Beyond Fighting and Returning:
Social Navigations of Former Combatants in Central Mozambique

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Beyond Fighting and Returning: Social Navigations of Former Combatants in Central Mozambique

Voorbij Vechten en Terugkeren: Sociale Navigaties
van Voormalig Strijders in Centraal Mozambique
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Além de Lutar e Voltar: Navegações Sociais
de Ex-Combatentes em Moçambique Central
(com um resumo em Português)

Proefschrift

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADEMIMO	Association of Disabled Military and Paramilitary Veterans of Mozambique (*Associação dos Deficientes Militares e Paramilitares de Moçambique*)
AIC	African Independent/Indigenous/Initiated Church
AMODEG	Mozambican Association of the Demobilized of War (*Associação Moçambicana de Desmobilizados de Guerra*)
ANC	African National Congress
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DF	Female soldier (*Destacamento Feminino*)
FAM	Mozambican Armed Forces (*Forzas Armadas de Moçambique*)
FIR	Rapid Intervention Force (*Força de Intervenção Rapida*)
FOMEC	Mozambican Forum for Ex-Combatants (*Foro Moçambicano para Ex-Combatentes*)
FRELIMO	Mozambican Liberation Front *(Frente de Libertação de Moçambique),*
FUMO	Mozambique United Front
GPA	General Peace Accords
MDM	Mozambican Movement for Democracy (*Movimento Democratico de Moçambique)*
ONUMOZ	UN Mission for Mozambique
PDD	Party for Peace, Democracy and Development (*Partido de Paz, Desenvolvimento e Democracia)*
PIDE	International Police and Defense of the State (*Policia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado*)
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance *(Resistência Nacional de Moçambique)*
SADF	South African Defense Forces
STAE	Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat (*Secretariado Técnico da Administração* Eleitoral)
ZANLA	Zimbabwean African National Liberation Army

Glossary

Aldeamentos	Communal villages
Antigo combatente	A veteran of Frelimo's anti-colonial struggle
Bandidos armados	Armed bandits, a common reference to Renamo
Bloco/Bloque	Civilian middlemen between the population and Renamo, during Renamo occupation
Buscato	Irregular informal job
Capulana	A cloth, generally worn by women around their waist
Caril	Curry, the vegetables, meat and/or beans that accompany *xima*
Chibalo	Forced labor on Portuguese owned plantation, also referred to as *contracto*
Contracto	Contract, used to refer to colonial-time forced labor on Portuguese owned plantation, also referred to as *chibalo*.
Curandeiro	Traditional healer/diviner (Portuguese)
Desmobilizado	Demobilized person
Drogas	Drugs, substances used by witches
Feitiçeiro	Witch (Portuguese)
Feitiço	Witchcraft or occult forces used to harm someone (Portuguees)
Fletchas	Arrows, referring to elite forces of the Portuguese army
Guia de marcha	A travel authorization
Grupo Especiais	Special groups, elite forces of the Portuguese army
Irmã	Sister, nun
Liga	Forced porter duty under Renamo control, deriving from the verb *ligar*, to connect
Lobolo	Negotiations concerning bride price
Lojas do povo	Communal shops
Machamba	Field for cultivation
Machambas do povo	Communal fields
Mana	Sister
Margem	Riverbank
Maringuenses	Inhabitants of Maringue
Mato	Bush
Militar	Military, reference to an ex-combatant
Nfiti	Witch (Chisena)

Nfumo	Traditional authority of the lowest rank
Nipa	A homebrewed alcoholic drink
Nyanga	Traditional healer/diviner (Chisena)
Profeta	Prophet, referring to healers of Zionist churches
Régulo	Chief, highest traditional authority
Thubo	Assistant of the *régulo,* particularly in conflict resolution
Tropa	Troop, reference to an ex-combatant
Tulas or *turas*	Frelimo fighters during the struggle for independence
Sapanda	Traditional authority of intermediary rank
Secretario de bairro	Secretary of the neighborhood, local Frelimo representative
Sentada	Sitting session, reunion to resolve a conflict
Ufiti	Witchcraft or occult forces used to harm someone (ChiSena)
Xima	Corn flower porridge

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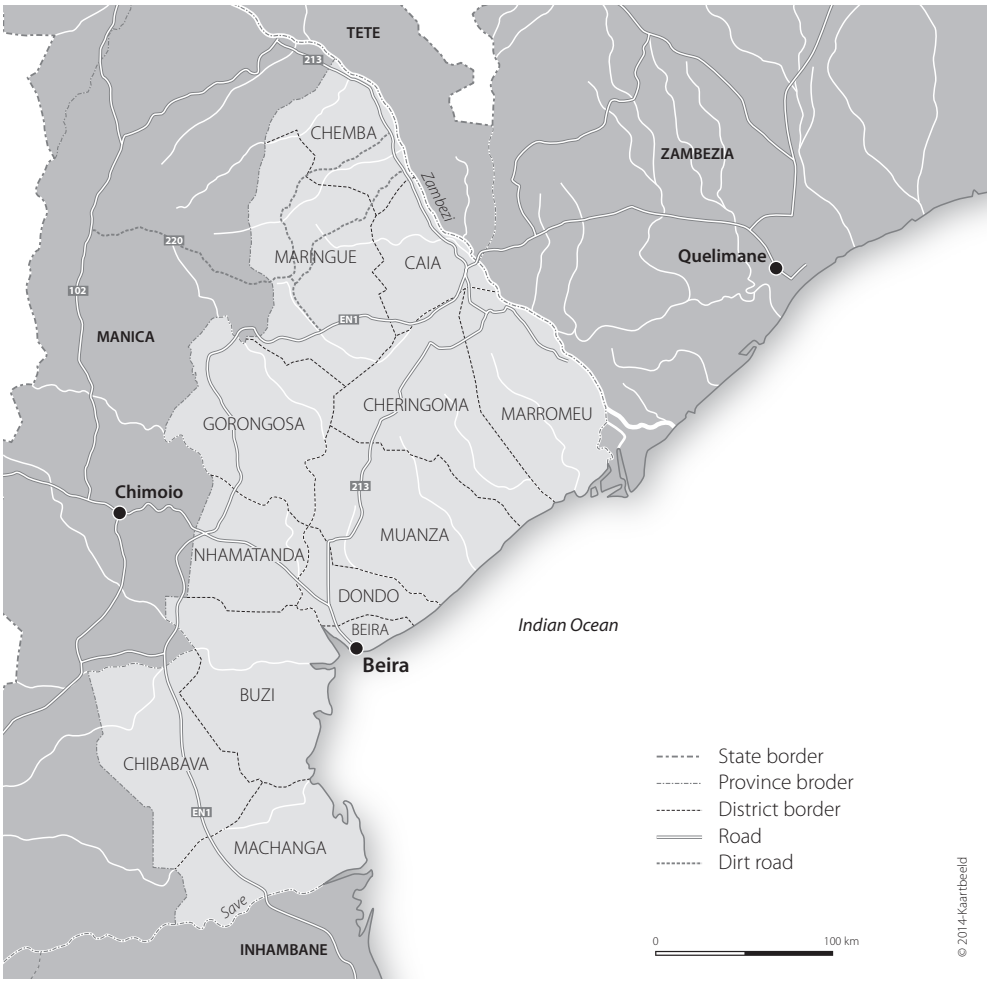

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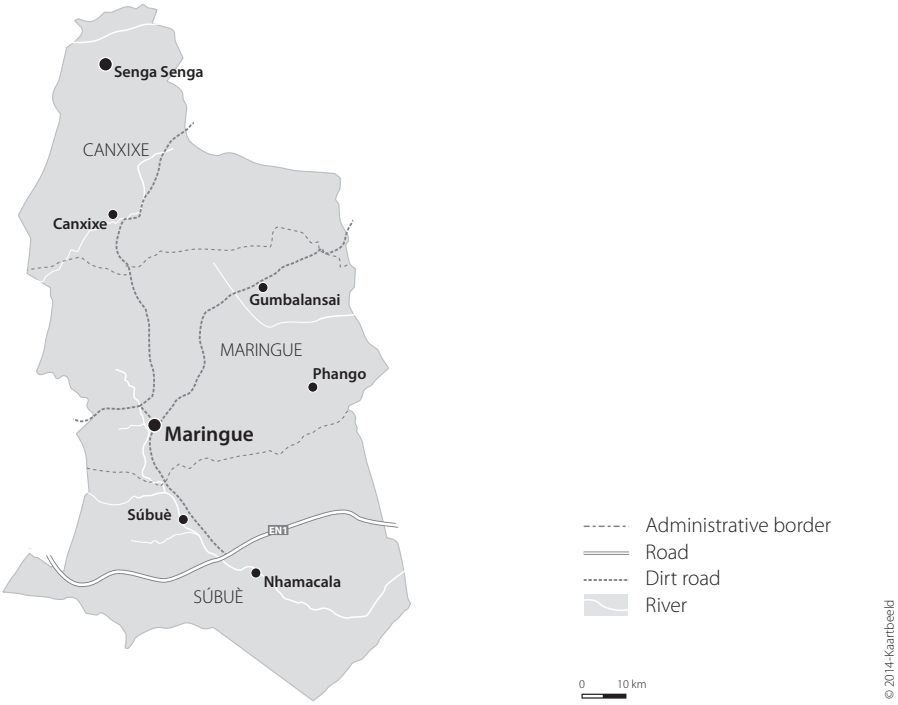

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am writing these acknowledgements in La Antigua, Guatemala, almost seven years after the start of this project. Somewhat accidently a circle is drawn, as it was in Guatemala where I did my first fieldwork during my Bachelor in Cultural Anthropology and where I really got a feel for ethnographic fieldwork. My current location is however even more exemplary of how this research project became intertwined with a nomadic life that took me, my partner Francesco and in later stages our two children, Pablo and Ines, to Nicaragua, Chile, Guatemala, Italy, the Netherlands and of course Mozambique. Here I want to express my gratitude the people who contributed to this dissertation in all these places, but particularly in Mozambique and the Netherlands.

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1 INTRODUCTION

"We are going to visit the house of my father," explained Adão, my field assistant, as we were cycling through the dry bush of Macoco, one of the more remote rural communities of Maringue, a district in Sofala province, central Mozambique. Adão had served as a Renamo combatant in Macoco during the war and knew the area very well.

Renamo, the Mozambican National Resistance (*Resistencia Nacional de Moçambique*), had been involved in a violent conflict with the government run by Frelimo, the Mozambican Liberation Front (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*), between 1976 and 1992. In 1985, at the age of eighteen, Adão was forced to join the rebels after Renamo fighters attacked his village in Marrumeu, a neighboring district. He was soon taken to Maringue, where he served in Renamo, first as a combatant and later as a "politician," charged with explaining Renamo's objectives to the local population. In the mid-1980s Maringue became a rebel stronghold after Renamo's main base was established in the area. The location of Renamo's central headquarters within the district changed frequently, with Macoco serving at the movement's base for a short while.

Adão's family still lived in Marrumeu, and I was therefore puzzled by his father's house being in Macoco. Just as I had concluded that this was another example of the – for me – surprisingly high mobility of people in central Mozambique, Adão said that we were actually going to visit his "wartime father". "They [his wartime father and his wartime father's wife] did the ceremonies as if they were my parents. It was necessary for getting married," he explained. Adão was referring to negotiations over the *lobolo*, the bride price. These negotiations generally take place between the parents of the future husband and wife. During the war Adão did not know the whereabouts of his biological parents, and searching them would have been dangerous, as crossing from rebel-held areas to government areas and vice versa was a life-threatening undertaking. Adão was still keen on marrying, however, as he did not want the war to "hold him down." His "wartime" parents, who were civilians living in Macoco, assisted in the *lobolo* negotiations. "*Lobolo* was agreed upon as it should [be]," Adão commented, emphasizing that he had followed more or less the expected "*lobolo* schema." This was important to Adão, as it rendered the marriage legitimate and ensured the children of the marriage would become part of his ancestral lineage. Adão and his first wife remain married to this day.

Arriving in Macoco, we entered the courtyard of Adão's wartime parents. Adão greeted his "parents" with respect by kneeling and clapping his hands. They had

not seen each other in five years, and we were welcomed with warmth and laughter. Strolling around Macoco later that day, Adão showed me the place where he and his wife had settled following their marriage and where their first two children had been born. The plot was overgrown with high grass and bush. The family's huts had long since disappeared. But Adão recalled happy memories of family life in the midst of a rebel structure and among people such as his "wartime father" living under Renamo occupation.

This ethnography is about the war and postwar trajectories of ex-Renamo combatants in central Mozambique. It is about male and female veterans and their attempts at securing a tolerable life for themselves within the difficult social, political, and economic situation in Maringue. Contrary to most academic work on ex-combatants and their so-called reintegration processes, this study is not primarily about violence, trauma, and the reacceptance of ex-combatants back into the community. Rather, it is about ex-Renamo combatants navigating unstable and sometimes dangerous social and political landscapes during and after the war, seeking to increase their social possibilities and life chances. Such a focus shifts the gaze from ex-combatants as individuals scarred by warfare -as perpetrators, victims, or otherwise- to their "projects of social becoming" (Vigh 2006:11) in environments of conflict and war, but also in relation to the specific social, cultural, and political context of Maringue.

The preceding vignette about Adão's wartime parents is illustrative in this respect. First of all, Adão's experiences offer a glimpse into the patchwork of relationships between civilians and combatants that were forged, maintained, and continued *throughout* war and peace, in this case marriage and fictive kinship. Second, the vignette shows that this patchwork is not neatly encapsulated by dichotomizing categories of before and after war, civil and military life, victims and perpetrators, nor in singular understandings of "home" and "community." Third, it underlines how Adão's envisioned certain life goals, in this case marriage, and went a long way to organize *lobolo* "as it should be," which demonstrates how processes of social becoming were obstructed, but nevertheless sought after, during the war as they were in the postwar. Fourth and finally, the example of Adão's wartime parents highlights combatants' room for maneuver and innovation in constraining and unstable contexts and conflicting structures (cf. Lubkemann 2008; Vigh 2006).

Stories like Adão's made me rethink what is generally understood by what is generally referred to as the process of reintegration of former combatants. This is seen as a crucial part of peace processes, based on the premise that when combatants' reintegration fails, they might see no other option than to pick up the arms again (Humphrey and Weinstein 2007). Not surprisingly, ex-combatants and their return

to civil life have been extensively studied across the academic disciplines of political science, peace and conflict studies, psychology, and anthropology.[1] Within this body of literature there is a sub-debate about urgent postwar issues of reacceptance, reconciliation, community-based reintegration, and local mechanisms for transitional justice.[2] Such studies skirt around the question how people who have experienced brutal conflict can reincorporate the perpetrators of that violence into their midst. This study contributes to these debates, but comes to the conclusion that such a focus on reintegration is of limited value, as it portrays wartime life as something far removed from the social realms of civil society and offers a rather singular conceptualization of community as a recipient entity, as if it were not affected by the war.

Ex-combatants' war and post-war trajectories are often understood in relation to two recurring themes: the break with society and the break with the past. Their recruitment and incorporation into military life is often regarded as a "break with society," exemplified by abduction, integration into a military system, and the perpetration of violence against relatives, resulting in a break-down of combatants' identification with prior systems of social norms (Honwana 2006:49-50; Minter 1989; Nilson 1993; Roesch 1992:472; Wilson 1992:545; cf. Schafer 2007; Finley 2011). Such descriptions of combatants' experiences underline the loss of identity, culture, and home.[3] Not surprisingly, the combatants' return to their families and communities needs to be accompanied by recuperation of their civil identity and the renunciation of wartime networks, hence the emphasis on reintegration rituals and "leaving the past behind" (Cobban 2007; Granjo 2007c; Honwana 2005; Leff 2008:14; Lundin 1998). Consequently, scholars have sought to view ex-combatants' postwar life as revolving around dealing with this violent past and have underlined the importance of restoring what was broken by this violence (i.e. trust, family bonds). Such processes are framed in terms of re-construction, re-conciliation, re-turn, re-incorporation and re-integration.

For the ex-Renamo combatants participating in this study, recruitment into the armed group meant a new kind of life, often one of hardship, involving new rules, the regular transgression of values and norms, and experiencing and perpetrating violence. It is not surprising that their life histories were divided into "before," "during," and "after" the war. But to view their time with Renamo as a rigid break with ordinary social life

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1 See e.g. Akello, Richters, and Reis 2006; Alden 2002; Baines 2007; Bayer, Klasen, and Adam 2007; Boothby 2006; Humphrey and Weinstein 2007; Kaplan and Nussio 2012; Kingma 2000, 2002; Knight and Özerdem 2004; McMullin 2004; Porto, Alden, and Parsons 2007; Theidon 2007; Utas 2005b; De Vries and Wiegink 2013.

2 See e.g. Baines 2007, 2010; Bolton 2012; Finnstrom 2008; Granjo 2007a, 2007c; Honwana 2006; Kaplan and Nussio 2012; Theidon 2007; Veale and Stavrou 2003; Wiegink 2013a.

3 Refugees are also often described as experiencing a break with culture, habits, and "home" and their deterritorization is often regarded as causing loss of one's individual or collective identity (Malkki 1995b:508). I refer to Malkki (1995a) and Hammond (2004) for critical analyses on this subject.

and to examine the postwar period through concepts such as "reintegration" or "repair" obscures processes and relationships that unfolded during the war and continued into the postwar period as well. As Erin Finley (2011:22) notes in her ethnography about US military deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, "war does not mean suddenly slipping outside life as we know it. Wartime may, in many ways, be an aberration of the course of life – a period of time different from any other – but is still part of that life course." This resonates with Lubkemann's (2008) understanding of war as "a social condition" in which daily social life is not only shaped by war violence, but also by much else. Thus, the prevalent focus on violence, and related to this "the break with society" and "break with the past" framings, leaves a part of ex-combatants' lives unmapped and may even leave possibilities for reintegration unexplored.

To be able to analyze ex-combatants in relation to a social condition of war and as embedded in "the pursuit of a complex and multi-dimensional agenda of social struggles, interpersonal negotiations and life projects" (Lubkemann 2008:13), I use Vigh's (2006:11) notion of "social navigation." Social navigation captures how "agents seek to draw and actualize their life trajectories in order to increase their social possibilities and life chances in a shifting and volatile social environment" (Vigh 2006:11). While it is very much an actor-oriented approach, social navigation is not a metaphor for agency, but rather a means to understand the relation between "agents" and "social forces" (Vigh 2006:14); in other words, it aims to describe processes of structuration (Giddens 1984). The relevance of the social navigation concept for this study lies in its attention to how agents seek to move within a shifting social environment that simultaneously moves the agent (Vigh 2006:238). This is helpful for thinking about ex-combatants' life trajectories throughout the war and the postwar periods since it allows for an analysis of ex-combatants' movements, decisions, setbacks, and opportunities. Following Vigh (2006:12-13), I situate veterans' social navigations in changing "social environments." The notion of "social environments" serves as an analytical tool for exploring the unpredictable and changing clusters of networks, relationships, and meanings that ex-Renamo combatants navigate and whose character, dangers, and possibilities are constantly assessed and reinterpreted.

However, to understand ex-combatants' life trajectories throughout war and peace, it is necessary to show not only how ex-combatants move in relation to these structures, but also how they "navigate" *with* social structures and thereby reproduce and change them. As Vigh (2006:236) notes, "we navigate not only the immediate but also the imaginary." The imaginary realm, he argues, is derived largely from people's past experiences. This dissertation takes a different perspective by arguing that social navigation – its directions, imaginations, successes, and failures – is best understood in relation to culturally, socially, and politically informed understandings people hold in relation to the world. To clarify the "navigation with" perspective, I rely on cultural model theory, which offers a notion of culture as an array of understandings

or models that range from personal to institutionalized, and operate as sources of meaning (D'Andrade and Strauss 1992; D'Andrade 1990:809; Holland and Quinn 1987; Shore 1996:315; Strauss and Quinn 1997). As I will explain in more detail below, it is such models that give direction and meaning to veterans' navigations, but also to the environments they navigate.

This dissertation analyzes the complexities of ex-combatants' life trajectories through an anthropological inquiry into the social navigations of ex-Renamo combatants in Maringue, central Mozambique. This is achieved through an analysis of ex-combatants' navigations of a range of social environments, involving relationships, networks, and practices, according to cultural models of war, violence, justice, and what it means to be a good person, father, political actor, and church member.

Two aims derive from such a focus. The first aim is to contribute to multidisciplinary debates about "the process of reintegration" of ex-combatants and, more specifically, debates about community-based reintegration. This dissertation examines several assumptions underlying such concepts, of which the most important is the dominant framing of ex-combatants' life trajectories in terms of a break with society and a break with the past. This dissertation shows that veterans' trajectories are best understood in terms of a mixture of ruptures and continuities, which are not easily captured in dichotomizing categories of before and after war, civil and military life, victim and perpetrator, or in singular understandings of "home" and "community."

The second aim of this dissertation is to contribute to anthropological debates on soldiering, combatants, and veterans. This research ties into studies of for example Debos (2011), Hoffman (2007, 2011), Utas (2005a) and Vigh (2006) about how combatants make their ways through the war and the postwar periods. Concurring with these authors, I focus on the intersection of agency and structure with the aim of showing how agents shape the social environments at the same times as these shifting, volatile social environments shape them (cf. Vigh 2006:238). The novelty of this study lies in its combination of the concept of social navigation and a cultural model approach, what I call the "navigating with" perspective, which illuminates the direction and meaning of such navigations and social environments. This ties into anthropological debates about the role of the notion of violence in analyses of wartime social life (Lubkemann 2008; Richards 2005; Wood 2008). The use of the concept of social navigation and a cultural model approach to the trajectories of ex-combatants provides an analytical answer to Lubkemann's (2008:330) call for "an anthropology of war as a social condition" that focuses on "the culturally negotiated life projects of warscape inhabitants rather than getting caught up in, or remaining mesmerized by, the more violent and uncertain medium in which such projects must be negotiated." This analysis is thus not only relevant to scholarship on the trajectories of veterans, but may also have implications for larger debates about people living in marginal, unstable, and violent surroundings (Gusterson 2007:161; see also Finnstrom 2008; Kleinman, Das, and

Lock 1997; Nordstrom and Robben 1995; Scheper-Hughes 1992; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004a; Shaw 2007).

In the following sections I will address these debates in more detail, showing how an analysis of ex-combatants' life trajectories through social navigation and a cultural model approach forms a valuable contribution. I end this introductory chapter with a discussion of the research methodology. First, however, I will situate this research in its ethnographic context.

1.1 Ex-Renamo combatants in Mozambique and Maringue

The ex-combatants discussed in this study are men and women who fought with Renamo during the civil war between 1976 and 1992. I refer to this armed conflict as a civil war, following Kalyvas' (2006:17) definition of civil war as "armed combat within the boundaries of a recognized sovereign entity between parties subject to a common authority at the outset of the hostilities." I am aware that labeling a war is part of framing it in a certain political light (Brass 1996; Demmers 2012:134-135). In Mozambique's case, the use of the term "civil war" is often criticized, on the grounds that it overlooks the fundamental role of the Rhodesian and South African military in supporting Renamo. I do not want to downplay the role of external actors in supporting Renamo, and I also recognize that contemporary wars are never a merely internal issue, as in various ways internal wars are linked to global shadow networks, the extra-state non-formal networks of trade that are intertwined with warfare (Nordstrom 2000; Reno 1998). I employ the notion of civil war, however, to underline that the war was fought within the boundaries of Mozambique and that most Renamo combatants and soldiers of the Mozambican Armed Forces (*Forzas Armadas de Moçambique,* FAM) were Mozambican, as this is a central starting point of the dynamics described in this dissertation.

Renamo veterans refer to themselves and other ex-Renamo combatants as *militares* (military), *tropa* (troops), and *desmobilizados* (demobilized persons). The use of this terminology underlines the significance of the military experience, which is often associated with positive characteristics such as seriousness, toughness, hard work, and bravery. I will use the terms "ex-combatants," "veterans," and "*desmobilizados*" alternately for stylistic variation.[4] While I use these terms to refer to this group of people, a significant part of this study is dedicated to demonstrating that their identity as "ex-combatants" is not always of relevance in their choices and positioning in social life. Participation in war, then, is not regarded as a period "outside" society, but rather as a continuation of social life (cf. Finley 2011), involving not only fighting and suffering,

4 The terms "former soldiers" or "ex-soldiers" will only be used to refer to those who fought for the FAM, as the word "soldier" implies a combatant within the military structure of a state.

but also many other experiences and relationships, such as marriage, family bonds, interactions with spiritual beings, and friendship.

Mozambique is a relevant and exiting place to research the life trajectories of former combatants. After a violent conflict in which an estimated one million people died and over five million were displaced, political elites opted for silence regarding the war and amnesty for all involved, as there were no formal initiatives for truth-finding and transitional justice.[5] As a result there was no other choice for the victims and former perpetrators "than to live together at the scene of their violent experience" (Igreja 2007:54). At the same time, the Mozambican peace process has been portrayed as a success story, as no large-scale acts of political violence took place after the peace accords were signed in 1992 (e.g. Cobban 2007; Graybill 2004:1127; Weinstein 2002).[6] The disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of over 90,000 combatants from both Renamo and the Mozambican Armed Forces is often regarded as one of the main reasons for the successful transition from war to peace. The UN Mission for Mozambique (ONUMOZ) has received some credit, but equal criticism for its role in the transition to peace (see e.g. Alden 2002; McMullin 2004). However, the "traditional reintegration mechanisms" used to incorporate combatants and war-affected civilians into the community have been identified as the main factor behind the successful peace process (Cobban 2007; Granjo 2007a, 2007c; Graybill 2004; Honwana 2006; Lundin 1998; cf. Schafer 2007). These "rituals of return," as I call them, involved the washing away of the evil spirits of war in the presence former combatants' families and a *curandeiro* (a traditional healer-diviner). In an evaluation of the process of reintegration of *demobilizados* in Mozambique, Alden (2002:353) suggested that such rituals substantially aided in the "fading away" of "old soldiers." Yet a decade after the publication of Alden's study, violent confrontations between remobilized Renamo combatants and the riot police showed that the *desmobilizados* have not faded away. On the contrary, I would argue that "ex-combatant" has become an increasingly significant identity in Mozambican politics, even though its meaning varies across the country and between Renamo and FAM veterans.

This study contributes to debates about Mozambique as a postwar society by focusing on Renamo and its veterans in Maringue. Unlike studies that examine on the immediate return of ex-combatants (Granjo 2007c; Honwana 2006), this research takes a long-term perspective on ex-combatants life trajectories (see also Boothby 2006;

5 As no substantial research or truth finding has been done, all statements about the number of casualties are rough estimates and may be exaggerated (Nordstrom 1997a:48, Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008). The vast majority of people died from causes related to the war, such as hunger and disease. Food shortages were probably the main cause of displacement.

6 There have been various incidents of violence between Renamo members, in particular Renamo's presidential guards, and the riot police (Schafer 2007:1), even before Renamo's recent remobilization. Furthermore, police violence (Amnesty 2009) and several urban riots in recent years have also challenged the peaceful character of Mozambique.

Posthumus 2006). This allows for the inclusion of issues ignored in most scholarship about ex-combatants in Mozambique, such as their current relationships with political parties. Furthermore, unlike most studies in the Mozambican context, which focus explicitly on male ex-combatants (e.g. Boothby 2006; Minter 1989; Schafer 2007), this dissertation also discusses the experiences of female veterans in order to compare and contrast their narratives and trajectories with those of male combatants.[7] This study's main contribution to debates about ex-combatants in Mozambique is to offer an understanding of Renamo veterans' trajectories beyond a mere focus on rituals of return, looking also at the continuity of relationships and networks, and to account for a notion of community reintegration that provides room for heterogeneity, conflict, and change.

Ethnographic fieldwork was carried out in Maringue, a rural district in Sofala province, central Mozambique. This district was selected on the basis that my initial research interest revolved around the question of how people who have experienced brutal conflicts can take the perpetrators of such violence into their midst. To answer this question, I decided to "follow" the "perpetrators." I was particularly interested in Renamo veterans, as it is generally agreed that that Renamo was responsible for the major part of the atrocities committed during the civil war (Finnegan 1992; Hultman 2009; Nordstrom 1997).[8] In 2008, this quest led me to Maringue, where an estimated three thousand ex-Renamo combatants settled after the war.[9]

Maringue is notorious for "trouble" (*confusão*) and has the dubious honor of being a Renamo bastion, as sometime during the mid-1980s the rebel movement established their main military base in the district's dense forests. When the peace accords were signed, Maringue became one of the 43 assembly areas for combatants,

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7 Nordstrom (1997b) argues that scholars and humanitarian aid agencies have largely ignored the experiences of girls and young women in the aftermath of the Mozambican civil war. The recruitment of girls by the armed forces, but also the sexual abuse by the peacekeeping force and human trafficking, is an issue that has been hardly touched upon by media, scholars, and humanitarian practitioners.

8 Statements about the responsibility for atrocities during the war are based on rough estimations and are highly influenced by framings of the war. It is estimated that Renamo killed between 50,000 and 200,000 people (Hanlon 1991; Hultman 2009). But it has been also noted that the atrocities committed by the Mozambican armed forces and their allies (such as the Zimbabwean forces) may be more numerous than often believed (Igreja et al. 2008).

9 According to the national census of 2007, Maringue has 75,089 inhabitants. The district covers over 6,290 square kilometers of hilly forest land and has a population density of 11.9 inhabitants per square kilometer. The district is divided into three administration posts: Maringue-town, with 40,067 inhabitants; Canxixe with 20,660 inhabitants; and Súbeú with 14,353 inhabitants. Concurring with national patterns, most *Maringuenses* fall into the age group of 5-25 years. There are slightly more women than men in Maringue, with this difference being most significant in the 15-40 age group. In this category women outnumber men by more than 1.5 to 1. The war may be one reason for this, as more men were killed than women. Additionally, men often leave Maringue for work or study, whereas women tend to stay, often marry young, and work on the *machambas* (fields) and in the house.

accommodating numerous Renamo fighters. While waiting almost two years for their official demobilization, an estimated three thousand Renamo *desmobilizados* settled in the area that is now the main village, and many have stayed until this day. They live among a population that experienced violence, repression, and terror at the hands of both the government armed forces and Renamo. During the war a large part of the population left Maringue for refugee camps in Malawi or elsewhere, and some of them returned after the signing of the peace accords. The remained of the population stayed in Maringue during the repressive Renamo occupation, suffering beatings, rape, famine, and forced labor.

Although I was well aware that the categories of victim and perpetrator were far from ideal analytical devices at the outset of this research, I quickly realized that in the context of Maringue these categories were absurdities. The abducted child soldier is a well-known example of the blurring of these categories. But what about the chief who held a grudge toward Frelimo and therefore collaborated with Renamo, and found himself obliged to participate in the execution of a violent system of forced labor; or the hunter who poached animals to satisfy Renamo's demand for food and to feed his children? And how do we categorize the militia-member who defended his village? Furthermore, the war divided communities and families along political lines. As a result, it was common in the Mozambican countryside for people to have some relatives who fought for Renamo and others who were killed by Renamo. Forced recruitment, child soldiers, civilian collaborations of all kinds, the use of violence to resolve local conflicts, and so on demonstrated endless shades of grey. Ex-combatants and civilians who participated in this research recalled instances of fighting, violence, and rape, but also told me about praying in local churches, organizing rituals for their ancestors, falling in love with a local woman, paying *lobolo*, and establishing a family, as the case of Adão illustrates.

Such stories forced me to rethink my initial question: the idea of ex-combatants being re-incorporated into the midst of social life turned out to be a rather flawed angle to perceive these processes, as it presumed a break with society that did not exist, at least not in the terms in which it was generally conceptualized by scholars. At the time of my fieldwork, most of the ex-combatants' social, political, and economic positions were rooted in wartime relationships with civilians, family members, other ex-combatants, their former military superiors, the Renamo leadership, local traditional and religious authorities, and so on. This led me to seek an analytical framework that left room for continuity and the blurring of categories such as ordinary and violent life, civilian and soldier, and victim and perpetrator.

But it was not only Maringue's war history and the great number of ex-Renamo combatants living in the area that made it a relevant location for this study. It was also Maringue's fame for political "trouble" (*confusão*, confusion) that made it an interesting research location. The district's political disputes and frequent incidents of violence must be related to at least three specific and interrelated characteristics of Maringue.

First, the district is infamous for being the "home of Renamo," because it was here that Renamo's last headquarters were located and, moreover, because Renamo still maintains a military base in the district, complete with armed combatants and an unknown quantity of weapons. Second, in reaction to the presence of the Renamo military base, the Frelimo-led government stationed a special police force in Maringue. Third, both the local Renamo and Frelimo party have been very militant and at times aggressive vis-à-vis one another. These three factors have contributed to complex political divisions, which deeply influence the social life not only of ex-combatants but also of Maringue's population as a whole, creating opportunities for some and impediments for others.

Furthermore, these political divisions cannot be regarded in isolation from the context of daily hardship in which most *Maringuenses* find themselves. While it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to undertake an in-depth analysis of poverty or livelihoods in Maringue, people's dire living circumstances and the underlying patterns of (political) exclusion are palpable. Visiting the homes of ex-combatants and other villagers, one cannot but conclude that the majority of the people in Maringue live below any imaginable poverty line. They struggle to grow food in their *machambas* (fields), most have no more than four years of education (if any), and primary healthcare, though available in the administrative centers of the district, is for inhabitants of rural areas largely inaccessible due to the physical effort of making the long journey.[10] This situation reflects a nationwide increase in inequality and a deepening urban-rural divide (Hanlon and Smart 2008). In Maringue, Renamo veterans largely interpret this inequality as caused by political discrimination between the center and periphery, urban and rural, and the government (Frelimo) and Renamo.[11] In this context, old tensions frequently arise, and new frictions emerge.

Maringue is therefore not a typical Mozambican district – if such a thing even exists – but a place where politics are brought to the edge, where history is contested on a daily basis, and where relationships forged during wartime are strengthened, changed, broken, and remade in peacetime. And above all, it is where the social and political positions of civil war veterans are most visible and relevant.

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10 Statistical data on Maringue are unreliable and hard to obtain. Yet what can be concluded from observation and the district's profile published on a government website is that Maringue is less developed than other districts in terms of access to electricity, water, infrastructure, healthcare, juridical infrastructure, transport, and superior education. To give some statistical impression of poverty on the national level, since the end of the war in 1992, Mozambique has not left the bottom section of the Human Development Index (HDI). In the HDI 2011, Mozambique occupied number 184 of the 187 countries included on the list, just above Niger, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the HDI of 2013, Mozambique was the third-lowest-ranked country, just above Niger and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

11 This was the case when I arrived in Maringue in 2008. In the run-up to the 2009 elections, the political landscape changed substantially as a new, very popular political party was established: the Mozambican Movement for Democracy (MDM, *Movimento Democratico de Moçambique*). The rise of MDM and its political consequences in Maringue will be further discussed in chapter 8.

1.2 The social condition of war and peace

A starting point for providing a more nuanced account of the life trajectories of ex-Renamo combatants is to underline the porous boundaries of war and peace. That war and peace are not opposites has become a staple notion in anthropology with numerous authors having noted that categorical distinctions seem to imply a lack of conflict and violence in the period before and after war (Debos 2011; Lubkemann 2008; Nordstrom 2004; Richards 2005; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004a). However, as peacetime is not free of violence, neither is wartime only defined by violence. As Lubkemann (2008:23) argued, "the very lines between the social conditions of war and nonwar may be less than clear to those who continue to engage in everyday social negotiation and struggle throughout both." In this section I will probe the role of violence in war and make a case for viewing war as a "social condition."

There is an intrinsic relation between war and violence, as "war comes into existence when violence is employed" (Nordstrom 1997a:114). It is through violence, and even terror violence, that warzones and post-warzones are often approached in popular imaginaries, but also in academic studies. How can we not be repelled and shocked by the arsenal of terror warfare? And as scholars, how can we not write how massacres, torture, sexual abuse, and community destruction have attacked the core definitions of humanity? The experiences of people enmeshed in brutal violence have been documented and analyzed in a vast body of ethnographic literature on war experiences, trauma, and creative ways of dealing with the consequences of terror (e.g. Argenti-Pillen 2003; Kleinman, Das, and Lock 1997; Nordstrom 1997a; Nordstrom and Robben 1995:4; Robben and Suarez-Orozco 2000; Trnka 2008). These brave in-depth analyses follow Clendinnen's (1999:4) suggestion "to dispel the 'Gorgon-effect'" – to try to look into Medusa's eyes and not be paralyzed – in order to arrive at some understanding of persons and processes entangled as victims or perpetrators in horrifying situations. The focus, then, is on the capacity of violence to unmake meaning and to produce massive trauma, but these studies also include reflections on the capacity of human creativity and versatility to remake and rebuild shattered worlds.

However, the emphasis on the role of violence in warfare has led scholars and policy makers to interpret the social lives of people during wartime almost exclusively in terms of what coping with wartime violence means. This leads to a rather narrow understanding of the experience of war and of reconstruction in its aftermath (e.g. Englund 2005; Lubkemann 2008; Wood 2008). Lubkemann (2008:12) observes that

> People who are simultaneously brothers, workers, neighbors, and elders all of a sudden are recast in singularity reductionist molds: either as "refugees," whose only recognizable role is to flee violence, or as "combatants," whose only analyzed role is to perpetrate violence, or as "victims," whose only role of relevance is to suffer violence.

In their emphasis on wartime violence, scholars have neglected people's social struggles and attempts to realize life projects in the context of war in ways shaped by prewar social relations, norms, and everyday patterns as well as by war violence (Englund 2005; Lubkemann 2008; Malkki 1995a; Richards 2005; Wood 2008:540). This focus on violence has also profoundly influenced multidisciplinary studies on the reintegration of former combatants and the perspectives of implementing agencies in the field. In what follows I explore two implications of the "totalizing and sensationalizing effects" of "violent things" (Lubkemann 2008:10) for the study of the combatant and their community reintegration.

First of all, a focus on terror violence may obscure the fact that the mundane and routinized forms of structural violence may be more significant factors in the constitution of wartime and peacetime social life. Lubkemann (2008) estimated that in Machaze (a district in Manica, central Mozambique), famine killed more people than bullets. The same holds true for Maringue. And famine continues in the postwar. Before every rain season, peasants in Maringue experience a period of *fome* (hunger), an anticipated but nonetheless deeply felt crisis. Such problems in "peacetime" led some of those I met to recall better days during "wartime."[12] An ex-government soldier told me that life "*na tropa*" (in the troops) was in some ways not so bad: "when we were hungry you handed in a ticket and there was food. Now when I'm hungry I remember those days; at least you had something to eat at the end of the day." The "violence of everyday life" (Scheper-Hughes 1992) may not be as sensational or confrontational as a wartime massacre, but the patterns of exclusion and poverty, whether a consequence of war or not, have profound implications for people's lives in both peace and wartime. An awareness of the centrality of struggle *throughout* war and peace is crucial for understanding the variety in ex-combatants' spatial, social, and political trajectories.

Second, the totalizing effects of violence also influence the framing of ex-combatants' life trajectories in terms of a break with society and a break with the past. As I mentioned above, these "breaks" underline that recruitment into the armed group ruptures bonds with combatants' prewar social life. They exemplify Hoffman's (2007:660) observation that war is often defined by the absence of social structures, as it is believed to generate its own military habitus, and Lubkemann's (2008:11) claim that violence is "implicitly ascribed hegemonic status as both the singular determinant of agency and the sole genitor of all warscape social processes." But whereas Hoffman's an Lubkemann's studies are mainly concerned with wartime processes, this dissertation holds that framing war as a predominantly violent experience also shapes the analysis of postwar processes. As mentioned previously, ex-combatants' postwar social life is often seen as revolving around re-entering society, dealing with the violent military past, and restoring what is broken. This dissertation provides a different analysis of ex-combatants'

12 During her fieldwork in Mozambique in wartime, Nordstrom (2004:230) heard many people express hopes for peacetime. But when she returned after the war, she was forced to conclude that for many citizens it was just as hard to find food, work, and shelter as it was during the war.

social trajectories, conceiving them as being characterized not only by rupture but also by continuing relationships of many kinds, some shaped by violence and force, others involving economic profiteering, ancestor worshipping, or marriage. This allows a more nuanced understanding of how ex-combatants and civilians seek to increase their social possibilities and life chances.

These two implications lead to the obvious, yet often disregarded, assertion that war is not only about violence. A sole focus on the destructive side of war – in material, social, and symbolic terms – obscures the ways in which war changes, renegotiates, and even creates social relationships (Wood 2008). People in war zones "do not cease to be specific, recognizable human beings in particular relationships, with all the interests, compassion and contradiction that social life everywhere involves" (Englund 2005:71). By no means do I want to present war as a positive or constructive force, or to ignore the perpetration of brutal atrocities and the existence of rape camps, slavery, and terror during Mozambique's civil war. Rather, in order to understand social life in the postwar, I wish to call attention to that which war does not destroy, and to demonstrate that people look for order, allies, relationships and dependencies in all circumstances.

Lubkemann (2008) has argued for an ethnographic understanding of war as a "social condition," which allows for a reflection of "how factors and forces *other than violence* may also play important – and potentially even leading – roles in shaping warscape social process" (Lubkemann 2008:15, *italics in original*). These other factors and forces may include "social struggles and concerns, interpersonal negotiations, and culturally scripted life projects" (Lubkemann 2008:14). Such a perspective permits me to consider ex-combatants' social navigation as being formed in unstable social and political environments, directed by life projects, and shaped by cultural understandings of what it means to be a good man, woman, veteran, politician, community member, and so on. By focusing on social navigation and cultural models, this thesis provides a novel way to examine war, viewing it not as an aberration of social life but as a social condition among others. This study shows that the lives of those who bear arms in war are defined not merely by the use of violence but also, and more fundamentally, by a range of other social factors, which are defining for their postwar life trajectories.

1.3 Anthropology and combatants

This study aims to contribute to the growing anthropological debate about soldiering and veterans' issues. While anthropology has traditionally focused more on the victim side of violent conflict and its aftermath (e.g. Green 1999; Kleinman et al. 1997; Nordstrom 1997; Schmidt and Schröder 2001:12), the "perpetrator perspective" has also received growing attention in recent years (e.g. Ben-Ari 1998; Debos 2011; Finley 2011; Grassiani 2013; Hoffman 2011; Lomsky-Feder and Ben-Ari 1999; Robben 2005; Simons

1999; Utas 2005a, 2005b, 2003; Vigh 2006). Combatants and ex-combatants generally appear in three sets of anthropological literature.

A first set of studies grapples with the concept of reintegration. Anthropologists have, for example, drawn attention to the different discourses shaping Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and NGO programs and to how combatants appropriate these discourses for their own benefit (Bolten 2012:500; Ferme 2001:197; Schelper 2005; Utas 2003). Yet most anthropological work on reintegration focuses on the phenomenon as it occurs outside the programs of humanitarian organizations, often referred to as "community reintegration," emphasizing its long-term and processual character. These studies draw attention to social relationships between ex-combatants and non-combatants in a particular historical, political, socio-economic, and cultural context (Coulter 2009; Van Gog 2008; Rozema 2008). They highlight local possibilities for transitional justice (Baines 2010; Theidon 2007), community reconciliation and reintegration rituals (Baines 2007; Granjo 2007a, 2007c), the accentuation of (prewar) conflicts (Bolten 2012), and the possible impact of returning ex-combatants on the social arena, social relations, cultural outlooks, people's behavior, and mores (Adair and Vogt 1949; Modell and Haggerty 1991).

A second set of studies looks at the potential symbolic power of veterans in historical narratives of a nation or a group (Kriger 2003; Mestola 2010) and at the types of subjectivities this creates (Kleinman 2007). Former soldiers may be portrayed as heroes who strived for freedom and for their nation, but they may also be regarded as reminders of a "dirty" war without victory, characterized by devastating destruction and brutality, or as something in between these two poles (Wiegink 2013b). The *desmobilizados* of Mozambique's post-independence war fall in this last category, which has far-reaching political and practical implications for the relation between veterans and the state, which will be dealt with toward the end of this dissertation (see also Wiegink 2013b).

Recently, a third body of anthropological work on (former) combatants has emerged that approaches this subject from an actor-oriented point of view, stressing (former) combatants degrees of (bounded) agency. From this perspective, (former) combatants have been described as young people in crisis – be it due to socio-economic downfall, generational struggles, or rural-urban divides (Peters 2006; Utas 2003, 2005a, 2005b) – who are often embedded in global shadow networks (Hoffman 2011; Nordstrom 2004). Concepts such as navigation (Vigh 2006), creativity (Nordstrom 1997), and tactic agency (Honwana 2006) refer to actor-oriented perspectives that aim to shed light on how individuals – whether victims, perpetrators, or both – navigate restricting contexts of war, and on the variety of roles people inhabit in their everyday practices (Debos 2011; Korf, Engeler, and Hagman 2010:387; Utas 2005a; Vigh 2006).

This study tackles aspects of each of these three "sets" of debates, but I specifically engage with studies about community reintegration and social navigation. In the next

section, I will delve further into debates about community reintegration, arguing for a more complex and heterogeneous understanding of the context in which ex-combatants' civilian lives unfold. This is followed by the final theoretical section, in which I explain the analytical framework of this dissertation that combines social navigation and cultural model theory.

1.4 Reintegration into what? The trouble with community[13]

Reintegration is often studied in the context of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs that are implemented in (post)conflict settings around the world. Although the reintegration aspect is regarded as the weakest link in such programs, as it can neither be planned nor evaluated with clear parameters, it is nonetheless seen as the most important element of DDR (Theidon 2007).

This study has an uneasy relation with the term "reintegration" for two reasons. First, the term is generally used in humanitarian program language as a container notion for a range of processes that occur after the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants. It suggests that ex-combatants need to be supported and equipped to successfully re-enter peaceful society (Peters 2006:3), and triggers the implementation of skill training courses and sensitization workshops (Bolten 2012). However, as Peters (2006:3) observes, few questions are asked about the community to which the ex-combatants return. This leads us to the second reason for this study's uneasiness with the term "reintegration," which is that it seems to presuppose the return to a status quo (see also Van Gog 2008), which is, as I will elaborate below, illusory, and implies that social and military contexts are two separate spheres, when in fact they are deeply intertwined, especially in the case of civil wars.[14] Reintegration is thus an analytically weak concept for understanding the post-war trajectories of ex-combatants. Nevertheless, it is the term most commonly used to describe these processes. Therefore, the term will arise from time to time, but always with the abovementioned precautions in mind.

In recent years, there has been a shift from more technical and program-based studies of reintegration (focusing on "kits" and "skill-training") to the current buzzword, "community-based reintegration," which regards reintegration as a long-term social process and aims to include local mechanisms for reintegration and reconciliation (Kaplan and Nussio 2012; Özerdem 2012; Stovel 2008; Theidon 2007; UN 2006).

13 This phrase is borrowed from the title of Amit and Rapport's (2002) book *The Trouble with Community: Anthropological Reflections on Movement, Identity and Collectivity*.

14 Van Gog (2008) uses the concept of "social integration" instead of "reintegration" to avoid giving the impression that combatants are returning to a status quo. Nevertheless, the term "integration" still suggests that social and military contexts are two separate spheres.

Community-based reintegration initiatives have been observed in various post-conflict settings, including the Philippines, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Colombia (Kaplan and Nussio 2012:2). The community-based approach is often regarded by both scholars and practitioners as a relatively problem-free and low-cost solution for effective reintegration (Kaplan and Nuisso 2012; Özerdem 2012). There is however limited understanding of how it should take place. In technical reintegration literature, community-based reintegration is often defined using vague phrases such as "a dual process of individual adaptation and community acceptance and support […] through integration into community rhythms" (Wessells 2006:199), with "community" defined as "an absorptive social space for rebuilding civilian lives" (Podder 2012:196). These quotes exemplify how studies of reintegration often ignore the dynamic nature of communities.[15]

In relation to African armed conflicts, the focus on community-based reintegration has led to the publication of several (ethnographic) studies about rituals and local notions of reconciliation that facilitate the incorporation of ex-soldiers (Baines 2007; Granjo 2007a:126-127; Honwana 2005, 2006; Lundin 1998; Veal and Starvou 2003; Williamson 2006). Stovel (2008:306) notes that this trend started with studies of community-based reintegration practices undertaken in Mozambique (e.g. Gibbs 1994; Granjo 2007a, 2007c; Honwana 2005, 2006; Lundin 1998; Nordstrom 1997:145-146). These studies described how former combatants and traumatized people were re-incorporated into the community through healing and cleansing rituals to "shake off bad spirits." Honwana (2006:114), for example, argues that these ritual moments, though not univocally performed throughout Mozambique, can be regarded as *rites de passage* from military to civil life (Honwana 2006:114). Furthermore, several studies have argued that these rituals enhance the healing of trauma and restore a balance between humans and spirits (Granjo 2007a; Honwana 2006:114; Nordstrom 1997:145-146). These studies can be situated in wider debates about the (ambiguous) role of traditional healers, of traditional authorities and of spirit possessions in reconciliation practices and localized processes of dealing with the legacy of war in Mozambique (Bertelsen 2002:269; Honwana 2003, 1996; Igreja 2007, 2003).

The Renamo veterans who participated in this study also experienced such "rituals of return," which often marked their reunion with their families. In chapter 6, I will show how such ritual moments contributed to the restoration of a certain social and spiritual balance. However, here I want to argue that a mere focus on ritual moments offers a rather ahistorical and apolitical understanding of veterans' postwar social lives and their communities (see also Scanlon and Nhalevilo 2011; Schafer 2007:167-168;

15 For further discussion of this, especially in relation to DDR programs, I refer the reader to an article by Hugo de Vries and myself in which we critically assess two prevalent assumptions in the DDR literature (De Vries and Wiegink 2011).

De Vries and Wiegink 2011).[16] Such a focus offers a limited timeframe of such rituals, which is restricted to the moment of return, but more importantly, it suggests a singular conceptualization of the communities ex-combatants are supposed to reintegrate in. As several scholars have noted, "community" is a rather slippery concept and is often used as a container notion (Baumann 1996:14, see also Amit and Rapport 2002:7, 13; Cohen 2001 (1985):165). To arrive at a more problematized understanding of community and thus also of reintegration, I shall now present three critical observations on the dominant position of "rituals of return" in scholarly work on former combatants.

First, a mere focus on "rituals of return" reinforces the idea that ex-combatants' return to civil life involves a "break with the past." As I have illustrated above, this obscures veterans' ongoing relationships with people and institutions that were established during the protracted armed conflict. But it also conceives of community life as static, implying that the social and economic environments to which *desmobilizados* return have not changed since they left, as if the war was fought in another realm (Kriger 2003:16; Peters 2006:135; De Vries and Wiegink 2011). In reality, the places combatants came from and return to have most likely been penetrated by violence and changed over the years of war. Let us take Maringue as an example: the entire village was destroyed, houses were set on fire in rural areas, people fled to the city of Beira or to Malawi, their spouses remarried, relatives, neighbors, and peers were recruited by one of the several armed actors, some disappeared and others died. During the internal armed conflict in Mozambique, more than half of the population was directly affected by the war, and I dare to state that in Maringue, there is nobody who did not flee, was not threatened, did not take up a weapon, or was not forced to work or collaborate with one of the armed groups. Therefore, to understand the relationships between former combatants and the "community," civilians' war experiences and their interactions with soldiers during and before the war must be taken into account.

Second, as a consequence of the variety of experiences, but also due to local and prewar dynamics, former combatants returned to a "community" that was not politically neutral, and that was most probably divided and polarized by both the national conflict and local conflicts and grievances (Schafer 2007; Wood 2008). Such conflicts may involve various political parties, former armed groups, combatants, returning refugees, and other people who have been affected by the violence, but conflict divisions may also run across families, friends, and neighbors (Englund 2002; Kalyvas 2006; Peters 2006:135; Wood 2008:548). Furthermore, as Harri Englund (2002:24) has pointed out, the post-war context has its own potential for triggering conflict. As this study shows,

16 I draw extensively on the book *Soldiers at Peace* by Jessica Schafer (2007), whose excellent analysis of soldiers of both sides of the conflict inspired me to ask questions about topics such as witchcraft and the ex-combatants' use of demobilization allowances. However, this study differs from Schafer's in its geographic location, timeframe, and inclusion of female veterans, as well as in its aim of describing ex-combatants' continuing social relationships throughout war and peace.

such conflicts may revolve around discontented spirits, the return of refugees, and political tensions concerning multiparty democracy and elections. As a consequence, veterans do not necessarily return home, as it might be impossible or undesirable to return to their village of origin.

Third and finally, approaching the "recipient community" as a homogenous whole located in the remote Mozambican bush overlooks the variety of networks, such as religious institutions, veterans' organizations, and political parties, which have links beyond the village. The relationships between ex-combatants and their former armed groups have been little explored, as demobilization assumes as a clear rupture of military bonds (but see Reno 1998; Themnér 2012; Utas 2003).[17] However, this is not the case for many ex-combatants in Maringue, for whom fellow Renamo combatants and the Renamo party form social networks that offer possibilities for patronage, social security, and access to economic resources (see chapters 3 and 8). Furthermore, "community" dynamics, especially involving veterans, do not exist independently of processes of memory construction and negotiations of citizenships (chapter 9).

Therefore, this study seeks to provide a more complex reading of community and consequently of reintegration. The social world in which "reintegration processes" are situated is one of change, conflict, and heterogeneity, involving a variety of networks, experiences, and power relations. I propose to understand the (post-)war social world through the concept of "social environments" as developed by Vigh (2006).[18] A social environment, Vigh (2006:12-13) writes, is an intrinsically multilayered phenomenon containing a multitude of negotiations of power, networks, events, and relationships that change, overlap, and contradict within "fluctuating social structures." Vigh (2006) draws on Bourdieu's (1993) concept of "field," which situates agents in concrete social situations structured internally by certain rules and power relations, always structurally homologous to other fields. "Fields," however, suggest stability and certain predictability, whereas social environments situate agents in a non-transparent world in motion (Vigh 2006:12). This is a useful way not only to conceptualize the volatile situation of war, but also to regard the unstable transitions from war to the post-war. Additionally, the non-transparent and unstable characteristics of social environments reflect anxieties and dynamics of social struggles, involving violence and exclusion, but also particular social dynamics relevant for the ex-combatants in Maringue, such as witchcraft suspicions and accusations, and interactions with avenging spirits.

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17 It is one of the explicit goals of DDR programs to break down the command and control structures of armed forces. This is often done by breaking up battalions, separating soldiers from their commanders, and scattering ex-soldiers throughout the country. This is not always possible, however, as people are often recruited en masse with their peers from the same village. Furthermore, in the wake of war, remaining with the former armed group may offer protection and economic possibilities (De Vries and Wiegink 2011).

18 Vigh (2006) uses "environment" and "terrain" as interchangeable concepts. However, I have opted to use "environment" as it does not have the same spatial connotation as "terrain."

In this study "social environment" serves as an analytical tool to explore the non-transparent and changing clusters of networks, relationships, and meaning that ex-Renamo combatants navigate and whose character, dangers, and possibilities are constantly assessed and reinterpreted (Vigh 2006:12). This dissertation is organized around six social environments, which fall into two clusters. The first cluster, which centers on kin relations and the "life project" of establishing a family, contains three chapters in that subsequently discuss ex-Renamo combatants' relations with the consanguinal family, marital relationships between men and women, and relationships with the spiritual world. The second cluster focuses on ex-Renamo combatants' social navigations of social and political networks that are shaped by asymmetrical relationships characterized by big man dynamics. The social environments discussed in this cluster are church networks, former military networks, and veterans' relationships with the state. These social environments are by no means closed entities. For example, ex-combatants' relations with the consanguinal family (chapter 4) are intertwined with veterans' possibilities for marriage (chapter 5) and with relationships with the spiritual world (chapter 6). Furthermore, these social environments are largely governed by the same cultural models of family life that involve dependency, obligations, and reciprocity.

The approach set out above does not claim to be holistic; there may be countless other social environments essential to understand veterans' social navigations.[19] The choice to focus on the abovementioned social environments and not others was empirically driven. They are clusters of what the research participants showed me to be their most important networks and relationships. It is through the notion of social environment that this dissertation approaches what others have called the "recipient community." The "reintegration process" is thus understood as the ex-combatants' navigations of these social environments.

1.5 Understanding veterans' social navigation

This dissertation employs Vigh's (2006) understanding of the concept of "social navigation" to describe ex-combatants' life trajectories as situated in multilayered social environments. Social navigation has proven to be an analytically rich concept in studies analyzing wartime social life as well as the complex social and political world after war (Debos 2011; Korf et al. 2010:386; Utas 2005a). Vigh (2006:11) proposes to view combatants (in his case youth in Guinea-Bissau) as "social navigators" to capture how "agents seek to draw and actualize their life trajectories in order to increase their

19 An example of such an environment might be what Igreja (2007) calls the "agricultural cycles." These formed, according to Igreja, a crucial social practice in reconciliation processes in Gorongosa, Sofala province. As far as I could observe, in Maringue agriculture was a family practice with little social meaning beyond the household unit.

social possibilities and life chances in a shifting and volatile social environment." Social navigation is not a metaphor for agency but rather a means to understand the relation between "agents" and "social forces" (Vigh 2006:14); in other words, it aims to describe processes of structuration (Giddens 1984).

The relevance of the social navigation concept for this study lies in its attention to people's movement and steering shaped not only by their immediate possibilities, but also by their imagination of future possibilities and positions (Vigh 2006). Here I see a parallel with Lubkemann's (2008:13) argument that inhabiting a warscape is not merely a matter of coping with violence, but is deeply embedded in "the pursuit of a complex and multi-dimensional agenda of social struggles, interpersonal negotiations and life projects." This is helpful for thinking about ex-combatants' life trajectories throughout war and postwar, as it facilitates an analysis of ex-combatants' movements, decisions, setbacks, and possibilities in changing social environments. Furthermore, such a perspective provides room for the variety of social trajectories, which are dependent on background, gender, age, divergent experiences, and more contingent factors, such as being away from home for years, the demobilization allowance, the stigmatization of female combatants, and the fact that some combatants survived and others did not.

Vigh's (206:13-14) objective is to depict social navigation as "motion within motion": agents act in relation to other actors and larger social forces, which are themselves unstable and changing. This creates complex and volatile interactions between agents and their social environments (see also Korf et al. 2010:389-389). Vigh (2006: 14) is quick to note that we are restricted in our navigations. He draws on Bourdieu's image of an agent bound by structures, the Weberian idea of "social options," and Dahrendorf's (1988) notion of "life changes" to underline how people's choices are embedded in social bonds and attachments. The actors in this study inhabit and navigate social environments shaped by kinship structures, gender, religious beliefs and practices, and relationships with political leaders and fellow combatants. But to more completely understand ex-combatants' life trajectories throughout war and peace, it is necessary to show not only how ex-combatants move within these structures and how they are constrained by them, but also to examine how combatants "navigate" *with* these social structures and thereby reproduce and change them.

To clarify the "navigation with" perspective, I rely on cultural model theory, which offers a notion of culture as an array of understandings or models, ranging from personal to institutionalized, which operate as sources of meaning (D'Andrade 1990:809; D'Andrade and Strauss 1992; Holland and Quinn 1987; Shore 1996:315; Strauss and Quinn 1997). Cultural model theory "assumes a structuration process between mentally and socially constructed models in which cognitive representations are externalized in the social world and those observable externalizations are in turn internalized in cognitive constructs" (Robben 2010:141). In other words, models are "twice-born" as they exist both "outside" in society and inside people's minds (Shore 1996). Cultural

model theory builds upon Anthony Giddens' (1984) duality of structure, that is, "the idea that structure and agency are not ontologically prior, but mutually constitutive entities" (Demmers 2012:199). This structuration process does not occur in a one-to-one correspondence, as individuals internalize models and subsequently participate in the enactment (or change) of their public institutionalized forms. In doing so, they may reinforce or subtly modify their mental model, albeit within certain boundaries (Giddens 1984; Hinton 2005:25; Strauss 1992).

Cultural model theory tries to account for "the variation in the distribution, content, saliency, and motivational force of cultural knowledge" (Hinton 2005:24), but also for individual deviations. From this perspective, culture not only mediates social practices, but also shapes the interpretation of events. People are viewed as meaning makers, "drawing on a repertoire of personal and cultural knowledge to comprehend and construct meaning out of their social lives" (Hinton 2005:28). These models, personal and social, shape how people envision their futures and their trajectories to reach advancement in life. This is highly relevant for understanding the "reasoning" behind ex-combatants' social navigations, as it draws attention to how ex-combatants imagine their trajectories within a particular social environment and, as I will show below, it allows for an analysis of innovative steering.

Three aspects of cultural model theory require elaboration in order to clarify how it is used in this study. First, cultural understandings are not fixed. They are "loosely structured" models that interact with and contradict other (personal) understandings, which are based on personal experiences, expectations, and emotions (Shore 1996:312, see also Ben-Ari 1998; Hinton 2005). Therefore, cultural models are not shared in the same degree (Shore 1996:312). Such variations may have an individual character, and may also vary along social lines, such as gender and age, or occur in specific situations (Tyler 1969:4, see also Hinton 2005:26; Strauss 1992). Moreover, the versatility of cultural models becomes clear when confronted with a new context (Ortner 1984:155), such as terror and fear, the "return" to civil life, or being in the presence of former enemies. Adão's pursuit of fictive parents may be an example of how cultural models are upheld in new contexts, in this case Renamo occupation and the absence of his parents in the *lobolo* negotiations. At the same time, it forms an example of how the cultural model of *lobolo* was slightly during the war. *Lobolo* was "agreed upon as it should," Adão said, suggesting that the *lobolo* model was preserved, although slightly adapted to the situation at hand. Thus, people not only *re*produce cultural understandings but also alter and evoke them in new and different contexts.

Second, people hold a range of models, both as mental representations and in institutionalized form. As a consequence, these models may be conflicting (Luhrmann 2006; Shore 1996:49, 287). One can imagine that this holds especially true for combatants and soldiers in military structures and in a situation of war. For example, military structures generally lift the taboo on killing other human beings. However, this does not

mean that other moral models that condemn killing are replaced, as will be described in chapters 2 and 6. The idea of multiple, interacting, and competing "models" with different meanings and importance to people may further complicate ex-combatants' social navigation.

Third, cultural understandings do not exist or emerge in isolation from power dynamics. Which models are regarded as relevant is not only a question of their idiosyncratic understanding, but is primarily related to a differentiated understanding of cultural knowledge. This holds that people have neither equal access to certain models nor an equal ability to emphasize or change them. Gender, class, wealth, age, ethnicity, residential area, education, religion, political affiliation, and occupation form some of the axes that may influence a person's access to and understanding of instituted models (Hinton 2005:27). Furthermore, the ability to change models and the robustness of innovations is dependent on two interrelated factors. First, such innovations should be "socially sensible": they should be "in reference to, and in congruence with, other fundamental strands of social discourse whose hegemonic status remains uncontested" (Lubkemann 2008:317). This concurs with what Holland and Quinn (1997) call "umbrella models" (Holland and Quinn 1997) and Hinton's (2005:25) argument that the model's ontological resonance is central to its motivational force. Second, it is worthwhile to consider "*who* has the capacity for authorizing particular discourses while preempting others" (Lubkemann 2008:319, italics in original). These differences are largely based on social status and power relations, as gender, age, and (former) military position may influence one's ability to "propose" alternative models and influence their durability (Lubkemann 2008:321-322), but may also be related to one's personality and "moral capital" (Lubkemann 2008:320-321).[20] Adão, for example, was able to innovate the practice of *lobolo*, probably due to his high rank in Renamo and to the ontological resonance of his proposition. In the course of the following chapters, we will see similar "successful" navigations by ex-combatants, as well as other innovations that were less successful.

In relation to social navigation and social environments, cultural understandings may be seen as "a sextant," to borrow Gerd Baumann's (1999:78) metaphor for religion. Baumann (1999:78) shows that all too often, religion is described as a compass, pointing in one direction. He argues that a sextant, the instrument used by sailors to calculate their position relative to the changing night sky, is a more appropriate metaphor, as it draws attention to the relational aspects of religion (Baumann 1999:78-79). Similar to a sextant's indications, cultural models take into account the changing positions and contexts of the navigations themselves. In other words, these models provide direction and meaning to social navigation, as it is *with* these models that people navigate relative

20 Lubkemann (2008:320) views "moral capital" as "another more individualized form of epistemic power." Moral capital grants credibility to an agent and to his or her interpretations. It is the result of a range of social performances (Lubkemann 2008:321).

to the social environment. Revealing the multiple, changing, and perhaps contradicting understandings of what it means to be a father, daughter, wife, community leader, believer, political member, or (former) combatant is crucial for comprehending the "reasoning" behind ex-combatants' trajectories. Furthermore, in the unstable context of the transition from war to peace, social navigation draws attention to how people's life projects are contextually (culturally, economically, politically, etc.) embedded and constrained, as well as to the degree to which they may steer successfully by navigating *with* certain models and *altering* others.

This dissertation thus describes how former Renamo combatants navigate a variety of social environments with multiple, often conflicting cultural models. Such a focus sustains the three arguments of this thesis: that "reintegration processes" are not only about dealing with violence; that such processes are shaped by continuities as well as ruptures; and that "the community" is best understood as open, heterogeneous, and conflict-ridden.

1.6 The research

The fieldwork for this study was conducted over eighteen months, divided into shorter and longer periods of fieldwork in 2008, 2009, and 2010. The research primarily took place in Maringue, but I also made short research trips to the neighboring districts of Caia and Chemba, the city of Beira, and the country's capital, Maputo. Additionally, I spent three weeks in Magude, a district in Maputo province, southern Mozambique, which is also known for its large number of civil war veterans, most of whom fought with the FAM. The data gathered in Magude was used to compare and contrast with some of the observations from Maringue resulting in a publication (Wiegink 2013b). The great bulk of the data presented in this dissertation, however, is based on ethnographic fieldwork in Maringue.

Ethnography is a practice of description that explores social life through a focus on people's daily interactions and behavior in a certain context, aiming to understand these from "within." This enables us to see beyond stereotypes of, for example, the undifferentiated community, the one-dimensional perpetrator, and the helpless victim, as ethnography directs our attention toward the polyphony of power relations, identities, and connections (Robben and Nordstrom 1995:8; Robben 2007:446). Ethnographic methods "emphasize the immersion of the researcher in a research setting and the effort to uncover meaning and significance of a social phenomenon for people in those settings" (Ragin 1994:91). These methods, which range from open interviews and life history recording to hanging out and participant observation, require a relationship of trust between researcher and informants, and are therefore well equipped for researching sensitive topics such as fear, violence, and conflict.

This research used two modes of data collection: conversational methods and participant observation. As well as conducting informal and semi-structured interviews and informal conversations, I made use of the life history technique. Although I predominantly talked to ex-combatants, both men and women, this study also draws heavily on the accounts of traditional authorities, political leaders, traditional healers, civil servants, and the pastors of various churches. During visits to Maputo and Beira, I talked with representatives of ex-combatants' associations and with officials from the Ministry of the Combatants. Conversations with non-combatants were invaluable for understanding the social, cultural, historical, and political context of Maringue and for thereby arriving at a more heterogeneous notion of "the community." Furthermore, these conversations gave me an insight into non-combatants' perceptions of veterans and revealed that categorical distinctions between non-combatants and veterans were difficult to maintain.

In total I conducted over 200 interviews, which were supplemented by countless informal conversations and valuable small talk. Some of the people I interviewed I met only once, yet the majority I visited at least two times. Often, the conversational methods that I employed were not sharply differentiated, but were instead blurred and adapted to the situation at hand. For example, I might have planned to conduct a semi-structured interview with a *régulo* (highest traditional authority), but this might easily turn into a group discussion with his family and other people who happened to pass by. Private conversations were not easy to organize. Often, small crowds of curious onlookers would gather around and participate in the discussion. Although this resulted in numerous valuable contributions, I made an effort to revisit the research participants in the hope of talking to them more confidentially.

Participant observation was undertaken during political rallies, national festivities, church services, and healing sessions, but was predominantly characterized by "hanging out" at people's homes and by accompanying people on walks to their fields or elsewhere. By "being there" I got a grasp of what social and family life, people's daily struggles, and social interactions meant in Maringue. Furthermore, I could follow on a day-to-day basis how political contingencies, the visits of political figures, elections, and violent incidents took place and were interpreted.

Although they account for only a small part of the data presented in this book, document and archival data were collected for the analysis of media imaginaries of Maringue and demobilized combatants and to provide more historical context. Archives in Maputo and Beira yielded information about Maringue in the form of press releases and colonial documents. Documents from the ONUMOZ mission provided me with statistical information about the demobilized combatants, albeit undifferentiated between Renamo and FAM soldiers for political reasons (Pardoel 1994). Furthermore, I received video footage of ONUMOZ's Assembly Areas, where combatants were stationed prior to demobilization. In Maringue, local departments of education and

agriculture provided me with statistical information about the district. Additionally, as far as I could, I attempted to follow (or recruited others to follow) the reports in daily newspapers and broadcasts, which did not reach Maringue.

Ethnographic fieldwork is above all a relational endeavor; it is a "product of dialogue and intersubjective encounters" (Leibing and McLean 2007) between the researcher and the research participants (see also Finnstrom 2008). To further convey the nature of the research process, I present four vignettes that show central aspects of the dialogue and encounters between the research participants and myself. These vignettes grapple with a variety of themes: the researcher's multiple identities, translation, research assistance, establishing rapport, friendship, political tension, limits, narratives, silence, and analysis.

Entries and identities: The new nun/soldier in town

Fieldwork is a unique constitution of human interaction, as it involves "negotiation" (Robben and Sluka 2007:63) and "reciprocal interplay" (Jackson 2010:36) between researcher and research participants. Therefore, who we are, in terms of personality traits, background, gender, and emotions, influences the researcher's possibilities for establishing rapport, his or her access to information and his or her understanding of a "field (Diphoorn 2013; Madden 2010; Powdermaker 1967). As Robben and Sluka (2007:63) argued "the ethnographer's multiple social identities and his or her dynamic self may be liabilities but also research assets." Therefore it is relevant to explore how my personality and characteristics as a single, white, European woman influenced my position in the field and the data I was able to gather.

In my experience, being a white European woman helped me to gain access to the research location and to former combatants. Before visiting Maringue I anticipated two major difficulties in terms of access. First, I needed the necessary papers from the relevant government authorities at the provincial and district level, which I expected to be problematic as both the location and the topic of my research proposal were politically sensitive. The second potential pitfall was the issue of establishing contact with ex-combatants in Maringue. In both instances, my position as a woman was important, because people perceived me as unthreatening. Additionally, in the highly politicized context of Maringue it was also convenient to be an outsider, which suggested I was impartial and apolitical. In the end, the necessary stamps were obtained surprisingly fast, and with the kind help of the provincial representative of ProPaz (an association of demobilized combatants) I was introduced to Maringue, the district government, and – most importantly – two ex-combatants who fought for opposing

sides in the conflict, who eventually became invaluable guides to Maringue, practically, historically, culturally, and personally.[21]

I always presented myself as an anthropologist. However, this did not prevent people from ascribing a range of other identities to me (see also Walker 2009). Initially, most people thought I was an *irma* (a nun), as there were several foreign nuns in the district, who, like me, were without a husband and children. Others thought I was a volunteer at the hospital. Both of these ascribed identities were related to my first place of residence in Maringue, which was the house of the Chilean priest of the local Catholic parish. While I always presented myself otherwise, the public perception of me as a nun was in many ways beneficial and safe. It was asexual and explained my tendency to visit people at home and ask questions about their wellbeing, as such behavior was as expected of nuns.

However, as my research progressed and I began to travel to rural parts of the district on my bicycle, openly visiting the headquarters of political parties and ex-combatants' homes, other images emerged. One set of images was embedded in notions of gender. For "other outsiders" in Maringue, such as civil servants, I was regarded as a potential sexual partner, but most men and women originally from Maringue did not seem to regard me as a real woman. This was partly because I did not have any children, but was also because of my research activities. Once an ex-FAM veteran remarked that I must "have the heart of a man," because a woman alone would not travel to Maringue, as it was generally seen as a dangerous place. For this reason I was also regarded as extremely courageous. During an official meeting with ex-combatants, politicians, pastors, and the *régulo* (chief), I was asked if I was a soldier in my country of origin. When I answered that I was not, the men appeared surprised. "We thought that must be it, that you were a DF [*destacamento femenino*, Frelimo term for female soldier] in Holland, coming here all alone," one of them said. This shows that the process of ascribing identities is strongly embedded in the social, cultural, political and historical context of Maringue (cf. Walker 2009). In Maringue, being a female soldier was a more understandable "category" than being a female researcher, as there were many female veterans around. This image was an asset in my conversations with ex-combatants, as they often praised my courage in traveling so far on my own to a place that was generally perceived as dangerous. This probably influenced the extent to which they opened up during our conversations.

Another set of images that was ascribed to me was embedded in Maringue's political context. On one occasion in the beginning of the fieldwork, I was indirectly accused of spying, a quite common suspicion befalling anthropologists (see Sluka

21 ProPaz is a non-governmental organization founded by veterans of both the FAM and Renamo. This organization was founded on the idea that ex-combatants' experiences of conflict mean that they are motivated to maintain peace and resolve local conflicts. To put this idea into practice, ProPaz set up *grupo de resoloção de conflictos* (conflict resolution groups) in several key districts in Mozambique, including Maringue and Magude.

1995:283). Furthermore, I was warned on several occasions by Frelimo party officials "not to study politics.". While I was never dishonest about the topic of my research, on several occasions I used "impression management" (Goffman 1959) to mitigate certain suspicions (Berreman 1963; Sluka 1995) by presenting the research in less politicized terms. Instead, I emphasized its scientific nature and the focus on history and culture, which was generally seen as accepted, even though history was a highly contested issue in Maringue.

But it was not only I, the researcher, who provoked reactions among potential research participants, which in turn influenced the data I gathered and analytical insights I gained. The people who assisted me during the research also played a part in this process.

Traveling with Adão: On translators and politics

I regret that I never became fluent in ChiSena, the language spoken in northern Sofala. After fourteen months of fieldwork in Maringue, I managed to understand and participate in simple conversations about food, the division of the day, and attributes of the household. Most of my conversations with male ex-combatants took place in Portuguese, but few of their female counterparts spoke this language, and the same was true for traditional healers, community leaders, and men in rural areas outside Maringue town. Consequently, it was necessary to recruit a team of translators, who also assisted me in my research by establishing first contact with possible research participants. I never visited the homes of people I did not know alone, which would probably have scared them. Instead, I always made sure that someone else introduced me, and then, if possible, practically and in terms of language, I would return alone on another occasion.

During my first period of fieldwork in 2008, I worked with various research assistants. I was well aware of the fact that an ethnographer is judged not only on his or her own characteristics but also on those of his or her associates (Berreman 1963). Conversations and interviews took different turns and depths depending on the gender, age, religion, family context, and political affiliation of my research assistant. I made several initial mistakes in this respect. Arriving at the house of Olivia, who I initially thought to be a former FAM soldier, with my research assistant Beatrice, the daughter of a prominent Frelimo member, was one of the more awkward blunders I made. After a rather forced and stiff conversation, we left Olivia's house, as an interview was not going to happen. I was puzzled about the reasons for "our failure," until Beatrice, also irritated by the bad conversation, said, "you cannot expect much, she is with the confused people." It was only then that I understood that Olivia was a Renamo member. When I returned a year later with Adão, a Renamo veteran, Olivia seemed to have forgotten my earlier indiscretion, and we talked at length about her life as an ex-Renamo combatant.

Adão accompanied me to most interviews with Renamo veterans and supporters in 2009.[22] In many ways he was an ideal research assistant: he was a Renamo ex-combatant and politician with great knowledge of Maringue and its history. Additionally, he had a talent for research and identifying intriguing issues and most importantly, however, he had a respectful way of dealing with people.

My caution in choosing a research assistant is only one example of how political polarization influenced my research. Navigating Maringue's political world is an undertaking that requires great care not only for *Maringuenses*, but also for me. I tried to be friendly with everybody. I talked to people from both Frelimo and Renamo (and later also from the *Movimento Democratico de Moçambique*, MDM) and was always open about this fact, though I never revealed the names of those with whom I spoke. In the field and in this dissertation, I took a number of measures to protect people's identities. I created pseudonyms for most people presented in this book. In some cases my prudence may have been unnecessary and I risk disappointing people's expectations of having their stories told with their names next alongside them. However, I prefer to be too prudent than to cause unintentional harm to someone.

Additionally, the political tense situation in Maringue influenced who I could talk to and which places I could visit. As Feldman (1991:12) wrote in the introduction to his ethnography on Northern Ireland, "in order to know I had to become expert in demonstrating that there were things, place and people I did not want to know." Although the situation in Maringue posed different challenges to those faced by Feldman, I had similar experiences. For example, there were some Renamo veterans who kept their past and their political preferences "hidden," especially those working for government institutions. There was a small possibility that one could lose one's job by talking to me in public, as one could be suspected of being a Renamo member, as it was commonly known that I talked to Renamo veterans. So although these people were known to me, I never approached them for anything other than small talk.

One place I could not visit was Renamo's military base. Resisting my curiosity, I politely declined an invitation by the Renamo general to visit him in "the bush." Visiting the base could have jeopardized my research project, as it could have resulted in the local government expelling me from the district. Moreover, such a visit could also cause difficulties for the Frelimo members who had become my friends and research participants. When at one point in 2008 rumors circulated that I was planning to visit the base, several of my research participants came to me in distress, urging me to deny these claims, which I did. The "base" thus remains a blind spot in this description of Maringue. But just as with other kinds of "secret information," I do not think a visit to

22 When I first visited Maringue in 2008, Adão was living in Marrumeu, his district of origin, where he worked for the Renamo municipal administration. However, after Renamo lost the municipal elections in 2008, he returned to his family in Maringue, where he was the coordinator of Maringue's largely inactive ProPaz conflict resolution group.

the base would have enhanced my understanding of the everyday social practices of ex-combatants in Maringue.[23] For most of them, "the base" was an equally enigmatic matter.

Visiting Dona Ana: On friendship, rapport, and silence

Establishing trust and building rapport are classic themes in discussions on ethnographic fieldwork (Sluka 2004:121-125, see e.g. Powdermaker 1967). Such terms reinforce the fact that "fieldwork is a profoundly human endeavour" (Wagley 1960:414-415), involving complex human relations, the ethnographer's own personality, and his or her negotiations of a range of different roles, including friend, observer, researcher, and more.

This point is well illustrated by my relationship with Dona Ana, a former Renamo combatant. I met Dona Ana on my first day in Maringue, and henceforth I made a habit of visiting her house weekly. We would spend the morning or afternoon sitting outside in the shade of a tree, chatting while her children played with my bicycle. Over countless conversations, she regaled me with anecdotes about her life. I asked her many hundreds of questions, both crucial for my research and trivial. Often she answered them, but sometimes, especially when I believed the questions to be crucial, she did not. The conversations were never structured or taped. One day I asked her if I could tape "her story." When I posed this question, Ana looked away."You do that with other people," she replied, her eyes still averted, "we are friends and what we do is chatting." I instantly felt bad: I realized I had made a mistake by making this request. Fortunately, she then smiled and we continued talking about another topic.

This incident demonstrates many things about how I conducted research. The most important thing for me at the time was Ana's confirmation of us being friends. Like many other anthropologists (e.g. Chiñas 1992; Grindal and Salamone 1995; Powdermaker 1967), I struggled to come to terms with the nature of my relationships with those I was trying to write about. What is friendship? What does friendship mean in Maringue? How does it relate to rapport? The *Maringuenses* who were closest to me were also key research participants, whom I could turn to for the (apparently) trivial and "thick" aspects of my research. Without these conversations with Ana and a few other key informants, other people' stories would have made less sense to me. Furthermore, following Ana and her children over a period of time taught me more about family life and hardship in Maringue than any interview could have done. It was my relationships with these people that "thickened" my description of the lives of others.

Ana's reaction to my question about recording her story also highlights several limitations of this research. There were topics she would explicitly refuse to get into, such

23 Mahmud (2012) stresses that "secret knowledge" is often alluring, also for the ethnographer, but such information may be just as –or even less– important as public knowledge for ethnographic interpretation (see also Gable 1997).

as her deceased husband, her relationships with men during the war, and her personal experiences of violence. While it is commonly known that female Renamo recruits were sexually abused, this issue is nonetheless taboo Most of the female veterans I met were unwilling talk about this. Much as Coulter (2009) found in her conversations with female former rebels in Sierra Leone, it seemed that the female veterans' experiences could not be conveyed in words (see also Klungel 2010:130; Robben 1996:161; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004b:1; Scarry 1985). This accounts not only for the reluctance to talk about sexual violence but also for other "silences" I encountered related to the experience and perpetration of violence. This raises certain ethical and epistemological questions. What can we know about violent experiences (see e.g. Scarry 1985)? And to what extent should narratives of violent experiences be probed (Linden 1993; Ross 2003)?

In writing this book it was not my aim to analyze the psychological consequences of violence, nor did I have the therapeutic skills to delve into these subjects. Therefore, I did not probe people's accounts about the perpetration and witnessing of (sexual) violence. Rather, I let my interlocutors define the limits. Some people talked very candidly about atrocities that they had experienced or else perpetrated, while others reduced their experience of spending years with Renamo to a few sentences, referring to recruitment and demobilization, and largely skipping over their experiences of combat (see also Coulter 2009:22). Other conversations resulted in "meta narratives" about the war – why it started, what it was about, why they were fighting – and accounts of the experiences of others, which may have been a way for people to talk about themselves.

Yet the meta-narratives and the silences are not necessarily symbolically "thin." They involved defining moments, post-facto legitimizations, and conceptualizations of suffering. Furthermore, these stories opened up new avenues for probing the more mundane events of everyday life, both during the war and afterwards. It is these "mundane events" that are in fact central to the main argument of this book, as through the analysis of these seemingly trivial scenarios we can understand how people navigate unstable and volatile social environments. But before we embark on this investigation, it is necessary to delve a little deeper into the analysis of narratives.

Listening to Pai Denzja: Life histories and narratives

Pai Denzja (this surname was reputedly derived from the English word "danger", though nobody could explain to me how he got this name) was a pastor in Maringue and one of the town's most distinguished Frelimo members. He said he was born in Zimbabwe in 1937 and that he moved to Maringue at the age of fifteen. His most distinguishing feature was his glasses, which were thick and broken. Other Frelimo members generally referred to him as the "library of Maringue." I interviewed him several times. On one occasion, after talking extensively about Maringue's history, he said,

> Outside, very far away, you will find the other side. The opposition, people who are with Renamo. They will not tell you directly the history. They will talk like this [making zigzag movements with his hands]. They will not be interesting for your work, like I am.

Far from being "far away," I found the "other side" in Pai Denzja's backyard – quite literally – and I found many more "sides" both in and outside Maringue town. Likewise, several Renamo veterans and politicians urged me to "find" the "real" history of Maringue, at least not the history told by those of Frelimo or the "administration" (which included, in their opinion, Pai Denzja). Such references were strong reminders of the variation in political, cultural, and personal interpretations of the war and of how these were reflected in the construction of narratives.

In this last section I want to delve into the process of converting spoken word into ethnographic text. In unraveling ex-combatants life trajectories, my main source of data has been people's narratives and life histories. Life histories are loosely defined here as "central epistemological construct[s] illuminating the intersection of human experience and social context" (Cole and Knowles 2001:9). I use life histories in two ways. On the one hand, the life histories and narratives are treated as a source of information on facts, events, and people's movements during and after the war, and I thus do not consider veterans' and other people's narratives merely as discourse. On the other hand, these life histories are analyzed as narratives. A narrative of a certain experience is not the actual experience, but rather a meaningful way to deal with the experience, whose meaning "changes over time, circumstance, and speaker, and is a cultural production" (Nordstrom 1997:21) One could add the role of the listener/ethnographer to this, as narratives are dialogical, emerging in a setting of human interaction (Bakhtin 1981, in Scheper-Hughes 1992: 23), and perhaps the ethnographer's counter-transference (Robben 1996). In all, the narrative that is told at a certain moment, in a certain place, and in the company of certain people is highly contingent (Igreja 2007). This brings epistemological and representational dilemmas to the fore. What can we know? And how do we share our understanding (Lammers 2006:288)?

Narratives about violence, both experienced and perpetrated, often exhibit a number of peculiar features, such as a combination of guilt, shame, oblivion, fear, silence, and trauma (Coulter 2009; Robben 1996). Even more than "normal" narratives, narratives about violence may be subject to alteration with some aspects forgotten or omitted, intentionally or unintentionally. As Nordstrom (1997a:22) argues, narrative organizes experience *after the fact*; it "domesticates experience." If violence "unforms" the world, then narrative is among the multitude of options people have to create a survivable world (Nordstrom 1997a:22). Narratives, and particularly biographies such as life histories, may create order and continuity in an otherwise chaotic and discontinuous world (Becker 1997).

As was touched upon in the previous section, not all experiences can be verbalized. I concur with Nordstrom (1997a:24) that "people define themselves in narration, but they equally constitute themselves in the silent space of the unsaid." Silence is not necessarily a sign of fear, resignation, indifference, or trauma. As Jackson (2004:56) argues, silence may comprise respect and possibilities for healing and coexistence (see also Coulter 2009:17). Paul Ricoeur (1991:142) stressed that "narratives are seldom self-explanatory," and the same can be argued for silence. Both need explanation. A narrative is negotiated through dialogue and contextualization, and as Finnstrom (2008:21) notes, the ethnographer is implicated in this negotiation. Throughout this book, I try to be conscious of what is said, but also of what is consciously or unconsciously left out. As far as I can, I will try to interpret and contextualize people's narratives and silences, but also explicitly indicate the limits of my understandings. The outcome of such negotiations is my interpretation of the narratives, an informed reading at best.

The narratives and silences of ex-combatants are situated in a particular political and cultural context in which their memories are narrated, shaped and molded. Indeed, as Antze and Lambek (1996:xii-xiii) have argued, current narratives of war are more about the present political context than about the actual experiences of war (see also Nora 1989:8; Nazarea 2006:325). And it is precisely these narratives (and not the actual experiences) and how these are constructed and reconstructed that shape current relationships and social and political positions in Maringue. In addition to being politically colored, such stories are historically situated and culturally constructed (Malkki 1995a:104). They are what Malkki (1995a:104) calls "worlds made," and "it is these that people act upon and riddle with meaning." And as Pai Denzja reminds us, in any context, and especially in Maringue, there may be various "worlds made" existing beside one another. This study aims to uncover a variety of these "worlds made," which are multiple, contradicting, intertwined, and embedded in cultural models and power relations, in order to account for people's navigations of unstable and volatile social environments.

1.7 Outline of the book

The book is divided into three sections. The first section, **Setting the Stage**, presents the historical context of Maringue, with a strong emphasis on the unfolding of relationships between (ex-)combatants and non-combatants over time. **Chapter two, "War Stories: Experiences and Interpretations of Rebel Life,"** introduces the people who are the focus of this dissertation: former Renamo combatants. The chapter starts with a brief introduction to Renamo and then presents three narratives related by Renamo ex-combatants, which illustrate the wide variety of their experiences and interpretations of war, along the lines of gender, military rank, age, and much more. Despite this

variation, the chapter shows that ex-Renamo combatants describe the rebel movement in rather moderate terms and distance themselves from "bad" violence. It is argued that ex-Renamo combatants simultaneously try to present themselves as "good soldiers" and as victims. Such interpretations are situated in Maringue's political context of Renamo domination, but are also related to veterans' frustration with their politically and economically marginal positions.

Chapter three, "When Elephants Fight: Politics and Collaboration," provides a historical account of Maringue, with a particular focus on the interactions between civilians and armed actors, which are characterized by collaboration and mobility. The chapter touches briefly on such dynamics as they played out during colonial rule, Frelimo's liberation struggle, and Frelimo's post-independence rule. It then describes how Renamo occupied Maringue and delves into civilian's social and geographical navigations of the social environment of war. It is argued that different forms of collaboration with Renamo combatants blurred the lines between civilians and soldiers, victims and perpetrators, and resulted in an ambiguous understanding of (ex-) combatants that facilitated coexistence. At the same time, the chapter shows how during the postwar years Maringue's political and social fabric became increasingly divided along the lines of Renamo and Frelimo, resulting in a tense and at times violent political climate.

The dissertation's second section, "**Family Affairs,**" presents ex-Renamo combatants' social navigations of three interrelated social environments that are each embedded, albeit in different ways, in kin structures and cultural models of what it means to be a good father, daughter, son, husband, wife, and so on. In **Chapter four, "Why Did the Soldiers Not Go Home? Family, Witchcraft, and 'Home,'"** I argue that, contrary to general assumptions about reintegration programs, former combatants do not "naturally" return home, nor is "home" necessarily an unproblematic and hospitable place. The chapter presents a description of how the fear of witchcraft shaped ex-combatants' relationships with relatives, through jealousy, unmet expectations, and transformations within the family. This demonstrates how factors contingent to the war, but not necessarily war violence per se, shaped and complicated ex-combatants' return to their villages of origin and influenced their postwar settling decisions.

In **Chapter five, "Wartime Husbands and Wartime Kin: Gender, Sexual Violence, and Marriage,"** I analyze ex-Renamo combatants' navigations of the social environment of marriage, by which I mean the relationships, practices, and cultural models surrounding marriage, in particular *lobolo* (bride price). Marriage is presented as one of the central life projects of ex-combatants, as it is closely interwoven with kinship and understandings of what it means to be a "real man" and a "good woman." The chapter starts with a discussion of male combatants' social navigation of relationships with women during and after the war and their innovations and limitations in finding a spouse. This is followed by a similar analysis from the perspective of female veterans,

focusing particularly on how sexual violence and notions of marriage shaped their reputations and influence their marriage options. The conclusion highlights the distributive nature of cultural models and underlines the importance of analyzing social navigation toward life projects as processes continuing over the course of war and postwar.

Chapter six, "Navigating the Invisible World: Healing, Memory, and Morality," analyzes the various relationships between veterans and spiritual beings in the prewar, war, and postwar periods. It argues that the much-researched community-based reintegration mechanisms, which in Mozambique involved the cleansing of "bad spirits" picked up during the war, reveal only one aspect of ex-combatants' relationships with spiritual beings. The chapter addresses these "rituals of return" as well as offering an in-depth analysis of other interactions with ancestral spirits and avenging spirits. Renamo veterans' navigations of the supernatural world are analyzed through cultural understandings of health and legitimate and illegitimate violence.

The dissertation's third section, **"Navigating Politics,"** discusses ex-combatants' navigation of three social environments that are each characterized by participation in social and political networks and by big man dynamics. **Chapter seven, "In the Hands of the Pastor: Christian Churches, Social Security, and Politics,"** describes ex-combatants' navigation of church networks in Maringue. This chapter develops two arguments. First, it demonstrates that ex-Renamo combatants' participation in church networks and their relationships with fellow church members and pastors are intertwined with the veterans' past with Renamo, which is in contrast to studies that present the conversions of ex-combatants as a break with the past and a possibility for community acceptance. Second, I argue that participation in church networks provides ex-combatants with possibilities for social and material security in their postwar trajectories. Ex-Renamo combatants' social navigations of these environments are particularly characterized by their relationships of dependency with church pastors.

Chapter eight, "About Eating and Drinking: Former Military Networks and Political Parties," focuses on ex-combatants' social navigation of the networks of fellow veterans and, intertwined with this, the networks related to political parties Renamo and Frelimo. It operationalizes these former military networks by distinguishing horizontal and vertical relationships shaped by big man dynamics. It draws attention to the continuity of these relationships and networks, but simultaneously shows how these networks adapted to the postwar period. The main argument holds that these networks were crucial for ex-Renamo combatants' postwar social lives as they provide them with a sense of belonging, social and physical protection, and economic opportunities. At the same time, I argue that the instability of relationships of dependency in political party networks causes competition, frustration, polarization, and violence.

Chapter nine, "'Only a Bit Mozambican': Citizenship and Exclusion," analyzes veterans' dual relationship with the state. I argue that ex-Renamo combatants envision

the state as one of the main obstacles in their possibilities for a better life. The chapter starts off with an analysis of attitudes and policies concerning war veterans, which are embedded in the historical interpretations of the ruling Frelimo elite, that represent Renamo veterans as unworthy citizens. At the same time, I show that the state is very much present in veterans' imaginations of their navigating possibilities, being regarded as an exclusive caretaker that is expected to provide social and economic services to Renamo veterans.

In the **final reflections**, I bring the different parts of the book together and reflect on how concepts such as "the social condition of war," and "social navigation," combined with a cultural model approach work in tandem to provide a complex understanding of the reintegration process of ex-combatants.

PART I
SETTING THE STAGE

2 WAR STORIES

EXPERIENCES AND INTERPRETATIONS OF REBEL LIFE

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I introduce the people who are the focus of this dissertation, former Renamo combatants. I analyze their experiences of war and war violence and the ways in which they narrate and interpret these. The aim of this chapter is twofold. The first aim is to provide the necessary background information about Renamo, ex-Renamo combatants, and their experiences of war. The second aim is to investigate the veterans' framings of Renamo and their understandings of the war in the political and cultural context of Maringue. I will show that former combatants try to present themselves simultaneously as "good soldiers" and as victims (see also Schafer 2007). Renamo veterans portray Renamo's war conduct and objectives in moderate and often ideological terms. They generally frame wartime violence in terms of legitimate and illegitimate violence, generally denying the experience and use of "bad" violence. At the same time, they underline the fact that they were forced into war, and describe war in terms of "suffering." It is these understandings that underpin veterans' social navigations of a series of environments, which will be analyzed in the following chapters.

This chapter starts with a brief historical description of Renamo. This is followed by the central part of the chapter, which deals with ex-combatants' narratives about their participation in Renamo. The chapter ends with an analysis of veterans' interpretations of the war and how these are shaped by Renamo's pro-democratic discourse and the patronage relationships between ex-combatants and Renamo's leaders.

2.2 A brief history of Renamo

The nature of Renamo and other debates

In 1991, Alex Vines published a book called *Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique*. It was one of the first comprehensive accounts of Renamo based on empirical research. As the title of the book suggests, Vines' argument holds that Renamo was an organization founded by external forces with the aim of destabilizing Mozambique through havoc and destruction. Vines (1991:132) described the Renamo combatants as "deeply traumatized by their experiences," noting that they "have accepted terrorism and banditry as a way of life." Even though Vines' understanding of Renamo has been

contested (e.g. Geffray 1990; Shafer 2001, 2007), the book remains one of the only attempts to document Renamo's military structure and life in a Renamo zone.

Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique was among the pile of books that I brought with me to Maringue in the hope of understanding more about Renamo, in addition to the interviews and conversations I conducted with its former combatants. Through one of my research participants, the book came into the possession of the Renamo district delegate, Jaime Pereira. When he laid eyes on the book he immediately called me, and I was more or less summoned to Renamo's political party office to answer some questions about Vines' study, which he could not read as it was written in English. The next morning I arrived at the Renamo headquarters, a recently constructed hut with two rooms and a partly finished roof, situated in a corner of a large sandy courtyard in the center of which was a flagpole flying Renamo's partridge banner. There were six Renamo members present, some sitting and some standing, but all looking curiously between the book and me. The book lay open on the table and the Renamo delegate pointed out a first error he had discovered in the list of acronyms and abbreviations. FUMO (Mozambique United Front) was presented in the book as a splinter organization of Renamo (Vines 1991:ix). The Renamo delegate said:

> Here [in the book] it seems that it is some sort of organization, but they were mere bandits. People who robbed and stabbed other people in trains at night. It was a phenomenon that Samora [Machel, President of Mozambique from 1975 to 1986] used to be able to say that Renamo were "armed bandits." But they were nothing like an organization.[24]

I explained that Vines viewed Renamo as an organization that was founded and financed by outside forces in Rhodesia and South Africa, and tried to situate Vines' study in wider scholarly debates about the nature of Renamo. The Renamo members grumbled and were clearly appalled by these interpretations of Renamo's modus operandi and objectives. Then they came to the heart of their concern. Pointing at the title of the book, Matateo, a former Renamo commander, said frowning, "I don't like it that the book says 'terrorism'. That means that Renamo did not have political ideas! That we are armed bandits! But that is not true." Delegate Pereira explained this remark further:

> Renamo is not terrorism. We are not like Bin Laden. We are in favor of democracy. Now they talk about democracy in Maputo, thanks to Renamo! Frelimo wanted to prohibit the *régulo* [chief], they did not even raise the flag of Mozambique or they had already said "from now on, no more *régulos*." And now, every *régulo* has its flag. They have reconsidered the ideas of Frelimo. All thanks to us.

24 Meeting at the Renamo office, 06/10/08, Maringue,

The delegate was referring here to the abolishment of the traditional structures of authorities, such as the chiefs. This was one of several unpopular policies that the Frelimo government implemented after independence. These policies triggered deep discontent among parts of the Mozambican peasantry and are often seen as the reason why a part of the peasantry supported Renamo. By referring to the abolishment of the *régulos*, the Renamo delegate thus emphasized Renamo's political ideas and the popular support the rebels enjoyed. The views in Vines' book and the views of the Renamo veterans in Maringue represent two extreme positions in ongoing debates in Mozambican politics, media, and scholarship about the civil war, and more specifically about Renamo's nature and objectives (see e.g. Hultman 2009; Igreja 2008, 2013).

When Vines' book was published, debates about Mozambique's civil war were polarized into two "camps." On the one hand, there were those who pictured Renamo as an externally founded organization initiated by neighboring Rhodesia and later supported by South Africa with the aim of destabilizing Mozambique (Alden 1995; Hanlon 1986, 1991; Magaia 1990; Newitt 1995; Roesch 1991; Vines 1991). These observers also generally emphasized the rebels' brutality, which was the image of Renamo generally favored and expressed by the Frelimo government. On the other hand, there were observers and analysts who emphasized the rebels' popular roots and the support they enjoyed among the peasantry, mainly due to a process of estrangement between Frelimo and the rural population (Cahen 1993; Geffray 1990; Legrand 1993; Thomashausen 2001).[25] Over time, more nuanced understandings of Renamo emerged that stressed both external and internal dynamics of the civil war, and Renamo's different levels of support and varying conduct across Mozambique, which resulted in different patterns of violence and support and different local interpretations of the war (Bertelsen 2002; Finnegan 1992; Hultman 2009; Lubkemann 2005; Manning 2002). Still, providing a history of Renamo remains a highly politicized undertaking. Here, I present some general points that most observers agree upon.

Founded sometime in 1976-77 by the Southern Rhodesian military, Renamo had two main aims: to attack guerrillas of the Zimbabwean African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) located in central Mozambique and to destabilize Mozambican

25 Bertelsen (2002:47) noted that in the 1970s and 1980s scholarly work about Mozambique's civil war had to be situated in the political context of the Cold War, in which pro-Frelimo literature was published to change the Western (and especially American) perception (and support) of Mozambique's government by stressing the brutality of Renamo (Igreja 2008; Hultman 2009). This pro-Frelimo bias or the tendency to replicate Frelimo's view of Renamo as armed bandits may also have been due to the background of those writing about the war, many of whom arrived in Mozambique as *cooperantes* and Frelimo activists with the objective to assist in building the socialist state (Bertelsen 2002:45). At the same time, there were also journalists and academics that were invited by Renamo to visit their "liberated zones." Their reports depicted a rather idealized version of life under Renamo administration (Vines 1991:75).

politics and economy (Finnegan 1992; Hall and Young 1997; Vines 1991:15-17).[26] Under the leadership of Andre Matsangaissa, an ex-Frelimo commander who had been sent to a Frelimo government re-education camp for theft, Renamo began with operations geared toward destruction and sabotage, conducted attacks on government's prisons and reeducation camps in Mozambique (Vines 1991:16).[27] In 1979, Renamo comprised approximately 2,000 soldiers who had been recruited from among Mozambican exiles in Southern Rhodesia, veterans of the Portuguese military (especially of the elite forces *Grupo Especiais* and the *Flechas*), and individuals freed from Frelimo's reeducation camps (Finnegan 1992; Hall and Young 1997; Weinstein 2007:72-75). However, when Ian Smith's regime capitulated and ZANLA came to power in what was from then on called Zimbabwe, Rhodesian support ceased and Renamo soon disappeared from central Mozambique (Hall and Young 1997; Vines 1991:17).

After Zimbabwe's independence in 1980, support for Renamo shifted to the hands of the South African Defense Forces (SADF).[28] The SADF set up training camps in the Transvaal area of South Africa and transported large numbers of Renamo guerrillas into central Mozambique via helicopters. Thereafter, Renamo's scale of operations expanded to the southern and northern regions of the country (Hall and Young 1997:128-131). Recruitment intensified, and by 1986 Renamo had grown into a rebel movement of approximately 20,000 combatants, who were divided into highly mobile military units that were active across the entire country (Minter 1989:21; Vines 1991:1).[29]

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26 Further external support to Renamo was provided by the South African Military, Portuguese exiles, and several right-wing groups in the USA. For more detailed analyses of these relationships, see Cole (1984), Finnegan (1992), Flower (1987), Hall and Young (1997), and Hanlon (1991).

27 It is unclear when Renamo initiated its first armed operations, as other groups of armed commandos coordinated by the Rhodesian military also operated in Mozambique against ZANLA guerrillas. In southern Mozambique, former FAM combatants called this period the "war of Ian Smith," as the Rhodesian military struck soon after Mozambique's independence with attacks in the border areas of the provinces of Maputo, Gaza, Manica, and Tete. One of my research participants in Magude, Zavala, a former FAM soldier, recalled, "That was a beautiful war. Only troops against troops. Ian Smith's war was somewhat normal; he wanted to sabotage only. But then, Renamo were bandits; they robbed cattle and chickens and killed the population." Renamo turned out to be a very different kind of opponent, with guerrilla tactics that were no match for the FAM.

28 South Africa's apartheid regime was highly suspicious of its socialist neighbor, not least because Maputo turned into a safe haven for the African National Congress (ANC) (Hall and Young 1997; Minter 1989). It has also been argued that South Africa's support for Renamo was part of a "total strategy" to destabilize its neighbors—as also happened in Namibia and Angola—and thereby to establish regional political and economic hegemony (Minter 1989).

29 According to Hultman (2009:827), Renamo operated in nine of the ten provinces in Mozambique in 1983. At the end of the war, Renamo presented 30,538 combatants to be demobilized, although an unknown number of these *desmobilizados* were not actual fighters. It was said that Renamo recruited people for demobilization to make the movement look fiercer than it in reality was (conversation with Ton Pardoel, coordinator of the UNOMOZ DDR mission, 9/6/11, Veghel). As Renamo employed no coherent system for registering combatants, it is difficult to say what the exact number of combatants was.

In 1984, the South African and Mozambican governments signed the Nkomati accord, a non-aggression pact that was intended to halt South Africa's backing of Renamo and Mozambique's support for the African National Congress (ANC). While the Mozambican government stayed true to the accords and expelled ANC exiles from the city of Maputo, South Africa's support for Renamo continued, though less openly and probably less substantially (Hall and Young 1997).[30] For many observers of the civil war, this confirmed that the rebel movement was indeed a "puppet" used to destabilize Mozambique in South Africa's greater policy of supporting insurgencies in the so-called front-line states (Hanlon 1989; Minter 1994). However, it has also been argued that the fact that Renamo continued to exist in the post-Nkomati period demonstrated that the Renamo leadership was developing an agenda of its own (Borges-Coelho 2011; Hultman 2009).

Throughout the war, the Frelimo government generally portrayed Renamo as a disintegrated band of "*bandidos armados*," armed bandits with no political agenda who looted properties and killed innocent civilians. Although this became a fairly standard depiction in the media, academia, and the international community, Renamo's sophisticated military structure defied such portrayals of the rebel movement as a roving band of criminals (see also Hultman 2009; Minter 1989:21). Based on interviews with several Renamo leaders and generals, Hultman (2009:827-828) portrays the armed group as a solid hierarchical military organization constructed according to the South African model, with a strict chain of command and a central leadership that made all strategic decisions (see also Minter 1989; Vines 1991:80-87).[31] Renamo was, at least before the Nkomati accords, amply supplied by South Africa by air and sea, and it also had a sophisticated communication system that contributed greatly to the success of Renamo's operations (Hultman 2009:828; Minter 1989:21; Vines 1991:83).

Renamo's apparent military strength was also related to the dire state of the government army, which was understaffed, underpaid, and underfed (Finnegan 1992:62; Hall and Young 1997). Only when it received military assistance from Tanzania and Zimbabwe in 1986-1987 did the Frelimo government accomplish several military successes, including the destruction of Renamo's central base (Finnegan 1992; Hall

30 After the attack on Casa Banana, Renamo's headquarters, in August 1985, Zimbabwean troops discovered the diaries of Dhlakama's secretary, Joaquim Vaz, which provided evidence of the continuing links between Renamo and SADF. It was for this reason that Frelimo withdrew from the Nkomati accords (Hall and Young 1997; Vines 1991:24).

31 In the mid-1980s, Renamo probably had two or more battalions in each province of the country. These battalions were divided into two or three companies of 100 to 150 combatants, Renamo's basic operational unit (Minter 1989:20). The former combatants in this study were often assigned to smaller units that fell under a certain company, ranging from ten to forty people under the command of an officer, referred to as a *comendante*. These smaller units were often in close contact with the central leadership through radio communication.

and Young 1997).[32] Nevertheless, Renamo could not be defeated. It consistently moved into areas with low settlement density where government presence was weak and military advances for the Mozambican Armed Forces (FAM) were difficult.[33] In the south, Renamo sometimes seemed omnipresent, using tactics of destruction, terror, and hit-and-run attacks. In the northern and central provinces, Renamo occupied large territories, and hundreds of thousands – possibly millions – of Mozambicans lived under some form of Renamo administration (Finnegan 1992:61). As will be further described in chapter 3, in some such areas Renamo established some form of administration and political education of the population and combatants (see also Alexander 1997:8-9; Hall and Young 1997:184-185; Vines 1991:83-84, 151-155).

Variations of violence

Renamo did not act consistently throughout Mozambique (Finnegan 1992:72; Vines 1991:98). The rebels used violence and force across the country, but it seems that most of the violence against civilians and the majority of the massacres occurred in the southern regions of the country (Weinstein 2007:236). There is no straightforward explanation for the geographical differences in levels of violence. In what follows, I present possible explanations presented by observers of the civil war that show in more detail some of the fault lines in the aforementioned debates about the war and Renamo's nature.

First of all, there are observers who regard Renamo's excessive violence a consequence of its disorganization, reinforcing the image of Renamo as a loose band of "armed bandits." Finnegan (1992:71-73), for example, suggests that the high level of atrocities in southern Mozambique were the consequence of Renamo's lack of communication and organization between companies deployed in the south and the central bases (see also Weinstein 2007). Vines (1991) and Minter (1989) claim that the considerable autonomy of commanders resulted in warlord-like dynamics, influencing the intensity of violence in a given area. Weinstein (2007) argues that violence against civilians was a by-product of a combination of indiscipline and Renamo's wealth of resources, which attracted opportunistic individuals to the rebel movement.[34]

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32 Zimbabwean forces (up to 20,000 troops) were especially present in the Beira corridor and other areas of central Mozambique. Tanzanian forces were deployed in northern provinces of Mozambique.

33 As Kalyvas (2006) has noted, rebel movements normally base themselves in the most remote areas of the countries in which they operate. Renamo is no exception in this regard; Nordstrom (1997) and Geffray (1990) point out that Renamo support and presence was strongest in the most remote areas of Mozambique. Urban areas, including Maputo's outskirts, were attacked and looted, but Renamo was never able to occupy one of the larger cities.

34 See Kalyvas (2007) for a critical discussion of Weinstein's (2007:301) assertion that the "the brutal and widespread abuse of noncombatants by insurgent forces is often an unintended consequence of an organizational strategy that appeals to the short-term material benefits of potential recruits."

Other scholars have argued that behind Renamo's apparent lack of discipline and coordination, there were actually carefully planned operations, and that grotesque atrocities were instrumental in Renamo's efforts to control of the population, especially in contested areas (see e.g. Hultman 2009). Rather than regarding Renamo's atrocities as "mindless brutality" or "excesses," Hultman (2009:823) contends that seemingly indiscriminate violence in government-held areas was a strategy to delegitimize the state, by demonstrating how it failed to protect its citizens, and to pressure the government to enter into negotiations Hultman's understanding of Renamo as a strongly controlled and disciplined organization is bolstered by observations that massacres in the south were generally the work of smaller divisions of special security and intelligence forces, such as the *grupo limpa* (cleanup group) (Minter 1989:23; Vines 1991:85, 98; Weinstein 2007:231-133), as well as by the fact that Renamo was able to enforce the cease fire immediately upon the signing of the peace accords (Cahen 1998:1-2).

Finally, there are several ethnographic studies that demonstrate the variety of local interpretations of the war (see e.g. Alexander 1997; Bertelsen 2002; Englund 2002; Finnegan 1992:71; Geffray 1990; Lubkemann 2005). Such studies stress that local dynamics of conflict and violence often were more important than the military objectives of Renamo and the Frelimo government in shaping the unfolding of the war in a particular place. In several areas, for example, the war was interpreted in ethnic terms. Geffray (1990) observed that in Nampula province, two ethnic groups with a long history of antagonism, the Erati and the Macuane, sought alliances with the government and Renamo respectively (see also Lubkemann 2005:500). In Gaza province, Renamo was perceived as an "Ndau project" due to the prevalence of N'dau speakers from southern Sofala in the rebels' leadership (Roesch 1992).[35] In the south of Mozambique, Ndau combatants had been regarded since the Nguni wars in the 19th century as fierce warriors, whose spirits would return to haunt their killers (Roesch 1992:447). The antagonisms between the Shangaan-speaking south and other ethnic groups north of the Save river were further heightened by the fact that the Frelimo leadership was predominantly from the south.

In other areas ethnicity did not play a role in the civil war's dynamics. Lubkemann (2005, 2008) has observed that in Machaza, Manica province, war dynamics were shaped by social conflicts and specifically by local actors who tried to engage the military powers in their own struggles within communities and families (see also Alexander

35 Vines (1991) argues that this ethnic component was a consequence of the geographical location of the N'dau along the Rhodesian border and not a deliberate strategy. However, as Manning (1998:167) notes, to understand the war as only a N'dau project overlooks the fact that "Renamo was as much a Sena political project as it was an N'dau project." Without seeking to downplay the rivalries between these ethnic groups, Manning (1998:167-168) concludes that Renamo was more of a regional project, tapping into feelings of discontent in central and northern Mozambique concerning the dominance of people from the southern region in the Frelimo party.

1997; Bertelsen 2002). Similar war dynamics defined the situation in Maringue, where as I will show in chapter 3, war violence divided families and neighbors rather than ethnic or language groups. The beginning of the war was characterized by different levels of violence in the villages and the rural zones. The more urbanized areas, such as Maringue town, saw heavy fighting between the government army and Renamo combatants, whereas the rural zones were occupied by Renamo in a less violent manner. This resulted in different interactions between armed actors and civilians and in different interpretations of the war.

The wide variety of interpretations and conflict dynamics across Mozambique led Lubkemann (2005:492) to conclude that the war is best be characterized as "fragmented," by which he means that "national 'civil wars' take on a large degree of local character" as a result of sociocultural and ethnic diversity. As Lubkemann (2005:500) continues, "[c]onsequently, from the perspective of those actors embroiled in the day-to-day violence of the Mozambican civil conflict, what the war was about in one area was often something that was entirely different from what the war was about elsewhere." This is important to keep in mind when discussing the narratives of Renamo veterans and other inhabitants of Maringue, as it draws attention to how these narrations of war experiences are shaped in a particular political and cultural context. Consequently, an analysis of people's war experiences in Maringue does not offer any conclusive observations about Renamo as a rebel movement, but adds to the variety of interpretations of the war.

From peace negotiations to demobilization

Before turning to the narratives of ex-combatants, I first want to briefly discuss another debated process: how peace came about after sixteen years of armed conflict. The willingness of both Renamo and the government to engage in peace negotiations in 1988 must be understood within the global context of the end of the Cold War and the slow demise of the apartheid regime in South Africa (Hall and Young 1997:204-205; Minter 1989). Since the Nkomati accords, Renamo had seen South African support diminish, and saw, as Hultman (2009) and Manning (1998:166-168) have suggested, increasing possibilities for realizing their own political agendas. This is at least how Renamo leaders in the postwar described their willingness to start negotiations with the Frelimo government (Hultman 2009). Frelimo's leadership was extremely reluctant to accept the "armed bandits" of Renamo as a worthy partner in negotiations, but they were ultimately persuaded by Western donors to Mozambique to do so.[36]

36 In the late 1980s, the Frelimo government turned its orientation from socialism to free-market democracy. Following recommendations from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the government implemented a package of structural adjustments, involving among other things decreasing import tariffs, liberalizing foreign exchange, and implementing laws that encouraged private investment (Pitcher 2006:93).

Furthermore, it has been noted that negotiations were accelerated by extended periods of drought and consequential famine and cholera epidemics, which diminished Renamo's willingness to fight (Hall and Young 1997). Other scholars have stressed the importance of the role of representatives of Christian churches, who were the first to enter Maringue and meet with Afonso Dhlakama and his main generals to discuss peace negotiations (Vines 1991:120-121; Vines and Wilson 1995). At different stages of the peace negotiations the international community, in particular the governments of neighboring states and those of the US, Italy, Portugal, and Norway contributed to the process (Hall and Young 1997:208-216; Vines 1991:120-130). Peace negotiations took over two years and were brokered by members of the Community of Sant'Egidio, Bishop Jaime Gonçalves, and an Italian government representative (Vines and Wilson 1995). On 4 October 1992, Renamo's leader Afonso Dhlakama and Mozambique's President Joaquim Chissano signed the General Peace Accords (GPA) in Rome.

The two main pillars of the GPA were multiparty elections, in which Renamo was to participate as a political party, and an outline of the disarmament and demobilization process. The military issues were the toughest matter debated in the last phases of the peace negotiations, as the Renamo leadership, in particular, feared for its safety and that of its combatants (Hall and Young 1997:216). It was during this phase that it was decided that Renamo could keep a certain numbers of guards-in-arms or "presidential guards," of which a certain number are still stationed in Maringue and a few other places in Mozambique.

Besides these few "presidential guards," all other troops of both Renamo and the FAM were disarmed and demobilized by a special division of the UN Mission for Mozambique (ONUMOZ). The process involved gathering combatants in Assembly Areas, collecting their weapons, and registering the individuals concerned They then received a demobilization card, a demobilization kit, and a checkbook, which gave them access to a bi-monthly allowance for eighteen months (Alden 2002). The *desmobilizados* and their dependents (wives and children) were also offered free transport to a destination of their choice. In October 1994, over 63,000 government troops and approximately 30,000 Renamo troops were demobilized (Alden 2002:343).

The disarmament and demobilization process took almost two years and was shaped by distrust, competition, threats, and bribes, resulting in stagnations and delays (Alden 2002; Manning 2002).[37] Different issues were at play for Renamo: there remained concern about safety, the leadership was not always in charge of the troops, and they had certain legitimizing claims to live up to. During the negotiations, Renamo claimed to have 80,000 combatants, but only 30,000 were presented for demobilization, many of whom were suspected of being civilians pretending to be combatants. The Renamo

37 Interview with Ton Pardoel, coordinator of the Demobilization and Reintegration Unit, 09/06/11, Veghel.

leadership was kept "on board" with high sums of money supplied unofficially by the international donors (Manning 2002), which, combined with the high costs of the demobilization process, made the ONUMOZ mission one of the most expensive peace missions of its time (Alden 2002). Indeed, as Alden (2002:254) concludes, "the peace was bought on all levels."

For the ex-combatants who participated in this research, demobilization was an insecure moment. Thenceforth, they embarked on different trajectories shaped by their pasts as combatants, and oriented by their ideas about the future. An analysis of these trajectories forms the backbone of this dissertation. However, we cannot understand Renamo veterans' life courses without some notion of what it meant to be a Renamo combatant. It is to their experiences and their interpretations of these experiences that I devote the remaining sections of this chapter.

2.3 Veterans' war stories

In the following sections I will introduce three former Renamo combatants and their narratives of military life in the rebel movement. These veterans – two men and one woman – illustrate the wide variety of Renamo combatants' experiences of combat, fear, pride, suffering, boredom, and spiritual protection. Following Finley (2011:22), I want to stress that when reading these stories it is important to keep in mind that "[w]artime may, in many ways, be an aberration in the course of life – a period of time different from any other – but it is still part of that life course." All veterans who participated in this research defined their recruitment by one of the belligerent parties as a marking experience in their life course. However, this does not mean that they suddenly stepped out of their prewar lives. In the following chapters I will delineate people's trajectories throughout the pre-war, war, and postwar periods. In this chapter, however, I will focus explicitly on narrations of their war experiences. This forms the backdrop of the more in-depth analyses undertaken in the subsequent chapters, which deal with veterans' war and post-war navigations of social environments.

I take a narrative approach to veterans' accounts of their experiences because the data was not collected during or in the immediate aftermath of war but rather fifteen to eighteen years later, in Maringue's tense political climate.[38] As I explained in the introduction to this book, narratives often tell us more about the present than the past (Antze and Lambek 1996:xii-xiii; Nazarea 2006:325; Nora 1989:8). The narratives presented here are thus not used as historical evidence, but rather represent current

38 Additionally, these narratives were told to a certain person or persons, namely a white woman presenting herself as an anthropologist (which was often not well understood) and (in most cases) a male research assistant who was a known Renamo member in Maringue. My own role and the role of my research assistant(s) are discussed in the introductory chapter.

understandings and framings of the war, which are all the more important if we want to grasp how former combatants and civilians construct their social worlds. These narratives are politically colored and must be socially and culturally situated (see also Malkki 1995a:104). In the last section of this chapter I will analyze and contextualize these narratives in relation to debates about Renamo and the particular political and cultural context of Maringue.

Balthazar: "How to run into the rain of bullets"

At first glance, Balthazar, born in 1952, seemed a lot older than his age. He had grey hair, watery eyes, a slender figure and broken brown teeth. However, his energetic and brisk pace of walking, his dancing skills, and his good humor betrayed a young and determined spirit, willing to work hard on the land and to take good care of his three wives and eight children. While this is by no means an exceptional family arrangement in Maringue, when I informed about his family he seemed almost apologetic and felt the need to explain his polygamous household. "I was behind during the war [I started marrying late], with one woman I would not have had so many children now," he said.

Balthazar was originally from Caia, and, like many other Renamo veterans, he said the war had "brought" him to Maringue. When Renamo recruited him in 1982, he was thirty years old. During a journey from Beira to Caia, Balthazar's bus encountered a Renamo roadblock. All forty men traveling in the bus were taken "into the *mato*" (the bush), a common way to refer to Renamo's wartime location. Balthazar and the other recruits were "taken" against their will, but it was "not too violent," he said. The new recruits were brought to a military base where they received three months of training. In general, Renamo military training seemed to have lasted three to eleven months and was predominantly focused on weapon handling (dismantling, shooting, and cleaning) and basic military tactics. Afterwards, the new recruits were given an AKM, and then, as Balthazar put it, they "entered the war."

I asked Balthazar whether he how he had felt during his first period with Renamo. "The first three months everyone is afraid," he recalled, "but then not anymore. You cannot be afraid in war; when there is shooting you have to run towards it. After the shooting our magazines were checked to see if they really fired. If not you were beaten. You had to shoot." To gain the courage "to run into the bullets," Balthazar explained, he and his fellow combatants smoked *tres folhas* (three leaves) or *surruma*, local terms for marihuana, and drunk certain liquids prepared by *curandeiros* (healer-diviners) and alcohol (see also Schafer 2007:68). Drugs and alcohol were centrally distributed within Renamo, but combatants also sought out these things individually. Alcohol and drugs are common elements of fighters' war experiences all over the world, which are often used to gain courage or "to forget" (Finley 2011). In addition, many former Renamo soldiers also mentioned forging relationships with ancestral spirits and consultation of *nyangas* (traditional healers-diviners, in Portuguese: *curandeiro*) as ways to exercise

some control over a situation wrought by insecurity and fear. In search of protection, Balthazar had also consulted a *nyanga*, who had instructed him to sleep in a cemetery for a night, as he recalled:

> The dead would rise, you had to face them, even fight them. If you managed, that is *droga*! [Drugs, the working substance of occult forces used by *nyangas,* but also by *feiticeiros*, witches.] If not, you would go crazy. It was to never be shot, to have no fear and run while bullets fly by, like this [he makes a swishing motion at the sides of his head].

Many of my informants said that *nyangas* ask "terrible" things of their clients to make their magic happen. In Balthazar's case it was sleeping in a cemetery, which is generally regarded as a polluted and dangerous place. Balthazar believed this *droga* protected him throughout the war and contributed to his survival.

Balthazar worked his way up the ranks to become a commander of over forty soldiers. When I asked him about violence perpetrated by Renamo combatants, he said that he was a "good commander." "I was known as *chefe* [boss] Zhena Zhena. My fame was that I asked for food in a respectful way. Others would start beating and scaring people. I sat with people, greeted them, and explained we were hungry. Often they would give us food," Balthazar told me, then he said he recalled another commander called "*Limpa Cabeza*" (clean head), who had a more notorious reputation. "He did not ask, but killed people. He was crazy. And a crazy commander makes the soldiers crazy. They had to do what he did," Balthazar explained. By bringing up example of commander *Limpa Cabeza*, he suggested that the atrocities against civilians committed by Renamo were the result of "crazy" commanders who incited aggression in their troops. He kept himself far from such "bad violence."

Balthazar's wartime actions did however involve a great deal of violence. One of his main tasks as a commander was to lead the attacks of villages. Control of the population was a strategic priority for both sets of belligerents, and Renamo was heavily dependent on the loot and labor that was obtained by sacking and recruiting in the villages. The Renamo veterans I met in Maringue referred to such operations as "attacking," "assaulting," or "liberating" villages. Balthazar recalled how such operations were planned and executed:

> With my group, I was sent to villages. We set up camp at the outskirts of the village. Then two or three of us changed their clothing and went into the village, to see where the military base [of the government forces] was and other things. That was from six to twelve hours. They returned and told us about it. Then we went to sleep, and in the morning at four we started shooting. Then we took over the village and the stuff that was valuable was gathered, food and

> *capulanas* [cloths] for example. Then we asked people from the population to carry the stuff.
> Nikkie: Did Renamo kill people in such attacks?
> Balthazar: When Renamo entered a village, people were gathered. The people that did not come out of their houses, we banged on their doors. There were people who yelled: "*Matsangaissa* here! *Matsangaissa* here!" They wanted to expose Renamo; these people were killed. But only in the villages. On the road [during *liga*] people were never killed. Only those who were screaming.

The attack of villages was Renamo's most notorious war strategy (Finnegan 1992; Vines 1991), as Balthazar's words show, these assaults were very carefully planned and, as other accounts of former commanders revealed, followed each time a similar pattern. First, information was gathered on the size and positions of government forces by Renamo soldiers disguised as civilians, or obtained from civilian informants or bribed government soldiers. Then, in the early morning, the village was attacked, and any government soldiers, Frelimo members, or members of the *Grupo Dinamizador* (allied to the Frelimo party) were killed. Like Balthazar, other veterans justified the killings that accompanied such attacks by explaining how Renamo executed "only those who looked like they were from Frelimo and would rat us out." In other words, they viewed such executions as a form of self-defense. Such descriptions suggest a systematic intent, but also that the killings had a largely arbitrary nature.

After Renamo combatants took over a village, they generally destroyed and sacked state infrastructures, such as schools, health centers, and other government buildings, and evacuated a part or all of the population by force. The majority of the evacuees were forced to carry food and other loot, often including medicine and FAM weaponry, to a nearby Renamo base. Some of the young men were "taken" to be combatants, while young women would be taken to the base "to prepare your food," as Balthazar explained.

While Balthazar recalled many military actions, such as "taking" a village or outsmarting government soldiers, with a certain sense of pride, his overall opinion was that the war was a "suffering." The daily hardship of being constantly on the move made a strong impression on him. Renamo had no means of transportation, so combatants had to cover all distances on foot, often carrying heavy loads of weaponry and loot. Additionally, each military base or group of combatants was responsible for arranging their own food, especially when they were "walking." It could easily happen that a group of soldiers would go days without food. "We slept on the ground, also in the rainy season in the water. I suffered and I gained nothing," Balthazar grumbled. Like all demobilized combatants, he received a demobilization allowance after he was registered by ONUMOZ and had handed in his weapon, but this was "only a little, just to keep us happy." After that there was nothing else to do but work the *machamba*, he said. "Us [people living] in these zones, we receive nothing," he repeated over and over. Such

comments suggest that Balthazar expected that the government or Renamo would have given him something in return for his time with the rebels.

In one of our conversations, I asked Balthazar why, in his opinion, the war was fought. He said he had no idea at the time. He recalled that Dhlakama, Renamo's leader, told him that Renamo wanted to "stop socialism," and "that everybody had to be able to work his own land." He did not seem to disagree with this objective, but it was not his own experience. Although he had been forcibly recruited, to him the war had been a job, a dangerous one that had cost him time, but had not brought any rewards.[39]

Efrain: "It was beautiful, this war of ours"

Efrain was also a former Renamo commander, but of a higher rank than Balthazar. In 1986, Efrain was deployed in the secretariat of Renamo's leadership, as he was one of the few Renamo combatants who could read and write at. As a Renamo clerk, he was responsible for keeping track of the number and registration of combatants. "I had lists of those who died, and then a list of those who were alive," he explained. This was, however, an impossible task as often little was known about individual combatants whereabouts and actions. This became painfully apparent after the war, as Efrain recalled:

> Once, the parents of a combatant came to me, to ask where he died to be able to take his spirit home. I had no idea. They came to me because I was the secretary and I knew everything from Maputo to Rovuma, but I could not help them.

After the war, Efrain was among a privileged few who were offered a place in Renamo political party structures. Around the time that I met him, he was regularly traveling the over 1,000 km distance between Maputo and Maringue to exchange money and information between Renamo's headquarter in the capital and the military base in the district. Several people in Maringue called him a spy, but if he was one, he did a bad job at keeping a low profile. Wearing sunglasses (a rare accessory in Maringue), and with his fancy phone always in sight, Efrain could normally be found sitting outside the bar in the town's market square. Although he was vague about the nature of his job for Renamo, he was forthcoming about almost anything else and provided me with detailed knowledge about Renamo, the war, and Maringue.

Efrain was born in Mutarara, Tete province, where he had been recruited as a fourteen-year-old boy in 1982 when Renamo combatants appeared at his school. What bothered him most about his recruitment was that he could not continue with school,

39 Schafer's (2007:59) Renamo informants in Manica made similar references to work and also framed fighting for Renamo as a job.

as he was in fourth grade and was a promising student.[40] Efrain was recruited with his fellow classmates, a common tactic employed by Renamo, which often recruited young men and women from the same village en masse. A few years after his recruitment, Efrain returned to Mutarara to look for his brothers, whom in his opinion also had to join Renamo, which they did.

It is estimated that 40 per cent of Renamo's recruits were below the age of eighteen at the moment of recruitment, with twenty per cent between ten and fourteen years old (Pardoel 1994; Schafer 2007:68). I am cautious of using the term "child soldier," however, as the notion of "child" is very much culturally constructed (Boyden and De Berry 2004; Honwana 2006). A boy a fourteen, such as Efrain, was probably not seen as a child anymore, but rather as a young adolescent, almost ready to go off for migrant labor.[41] The underage combatants who participated in this research recalled that they were not immediately "given a gun," but were instead employed in other jobs. One ex-combatant, who was recruited at the age of eleven, said he was "given a gun" when he was fifteen.[42] Before that he worked as an assistant to a Renamo commander. Other children were deployed in administrative jobs, as we shall see later in this chapter.

Efrain was proud of his years as a Renamo combatant. When I confronted him with Frelimo's framing of Renamo soldiers as *bandidos armados* (armed bandits), he emphasized and probably exaggerated the professional character of Renamo combatants:

> We were real soldiers, two years of training without weapons. Not to be afraid. If a mortar would explode here, I would not be afraid, my heart would not even start beating faster. I would ask immediately: "Where did this come from? Who threw it?" I'm trained like that. We were soldiers; Frelimo feared us.

Efrain told me about his training in South Africa somewhere at the beginning of the 1980s, which he described in terms of competence and success. His words reflect a

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40 The recruitment of children differed over time and between regions. In the south and central areas, which have a long tradition of labor migration, fewer adult men were present in the villages as they were working abroad. This may be one reason for the more frequent use of child soldiers in southern Mozambique than in the northern parts of the country, as there were less adult men to recruit. In addition, many young men and women fled in fear of recruitment, which left children as the only viable recruits (Minter 1989:8-9). The FAM also recruited children, but information about the scale of this practice is hard to obtain, as the government has long denied the use of child soldiers. The recruitment of children by militias was probably also common; according to a former militia member in Magude, southern Mozambique, every boy able to hold a weapon was incorporated into this informal armed structure.

41 Schafer (2004:87-88) noted, for example, that in Manica (a neighboring province of Sofala) labor migration was an important element in the process toward manhood, which often began at the age of twelve.

42 Interview with Joao Thembo, 3/08/09, Maringue.

valuation of professionalism that was expressed by many, especially higher-ranked Renamo veterans. Such references may be understood in terms of "expert's pride" (Finley 2011:47) or "flow experiences" (Ben-Ari 1998: 91-103), the latter is characterized by the focused attention on particular tasks that stretch one's abilities to the maximum, which are, in the case of soldier, executed under the conditions of danger (Ben-Ari 1998:96). Combat and military operations across many contexts provide combatants, and especially officers and commanders, with challenges that give them a sense of control and satisfaction. This certainly held true for Efrain.

Efrain further underlined Renamo's professionalism by describing his experiences of rebel movement's disciplinary system. He told me that there were always combatants who misbehaved in relation to the population and that "taking someone else's wife" and demanding food in an aggressive manner were common problems. "When we would hear of this [harassment of women or theft] we would tie a person up and sometimes bring him to another base," Efrain explained. Then he leaned back in his plastic chair, visibly content with his answer, and said, "That was our war; it was beautiful." I was silent for a while, and then asked, "Is that beauty? I don't see much beauty in war." Efrain did not agree: "But it was [beautiful]. Some [combatants] may not have been good [i.e. violent, aggressive toward the population], but others are good until this day." I felt I had to contradict him, as his depiction of the wartime relationships between Renamo and the population seemed too good to be true. I told him how in 2007 I had visited Homoine, a district in Gaza province, southern Mozambique where Renamo had killed over 300 people during an attack in 1987. "There many people died in one day, many in their hospital beds when Renamo entered the village. That does not seem to be the work of one or two soldiers," I said. Efrain gave the following reply:

> Where the war comes, sister, where there is war there is death. What we are left with is the order of the commander not to do harm to the other side, the population. We knew very well that it is this population that we will govern and that will vote for us. That will give us everything. So we should let the population be. You cannot kill them. But another soldier could kill them, yes. We prohibited killing the population, because we knew very well that it is the population that will give us food.
> Nikkie: But in that process many people were killed.
> Efrain: Of course, a soldier is a soldier.

My probing of the (instrumental) use of terror violence by Renamo was often met by utterances such as "war is war," "in war people die," and "a soldier is a soldier." Like other politically engaged Renamo veterans, Efrain referred to Renamo's strong disciplinary structure, their dependency on the population for political legitimacy, and the excesses of a few "crazy" commanders to explain violence against civilians during the war. While

this reveals little about the violence conducted during the war, it shows a lot about Efrain's perception of Renamo and Renamo's cause. For him, Renamo had been a liberating force founded by several Frelimo dissidents who heroically started a struggle that ended in the victory of democracy. He "recalled" a meeting (one that he did not actually attended) in which Renamo's first leader, Andre Matsangaissa, declared to his followers, "Frelimo are Marxists, Leninists. They have the Russian idea. We will make war to get democracy. Mozambique has to be democratic; everyone has to [be able to] do their own thing." Efrain said the followers accepted this and "in that moment the soldiers received value." Renamo veterans in Maringue often evoked similar portrayals of Renamo as having defeated socialism and achieved democracy. For some veterans, citing Renamo ideology was probably an easy way to answer a difficult question ("why did Renamo fight?"). But others, especially higher-ranked and better-educated veterans like Efrain, gave sophisticated, confident, and articulate explanations of Renamo's roots and aims. Efrain, for example, was well aware of Frelimo's image of Renamo as an "Apartheid puppet," which he denied by saying that it was Renamo's founding fathers who turned to Rhodesia for help, not the other way around. "Like Frelimo did in Tanzania," he added, equating Renamo with the exiled Frelimo guerrillas, who gathered and trained in Tanzania, from where they started the liberation struggle. In doing so, he affirmed the legitimate character of both wars.

Efrain legitimized Renamo's struggle further by framing the conflict as a "spiritual war." Roesch (1992:472) argues that such terminology was used by Renamo commanders to depict their struggle as "a crusade" against a "traitorous" Frelimo "that is forcing people to abandon their ancestors and accept foreign ("communist") ideas, whereas Renamo is allied with the ancestral spirits in a war to return Mozambique to its traditions and ancestral ways." Such accusations must be situated in the Frelimo government's abolishment of traditional authorities and religion, which will be further discussed in chapter 3. Renamo rejected such policies and openly allied itself with traditional and religious authorities, such as *nyangas* and church pastors. Efrain and many other Renamo veterans stressed how Matsangaissa, Renamo's first leader, and other rebel leaders were keen on respecting certain taboos and "always" asked the local *régulo* or *nyanga* for permission to set up camp or make a fire in a certain area in order to appease the spirits. While Renamo commanders most surely respected the traditional authorities and feared the spiritual world, these traditions were also upheld for strategic reasons, in order to get the approval of local leaders and the support of the population (see also Finnegan 1992; Roesch 1992:472-473; Schafer 2007). For Efrain, the rebels' respect for and relations with spiritual beings was proof that Renamo was fighting on the "good side." As spiritual beings are considered extremely powerful, Efrain's conviction that Renamo was fighting with the spirits at their side was a powerful sensation and the key to Renamo's military successes.

Efrain described Andre Matsangaissa as "a man of spirits," who was accompanied and protected by ferocious war spirits from the era of the Monomutapa, a Mozambican chief who fought against the Portuguese in Manica province.[43] For many Renamo veterans, Matsangaissa was an almost mythical figure whose spirits protected him from bullets that "fell from his chest like water."[44] In several stories about Matsangaissa, this protection was attributed to the rebels' respectful treatment of the population. However, when one day Renamo combatants harassed a young woman in a rural village, the magical protection was broken. As the story goes, Matsangaissa was not aware of incident, so when he and his men, believing that they were still under the spirits' protection, stormed a government army base, they were slaughtered by machine – gun fire (Hall and Young 1997; Vines 1991:74-75; Wilson 1992:543).[45] Such stories contain different elements that are essential to understand Renamo's complex relations with the spiritual world: protection, obedience to a certain spiritual regime, and – in retrospect probably most importantly – legitimacy.

As was mentioned above, *nyangas* and prophets played a central role at Renamo's military bases; they were consulted about military decisions, for instance, and they cured and protected ("vaccinated") combatants to make them bulletproof. Additionally, they afforded magic protection to the bases themselves. Casa Banana, Renamo's headquarters in the Gorongosa Mountains, was for example said to be protected by a magical shield held up by strong *nyangas*.[46] As Thomas, Efrain's brother and a fellow ex-Renamo commander, recalled, "a helicopter could drop a bomb, but it would fall a kilometer away [from the base]."

The role of spirit mediums in protecting Renamo fighters and legitimizing Renamo's cause for war resonates partly with Ranger's (1985) and Lan's (1985) accounts of the position of spirit mediums during Zimbabwe's war of liberation. These mediums granted ZANLA guerrillas a certain historical legitimacy and a sense of belonging to a certain land. At the same time, the mediums attempted to exercise control over the behavior of the guerrillas, by prescribing certain taboos, such as the harassment of women. Renamo's leadership sought a similar legitimacy and perhaps also a means to discipline its combatants, especially in central Mozambique. But as Finnegan (1992) and Wilson (1992) have noted, Renamo's alliances with mediums were far more ad hoc than those of ZANLA and were more oriented toward providing protection for fighters

43 Monomotapa (or Mwene Mutapa in Shona) was a kingdom that stretched from Zimbabwe to central Mozambique. It existed from the mid-15th century until the mid-18th century, when it collapsed due to civil war and Portuguese expansion of their administrative rule (Newitt 1969:11; Jacobs 2010:34-37). The Monomotapa fighters are believed to have been fierce and fearless.

44 Interview with Efrain Bande, 13/06/09, Maringue.

45 There are several versions of the "Matsangaissa myth," but their essence remains the same. For variations, see Vines (1991:74-75), Finnegan (1989:70), and Martin and Johnson (1986).

46 Mount Gorongosa, where Renamo's central base was located for a while, is still regarded as having spiritual powers (see also Jacobs 2010).

than seeking approval from the population. But most important of all, Renamo's "war of spirits" was in fact contested by spirit mediums, of which the Naprama movement in northern Mozambique, led by Manuel António, a spiritual medium and priest, is a famous example (Nordstrom 1997; Roesch 1992:478; Wilson 1992: 560-569). Manuel António provided magical protection to the Naprama combatants, who fought Renamo in Zambézia province, claiming a series of unexpected victories (Wilson 1992: 560-569). Yet in the narratives of Efrain and other ex-combatants, such contestations of Renamo's spiritual legitimacy were not relevant. In Efrain's case, his understanding of the rebels' spiritual approval strengthened his conviction that Renamo was fighting for democracy.

There is no doubt that Efrain's framing of Renamo at the time of our conversation was highly influenced by his postwar career. After the GPA was signed, Efrain became part of a small privileged circle of Renamo members involved in establishing the political party. He still marveled at his first trip to Maputo and his stay in Hotel Cardozo, to him a luxurious and magical experience. Although he always complained that he did too much work for too little payment, he realized that he was in a privileged position compared to his fellow Renamo veterans in Maringue. Like them, however, he worried about the future for him and his children. Over the years, he had become more pessimistic about Renamo, which was not "taking care" of its people. He told me he had complained to Renamo's leader about the pensions of Renamo veterans. "A former general was not even receiving more than 1,200 [Meticais]; I said to the President [Dhlakama] that this was a scandal," Efrain told me. He was contemplating changing his loyalty to Frelimo. "Maybe I can get 8,000 [Meticais] from the administrator of Maringue," he told me one day, while we were having a Coca-Cola at one of Maringue's drinking stalls. He hinted toward applying a project for the District Development Fund, the so-called 'seven million,' which he would only receive if he would leave Renamo. But while he would often contemplate such possibilities out loud, over the course of fieldwork he never "deserted" Renamo. Like most Renamo veterans, he continued waiting for Renamo's leadership to reward him properly.

Teresa: "Maringue, ***a minha terra*****"**

The third narrative that I wish to discuss here concerns a former female combatant, Teresa. It is unknown how many female fighters filled the ranks of Renamo, as many female combatants were not officially demobilized and many female recruits were not deployed as combatants. In the most comprehensive analyses of the experiences of *desmobilizados* in Mozambique, women have not been taken into account, because their experience were very different than those of their male counterparts and because researchers foresaw difficulties in talking to female veterans about there violent experiences (see Minter 1989; Schafer 2007). In the reports and studies that do offer a perspective on women, the focus is on sexual violence and slavery in Renamo camps, these studies underline women's role as victims, civilians, and "abductees" (Roesch

1992:464; Scanlon and Nhalevilo 2011:110). This study offers a counterbalance to such analyses. In chapter 5, I will pay special attention to female veterans' narratives about their participation in Renamo and how this affected their post-war social trajectories. This is complimented by the following account of Teresa, a former Renamo combatant, to show the specific issues that female combatants had to deal with, but also how their experiences paralleled those of their male counterparts.

I met Teresa, a beautiful lady, who was dressed in an elegant matching *capulana* combination, in Beira. When I mentioned to her that I had just returned from Maringue, she gave a hearty chuckle. "Ah Maringue, *a minha terra* [my land]," she said. Initially I took this as a good sign; we seemed to have something in common, as not a lot of people in Beira had been to Maringue. Only later I did realize that her laugh and her comment had been ironic or sad, as for her Maringue was above all a place that triggered painful memories.

Teresa was originally from the outskirts of Beira. She was recruited at the age of eleven or twelve by Renamo representatives who said they had scholarships to offer. "We thought we were going to study," she explained. "I discovered much later that this was not the case. I did not know what *tropa* [troops] meant at the time." After arriving at the military base, Teresa started working in Renamo's weaponry stores, registering the weapons that were coming in and going out. She also received military training. "Nobody was in the war without picking up a weapon," she said. "How would I have defended myself without a weapon?" She explicitly recalled the attacks she participated in, when I asked her about her family:

> In war you do not think about your family. Only in that moment of an attack. Will I ever see them again? But after an attack, when lots of people died, we did a ceremony and they gave us a drink. You had to drink it. You could not cry. Later I understood that this [drink] was something to give us courage.

In this fragment Teresa mentioned several of her emotions during attacks she participated in, such as missing her family, but also the fear and horror she experienced during attacks. Like Balthazar, she referred to the use of substances, alcoholic beverages perhaps, to give the soldiers courage.

But what is also telling from Teresa's words, and those of many other female veterans I spoke with, is the emphasis on military tasks. In our conversation, Teresa persistently referred to herself as a "*demobilizada*," indicating that she had been part of Renamo's troops, and emphasizing, as most female veterans did, that her position was "no different from the men." "We did the same things, also shooting," Teresa said, similar to many women. By underlining their military agency, the female Renamo veterans challenged the stereotypical image of them as "sex slaves" or "bush wives." This does not mean, however, that these women did not experience (sexual) violence; on the

contrary, as I will delve into below sexual abuse was a daily aspect of their lives with Renamo. The stories of these women show that they are not only victims and not only hyper-agents. As anthropologists and political scientists such as Coulter (2009), Mckay (2005), Nordstrom (2005), and Utas (2005a) stressed, women in armed groups should be regarded as agents maneuvering in limiting and dangerous environments. Following these studies, I am cautious of portraying female combatants in a singular manner. Instead, I want to draw attention to the variety of roles and narratives girls and women used to describe their lives. Daily rebel life consisted of a range of activities – some violent, others relatively mundane – such as "shooting," "being with a man," domestic housekeeping, carrying loot and weapons, trading, cooking, fetching water, smuggling, spying, nursing, giving birth, and taking care of children. In carrying out these activities, women contributed to the day-to-day functioning of Renamo.

To illustrate how female combatants maneuvered in the limited and dangerous context of the Renamo rebel organization I draw on Teresa's account of her sexual relationships with male combatants during the war. Few female veterans were willing to talk about sexual abuse during the war, yet it must have been extremely common and a structural aspect of their lives with the rebels. When I asked Teresa about sexual violence "in the troops," she said, somewhat aggressively, that this was "something you don't talk about." However, after I had been silent for a while, she opened up, "it happened a lot in the war. The President [Dhlakama] could look at them [women] and choose. There was no way to say no. You had to sleep with him." Teresa then recalled how she had got involved in relationships with male combatants to obtain protection and to make life easier:

> Teresa: I had a friend in those days, but he died during an attack. From him I have a child. My first child, born with Renamo.
> Nikkie: Did it help to have a friend?
> Teresa: Sometimes, but between them [male combatants] they were corrupt. If only a commander liked you, there was no way, you had to go. When he died it was worse. Men here, and here. In war you are not for marrying. All were free. Only just liking one [fancying a woman]. Marriage was prohibited. Women, they suffered a lot.

In chapter 5 I will delve further into the relationships between female and male combatants and the consequences of these relationships for female veterans. What is important to note here is that female combatants, like many of their male counterparts, often found themselves in insecure, volatile, and dangerous positions. Yet regarding them as mere victims obscures their possibilities for social navigation, such as engaging in relationships with (preferably high-ranked) male combatants. Furthermore, female combatants' positions were far from fixed. For example, Teresa stayed with Renamo for

over eight years, during which time she gradually felt less insecure, became more aware of the power relations within the rebel organization, and even rose in the hierarchy. In 1992 and 1993, she was among a large and privileged group of combatants stationed in Maringue to protect Renamo's leader, Dhlakama. "He did not want us to demobilize," she recalled. "He wanted to keep us as his *segurança* [security]." Teresa was not interested in remaining with Renamo, however; she demobilized on 16 August 1993 and returned to her family in Beira.

Like Balthazar, Teresa remembered her time with Renamo as being characterized by suffering. "We were always on the move. There was no house, and we slept on the floor, on a mat," she said. Teresa recalled that toward the end of the war the hardship became worse, as successive draughts resulted in extreme famine. "The peace accord came because of famine," she explained. "There were not even leaves.[47] People did not die of the war, but of famine. Did you ever see someone die of starvation? Only bones, nothing else. The population was diminishing because of famine. The soldiers as well. It was tough."

I do not want to suggest that Teresa's story is representative of all female combatants' experiences, as there is no such thing as a universalistic narrative of "women's experiences of war" (Coulter 2009:4-5). Rather, following Coulter (2009) and others (Bouta 2005:6-9; Nordstrom 2005; Utas 2005a), I advocate a multifocal position of women in war. As holds true for their male counterparts, women's wartime and post-war experiences are diverse, as are the social processes that have shaped the way these experiences are interpreted.

2.4 Veterans' narratives: General themes and patterns

It is not possible to reveal the full variety of veterans' narratives about their participation in Renamo. I have tried to hint at the wide range of what veterans' war stories may look like by focusing on three accounts that are quite different from one another. And even though these stories underline that there is no "typical" veteran war story, there are some general themes and patterns that can be derived from them.

First, the veterans' narratives demonstrate that war stories are not necessarily, and perhaps not predominantly, stories about violence and combat. While these were unquestionably important elements of their lives with Renamo, they were not the first things that ex-combatants mentioned when they described their war experiences (see also Finley 2011:47). Teresa spoke of the extreme famine she witnessed, Efrain was

47 The term "leaves" literally denotes the leaves of various plants that in Maringue and elsewhere in Mozambique are used to make "*caril*," the sauce eaten with *xima*, the staple food made from corn flower. Many people in Maringue eat a *caril* made of leaves on a daily basis, which it is generally regarded as a "poor" dish.

especially concerned with Renamo's professionalism, and Balthazar recalled the daily suffering of long walks in the rain and his problems with establishing a family. This was how most veterans talked about everyday life in Renamo, as a monotonous ordeal characterized by hunger, fatigue, long walks, sleeping in the bush, and the sense of time being lost. Veterans did not frame their participation in the war in singular terms, and they did not centralize violence in their recollections of their time with Renamo; rather they emphasized various kinds of suffering, of which more mundane types were often central in their accounts.

Second, the narratives presented above give an indication of how veterans' experiences may differ along the lines of social categories such as age, gender, language group, religion, area of origin, military rank, level of education, and so on. Participation in Renamo was a very different experience for men than it was for women. Similarly, children recruited by Renamo had different experiences to adults; they were often not deployed as fighters. Additionally, adult recruits such as Balthazar were more likely to rise quickly in Renamo's ranks. This also depended on a combatant's level of education: few recruits were able to read and write, so those who could, such as young Efrain, were employed in Renamo's political wing. Throughout this book, I will refer to many more examples that further highlight ex-combatants' different experiences along social categories.

Third, my research participants presented a rather moderate image of Renamo. As we have seen above, the veterans' experiences were not free of violence, yet their narratives did not refer to "brutal abductions" (Honwana 2006:54) or "a cult of violence" (Wilson 1992), neither did they describe Renamo as a "monster beyond control" (Flower 1987; see also, Vines 1991; Minter 1989; Granjo 2007a:140; Nordstrom 1997; Roesch 1996). Most Renamo recruits who participated in this research were eager to make clear that their recruitment was forced.[48] "There was no saying no," they said, or "willingly or not willingly you had to go." But none of them described their recruitment as "brutal," and neither did they speak of having to commit atrocities against their relatives or members of their community, as has been described by Honwana (2006:54), Minter (1989:5), and Granjo (2007a:140), among others. The Renamo veterans generally used the phrase "*fui levado*" (I was taken), instead of the term that Minter (1989:5) said his informants used, "*raptado*," meaning abducted. As exemplified in Balthazar's narrative, several former combatants saw their recruitment as a "job" or as some sort of military service. As one former combatant put it, "It was obligatory, but it was the time of war – military service

48 There were some people who joined Renamo out of their own initiative. Many veterans recalled Renamo's arrival and their recruitment in terms of "liberation," although it was often unclear what this liberation entailed. Others enrolled because their brothers had done so, and some said that the war provided opportunities, profit, or a way out of rural life. War in all contexts forms an attraction to certain people; it may be seen as exiting and as an opportunity to gain access to looted goods, food, power, and women (Finnegan 1992:69-70; Young 1997:132).

is always obligatory." His statement implied that if Renamo had not "taken" him, he would have enrolled in the government forces, which would also have been forced.

Honwana (2006:58-59) and Wilson (1992:53) argue that Renamo's military training involved "initiations into brutality" (Honwana 2006:58-59) and a process of "psychological trauma and deprivation," which included the use of cultic or ritualized violence, such as the drinking of human blood (Wilson 1992:544). They claim that such practices were essential to "remold" the recruits' identities, since they instilled fear and challenged the social order, which enabled the new recruits to transgress social norms against killing (Honwana 2006:58-59; Wilson 1992:533). Yet a very different picture emerged from the accounts of the veterans in Maringue, who described their military training as heavy and intense, but not much different from how they had imagined "normal" military training. The ritual practices they recalled, such as the vaccination by nyangas, were more a *confirmation* of the social order than a contestation. Efrain, for example underlined the professional character of their military training, often referring to the involvement of "whites," who "knew the material of the Russians." This professionalism was also evident in the ex-combatants' use of terms such as "*militares*" (military) and "*tropa*" (troops) to describe themselves and other veterans. Such terms were associated with positive characteristics such as seriousness, toughness, discipline, and bravery.

Why do Honwana (2006), Wilson (1992), and others describe Renamo recruitment and training in such different terms? How can such differences be explained? It is possible that the veterans I spoke to did not want to talk about the violent details of their recruitment and training. Additionally, my research took place sixteen years after the peace accords were signed. Time might have lessened the urgency of violent acts, or incidents of violence may have been "forgotten" if they did not fit with more heroic understandings of Renamo's struggle. But it is also likely that violent practices, such as perpetrating atrocities against one's relatives, were not ubiquitous (see also Schafer 2007:59). As mentioned above, Renamo's strategies seemed to have been less brutal in Sofala and central Mozambique as a whole than in the south, where Wilson (1992) and Honwana (2006) based their studies. Different research locations within Mozambique will thus yield different accounts about wartime violence. However, my research participants did not describe their recruitment and training as completely free of violence. Many of them claimed to have witnessed violence, such as civilians were killed, runaways executed, and girls and women raped. Above all, their enrollment in Renamo was a highly uncertain moment in the new recruits' lives. But by no means did the Renamo veterans remember their admittance to the rebel movement in terms of a "glorification of violence"; rather, it was, as Balthazar's and Teresa's stories make apparent, predominantly characterized by other forms of hardship.

A fourth theme I want to highlight from the three narratives concerns the various ways in which veterans spoke about violence. Some were reluctant to talk about violence

and merely referred to the war as being "difficult" and "a suffering." As I explained in the introduction, I let my research participants decide how much they would reveal about such subjects and did not probe them when their answers appeared terse or perfunctory. For most, it was easier to talk about the violent conduct of *other* combatants. But there were also ex-Renamo combatants who spoke frankly about the killing of civilians, the raping of women, and other atrocities. Generally, veterans spoke easily of killing "the enemy," as this was often framed in terms of self-defense. Moreover, in a firefight, it was difficult if not impossible to establish who killed whom. Ex-Renamo combatant Caetano reflected on such violent confrontations by saying, "Did you see who killed [whom]? Nothing. People shoot but you don't see. The bullet looks for the person." The shooting of enemy soldiers was justified on a kill-or-be-killed basis. A similar logic applied to the execution of civilians who endangered Renamo combatants' security, as Balthazar suggested: "We only killed those who would go screaming to Frelimo." Such acts were defined as "normal violence," as they were directed against a (perceived) enemy. Renamo veterans contrasted such violence with attacks of "innocent" civilians, which were regarded as "bad." Balthazar and Efrain both referred to "crazy commanders" who harassed the population, to exemplify the exceptional character of killing "innocent people." And as Efrain stressed, Renamo had its own system of dealing with those who misbehaved.

Self-preservation was not the only logic that defined the lines between legitimate and illegitimate violence. Several former combatants understood the morality of their acts in terms of obedience to authority and religion. Caetano, whom I mentioned above, gave the following example:

> I was ordered, "Burn three houses." One, two, three… When you would burn four, with that fourth you will be condemned in the name of Christ! In the name of God! That house was not incorporated in the law; it was a sin, a sad sin. […] If you also burned that one here, you will be in trouble. Who ordered you? It is a sin.

Caetano strongly understood the morality of his actions in Christian terms and by referring to the obedience to his commander. According to him, any contravention of the orders of his superior would be "a sin," which implied that when he was following orders he had no responsibility for his acts, and thus that the latter would have no consequences for him. This is an often-heard discourse among veterans and other people in hierarchical structures (Arendt 1963; Browning 1992; Hinton 2005), and plays a powerful role in people's attempts to make sense of acts of violence.

Another logic by which the legitimate or illegitimate nature of violence was defined was the evaluation of people's behavior during the war in relation to the socio-spiritual world. As I will further elaborate in chapter 6, former combatants, but also civilians, who

had done something "wrong" during the war – usually killing an "innocent" civilian – were thought to receive some kind of retribution, often illness or impotence, from the spirits of those they had wrongfully killed. Such spiritual interventions not only form a powerful frame for understanding health problems, especially those of ex-combatants, but also offer a perspective on the morality of violent acts.

The fifth and final point I want to explore is the ideological framing of Renamo's objectives. When I asked veterans why the war was fought, they often answered in ideological terms. Similarly to Efrain, whom I quoted above, many veterans claimed to have been fighting "to live as we pleased," "against communism," or "for real democracy." Some research participants invoked Renamo ideology in order to give a (in their eyes) satisfactory answer to my questions. Yet many would say with a sense of pride, "thanks to Renamo we live here freely" or "thanks to Renamo we have multiparty democracy." These ex-combatants seemed to have incorporated ideology as a central theme in their narratives of war.

Several scholars (Finley 2011:10; Grossman 1995; Kalyvas 2006:44-46; Murphy 2003; Nordstrom 1992:256) have argued that the role of ideology as a motivational force for (guerrilla) warfare is often overestimated in historical and sociological studies of civil war. According to Kalyvas (2006:46), people's decisions to join a rebellion are often non-ideological, but their post-facto constructions are likely to focus on ideology as this may obscure motivations that are perhaps perceived as less legitimate, such as financial considerations, local political strife, and personal conflicts (see also Schafer 2007:69). In the case of Renamo, weariness of ideological utterances may be even more appropriate; the movement's ideology and political agenda have been variously regarded as non-existent or unsophisticated (see e.g., Finnegan 1992:77-78; Minter 1989; Vines 1991), designed to gain (international) legitimacy (Hall and Young 1997), or as a political slogan ("Renamo fought for democracy") for the 1994 electoral campaign (Schafer 2007:158).

Yet I argue that in the case of Renamo, the role of ideology may have been *underestimated* or at least misunderstood. External influences and interests in the establishment and functioning of Renamo do not preclude the possibility that the movement had an internal political agenda of its own. There are indications that the political agenda of Renamo was formulated over time as the movement developed into a more independent organization calling for democracy, concessions from the government, and negotiations (Hultman 2009:825). Nevertheless, it is highly unlikely that Renamo members were ideologically motivated at the moment of their recruitment. A former Renamo commander for example said that at recruitment he and his fellow recruits "did not know what this thing they called war was."[49] Most Renamo veterans, especially those who remained in Maringue, familiarized themselves with the Renamo

49 Interview with Matateo, 12/10/08, Maringue.

narrative during or even *after* the war. The ideological framings of the war, such as those made by Efrain (discussed above), cannot be dismissed as hollow repetitions of Renamo ideology or politically correct answers to "difficult questions." Rather, these must be regarded as postwar constructions that serve to furnish combatants with a sense of purpose in retrospect. Ideology, understood as a more or less coherent set of ideas about society, may provide a sense of purpose, legitimacy, and even empowerment, which may be essential not only for veterans' mental health but also for their positioning in society (Barber 2001:276-277; Bourke 2004; Boyden 1994; Geertz 1973:193-233; Schafer 2007; Summerfield 1998; West 2000). As Joanne Bourke (2004:480) writes, "to survive being a perpetrator may not be a matter of either 'forgetting' or 'remembering' but of finding a legitimate narrative that can 'place' the self in a way that is both coherent and convincing." The ideological element that my research participants attached to their war experiences may make it "easier" for them to live in peace with their war pasts (see also Baker 1991; Barber 2001; Muldoon and Wilson 2001; Kanagaratnam, Raudalen and Asbjornsen 2005; Schok, Kleber, Eland and Weerts 2007; West 2000) and may have even provided them with a political position in society, that of fighters for democracy.

However, not all Renamo veterans had the same "access" to this ideological narrative. Following Lomsky-Feder's (2004) notion of "distributive social memory," I regard the accessibility of the ideological narrative as being distributed according to social entitlement and power relations and shaped by former military rank and level of education. According to this logic, higher-ranked former combatants such as Efrain would have had greater access to this narrative than rank-and-file combatants. Additionally, it may be that ideological utterances were stronger among Renamo veterans in Maringue, than among Renamo veterans in other places, as here (former) combatants were more exposed to Renamo ideology due to a strong political Renamo network and the party's "civic" education programs during the war. In other words, the veterans' ideological statements that I heard so often in conversations were probably part of a highly localized narrative invoked by a few privileged Renamo veterans. Nevertheless, in Maringue "the fight for democracy" was an important narrative that resonated and continues to resonate in the stories of Renamo higher cadres and that has also influenced the narratives of rank-and-file veterans.

Finally, these ideological utterances may also reflect the persistence of close ties between veterans and the Renamo party. Above I presented Balthazar's understanding of Renamo's cause to wage a war on the government: "I asked the *chefe* [boss, referring to Dhlakama]; he told me that Renamo wanted to stop socialism." Balthazar made a reference to "Renamo ideology," but in a rather unconvincing way. His main concern with Renamo was that he had not received any compensation for his involvement in the war. Like many other veterans, he was waiting for Renamo to reward him. The veterans' apparent ideological support may thus be a means to affirm a tense patron-client relationship between Renamo's leaders and Renamo veterans. Ex-combatants'

ideological framings should thus be understood as a complex entanglement between their efforts to make sense of their participation in war, on the one hand, and their desire to maintain a (patron-client) relationship with Renamo, on the other. In the following chapters, this preliminary analysis of the variety of ex-combatants' war stories and these patron-client relationships will be further explored.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced the people that are the heart of this book: former Renamo veterans. By presenting three veteran narratives, I have tried to illustrate the variety of veterans' war experiences and their interpretations. Together with the experiences of inhabitants of Maringue, which are presented in the next chapter, these narratives strengthen the image of Renamo as an occupying force and contribute to ongoing debates in Mozambique about the civil war and its various dynamics and interpretations in different parts of the country.

The main aim of this chapter has been to highlight some of the ways in which veterans interpret their war involvement and experiences. I regard the Renamo party and the veterans in Maringue as a mnemonic community, in which interpretations of the war are formulated and changed, providing meaning and legitimacy to the veterans' participation in the war, their social and economic positions, and their place in history and the nation. The veterans' interpretations of the past not only reveal the ways in which the past is negotiated in the present, but also serve as examples of how people who have experienced extreme suffering and/or have perpetrated violence try to make sense of this. But what the veterans' accounts show more generally is a complex set of different experiences and understandings of Renamo, through which they try to present themselves simultaneously as "good soldiers" and victims. Depending on who is talking, the idea of being "good soldiers" is expressed through references to a variety of qualities, such as bravery, respect for "the population," professionalism in one's "job," "doing the same things as men" (in the case of female veterans), spiritual protection, and Renamo's noble cause of democracy. At the same time, ex-Renamo combatants portray themselves as victims by expressing feelings of loss (e.g. of educational opportunities, family life) and by referring to "suffering," which included daily hardships, physical harm, and fear. Renamo veterans' postwar marginality heightened this sense of victimhood. "We receive nothing" and "we are not respected" were commonly heard laments. In chapters 8 and 9, I will argue that such utterances are rooted in Renamo veterans' expectations of the Renamo party and the state.

An awareness of the tensions between veterans' portrayals of themselves as both "good soldiers" and victims is crucial when analyzing how veterans interpret and perhaps legitimize their past, and how they position themselves in relation to their families,

communities, the Renamo party, and democracy in the present. I will return to these portrayals in the following chapters, which are devoted to an ethnographic analysis of veterans' social navigations. First, however, it is necessary to situate the Renamo veterans in the research location, Maringue district.

3 WHEN ELEPHANTS FIGHT

POLITICS AND COLLABORATION

3.1 Introduction

When I asked people in Maringue about the consequences of the war for civilians, several replied with the following expression: "Where two elephants [or buffalos] fight, the grass suffers." This catchy image is used to highlight the fact that most war victims were civilians. Yet at the same time, this allegory appears to relegate Mozambique's rural population to the lowly position of "grass," a passive and homogenous helpless entity caught up in the whirls of war. As I will show in this chapter, such an image of the rural population conceals the dynamics and relationships between armed actors and the civilian population. Civilians were strategic targets for Renamo and the government forces (Bertelsen 2002; Hall and Young 1997), but simultaneously interacted with armed forces in a variety of ways that resulted in the blurring of distinctions between soldiers and civilians. Furthermore, the image of the rural peasantry as the grass on which the elephants fought obscures people's agency in a war situation and their navigations within the social condition of war (Lubkemann 2008), which are shaped not only by violence and force but also, and perhaps even more so, by other pursuits and relationships.

In this chapter I analyze civil-military relationships in Maringue during the war and its aftermath, as these form the backdrop for understanding ex-combatants' current social and political positions. More specifically, this chapter is a first step toward providing a more heterogeneous and complex understanding of the "recipient community." I argue that the ambivalence, the intimacy, and the blurring of military and civilian relations in Maringue has created a context in which, on the one hand, most people display reconciliatory understandings toward ex-combatants, who are generally seen as people like any other, but on the other, the political and social fabric is deeply divided along the lines of the Frelimo and Renamo political parties, resulting in tensions and occasionally violent incidents.

The relationships between combatants and civilians are analyzed in this chapter through the concept of social navigation, with a specific focus on *collaboration*. Collaboration is defined here as cooperation between two or more actors, maintaining also but not exclusively its connotation of "traitorous cooperation with the enemy" (Tsing 2005). I follow Tsing's (2005:246) understanding of collaboration as involving actors who are "not positioned in equality or sameness, and [whose] collaboration does not produce a communal goal." This is applicable to conflict situations in Maringue and

elsewhere, as it is common for insurgents to seek collaboration with citizens, whom they often depend on for food, shelter, and information (Kalyvas 2006:124-128; Weinstein 2007). For civilians, collaboration often involves pragmatic decisions shaped by opportunism and weak preferences for armed actors in order to survive and to continue with life projects as much as possible (Kalyvas 2006:124-128; Lubkemann 2005:500). Furthermore, as Tsing (2005:246) shows, collaboration "with a difference" does not mean that such collaborations cannot be fruitful. For civilians in Maringue, wartime collaboration with armed actors involved danger and force, but also survival and opportunities. A focus on collaboration allows me to analyze a spectrum of conscious and unconscious navigations of *Maringuenses* vis-à-vis armed actors. These decisions included fleeing, passively and actively collaborating, fighting with or against a certain armed actor, using violence to settle personal scores, and in some cases, making a profit.

To avoid an overly instrumentalist or rationalist perspective on people's behavior in warzones, this chapter provides contextualized notion of collaboration as a set of practices that are historically and culturally shaped.[50] How Maringue's inhabitants positioned themselves toward Renamo's occupation should be understood in the context of cultural understandings of authority, which are embedded in earlier experiences of war and oppression during colonial rule, in the armed anti-colonial struggle (1964-1976), and in post-independence politics. This chapter therefore begins with a discussion of *Maringuenses*' narratives about colonial rule, Frelimo's arrival and its rise to power. I will then turn to Renamo's emergence in the late 1970s and its occupation of Maringue in the mid-1980s, explaining how Renamo became a state-like power in Maringue and how *Maringuenses* were increasingly involved in this process. The last two sections address the postwar political situation in Maringue and portray the district as a heterogeneous, changing, and conflict-ridden community.

3.2 Collaboration in colonial times: The story of Window Coffee

Window Coffee, a frail old man with a neatly trimmed grey beard and small watery blue eyes, claimed to have been born in 1914, which made him the oldest person I met in Maringue.[51] Yet reported dates of birth were rarely correct as especially elder people in Maringue confused years, decades and even centuries, and Window seemed rather brisk for a 94-year-old man. All the same, during his lifetime he had lived under Portuguese colonial administrators, worked in Malawi and Southern Rhodesia, become a Frelimo

50 Here I follow Demmers' (2012:29) criticism of Kalyvas' (2006) analysis of civil war violence as being mainly played out through control, collaboration, and either indiscriminate or selective violence. Demmers (2012:29) argues that Kalyvas' theory draws predominantly on rational model of human behavior and obscures, among other things, the importance of context.

51 Interview with Window Coffee, Maringue, 13/11/08.

guerrilheiro for a few years, witnessed the emergence of Renamo after Mozambique's independence, killed a commander of the Mozambican Armed Forces (*Fuerzas Armadas de Moçambique*, FAM) and consequently become a Renamo hero, and much more.[52]

Window lived in Chionde, a small community a twenty-minute ride outside Maringue. I travelled there with one of his sons, Lino, who had offered to take me on his motorcycle. Window lived with his two wives in several small huts, typical of most peasants' homes in the area. He greeted me in perfect English with a British accent, which he had picked up during his time in Malawi and Southern Rhodesia. We conversed in a mixture of English, ChiSena, and Portuguese, with Lino translating when necessary.

Window was born in Catandica (Manica province) to a relatively well-off Catholic family. Sometime in the 1930s, Window, then a young man, was recruited for *contracto* (or *chibalo*), a six-month period of forced labor on the Portuguese-owned plantations in Vila Pery (Chimoio) and Buzi. Under the rule of the *Companhia de Mocambique,* a private enterprise, a plantation economy emerged in central Mozambique, which was continued by the Portuguese colonial government after 1941 (Isaacman 1996:82; Hall and Young 1997:4).[53] From all districts in central Mozambique, including Maringue, young men were recruited as cheap labor. Window recalled this job with little fondness: "We worked for nothing. Sometimes they would give us 100 Meticais, but then they only paid the first month and said that they would give the rest later. They never did." Portuguese rule was remembered for the prevalence of physical punishment, the racist education system, and forced cotton production, however, my research participants in Maringue who were old enough to remember the colonial period regarded the *contracto* as the ultimate symbol of the exploitation of the Portuguese colonial administration.[54]

To avoid the backbreaking labor on the foreign-owned plantations, Window and thousands of other rural Mozambicans, especially men, migrated to Nyasaland (current Malawi) and Southern Rhodesia (current Zimbabwe), where salaries and working conditions were substantially better (Allina-Pisano 2003:60; Isaacman 1996:82;

52 For historical analyses of the late colonial period in central Mozambique, see Isaacman and Isaacman (1983) and Newitt (1995). For a description of the founding of Frelimo and the anti-colonial struggle, see Simpson (1993) and Henriksen (1983).

53 At the end of the 19th century, in the context of the "scramble for Africa," Portugal increased its effective presence in the Mozambican hinterlands. In Sofala this was achieved not by the Portuguese state but by "the Company of Mozambique" (*Companhia de Moçambique*), an international enterprise that had concessions over the area between the Pungwe River and the Zambeze (Isaacman and Isaacman 1983; Newitt 1995; Jelínek 2004:496). In the decades that followed, the *Companhia* controlled these territories and the people living there, who were required to pay taxes and work on plantations. The *Companhia* recruited a police force, called *cipais*, from among the population and forced the *régulos* (traditional authorities) to work for them (Jacobs 2010:47-48).

54 See Isaacman (1996) for a discussion of the forced cotton production.

Lubkemann 2008:47-48). Window worked as a "window boy" (i.e. a window cleaner) and later as a domestic servant in the houses of "whites" in Harare, where he earned a decent wage, as well as his longstanding nickname.

On one of Window's returns to Catandica, the local *régulo*, the highest traditional authority, approached him and said he appreciated Window's "character," and therefore invited him to become a *thubo*, an assistant of the *régulo*, especially in conflict resolution efforts..[55] While being a *thubo* is an honorable position within a community, under the Portuguese colonial administration it also required one to participate in the organization of forced labor. The *régulos* and other community leaders cooperated with the Portuguese in the forced mobilization of men for the *contracto* (Isaacman 1996:12; Hall and Young 1997:4-7; Jelínek 2004:498). While the *régulos* were not paid for this work, it conferred gifts from the colonial administration, power, and social status.

Window's promotion to *thubo* happened sometime in the early 1970s, around the same time as Frelimo *guerrillas* crossed the Zambezi River and entered the provinces of Manica and Sofala, expanding the anti-colonial war.[56] The arrival of Frelimo was a disquieting development for those who were collaborating with the Portuguese administration. Window was quite worried at the time:

> I was to be killed, because we mobilized the population. We were seen as bad, because we followed the orders of the colonizers. Then I fled in 1973 with my family to Maringue, where nobody knew me and I could be simply [one of the] population. We settled at the base in the bush in Nhamaloba [a Frelimo base]. There I was elected as a *secretario* to mobilize the population.

Many people, even those in rural and remote areas like Maringue, were in one way or another aligned to the Portuguese administration. These included the *régulos*, other "traditional authorities," their assistants, *cipais*, who were members of local police, and *capricorni*, individuals who passed information to the Portuguese military about people supposedly supporting Frelimo. Frelimo regarded such people as "*os compremetidos*," individuals compromised by past association with the colonial state (West and Kloeck-

55 I refer to *regulos, saphandas*, and *nfumos* as "traditional authorities," as this is how they are generally referred to in Maringue. However, the "traditional" adjective is somewhat misleading, as it "simultaneously legitimates and renders anachronistic the institutions and individuals to whose authority it is applied, distracting attention from a complex history in which the titles, geographical dimensions, functions and individual identities of kin-based authority figures have been continuously transformed in the midst of a tremendous variety of local scenarios" (West and Kloeck-Jenson 1999:457). The term "community authorities" has other political connotations (Kyed and Buur 2006) and is not so commonly used.

56 Frelimo was founded in Tanzania in 1962 when several nationalist parties were combined into one front under the leadership of Eduardo Mondlane. In September 1964, their struggle became violent with an attack on a military base in Cabo Delgado (Hall and Young 1997:11-25).

Jenson 1999:456), or as "traitors of the revolution." Window recalled that during the war against the Portuguese colonial state Frelimo attempted to prosecute these people in the areas they occupied, the "liberated zones," albeit with variable success. Window did not await the verdict of the Frelimo guerrillas: he and his family left Catandica for Maringue, where he could live in anonymity. Window even became one of the local Frelimo party leaders (*secretario de bairro*) and found himself mobilizing people for the struggle against Portuguese domination.

Window's story is an example of how people collaborate with authorities and armed groups, switch alliances, and maneuver in a context of oppression and war, seeking protection and even gain. It is a story of agency, but also of personality, as Window is a man with a natural air of authority, which is probably why he was chosen as community leader on several occasions. His story also demonstrates how people are able to move in central Mozambique and across borders, in search of economic opportunities, marriage possibilities and survival.

Window described his decision to join Frelimo as a largely practical one. Yet most stories told by *antigos combatentes* (Frelimo veterans of the liberation war) and elder people with memories of this period spoke of heroism and popular resistance against the Portuguese, of men willing to sacrifice their lives to be part of Frelimo and of women risking everything to give food to the *tulas* or *turas*, as the guerrillas were then called.[57] The stories of glory and heroism match the national historical discourse that glorifies the anti-colonial war (see Igreja 2008; Chapter 9), but what such narratives obscure is that for many peasants in Maringue, including Window, the liberation war was a period of deep insecurity.

Maringue was never fully occupied by Frelimo. The guerrillas established several military bases in areas regarded as "liberated zones" (Jelínek 2004:498). In response to Frelimo's proximity, the Portuguese military forced the rural population into *aldeamentos* (communal villages), which were intended to control the movement of the population and to impede contact between the people and the guerillas (Hall and Young 1997:20, 29). Life in these communal villages was highly militarized, and any suspicion of contact with Frelimo fighters was punishable by tortured or even execution by either Portuguese troops or the PIDE (*Policia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado*,

57 In ChiSena, "*tula*" means "let go." Some research participants said it was short for "let go of that sack," a reference to the backpacks that the Frelimo soldiers carried that were believed to be a kind of engine that enabled them to fly. Others suggested, somewhat more poetically, that "*tula*" was a contraction of the imperative "let go of our land."

International Police and Defense of the State), a secret police force.[58] In Maringue, PIDE agents are held responsible for a massacre that took place near the village of Canxixe, to which almost all *Maringuenses* referred when I asked about the war for independence. During this episode, PIDE agents captured over a hundred peasants, who were killed, thrown in a mass grave, and burned. Currently, there is a rudimentary memorial to the victims on the site of this atrocity.

The war for independence ended in 1974 after the Carnation Revolution in Lisbon. That same year, the Portuguese administration and Frelimo signed the Lusaka accords, which established the basis for Mozambique's independence. The administration of the country was handed over to Frelimo, which had successfully situated itself as the "sole legitimate representative" of the Mozambican people (Hall and Young 1997:32).

3.3 Frelimo: From ambitions to repression

> *"Frelimo began to abuse its own people, who had yesterday helped them liberate the land and who it had promised worlds and worlds. But then, when the resistance [Renamo] came, we were all treated like resistance. Accused of being against the independence."*
>
> *Elias, Maringue*

Mozambique became an independent country on 25 September 1975. Soon after, Frelimo took control of the government and began to implement its ideas for developing Mozambique into a prosperous socialist nation. This was a daunting undertaking, as the country that Frelimo had inherited was vast, war ravaged and bankrupt, and would have to be built again from scratch. Nationalization policies had caused a massive exodus of the Portuguese, other whites, literate Mozambicans, and *mestiços*, draining the skilled working class of the country. Businesses were abandoned, infrastructure destroyed, the commercial network collapsed, and many jobs disappeared over night (Hall and Young 1997:49-50; Hanlon 1996:9). Yet inspired by Marxist-Leninist ideas, Frelimo had lofty ambitions and the government enthusiastically began to put their plans for the new African state into practice. Marxism offered a historical framework for the fight against colonialism and the struggle toward progress after independence. However, as Hall and Young (1997:68) argue, this ideology was used rather uncritically as a blueprint

58 The Portuguese military, which primarily consisted of Mozambicans, was poorly motivated. Even though the Portuguese army employed at its height 75,000 soldiers, their military successes against Frelimo were few (Hall and Young 1997). The military leadership resorted to the adoption of "dirty" tactics, such as the deployment of elite forces (the *flechas*, the arrows and *Grupos Especiales*, Special Groups) and the use of terror (Hall and Young 1997). Some years later, these specially trained soldiers were among the first to fill the ranks of Renamo (Vines 1991).

for national unity, anti-tribalism, and economic prosperity. Before long, Frelimo's economic and socio-cultural policies had alienated the rural peasantry in many areas of Mozambique, including Maringue. This discontent is often regarded as the main source of Renamo's support among the country's rural population (Hall and Young 1997; Hultman 2009; Vines 1991).[59]

Frelimo's leadership was dominated by an urban southern cosmopolitan elite that was out of touch with the rural reality. They regarded the peasantry as a kind of tabula rasa onto which could be inscribed the ideal modern society (Hall and Young 1997:27-34; Geffray 1990). Frelimo's leadership formulated a "total strategy" for modernizing rural Mozambique and creating the modern Mozambican individual referred to as "*o Homem Novo*" ("the new man") (Hall and Young 1997:54-60). Traditional authorities, polygyny, and initiation rituals were regarded as "feudal structures" that kept people ignorant and repressed women (West and Kloeck-Jenson 1999:456-458). Frelimo abolished traditional authorities, which were seen as extensions of the colonial rulers, and started campaigns against traditional healers, polygyny, and religious institutions in general (Hall and Young 1997:54-60; Newitt 1995:547-549). Additionally, Frelimo imposed unpopular collective agriculture policies, which stipulated the implementation of communal lands (*machambas do povo*) and communal shops (*lojas do povo*) (Hall and Young 1997:89-98).

For many peasants in Maringue and elsewhere in Mozambique, Frelimo's new policies were experienced as an abrupt change in their daily lives (see e.g. Alexander 1997; Geffray 1990; Lubkemann 2008; West and Kloeck-Jensson 1999). This is well illustrated by the case of Elias, a short elderly man from Palame, a remote rural area in northern Maringue. After independence, Elias became the *secretario de bairro* of Palame, a position established by the Frelimo government to replace the traditional authority. Yet Elias was deeply worried when Frelimo abolished the *régulos*, as he explained:

> Not even *o colono* [the colonizers] abolished the *régulos*. They respected the African tradition. When it does not rain, the *régulo*, being the owner of the land, does his ceremonies for the rain to fall. Often when we would come home [from doing such ceremonies], the rain would already be falling. Therefore, when they were prohibited there were consequences; [there was] a lack of rain. They [the *régulos*] came back when Renamo liberated [the area].

The colonial government never had a strong presence in Maringue. The main representative of *o colono* were the *régulos*, who were installed by and cooperated with the colonial state, but simultaneously enjoyed some kind of local legitimacy, as Elias's

59 See Hall and Young (1997:105-114) and Simpson (1993) for elaborate analyses of Frelimo's nation-building project and how economic strategies for rapid growth and structural transformation stagnated due to a lack of the preconditions for modern planning, such as skilled workers and infrastructure.

words reveal. Traditional authorities were, and still are, a central authoritative structure in Maringue. They are related to the spirits of the land, but also have an important role in events as diverse as conflict resolution, marriages, ancestral appeals (including rain-making ceremonies), and the control of witchcraft (see also Jacobs 2010; West and Kloeck-Jensson 1999:458-459). Their abolishment was therefore deeply unsettling.

Yet Frelimo's policies were not uniformly implemented across Mozambique (West and Kloeck-Jensson 1999:459), or even within the district of Maringue. The vast size of the country, coupled with the fact that the Portuguese administrative structures had all but collapsed, meant that the Frelimo state was overextended and underdeveloped, and its effective presence in remote rural areas was weak (see also Hall and Young 1997:82-83; Lubkemann 2005). The local government representatives were free to mold policies, thereby they knowingly and unknowingly diverting from government policies (Hall and Young 1997:82-83).[60] In Palame, for example, healers were the only source of healthcare; therefore local representatives did not put this law in effect. Furthermore, the *machamba de povo* was never established in Palame. Many inhabitants, including *secretario* Elias, thought this was a disastrous idea, as the peasants' practice of cultivating various plots of land in different places is essential in Sofala's dry and unpredictable climate. Furthermore, the *machamba de povo* was highly unpopular, as it closely resembled the resented forced labor policies of the Portuguese colonial administration (see also Lubkemann 2008:125-127).

The presence of the Frelimo state was stronger in more populated areas, such as Maringue town and Canxixe, where government policies were implemented more rigorously. Several people from the main village furiously recalled the abolishment of religion and the punishments inflicted on "believers" (*creentes*) by Frelimo officials. Others resented the policy of the *guia de marcha*, which required one to carry a document while traveling, a policy also copied from the Portuguese. It made traveling arduous and dangerous, as people roaming without a *guia de marcha* were suspected of being with Renamo and could be arrested or even killed. But the policy that was most influential was concerned the *aldeamento* (the communal villages), which was also led by Portuguese example. The forced relocated into communal villages frustrated many peasants, as their agricultural and family structures were generally built around living in dispersed homesteads (cf. Jelínek 2004; Lubkemann 2005). The communal villages were presented as a strategy to enable service delivery to Mozambicans in a more efficient manner and to modernize agriculture. Yet as Renamo's presence in the countryside of Sofala and Manica became stronger in the two years after independence, forcing people into communal villages became a military strategy for defending and controlling the population (Alexander 1997:7; Finnegan 1992; Hall and Young 1997:91).

60 The Frelimo *secretario* was often the same person as the traditional authority. For similar observations from Tete and Manica, see Englund (2002:19-20) and Lubkemann (2008) respectively.

The conduct of the Mozambican Armed Forces (*Forzas Armadas de Moçambique*, FAM) resembled the repressive practices of the Portuguese military in several ways. Aida, a woman of approximately sixty years old, lived in Canxixe in the years after independence. She recalled the FAM's oppressive conduct:

> When the troops [of Renamo] began in Gorongosa, Frelimo did the same as the *colono*. They accused people of having family with them [Renamo] and those people were tortured and murdered. In Canxixe ruled commander Conchembe, from Tete. When he visited a zone, people had to clap so fiercely that the leaves would fall from the trees, otherwise it was not enough.

"Fernanda," a woman in her forties from a rural village near Maringue village, was initially reluctant to talk about her experiences. She said she was afraid that if her words were to reach the "parties" she would be tortured. However, after I guaranteed her anonymity, she began to talk. Sometime at the beginning of the 1980s, Fernanda was working on the *machamba* when government soldiers captured her. They tortured her and several other women to find out if their husbands were "with Renamo." Then the women were forced to walk "with our bottoms bleeding" to Caia, where a communal village was located. She recalled the trip: "We slept on the ground or in trees. Children that made too much noise were beaten to death against a tree. Many died, and at night the women were the wives of the Frelimo soldiers." Fernanda considered herself fortunate; the soldiers did not rape her because she was visibly pregnant.

There are no comprehensive accounts of the atrocities perpetrated by FAM soldiers during the civil war. This is, as Igreja (2008) argues, one of the "silences" of the war. In the dominant historical narrative, Frelimo is depicted as a blameless sovereign, whereas Renamo is portrayed as the aggressor and regarded as being responsible for the major part of the war atrocities (Igreja 2008). It is beyond the scope of this study to formulate any statements about the responsibility for atrocities perpetrated during the war, but based on the stories of *Maringuenses*, I can conclude that both parties committed horrific acts of violence. Gruesome acts of torture, rape, and killing, which are often ascribed to Renamo, were as much perpetrated by the FAM soldiers, especially in the early 1980s (see also Finnegan 1992; Nordstrom 1997).

The resented Frelimo policies mentioned above and the brutal conduct of government soldiers created fertile ground for the growth of Renamo support in Maringue. Renamo's objective to expel Frelimo and end "communist oppression" drew sympathy among the peasantry in many areas of Mozambique (Englund 2002; Finnegan 1992; Hall and Young 1997:91-91; Lubkemann 2005). However, there is no direct correlation between discontent with Frelimo and Renamo support. As accounts from Palame show, the implementation of government policies was far less rigorous in peripheral areas, as was the state's military oppression (cf. Englund 2002; Lubkemann

2008). Yet it was precisely in these peripheral areas where Renamo initially gained most support. In the early years, most peasants probably intended to avoid *both* parties. However, such strategies became increasingly dangerous, as competition over the control of the population grew and both belligerents treated civilians from outside their zone of control as supporters of the enemy, who were to be captured and often killed (cf. Lubkemann 2005:497). Thus, soon after independence, a situation emerged in Maringue in which civilians were forced to align themselves either with the Frelimo government or with the Renamo rebels.

3.4 Renamo occupation: Liberation or destruction

Maringue would eventually become one of the first and longest-held areas occupied by Renamo. After several attempts, it was probably sometime in 1982 that Renamo was able to capture the main village from the FAM and local militias, of whom some were killed and others fled the town (Jelínek 2004:499). Pai Denzja, an elderly pastor and known Frelimo member, whom I referred to in the introduction, recalled the day that Renamo combatants attacked Maringue town. He said there was heavy shooting near his house along one of Maringue's main roads. He and his family hid near the Nhamapaza River before leaving the district all together:

> From that day on, the war was here and there were no good things anymore. Everything was bad, bad, bad. They caught people here, the *guerrilheiros* of Renamo, when they came here. They took men and women. "We have to kill one" [they said]. Like that they opened a zone [*abrir uma zona*]. My sister was killed. There in Subue, do you know Subue? That huge tree there where the people hold meetings? [I nodded.] It was right there that they slit my sister's throat.

In relating this story, Pai Dezja did not describe the incident but also enacted it, using gestures to show how the soldiers had held her against the tree and murdered her. Then he enacted the killing of another man and demonstrated how a Renamo combatant raped a woman, while she was lying on top of her husband.[61] According to Pai Denzja, Renamo used such acts of violence to communicate to the people that Renamo had arrived and had "opened the zone" – "a way of saying 'we are here, the war came here. Those who are not on our side will be killed.'" Pai Denzja's statement resonates with Grossman's (1995:207) assertion that "one of the most obvious and blatant benefits of atrocity," namely that it "quite simply scares the hell out of people. The raw horror

61 This is a common story often told to underline the brutality of Renamo's atrocities (Nordstrom 1997). It is likely that Pai Denzja did not personally witness this.

and savagery of those who murder and abuse cause people to flee, hide, and defend themselves feebly, and often their victims respond with mute passivity."

Renamo's violence has been described as "grotesque" (Nordstrom 1997:171), "savage," and "mindless" (Weinstein 2007). Yet such characterizations disregard how violence is a social act that is historically situated and endowed with meaning (Whitehead 2004:9). Renamo's use of violence was not mindless or indiscriminate, at least not in Maringue. Batista, an *antigo combatente* in Frelimo's anti-colonial struggle, said he fled in 1983 when Renamo arrived because "people of Frelimo did not survive. They were killed and decapitated and their heads were put on poles."[62] The message of terror was thus directed against individuals related to the Frelimo party and government (see also Hanlon 1996:15). Such atrocities terrified everyone and forced people to adhere to Renamo control. However, this does not render these acts of violence meaningless, but rather highlights that such violence was understood in a certain political context and was historically and culturally shaped.

Not all narratives about Renamo's arrival involved violence. In more remote areas, where Renamo did not clash with government soldiers, the rebels seemed to have simply "appeared" at a certain moment in a peaceful manner. Silvano, a peasant from Macoco, a remote rural area of Maringue, said he had first heard of Renamo through radio broadcast on *A Voz da Africa Livre* (The Voice of a Free Africa) in the late 1970s.[63] However, it was not until 1983 that Renamo combatants arrived in Macoco. Silvano remembered thinking,

> "So these are the ones that have liberated the zone." And then we lived with them. There was no war. Renamo and the people had good ways of living with each other. When they felt hungry they came to ask for food. They came to my house as well. I gave them food; they asked in a very sentimental [polite] way.

Silvano was fairly indifferent toward Renamo; he had been unafraid, slightly curious, and generally willing to help the rebels. Perhaps at times there was some force involved when Renamo combatants asked for food, but in general they did not seem to have made a big impression on him. It is notable that Silvano referred to Renamo's arrival as a "liberation," as the same words were used by Elias about Palame, who described Renamo's arrival as followed:

> Everybody liked it very much. We stayed with Renamo and they began to implement the *régulo*, the *sapanda*. When a zone was liberated, Renamo

62 Interview Batista Cerveja, Maringue, 27/06/09.

63 *Voz da Africa Livre* was based in Southern Rhodesia and run by Orlando Cristina, a former Portuguese military officer who had close ties to Renamo (Hall and Young 1997; Weinstein 2007:72)

> returned the permission to practice religion. This message was received very well, but only in the liberated zones.

Elias was referring here to Renamo's common practice of reversing the policies of Frelimo that were largely disliked by the peasantry, such as the abolishment of religion and of the *régulo*. As mentioned previously, by this point Elias had become quite disillusioned with Frelimo, and up until today he seems to sympathize with Renamo.

The striking differences between the accounts of Pai Denzja from Maringue village, Silvano from Macoco, and Elias from Palame show that Renamo's arrival was met with much more resistance in Maringue than in remote rural areas that were already deserted by the government or where its presence was never effective. This may explain why the rebels used more terror tactics in towns than in rural zones (see also Finnegan 1992). It is hard to believe, however, that people were overjoyed about Renamo's arrival, as the rebels looted, raped, burned houses, and forcibly recruited people for battle and porter duty. Nevertheless, many people, similar to Silvano, talked about Renamo in noncritical terms.

But what these varying accounts make even more apparent are differences in people's interpretations of the war and of Renamo's nature. Both Elias and the pastor in Macoco used the word "liberated" to refer to Renamo's arrival, evoking the image of Frelimo's liberated zones during the anti-colonial war. In contrast, Pai Denzja regarded Renamo as a destructive, evil force. When I asked him who the Renamo soldiers were, he started to lecture me on the Portuguese military and how they trained *Grupos Especiais* (special groups) that were used by the "whites" to attack Mozambique after independence. These stories show the diversity of narratives about the war even within Maringue. These variations are embedded in people's wartime alliances, Pai Denzja for example left the district with his family and traveled to a refugee camp in Malawi, where they spent the rest of the war years. Elias, meanwhile stayed in Palame and participated actively in Renamo's administrative structure. However, Pai Denzja's, Elias', and other people's wartime stories were also shaped by their current political affiliations, which I will delve into toward the end of this chapter. Here I have hoped to show that people's narratives are, as Malkki (1995a:104) observed, highly politically colored, historically situated, and culturally constructed. And it is such narratives that are meaningful and it is these that people act upon.

3.5 Under Renamo control

From 1985 onwards, Maringue became a "Renamo control area," in the words of Gersony (1988), or a "liberated zone," in the words of Renamo veterans, echoing Frelimo's use

of the term "*zonas libertadas*" during the anti-colonial struggle.[64] Renamo's presence in the district became stronger after the rebels' main base in Gorongosa was destroyed in 1986 and re-established in Maringue. The district's dense forests, two two airstrips, sparse population, and general remoteness made it an attractive location for the rebel movement (Jelínek 2004:500). The area came under attack from Frelimo government troops several times, but the thick forests and forcefully mined roads proved too much of a challenge for the FAM's heavy vehicles and cumbersome military apparatus (Jelínek 2004). The main threat for Renamo in Maringue seems to have come from the air, as Zimbabwean planes bombed the area on several occasions in 1986 and 1987. But neither Zimbabwean nor FAM forces were able to penetrate the district.

It was in places like Maringue that Renamo erected some kind of administrative structure and provided a certain level of service delivery (Manning 2002:78; Hultman 2009; Vines 1991). In its occupied areas, Renamo tried to replace the state by mimicking it in various ways. Renamo's objectives in these areas have been understood in different ways. Vines (1991:91) described them as "production areas" for "exploitation." Weinstein (2007:186) and Hall and Young (1997:125), meanwhile, have argued that these "liberated zones" were part of Renamo's strategy to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the international community in the run-up to peace negotiations. In contrast, Hultman (2009) describes the political agenda of the Renamo leadership as becoming more pronounced over time. This interpretation was confirmed by some of the Renamo leaders I spoke to in Maringue, who expressed their wartime ambitions relating civil administration. This does not exclude, however, that Renamo's campaign to gain support from the population by providing services was also a public for bolstering their international image.

Given the accounts of *Maringuenses* about the period of Renamo occupation, I conclude that the organization of the rebels' civilian administration consisted of a rather changeable and unpredictable array of bureaucratic and administrative structures that differed radically over time and space, even within Maringue (see also Alexander 1997:8-9; Finnegan 1992:62-63; Vines 1991). Furthermore, it cannot be overlooked that Renamo depended on the population for food, porters, and other services, which were largely obtained through the use of force (Finnegan 1992; Weinstein 2007). For most *Maringuenses*, Renamo became the most powerful player "in town," which meant they had to position themselves in relation to Renamo's volatile and violent social and political order.

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64 The Gersony Report for the US State Department (1988) provided an analysis of Renamo's conduct in different areas that fell into three categories: "tax," "destruction," and "control." This distinction has been used by several other scholars (Hall and Young 1997; Vines 1991), most of whom claim that in tax and control areas there was some support for Renamo, while in destruction areas Renamo was generally regarded with antagonism. See McGregor (1998) and Thomashousen (2001) for for criticisms of the Gersony Report.

Collaboration: Blurring the lines between civilians and combatants

For lack of a better alternative, I have been using the terms "civilians" and "population" to distinguish inhabitants of Maringue from the armed actors, Renamo and the FAM. Yet the use of such a three-way analysis (civilians, Renamo, and FAM) is somewhat deceptive for at least two reasons. First of all, it portrays the conflict as a clear-cut war between two identifiable belligerents. This obscures the fluctuating and various entanglements of armed actors with civilians involved in the conflict, as described by Nordstrom (1997:46-62), among others. She identifies a range of actors involved in Mozambique's civil war, including bandits, local militias, splinter groups, resistance movements, and civilian collaborators, to demonstrate the difficulties in clearly distinguishing who the armed actors are. Second, a three-way analysis does not account for the blurring of the categories of civilians and combatants, victims and perpetrators. The abducted child soldier is a well-known example of how the categories of victim and perpetrator collide. But what about the chief who held a grudge toward Frelimo and therefore collaborated with Renamo, only to find himself obliged to participate in the implementation of a violent system of forced labor? Or the hunter who poached animals to please Renamo and feed his children? Or the Renamo combatants who killed a childless couple accused of witchcraft? And how do we categorize the militia member who defended his village? These are examples of the blurring of the categories of civilians and combatants, illustrating that the involvement of civilians in Renamo and other armed actors was a layered phenomenon.

Several scholars have described political culture in central Mozambique using the notion of "disengagement" (Azarya 1988 in Lubkemann 2005:502), which connotes the avoidance of central authority (see e.g. Alexander 1997; Finnegan 1992; Nordstrom 1997; Vines 1991:100). While there is no doubt that many peasants in Maringue would have preferred to have been "left alone," in various situations they were forced to "collaborate" with the state or other armed actors and often tried to "make the best of it" (see also Lubkemann 2005). But there were also many civilians who actively sought the patronage and power that came with being associated with "big" political actors, such as the colonial government and, later, the Frelimo and Renamo administrations. A focus on the avoidance of authority thus disregards people's relations to powerful actors and the ways in which they used these actors to their advantage. It therefore makes more sense to analyze the positions of civilians in relation to such actors in terms of social navigations and, more specifically, different degrees of collaboration (Kalyvas 2006:45, 103). This involves a dynamic form of support that is not necessarily based on ideology, but that is pragmatic and changeable over time. Collaboration may be regarded as "a combination of weak preferences and opportunism, both of which are subject to survival considerations" (Lubkemann 2005:500). I regard collaboration as involving pragmatic decisions made by people in order to save their job, house, family, and, above all, their lives.

Given the above, the inhabitants of Maringue should not be regarded as "the grass" downtrodden by the fighting of elephants, as they were very much involved with the armed groups in a variety of ways. Neither should they be characterized as "trapped" in either a government-held or a Renamo area. Civilians had many possibilities for mobility. Here it is important to underline that the war lasted for over a decade and that its intensity was, for the most part, relatively low (see also Lubkemann 2008). As the war dragged on, people continued to travel in order to visit family members, pay respect to ancestral spirits, or search for work or trade opportunities. Pai Evaristo, for example, recalled making a trip from Maringue to Malawi while carrying a sewing machine on his head. In Maringue such a device was not useful, because people hardly had any clothes, and no money to pay for his sewing services. But in Malawi he could sell it or trade it for food. Several church representatives told me that they went to Malawi to get Bibles for the churchgoers in Maringue. There were many people who went back and forth between Maringue and the refugee camps just across the border, which was a two-day walk (see also Englund 2001; Lubkemann 2005, 2008).

It is important to note that people's experience of Renamo's occupation and their possibilities for successful maintaining relationships with the rebels varied along the lines of age, gender, political preference, status, location, and role in the conflict. In looking to explore the variety of interactions it is important to keep in mind that children, young people, and women were more likely to be subjected to violence and had had fewer opportunities to become part of Renamo's administrative structure, as elder men of considerable status generally occupied positions of authority. I present three groups of civilians and their collaborations with Renamo, which exemplify the variety of interactions between the rebels and the inhabitants of Maringue.

First, there were people who actively collaborated with Renamo, by partaking in the rebels' administrative structures. From the outset, Renamo aligned itself with *régulos* and other traditional authorities, which had been abolished by the Frelimo government. This constituted an ideological springboard for Renamo, but also offered a pragmatic solution for control, as *régulos* formed a readymade authority structure that was understood and respected by most civilians (see also Alexander 1997:8; Geffray 1990; Vines 1991; Weinstein 2007:181-184). Less well documented in the literature are the linkages that Renamo forged with religious leaders, especially those from Catholic and other Christian churches.[65] Pastor Samatere, for example, spent the war in Phango, Maringue, where he established the Assembly of God (*Assembleia de Deus*). He recalled that in 1987, he and other religious and traditional leaders were summoned to Casa Banana, Renamo's central base in Gorongosa, for a meeting with the Renamo leadership. The Renamo leadership was concerned with the large number of people leaving the

65 As will be further analyzed in chapter 7, Renamo encouraged the establishment of Catholic and other Christian churches. Combatants often attended church services and even brought churches to Maringue.

occupied territories in and around Maringue and demanded explanations, as Pastor Samatere explained:

> We told everything. That they [Renamo combatants] took women, they recruited people for *liga* [forced porter duty] when we were praying in church, they abused people, kidnapped children, and that people were afraid to travel because during the trip they could run into Renamo combatants and then they had to enter the *liga*. The leaders of Renamo said they knew nothing about these things and were surprised. They started this system to denounce the abuse of soldiers. People could send a letter to the local Renamo base with the facts and then the base would take measures. The soldiers were punished, beaten. Besides that they implemented the *bloques* [middle men between Renamo and the population]. They regulated the *liga*, appointing people to work in shifts.

Pastor Samatere thus recalled a shift in Renamo's conduct from an undisciplined toward a more controlled organization of forced labor through civilian authorities, called *blocos* or *bloques*.[66] These middlemen were intended to reduce combatants' contact with and abuse of the civilian population (see also Weinstein 2007:184-185). Additionally, Pastor Samatere's words show that community leaders could mediate between the Renamo leadership and the population. At the same time, these authorities were also a medium of control, as they often took up the roles of *blocos*. While many, such as Pastor Samatere, welcomed this system with relief, others resented it, comparing it to colonial practices of using local authorities for the recruitment of forced labor. The blocos exemplify Renamo's multiple 'faces.' It was thus not a singular entity; rather, it constituted of combatants – some violence and harassing, others benign – but also by commanders, *politicos*, and local representatives, such as *regulos* and *blocos*.

From 1984 onwards, a second group increasingly participated in Renamo's structure of service delivery, namely higher-educated youngsters, who were trained as teachers, nurses, and politicians (Jelínek 2004:501; Manning 2002:79-80). Pai Evaristo was one of these nurses. Before the rebels arrived in Maringue he had left the district for Beira as he feared recruitment by Renamo. However, when he returned in 1989 to check on his family members, he was forcibly recruited to become a Renamo combatant. But his fate changed when his commander found out that Evaristo had enjoyed four years of education in Beira. Pai Evaristo was sent to Casa Banana, for three months to learn the basics of medicine. After competing his training, he provided rudimentary healthcare

66 One informant referred to this cargo by the term *madiesa*. Nevertheless, *bloco* was the more common term for individuals who were in charge of collecting food from the population for Renamo. Other scholars have referred to such individuals as *mujibas* (or *majubas*) (Finnegan 1992:67; Minter 1989:14), but as Vines (1991) observes, the *mujibas* were actually informers working for Renamo, who controlled the population and were often compelled to do Renamo's "dirty work."

for civilians in Maringue, which he continues to do informally to this day. Thus for the teachers and nurses deployed by Renamo it provided safety, income, training, and a career perspective.

But there were few people occupying such posts within Renamo in Maringue. Most people's relationships with Renamo, fall into a third category, that of "passive collaboration," as they contributed (either voluntarily or more often involuntarily) to the Renamo military and administrative structure. Inhabitants were forced to contribute food to Renamo either to combatants passing by their houses or to civilian authorities such as the *blocos*. While some civilians and former combatants recalled that this was initially not a large problem for civilians in terms of food supplies, over time this became a heavy burden for peasants, particularly after severe draughts in 1990-1991, when civilians and combatants literally starved. The Red Cross distributed humanitarian aid throughout the region, but this was often stolen from civilians by hungry soldiers. To make matters worse, there was also an outbreak of cholera, resulting in a situation in which "people were dying like chickens," as one Renamo veteran commented. During this period, many civilians and Renamo combatants left Maringue for the refugee camps in Malawi.

An increased demand for food was not the only strain that Renamo placed on the population. The rebels also forced people to serve in the "*liga*" (derived from the verb *ligar*, to connect), the system of mandatory porter work through which Renamo transported food and looted goods over long distances.[67] The *liga* was for many *Maringuenses* the defining experience of war. Aida, a woman from Maringue in her forties, explained how she had been recruited for "*liga*" several times:

> We had to walk in the night, carrying. During the day we rested. People got weaker and weaker. They were hungry, sleepy, and thirsty. Sometimes they fell. The person that fell was killed with the bayonet. Not with a bullet, that made too much noise. The others had to carry even more load then. Even though my husband was murdered in the other war [war of independence], this war was much heavier.

Aida recalled her time in the *liga* as a terrifying and humiliating experience. In the same interview, she remembered being stripped of her clothing while Renamo combatants laughed at her. Aida did not directly mention sexual abuse, but she and others confirmed that Renamo combatants often raped women during the *liga* (see also Igreja et al. 2008).

67 In Gorongosa people referred to the porter service as *chibalo*, a reference to the forced labor of the Portuguese plantation system (Igreja 2007).

Other *Maringuenses* also recalled that the elderly and exhausted were left behind to die and that crying babies were killed because they made too much noise.[68]

The provision of food to Renamo and service in the *liga* were largely forced and violence experiences. Nonetheless, *Maringuenses* recalled these practices often in terms of "work." Given that the colonial administration and later the Frelimo government had also imposed forced labor of various kinds upon the population, Renamo's methods was probably not regarded as a novel or surprising experience. Yet Renamo rule differed from that of the colonial government and Frelimo in the degree of intimacy that existed between the local population the rebels.

Settling local conflicts

Collaboration between civilians and Renamo was not usually based on shared objectives, yet the outcomes of such relationships could be beneficial for both parties. Renamo's strategic reasons for collaborating with the population were based on the rebels' need for control, food, and manpower. Meanwhile, civilians aligned themselves with Renamo combatants for security, among other things, but they also used such relationships to settle their own conflicts. Marco, who was a young boy during the war years, recalled how Renamo combatants intervened in a conflict within his father's family:

> My grandmother died; she was murdered. Eaten by the *padrinhos* [godparents, in this case an aunt and uncle] of my father.[69] That couple could not have children of their own and wanted to take the children of my grandparent. They all went to a *curandeiro*, who saw what happened, and then the *padrinhos* confessed they had killed my grandmother. It was during the war of sixteen years [the civil war], and when they walked home, they encountered Renamo soldiers on their path. "What are you doing here?" they asked. My father explained that they were returning from the house of a *curandeiro* and that these people had killed his mother and had also attempted to kill his father. "So it is you that are finishing people here!" said the soldiers, and they started to hit them. The *padrinhos* confessed; they admitted that they had killed her [the grandmother], but said that they had only eaten her leg. The soldiers were beating and beating them, until they died.

While it is impossible to know whether Carlo's father expected such fatal consequences when he accused his *padrinhos* of witchcraft in front of Renamo soldiers, Renamo was

68 Interview with Pai Dezja, 08/05/2008, Maringue. For similar stories about the *liga*, see Igreja (2007), Nordstrom (1997), and Finnegan (1992).

69 The reference to "eating" is literal and suggests that this conflict involved accusations of witchcraft, as witches are believed to eat their victims. Witchcraft dynamics will be further analyzed in chapter 4.

generally known to act firmly against *nfiti* (witches). As Matateo, a former Renamo commander stationed in Maringue during the war, explained, "In those times of war there were not many *feitiçeiros* [witches]. When somebody caught a *feitiçeiro* he [or she] was punished severely. Now there are more *feitçeiros*, because now they only hold them for a short time [in prison] and punish little." Renamo's severe treatment of alleged witches may have been a means to gain popular support, as *nfiti* are deeply feared by most Mozambicans. At the same time, as we will see in chapters 4 and 6, belief in witchcraft and spiritual beings play a major role in motivating people's actions, including those of Renamo combatants. It is quite likely that Renamo combatants were themselves afraid of witches. The remark "So it is you that are finishing people here!" may also reflect Renamo's preoccupation with the "decrease" in the population, who the rebels needed as a workforce. This could be another reason for their brutal handling of the alleged witches.

More generally, Marco's story demonstrates how war can become an opportunity to settle old scores (see also Englund 2002; Kalyvas 2006; Kriger 1992; Lubkemann 2005, 2008). These local conflict dynamics provide more insight into people's wartime behavior than the larger strategies and actions of the armed actors. (Lubkemann 2005). Relationships between Renamo combatants and civilians must also be situated in dynamics "on the ground" that are shaped by cultural understandings of power and violence and by community and family conflicts, such as in the case above (cf. Englund 2002; Lubkemann 2005). Such observations call for a more nuanced perspective on the experience of armed conflict, one that gives more weight to local variations within a particular social and cultural context. Furthermore, a focus on the different, often overlapping modes of collaboration defies images of civilians as mere "refugees" or "survivors" (see also Englund 2002; Lubkemann 2008:19, 2005; Mallki 1995a). These modes draw attention to people's various practices of social navigation by forging alliances, changing location, and making the best of a situation of war. Furthermore, they show the different layers of collaboration and the variety of relationships between Renamo and the population in Maringue, which are based not only on force but also on other factors.

"Renamo, that was us"

Categorical distinctions between civilians and ex-combatants are further blurred by Renamo's recruitment practices. Renamo recruited boys, young men, and – to a lesser extent – girls and young women to fill their ranks as fighters. "Renamo, that was us. We saw all the boys go with the rebels," the *régulo* of Palame remarked, referring to the fact that his fourteen-year-old son and many other youngsters from Palame were recruited by the rebels and fought with them for many years. For the *régulo*, this gave Renamo a rather familiar character.

Many people referred to the armed conflict as a "war of brothers," often metaphorically alluding to the fact that the Renamo and Frelimo combatants were all Mozambicans. But for some families the "war of brothers" became a reality. In Maringue there were several families that had one son who was living in Beira during the war and was recruited by the FAM, and another son living in Maringue who was recruited by Renamo. I heard stories of families who continued to be politically divided after the war, but in most cases such situations were dealt with through a mutual acceptance that one's involvement in the war had been out of one's control. Cerveja Batista, an ex-FAM soldier, found out after the war that his brother had been fighting with Renamo. When I asked him about his feelings toward his brother, his response was typically stoical: "We could have encountered each other in battle, yes. But war is war and we were both forced." This resonates with how most ex-Renamo combatants described their recruitment (i.e. in terms of force, as discussed in chapter 2), but also with the fact that that military recruitment by either Renamo or the FAM was inevitable for young men in the 1980s.

The "familiar" character of Renamo was further strengthened by marriages between Renamo combatants and girls and women from Maringue. In chapter 5 I will delve further into the variety of relationships between male and female combatants and between male combatants and women from Maringue. Renamo recruited women and girls not only for combat but also to serve as concubines and domestic servants at Renamo's military base, where they were also subject to sexual abuse and rape. But in areas such as Maringue, where large numbers of troops were stationed more or less permanently for many years, Renamo soldiers also married local women and paid *lobolo*, the bride price. This meant the combatants engaged in relationships and obligations with their family-in-law as well. In such cases, combatants could offer protection to the family and supply them with goods and food, although some ex-combatants recalled how they expected their wife's family to take care of them in times of food scarcity at Renamo's bases. Thus, in Maringue, Renamo combatants were frequently people's sons, sons-in-law, daughters, neighbors, and so on. Some people's interactions with Renamo were fleeting, limited to those occasions when combatants came to one's house to ask for food; but many relationships were of a very personal and lasting nature.

The relationships between *Maringuenses* and Renamo combatants were thus shaped not only by fear, force, and violence but also by ambiguity and intimacy. Again, we see here how wartime social life is informed by violence but perhaps even more by other factors, such as local conflicts and marriages. This may result in a range of different understandings of the war and its combatants, not as mere perpetrators, but in more ambiguous terms. This resonates with what Argenti-Pillen's (2003:199) observed about postwar reconciliation in Southern Sri Lanka, where the "strategic ambiguity of truth" discouraged public condemnation of soldiers who fought in the government army during the civil war and promoted their accommodation in the community. The ambiguity of the categories of victim and perpetrator, civilian and soldier, may, Argenti-

Pillen (2003) argues, facilitate coexistence among people who have found themselves on different sides of an armed conflict (see also Macek 2005). Similarly, in Maringue civilians' ambiguous and intimate understandings of veterans and different degrees of collaboration over a period of more than a decade contributed to a situation that discouraged any simplistic condemnation of Renamo combatants. It is in the context of such understandings of Renamo that one must view the postwar relationships between Renamo veterans, the Renamo party, and a large part of the population in Maringue.

3.6 "Those who lived with Renamo had the idea of the *guerrilheiro*"

After the signing of the General Peace Accords (GPA) in 1992, the village of Maringue literally had to be rebuilt from scratch. The village was deserted and overgrown, the town's few brick buildings had been destroyed, and most of the inhabitants had been relocated to the more remote zones of the district, often in the proximity of Renamo bases. "This was all grass," recalled Pastor Umberto, one of the first civilians who "dared," as he said, to return to Maringue from the refugee camps in Malawi. The main roads to and from the town were heavily mined and littered with the carcasses of armored vehicles, of which some remain to this day. The first to settle in the area were mainly Renamo combatants awaiting demobilization settled in the area. They were followed by people from Renamo's civilian settlements and returning refugees. Access to land was not an issue at the time, as around Maringue town there is fertile fields in abundance. However, rebuilding Maringue physically and socially was a process marked by numerous conflicts and insecurities. In subsequent chapters I will give ample attention to intra-familiar, spiritual, and other kinds of social conflicts. Here, however, I wish to focus on how Maringue's political landscape took shape after the war, a process that was influenced in large part by the patterns of collaboration between political and armed actors and the population.

When I asked Pai Denzja about his return to Maringue from the refugee camps in Malawi, he summarized the postwar situation as follows: "Those who lived with the *guerrilheiros* had the idea of Renamo [shared Renamo's ideas] and those who lived with the government had the idea of the government." I do not think we should interpret the "ideas" to which Pai Denzja refers, in ideological terms, nor can *Maringuenses* be so strictly categorized. Pai Denzja was referring here to a complex entanglement of control, loyalty, and expectations in the context of patronage systems. Kalyvas (2006:124-129) observes that insurgents across many contexts can often count on a certain loyalty of the people they control, because they often offer protection as well as some services. In Maringue such mechanisms probably also played a role in creating a certain loyalty toward Renamo among some *Maringuenses*. Kalyvas' (2006) analysis is focused solely on wartime collaboration and does not take into account what happens when insurgent

groups become political parties after the war. It is my aim to demonstrate that the wartime collaboration of *Maringuenses* with Renamo as a rebel movement also created postwar loyalties and expectations regarding Renamo as a political party.

The postwar loyalty of a great part of Maringue's inhabitants can be explained by Renamo's continuing position of authority in the district. As I showed above, over the course of the war Maringue became a place where the Frelimo government had little or no influence and where Renamo attempted to erect its own governing structures. Renamo's rule continued after the signing of the General Peace Accords (GPA), when it was agreed that Maringue, together with two other districts, Cheringoma and Muanza, would be governed by an administration chosen by Renamo, at least until the first democratic elections. Renamo-appointed administrators governed the district until 1997, through they found it difficult to strike a balance between distributing the limited resources (mainly humanitarian aid), maintaining workable relations with the central Frelimo government, and accommodating the desire of Renamo party members to allocate resources to Renamo sympathizers (Jelínek 2004). Renamo's power base in Maringue was further strengthened by the presence of its presidential guards, an unknown number of armed men who had to guarantee the security of the party's leadership. These combatants are still stationed at an active military base in Maringue.

Maringuenses' postwar loyalty toward Renamo was also shaped by certain expectations of what Renamo as a political party could do for people in the district. People such as Aida and Elias, who lived in Maringue during the war, considered their participation in the *liga* and the food they had provided to Renamo as "work." They and many others expected that Renamo would reward them for their "services." Additionally, Renamo had raised expectations among its nurses, teachers, and politicians by promising them paid jobs after the war (see also Manning 2002:90-91).

The population's support for Renamo was partially materialized in votes. In the first multiparty democratic elections in 1994, Renamo received over ninety per cent of the votes in Maringue district and the party went on to gain the majority of the votes in every election held between 1994 and 2004. (Brito 2000:28-31).[70] While this success was initially attributed to Renamo's intimidation of voters (Jelínek 2004:503) and regarded

70 The first democratic elections in 1994 resulted in an unexpectedly close contest between Frelimo's leader, Chissano, and Renamo's leader, Dhlakama. Renamo won 33.78 percent of the presidential vote and 37.78 percent of the vote for the National Assembly. While Frelimo won the elections with 60 percent of the vote, the results defied the image of Renamo as "armed bandits" and drew attention to the existing support for the movement in rural areas (Manning 2002:170-171). Renamo won a majority of votes in the provinces of Sofala, Manica, Zambezia, Nampula, and Tete, confirming the division of political sympathies along regional lines (Manning 2002:170-171). Renamo's popularity diminished in the 2009 national elections, however, when Renamo received scarcely more than fifteen percent of the vote in Maringue. One of the reasons for this failure was the popularity of a recently founded political party, *Movimiento Democratico de Moçambique* (MDM), headed by the mayor of Beira (website STEA, accessed 30/05/13; De Tollenare 2013).

as so-called captive votes, Renamo's victories in areas that were not under Renamo occupation suggests otherwise (Cahen 1998; Manning 1998). In Maringue Renamo's political popularity can be partially explained with reference to people's expectations and loyalty regarding the party, which may be characterized as dynamics of patronage. In chapters 7 and 8 I will return to the issue of patronage and Big Man dynamics between political parties, ex-combatants, and other supporters. Here, however, I want to focus on how these networks, shaped by wartime collaborations, gave rise to a politically tense postwar political context.

In the wake of the war, Renamo was the "biggest boss" in Maringue, but over time the Frelimo government regained terrain in Renamo-controlled areas. In the period between 1994 and 1996, the Frelimo party tried several times to establish an office in Maringue, but on at least one occasion Frelimo party members were chased out after Renamo combatants set fire to their tents.[71] But from 1997 onwards, the power balance in the district shifted. That year, a nationally (i.e. Frelimo) appointed administrator arrived in Maringue town, and began to establish government institutions, which were based in tents as there were no brick buildings. This administrator was accompanied by a Rapid Intervention Force (*Força de Intervenção Rapida*, FIR), which is to say, riot police. The FIR established a base in the district's main village, which was intended, according to provincial FIR commander Binda, "to make sure the government could do their job. In 1995, 1996, they [Renamo soldiers] did not let the government build. They burned [government constructions] down." The presence of the FIR counterbalanced Renamo's military dominance in the district. From 1997 onward, the Frelimo party gained greater support, especially among civil servants, but also among *Maringuenses*. These included people such as Pai Denzja, who said he and many other returning refugees who were originally from Maringue felt excluded by Renamo, which privileged the people who had "worked" for the rebel organization. This shows that not all *Maringuenses* were "with Renamo" to the same degree. It also calls attention to some of the tensions that persist in the district, which that are closely intertwined with a range of factors related to the war, national politics, extreme daily hardship, and local and personal conflicts.

3.7 "Being with…": Current political affiliations in Maringue

In contemporary Maringue political affiliation remains closely related to people's wartime experiences. People were rarely explicit about their political affiliations and most would probably not describe themselves as "being with" Frelimo, Renamo, or MDM (a new political party that rose to prominence during my fieldwork in 2009). For this reason, it took me a while to discover that political affiliation was one of the most

71 Interview with secretary of Frelimo, 26/06/09, Maringue.

important social markers that people used to classify each other. "They are *matsangaissas*, they are confused," "he is with them," "she is with the administration, but her husband…," and "he sold himself to Frelimo" are just a few examples of how people categorized their fellow *Maringuenses*. Such knowledge was often transmitted tacitly, with a nod or a wave in the direction of Maringue's administration (to signify a Frelimo supporter) or Renamo's military base (to imply a Renamo supporter or armed Renamo combatant).

These categories, which were at once political and social, were often based on people's collaborations during the war, but were at the same time intertwined with people's personal and family histories. Generally speaking, it seemed that most people who stayed in Maringue after 1985, were "with Renamo," while most people who had fled the district, especially before or around 1985, were "with Frelimo." However, there were many exceptions to this observation. Some people seemed "easy" to place in political categories, such as civil servants, who were all supposed to be more or less "with Frelimo" since their jobs depended on it. Yet on one occasion, I heard several civil servants talking about a Renamo meeting they had attended, and I met others during an MDM gathering. Young people were more often affiliated with Frelimo, but there were also militant Renamo supporters among them. Fathers and sons too, could be on different "sides." The overwhelming majority of Renamo veterans "were still with" the former rebels, yet there were some noticeable exceptions of veterans who "switched sides."

Yet Maringue cannot be depicted as a segregated community, in which people with different political affiliations lived parallel lives, avoiding or in permanent conflict with the other. For example, Window Coffee and his son, Lino, whom I introduced above, "belonged" to opposing political parties. Lino, who moved to Malawi during the war to avoid being recruited by Renamo and the FAM, had joined Frelimo upon his return to Mozambique. His father, in contrast, had spent the war years in Maringue, where he became a Renamo hero for killing a FAM commander who had abducted his wife. During a conversation with father and son, Lino left me and Window alone for a moment. Window said in English that he "hated Frelimo" and that he would vote Renamo. His face contorted with fury when I mentioned his son's job with the Frelimo party, but he did not say anything else. When I cautiously probed Lino about his father's political ideas, he dismissed them as an old man's foolish thoughts. This illustrates that different political affiliations did not necessarily cause schisms in families and that people who were associated with different political parties interacted with each other on a daily basis. In chapter 7 I will examine the content and quality of such interactions, in the final section of this chapter I want to highlight those particular situations and relationships in which knowledge about people's political affiliations was critical and could even be a matter of life and death.

3.8 Maringue: "The kingdom of confusion"

The occasional violence in Maringue must be understood in relation to the district's war history, but is shaped to an even greater degree by postwar characteristics particular to the district, such as the presence of a Renamo military base (which contained armed combatants and an unknown quantity of weapons), the presence of a permanently stationed riot police force (FIR), a strong Renamo party, and a militant Frelimo party. These actors were a recurring theme in *Maringuenses*' narrations about political polarization, violent incidents, the lack of development, and the nature of democracy in Maringue.

In the General Peace Accords it was stipulated that Renamo could maintain a certain number of "presidential guards" to guarantee the safety of the party's leadership. These guards were supposed to demobilize after the 1994 elections, but this never happened. Renamo has an unknown number of military bases across the country where these "presidential guards" are stationed, of which the largest base is located in Maringue. The base is maintained by the Renamo party leadership in Maputo, which provides supplies and pays the guards a monthly subsidy. Estimates of the number of Renamo soldiers present at the base fluctuate between 180 (FIR commander Binda), 500 (Renamo commander) and 50 (Jelínek 2004). The base also stores weaponry, but little is known about the kind and quantity of these weapons.

In Maringue, the Renamo base is a politically sensitive subject. People would often talk about it in covert terms or with a subtle nod toward a certain point southeast of the village, where the base is apparently located. Most people seemed to know exactly who the Renamo combatants were. Several months into my fieldwork, an ex-Renamo combatant pointed out several individuals who were working at the base. Some of those he mentioned were my neighbors. All of them were living in the village with their families. They also worked their land, shopped in the market, and drank in the village bars. Most *Maringuenses* did not fear these men, but considered them as fellow inhabitants of the district.

Most of the research participants, whether affiliated with Frelimo or Renamo, downplayed the importance of the base by saying "that is their [Renamo combatants'] area," "there are no problems here," "you see how calm we live here," and "they are our neighbors." Perhaps these were attempts to make a visitor feel comfortable, or a means to steer the conversation toward a different topic. It seemed that my research participants did not appreciate too much interest in the base from an outsider like myself. As I explained in the introduction to this book, I never visited the base or made an explicit effort to talk to people currently working there, as I was afraid to endanger the research project, and some of the research participants. Most of the time, the base was something enigmatic to most people in Maringue. It was "out there" and external from their daily lives.

But there were a few instances when Renamo soldiers left the base and roamed the village, dressed in their dark green uniforms and displaying their weaponry. One day in November 2008, on the eve the municipal elections, armed Renamo soldiers patrolled the village and set up several roadblocks on the main routes into the village. That night they stopped a car driven by a group of *antigos combatentes*, who were then heavily beaten. This was reason enough for the riot police, the FIR, to unpack their weaponry. Eventually, the FIR and Renamo combatants faced off across the small river that runs through Maringue town. Shops closed, people avoided the market, and the village became ghost town.

People reacted to the incident in very different ways. Some were excited about the "action." My friend Thomas, a former Renamo commander, was deeply disappointed that I had just missed this incident, because I had left for Canxixe, a rural town in the north of the district. Thomas described the standoff vividly:

> They were standing on both sides of the creek, pointing their guns, calling the other one's bluff. "Start shooting then," they yelled. "When you shoot first," the other replied, and so on. It was a pity that you were not there. You could have taken pictures and interviewed them.

Thomas felt Maringue was the center of political dynamics in Mozambique at that moment. He and several other people, including civil servants, felt a sense of pride about the district's infamous reputation; living in such a place made them feel courageous.

The incident left other people in Maringue terrified, however. The sight of armed men in uniform walking around the village brought back traumatic memories of the war. Parafino, one of my neighbors, was quite indifferent to the armed Renamo soldiers patrolling the village, but his wife had panicked. Almost as a joke, he recounted how he had come home the day of the near confrontation and, upon entering his hut in the dark, had gone to put his motorbike helmet on the table, only to find that it had disappeared. On a second glance, he saw that his wife had gathered together all their furniture and clothing. She had been preparing to leave Maringue with the entire family, never to return, but Parafino eventually convinced her to stay. While no Mozambican in Maputo would ever consider a renewed armed conflict between Frelimo and Renamo a realistic possibility (at the time of fieldwork), in Maringue people were not so convinced, especially during such episodes.

Violent incidents and (near) confrontations were particularly common in the run up to national or municipal elections. In the months prior to the 2009 elections, both the Frelimo party and the Renamo party used violence and threats against their opponents' supporters or the "hovering" electorate. The Frelimo campaign was accompanied by a *grupo de shoque* (shock group), a nationwide phenomenon consisting mainly of young men with sticks. In Maringue this group beat up several people, such as a woman with

a Renamo *capulana* fastened around her waist. A former Renamo combatant said the *régulo* of his area had obliged the people living in his *regulado* to come to a Frelimo rally, threatening those who did not attend with beatings. Renamo campaigners were also reported to use violence, as at least one Frelimo official was beaten up, and Renamo members were accused of having burned the huts of several Frelimo members.

Such incidents did not surprise Maringue's inhabitants. My friend Laura, a primary school teacher and Frelimo member, told me in June 2009 that she was saving for a zinc roof. "I want to have it placed before the [electoral] campaigns begin in September," she explained. "A zinc roof does not easily catch fire." Laura was worried that people would set fire to her house. In such a situation it is not surprising that people regard "democracy" and "politics" as highly troubling things that are better off avoided. When we talked about the near confrontation between Renamo and the FIR in October 2008, Vinte, a former FAM soldier, sighted and said: "I feel bad for my children that they have to grow up in these times of democracy."

The presence of the base and the related political tension were often cited as reasons for the district's lack of development. People blamed the presence of the base for Maringue's exclusion from the nationwide electricity network, for the lack of donor projects, and for the shortage of better houses (*casas melhoradas*), constructed with brick walls and zinc ceilings (i.e. as opposed to wattle-and-daub walls and thatched roofs, the most common dwelling design in these parts).[72] Pai Denzja was one of the people who contemplated building a *casa melhorada*. He proudly showed me the zinc he had bought in Beira, yet at the same time he did not seem entirely convinced of this plan. "I sometimes think that it may repeat, another war," he said. "We suffered a lot in this war. Now I see people constructing houses, maybe I'll be able to construct a house like that." But later in the conversation, he said that he associated the "armed men" (i.e. Renamo combatants) with the threat of war, which makes him reconsider his plans to buildt a "better house." "I will lose again," he explained. "I do not want to lose my material [for construction]. At the first sound of a gun, *takatakatakataka*, I will leave everything and I will go to Zimbabwe or Malawi." Returning to Malawi was not what worried *Pai* Denzja, as his experience of living in the refugee camp was quite positive. His main worry was losing the construction materials in which he had invested, because they were costly and which he had had shipped all the way from Beira.

The idea that development in Maringue was "held back" because of the base was widespread, but there were also people, especially Renamo sympathizers, who turned the argument on its head. They claimed that the "government" or "Frelimo" used the base as an excuse for not investing in Maringue and not allocating "donor projects" to the

72 This dynamic is not unique to Maringue. Englund (2002:140) observed that in Chitima (Tete province) the returning refugees were reluctant to build iron-roofed brick houses.

district. This shows how "development," and more specifically the allocation of projects, was regarded as a highly politicized process.

This view is not unique to Maringue, as the politicization of development and violence during electoral campaigns is a nationwide pattern. What is particular to Maringue is the presence of Renamo men-in-arms and the FIR. It is not necessarily these armed actors who use violence; they are in fact quite reluctant to do so, as the near-confrontation described above illustrates. Rather, their presence seems to set political actors on edge. In this context, violence and threats are shaped not only by the Renamo – Frelimo divide but also, and perhaps even more so, by personal and local dynamics. In Maringue, for example, it mattered greatly *who* was occupying a particular position of power. Between fieldwork periods in 2008 and 2009, Andre, a former Renamo combatant, became Frelimo's first secretary. Many Renamo members, but also less politically engaged people, regarded Andre's appointment as a worrisome development. My research assistant Adão, said "he has to hit people, otherwise they will think he is still with Renamo. He has to hit his friends. And by doing that he makes Frelimo dirty." Under Andre's leadership in the years 2008 to 2010, Maringue's Frelimo party was generally said to have become more militant and aggressive.

The violent incidents framed as "electoral violence" often also involved personal conflicts. During one night in September 2010, eighteen huts belonging to alleged Renamo supporters were set on fire. In addition, the hut of Felix, a carpenter, and his family was barricaded. Fortunately, the family was able to escape with the help of neighbors, who destroyed one of the walls of the hut. The attack was generally believed to be the work of Frelimo militants, as all the victims were Renamo members, including Felix. Yet Felix believed that the burning of his hut was not politically motivated. He suspected that a rival carpenter, with whom he had had a dispute, set the hut on fire and barricaded the door. Violent incidents are thus not singularly interpreted in terms of the conflict between Renamo and Frelimo, and are not simply labeled as "electoral violence"; rather, these incidents are experienced and interpreted in a specific political, social, and cultural context.

3.9 Conclusion

Following an understanding of war as "a social condition" (Lubkemann 2008), this chapter analyzed how wartime social life is shaped not only by violence and force but also, and perhaps even more so, by other pursuits and relationships. More specifically, I showed how *Maringuenses* navigated the limiting and dangerous context of colonial rule, the liberation struggle, and the civil war by forging alliances, collaborating, and even incorporating armed actors into their families. It was such relationships, which were not necessarily based only on violence and force, that blurred the lines between

civilians and combatants and shaped the postwar positions of Renamo as a political party and of Renamo veterans.

In the introduction to this dissertation I expressed my uneasiness with the terms "reintegration" and "recipient community" as key concepts in describing ex-combatants' trajectories in civil life. Both of these notions presuppose a return to a status quo, implying that the social life and military life are two separate spheres. Furthermore, I argued that all too often "the community" is approached in ahistorical and apolitical terms, and regarded as a less problematic subject of analysis than ex-combatants (see also De Vries and Wiegink 2011). This chapter can be regarded as a first step toward an analysis of the complexity of a postwar "community" by leaving room for a variety of experiences and the blurring of categories of civilians and combatants. I underlined that even though collaborations between civilians and combatants were not necessarily based on the same goals or on equal relationships, they could create favorable circumstances for both parties (cf. Tsing 2005:246). Furthermore, I described how people's war experiences and opportunities for collaboration varied according to age, gender, political preference, status, location, role in the conflict, and circumstantial factors. As a consequence, we see that in the same area there may be a variety of ideas about the legitimacy and status of certain armed actors and their current and past behavior (see also Theidon 2007:76). This chapter showed that Maringue's social context continues to be deeply divided, mainly between the former belligerent parties Renamo and Frelimo. This political polarization was further deepened by postwar conflicts that involved the return of refugees, the partial demobilization of Renamo, political competition, and inter-personal dynamics.

This chapter has presented the contours of the context and relationships that have havehave shaped ex-Renamo combatants' postwar lives. It has set the stage for the development of one of the main arguments of this dissertation, which is that ex-combatants' trajectories should be understood not solely in terms of a break with society and the past but also in relation to a mixture of ruptures and continuities, which are not easily captured in dichotomizing categories of before versus after war and civil life versus military life, or in singular understandings of "home" and "community." In the subsequent chapters I will delve in more depth into the intertwinement of ex-combatants' trajectories with the lives of civilians by analyzing former Renamo combatants' social navigations.

PART II
FAMILY AFFAIRS

4 WHY DID THE SOLDIERS NOT RETURN HOME?

FAMILY, WITCHCRAFT, AND "HOME"

4.1 Introduction

Fernando, a former Renamo combatant, worked as a tailor on the small veranda of his mud hut in the village of Maringue. He was originally from Dondo (also Sofala province), but ended up living in Maringue because of the war. After the General Peace Accords were signed in 1992, Fernando and thousands of other soldiers were stationed in the Assembly Area of Nhacala, Maringue, where they awaited official demobilization by the UN mission for Mozambique (ONUMOZ). During this period, he and many other soldiers started looking for their families after years of absence. In 1993, Fernando traveled to Dondo and visited his relatives, who thought he had died during the war. He recalled this experience as follows:

> It was then that my father told me how I could live [to maintain contact with them]. […] It was sad for me because when I returned I found out that my mother had died. My father said to me: "You are a good person, you already have a wife, you already have children. I have to tell you, because you were a long time outside the family, arrange yourself a place you like and live there. We will be in touch and visit each other." *Eh pa*, life is like that, isn't it? If we would have stayed in the same place, there might have been a person of bad faith [*pessoa de má-fé*] who would say, "that one was in the war!" It stays in the family, hatred.

At this point during the conversation I became confused, I did not know what Fernando meant by "hatred." Adão, my research assistant, tried to explain: "He is talking about hatred within the family [ódio familiar]." Fernando continued:

> When we were captured or recruited for war we were not alone; no, we were with many from the district. This does not mean that everyone also returned. Some lost their lives, others did not return to their families. Because of this my father arranged another place for me to live.

"Outside Dondo?" I asked. "Yes, outside Dondo," Fernando replied. "I went to Gorongosa in 1994 until 1999, and then I came here [Maringue]."

In order to be safe from "hatred within the family," Fernando's father asked his son to settle outside Dondo. In similarly vague descriptions, other ex-combatants said they could not live again in their home village, as this would mean "certain death." It took me some time to understand that the ex-combatants were referring to what in Chisena, the language spoken in most parts of northern Sofala, is known as *ufiti* (*feitiço* in Portuguese). *Ufiti* refers to occult forces used to harm someone, often in close proximity to the family. It is translated here as witchcraft.[73] Fernando could not live in Dondo because his father feared that a *nfiti* (a person using *ufiti*) would assault himself, his son, or his other relatives.

Early during my first period of fieldwork in Maringue, I came to the conclusion that, like Fernando, most former soldiers I encountered were originally not from Maringue. Hence, they had not settled in the proximity of their kin.[74] This observation and the stories ex-combatants told me about their relationships with their relatives were in stark contrast to the two interrelated lines of thought that seem to dominate scholarly debates on ex-combatants' position vis-à-vis their kin.

On the one hand, there is the notion of "community-based reintegration," which regards the return of the ex-combatant to his village of origin and family as expected, "natural," and conductive to reintegration (Alusala 2011:vii; UN 2006; Wessells 2006). The voluminous Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Standards of the UN (2006), for example, state that "most ex-combatants, like refugees and IDPs, wish to return to the places they have left or were forced to flee. Returning home, where this is possible, is often a key step in reintegration programmes."[75] Returning "home" is thus regarded as desirable for the ex-combatants, and "home" is rather uncritically seen as a hospitable place. On the other hand, there are critical studies underlining the troubles

73 Witchcraft and sorcery are often used as synonymous (Ashforth 2005; Geschiere 1997; Israel 2009:1). As Israel (2009:1) and Stewart and Strathern (2004) have pointed out, it may not be empirically relevant to make such a differentiation, as it does not reflect the local idiom. Evans-Pritchard's (1937) famous differentiation, which held that witchcraft is inherited and psychically enacted while sorcery is learned and requires intentional manipulation of medical substances, does not apply to what people in Maringue seem to understand by *ufiti*. These are malign powers used to afflict harm, which may be inherited or learned from other *nfiti*. Following Stewart and Strathern's (2004:1-2) distinctions, I have chosen to translate *ufiti* here as witchcraft.

74 The data on the 92,881 demobilized soldiers gathered by the technical unit of the United Nations Mission in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) suggest that most demobilized soldiers *did* return to their region of origin when the war ended, i.e. that 75 percent of the former combatants settled in the province where they originally came from (Pardoel 1994:14-21). However, the ONUMOZ's findings do not reveal the settlement patterns of demobilized soldiers in great detail, since they highlight trends solely at the provincial level. Most of the ex-combatants that participated in this study were born in Sofala province but did not settle in their home village or even in their home district following the war.

75 A recent publication by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS Africa), a leading African human security institute, defined reintegration as "the process through which ex-combatants leave their fighting units to resume civilian life within their families and communities" (Alusala 2011:vii).

ex-combatants face when returning due to their "socialization with violence" (Honwana 2006:49-50; Nilsson 1993; Wilson 1992:545; Roesch 1992:472), intolerance of authority (Granjo 2008; Coelho 2002), and possible atrocities committed against relatives (Granjo 2007a; Honwana 2006). These studies presume that the period with the rebel groups constituted a "break with society" and therefore expect, as discussed in the introduction, that reintegration to involve a "break with the past."

Yet the ex-combatants who participated in this research project spoke of neither welcoming homes nor violent ruptures. Their stories and life trajectories revealed a more complex patchwork of continuities and ruptures of relationships with relatives that are not easily captured in seemingly dichotomizing categories of before and after war and civil and military life, or in singular understandings of "home" and "community." The question "why did the ex-combatants not go home?" became one of my main concerns during my fieldwork and turned out to be an excellent window for learning about complex and contradicting cultural understandings of family relations, as well as for understanding ex-combatants' social, economic, and political trajectories.

This chapter is the first of three to probe ex-combatants' social navigations of family relationships. While very much interrelated, each chapter presents a different social environment in which I approach kin relations from a different angle. They show how kin relationships were shaped by war – and not only by war violence – in many ways, and how they profoundly shaped ex-combatants' life trajectories. Chapter 5 focuses on marriages and gender relations. Chapter 6 concentrates on relationships with spiritual beings. The present chapter describes veterans' social navigation of relationships with consanguineal family members through cultural models of obligation and reciprocity, which are linked to the dynamics of witchcraft. Such dynamics, I argue, profoundly influenced the decisions of Fernando and many other demobilized combatants in central Mozambique, especially in relation to their spatial trajectories. In addition, this perspective offers a critique of the general assumption that demobilized combatants would "naturally" want to "return home" and that "home" is a hospitable place.

Witchcraft is a central feature of social life in Mozambique (Nielsen 2010; Bertelsen 2009; Raimundo 2009; Lubkemann 2008;West 2005) and elsewhere in Africa (Ashforth 2005; Geschiere 1997), but is often neglected in studies about the reintegration of former combatants.[76] Scholars and practitioners of these reintegration processes often focus on war violence and possible traumas as defining features for the problems of veterans' return to civil life. I take a different approach, however, by showing how certain contingencies of the war, but not necessarily war violence, influenced the social lives of former combatants in their home villages. This chapter demonstrates how the position

76 A demobilized Renamo combatant quoted in Schafer (2007:109) briefly refers to the role of witchcraft in relation to former combatants (in Maringue) and their choices not to return home, because of their fears of the family members of combatants who did not survive the war. However, this is neither further analyzed nor contextualized.

of former combatants in their kin and community networks were was changed by 1) the time they spent away from home, 2) the demobilization allowance they received, and 3) the fact that some survived and others did not. It were these particularities that created tensions and inciting fears and suspicions of witchcraft.

To develop this analysis, I first examine scholarly debates about the reintegration of ex-combatants – particularly the return "home" – and present several reasons why witchcraft is rarely discussed in relation to the social integration of former soldiers. I then give a short characterization of witchcraft dynamics in central Mozambique, followed by a description of how the fear of witchcraft entered into the kin relationships of ex-combatants through jealousy, unmet expectations, and transformations within the family. Finally, I elaborate on mobility as a strategy to mitigate the threat of witchcraft for ex-combatants and others.

4.2 Violent ruptures?

In the last decades of the twentieth century the presence of armed children serving on the frontlines of civil wars all over the world, received considerable attention both in the news media and in academic and policy circles.[77] Especially in the African context, the stories of these children often begin with how they were captured by a rebel movement (but also by government forces) that inflicted harm upon their relatives and community members, sometimes forcing the children to perpetrate violence against their own family members. The logic behind this practice is to sever the bond between child and family, and between child and community more generally, which breaks the willingness of the child to run away from the armed group (Honwana 2006:61). In the Mozambican context, Renamo is infamous for having used such recruitment tactics (Granjo 2007a:140, 2007c:391; Honwana 2006:61; Nordstrom 1997; Roesch 1996; Thompson 1999:193).

There is no doubt that such atrocities happened during the armed conflict in Mozambique. Yet I want to express two caveats in framing the experiences of Renamo recruits in terms of a "violent socialization." My first caveat is empirically based, as none of the ex-Renamo combatants I interviewed recalled Renamo recruits being forced to commit atrocities against their relatives. One can easily imagine that veterans would find such acts shameful and difficult to talk about, but even civilians, who told me of many other horrendous incidents, made no mention of such atrocities. Concurring with Schafer's (2007:59) observations, the settlement pattern of ex-combatants may provide further evidence against the widespread and structural character of harsh ruptures

77 Child soldiering is not a new phenomenon. Children have always been part of wars, hence the origin of the word "infantry" (Honwana 2006).

of family bonds. Almost all of the veterans I spoke to made an effort to look for their families after the war. Their experiences varied from deep grief and disappointment upon learning that one's relative had died or one's village had been destroyed, to relief and elation upon being happily reunited with their families (see chapters 3 and 5). Again, this does not mean that violent ruptures did not occur; unquestionably they did, though they might have been less common and widespread than is often suggested (see also Schafer 2007). As I mentioned in chapter 2, the recruitment tactics of Renamo, in particular, may have been more violent in the south than in northern and central parts of Mozambique. Therefore it is not surprising that studies who were based in the south, such as Honwana's (2006), depicted a more brutal image of Renamo.

My second caveat is of a more theoretical nature. As I argued in the introduction to this dissertation, the conceptualization of entry to a rebel group as a "break with society" also implies a break with home, culture, and habits (Nilsson 1993:508). This implies that the former combatant's return to his or her family involves a "break with the past," which must be fostered by leaving the violent past behind. While in chapter 6 I analyze how people in fact dealt with violence by participating in purification ceremonies "to take out the spirit of war," here I want to underline that ex-combatants' social navigations were not only, and perhaps not even principally, shaped by social dynamics associated with by war violence. As I will show in this chapter, factors contingent on the war, such as the time spent away from home and the demobilization allowance, had a significant influence in how veterans' recalled the post-war unfolding of kinship relationships.

By no means, however, did these veterans encounter an unambiguous "homecoming." Rather, they returned to families and villages that had been deeply affected by war, by violence, destruction, hunger, and disease. Furthermore, many ex-combatants found that in their absence their spouses had remarried, relatives had died, houses had been destroyed, and entire families had fled. What is often singularly dubbed the "recipient community" turned out to be politically divided by local conflicts, involving of people who fought, fled, returned, stayed, were wounded, grew hungry, got sick, saw loved ones die and disappear, lost their homes, and/or generally lived in deep poverty.

To assume that ex-combatants would "naturally" want to return "home" is to preclude an understanding of home as a complex and changeable phenomenon (Malkki 1995a; Hannerz 2002:218; Hammond 2004:10-11). The "home" (or homeland in the case of refugee studies) is often idealized as the place where one fits in, lives in peace, and has an unproblematic culture and identity (Malkki 1995b:509). The return home, then, is natural, as home is the place where one belongs. For former Renamo combatants this was not necessarily the case, as their homes had changed profoundly. Additionally, the former combatants themselves had changed as well. They had spent considerable time away from home. As described in chapter 2, the average length of combatants' participation in either Renamo or the FAM was eight to nine years (Borges-Coelho and Vines 1994:40-41; Pardoel 1994:27). They were recruited as adolescents and at the

moment of demobilization many of them were married men and women, fathers and mothers. It is safe to say that over the course of war both the ex-combatants' ideas of "home" and the social and physical context of their village of origin changed in many ways.

In December 2008, after eight months of fieldwork in Maringue, I met several leaders of the nationwide associations of demobilized soldiers in Maputo. I invited them to reflect on the experiences of ex-combatants like Fernando and to assess if these were widely shared. Evaristo, the president of the Association of Disabled Military and Paramilitary Veterans of Mozambique (*Associação dos Deficientes Militares e Paramilitares de Moçambique*, ADEMIMO), described the process that many former combatants from Renamo and the government forces went through when they returned home:

> It is true that Mozambican families are receiving [welcoming]. But when a son returns to the family they also have expectations, he should bring something. They will call the eldest uncle, do the rituals and ceremonies that one does in Africa, and pronto they stay [together]. But as time passed, the family does not feel reciprocated [*retornado*]. They don't feel that the person is contributing economically. A family stays poor because they have to share the bread with him as well. The son has problems, he feels guilty. He starts to think it is better to have a change of scenery [*vista*]. He does not find the way to have a normal life. He stayed a long time in the military: twelve, thirteen, fourteen years. It is true that the foundation is the family, but they were not counting on him anymore. And when he returned there were no benefits. The others are beginning to look at him, for him to contribute. So for him it is better to be in a place where he was during his life in the military.

Evaristo's account shows how the return of former combatants was initially marked by the joy and relief, but these emotions were soon diminished by the daily reality of hardship in which most Mozambican families live. Becoming a productive family member is often seen as an important phase in the social integration of ex-combatants (Nordstrom 1997:146; Sendabo 2004:66; Igreja 2007), though one that is not unproblematic, as the words of Evaristo show.[78] He speaks of the expectations of relatives that could not be met by the ex-combatant and of veterans becoming a burden to their family, resulting in a tense situation that leads many veterans to look for a

78 The situation for disabled veterans was even worse. At the moment of demobilization they were given the same items as the able-bodied ex-combatants: "ONUMOZ gave a plough to a person without legs, and seeds to a blind person!" (Interview with Evaristo, ADEMIMO, 16/12/08, Maputo.)

"home" among other veterans. In what follows I delve into family members' expectations, creating a tense environment that is conducive to suspicion and fear of witchcraft.

4.3 Witchcraft: Dangerous rhythms of family life

Evaristo described how the ex-combatant should find another place to live when "the others are beginning to look at him." This is just as vague as what Fernando called "hate within the family," or the assertion of a female Renamo veteran that her father's wives "did not want to see me well" when she returned home. Underlying these expressions is a fear of falling prey to witchcraft. In central Mozambique, people rarely refer to witchcraft in straightforward terms. Witchcraft is talked about through gossip and rumors; it is shrouded in secrecy and suspicion and mostly referred to in veiled terms (see also Ashforth 2005; Stewart and Strathern 2004; Ellis 1993). A sudden or premature death may spark speculations about who was "going after" the deceased, causing his or her death. Similar gossip and suspicion may arise when people contract diseases that have no clear medical cure (such as AIDS) and in cases of marked misfortune, such as a bad harvest or the loss of one's job.[79] This prompts one to ask, "*Who* is causing me this misfortune?" This may be attributed to a discontented ancestor, a malevolent spirit, and/or, as is the focus here, a *nfiti* (see also Granjo 2007b; Igreja 2003).[80]

Wilson, a *nyanga* (traditional healer-diviner) and local leader of the National Association of Traditional Healers in Maringue, explained what a *nfiti* is: "The *nfiti* wants to kill people. The *nfiti* walks in the night. He or she transforms into a hyena and as a hyena he or she eats people. At night it is full with hyenas here, you can see them walk." In ChiSena, *nfiti* literally means hyena, since like a hyena, a *nfiti* eats the flesh of dead human bodies.[81] *Nfiti* are people who cause misfortune, disease, and death by sending spirits to harass people or by using *drogas* (drugs, substances). The knowledge and power of the *nfiti* is learned from other *nfiti* or from (ancestral) spirits. Generally, speculations about the process of learning remain rather vague and are often quickly followed by "I don't really know anything about this" or "you should ask a *curandeiro*" (Portuguese for *nyanga*). Knowledge about witchcraft is dangerous, as one who knows too much can be suspected of being a witch oneself. While suspicions of witchcraft

79 Ashforth (2005:9) notes that in Soweto symptoms associated with AIDS (persistent coughing, diarrhea, abdominal pains, and wasting) were viewed as indications of the malicious assaults of witches.

80 While *ufiti* and the ancestral and malevolent spirits are very different phenomena, they all seem to play a role in the search for the meaning of certain (often negative) experiences or life events. Additionally, *nfiti* (and also *nyangas*) are known to "work with" certain spirits, such as *mfukwa* and *gamba* (Granjo 2007b; Igreja 2003).

81 "Eating" is a common reference to the activities of witches. Geschiere (1997:33-34, 61) notes, for example, that in Cameroon the eating of kin is the "most compelling urge of witches."

are myriad, direct accusations of being a witch are rare. In such cases, the accused and accusers bring the "case" to a *nyanga*, who then sets out to determine the truth behind the accusations. Often it is concluded that the accused used spells or substances because he or she was possessed by a spirit sent by a witch, triggering a further chain of accusations. During my time in Maringue I heard of no case of an individual confessing to be a *nfiti*.[82]

"Strange looks," "hate within the family," and suggestions that "they don't want to see me well" are statements that refer to the intimacy of witchcraft. A *nfiti* is generally thought to be someone close to the victim, who often "sees" his or her riches and fortune or "knows" his or her secrets, as witchcraft is believed to be fueled by jealousy and envy (see e.g. Geschiere 1997; Ashforth 2005, 2001:207; West 2005; Lubkemann 2008:70). Therefore, people avoid calling attention to behavior or assets that may cause others to be jealous, such as wealth and good fortune.[83] For example, people would avoid buying luxury items, as Francisco, a religious leader in Maringue, explained: "People here could have bread everyday, but they won't because they are afraid." Bread is a luxury item in Maringue, something only eaten by government officials and rich people. Francisco's words imply that inhabitants of Maringue would not buy bread even if they could afford it because this could inspire the jealousy among one's neighbors, which is potentially dangerous.

Rosa, a former Renamo combatant in her late thirties, fled from her family-in-law out of fear for witchcraft. She was originally from Beira, where I met her in 2009. Her husband, whom she met during the war, was from Nampula, and after the war they went to live with his family:

> We went there [Nampula] for three months. The first month we were all right, but after that nothing. His brothers started saying that they did not like a woman from another zone. I could not understand them because I did not speak their language. They thought I was arrogant. And his mother told him [the husband] that I should not change my clothes every day. "She will be killed"

82 See Ashforth (2005) for similar conclusions on suspicions, accusations, and confessions of witchcraft.

83 Witchcraft, or better said the fear of witchcraft, is often interpreted as a leveling force, opposing new inequalities, relations of domination, and even development (Geschiere 1997:5; Ashforth 2005; West 2005:239-245; Raimundo 2009:25-27). But it may, as Geschiere (1997:5) argues, also work as an accumulative force. Objects of wealth may evoke "dangerous" jealousy, and inspire at the same time great suspicion about the owner of these riches, as such objects may have been obtained through the use of occult forces, often with the help of a powerful *nyanga*. It is believed that in order to acquire such a great fortune one needs to conduct terrible acts, such as sleeping with one's mother or killing one's child.

> [his mother said]. I also had to take off my watch. My husband did not want to tell me, but later his mother did [tell me]. I could not live like that.[84]

Eventually, Rosa's husband was offered a job in Beira. Rosa was supposed to stay with her in-laws, but she refused and followed her husband. She was afraid to stay, she explained, because "when those kinds of contradictions come in, a person does not live long." Rosa suspected her husband's relatives of jealousy and malice. This fragment shows the significance of proximity in *ufiti* dynamics and the feelings of jealousy that may thrive in intimate relationships. Her brothers-in-law regarded Rosa as "different" because she was from another province and spoke another language. On top of this, she did not redistribute her "wealth," which created the sort of tension that is conducive to witchcraft. Rosa left the household in Nampula to get away from dangerous "contradictions." *Nfiti* may be powerful, but in most cases these powers are not believed to extend over great distances.

Witchcraft seems to thrive especially in family relationships because these are bound by reciprocity and dependency. The family is, among other things, a solidarity network that offers protection in times of need. At the same time, family relationships are accompanied by obligations and hence expectations, such as reciprocity and the sharing of wealth, not only in central Mozambique (Schafer 2007:107-109; Bertelsen 2009:132) but also in many other African contexts (Ashforth 2005:62; Chabal 2009; De Boeck 2005; Geschiere 1997:11).[85] When certain obligations or expectations are not met, tensions and feelings of resentment surface, which may spark suspicions of witchcraft. Several scholars have noted that social conflicts within kin networks and strains on the systems of reciprocity go hand in hand with a rise of speculation about witchcraft (Ashforth 2005:67; De Boeck 2005:191; Lubkemann 2008:92).[86] Lubkemann (2008), for instance, noted a correlation between changing patterns of labor migration and a rise in *uloi* (witchcraft) activities in Machaze (district of Manica province, bordering Sofala). Due to the higher income of young men, economic differences increased within households, because they gained more leverage in social relationships, especially vis-à-vis elder kinsmen. Lubkemann (2008:92-93) concludes that these social conflicts had an inevitable by-product: *uloi*.

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84 Interview with Rosa, 14/08/09, Maringue.

85 See Chabal (2009) for a more general account of the importance of obligations and family relations in Africa. According to Chabal (2009:48), obligations define people: "to have no obligations is not to belong; is not to be fully and socially human."

86 Geschiere (1997) and others (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993; Moore and Sanders 2001) have viewed witchcraft in relation to modernity and conceptualized it as a dynamic phenomenon able to incorporate (modern) changes. The idiom of witchcraft is a way (among others) for people to understand increasing inequalities in a globalizing context. I refer the reader to Moore and Sanders (2001) for an extensive overview of conceptualizations of witchcraft.

As Comaroff and Comaroff (1999) have noted, ideas about occult forces seem to be particularly salient in contexts of rapid change in which power relations are unclear or incomprehensible. I do not have concrete data pertaining to levels of witchcraft in Mozambique after the war. Yet it is not hard to imagine the profound ruptures that took place within families following the conflict, during which many were separated and disturbed because of flight, migration, abduction, death, disease, or other factors. Furthermore, in the immediate aftermath of the war Mozambique's economy collapsed, which led the majority of households to face deep economic hardship (Hanlon 1996; Nordstrom 1997; Lubkemann 2008). Thus, when former combatants returned to their villages of origin, the situation and structure of their families had altered in many ways. Additionally, the demobilized combatants themselves had changed. They were taken as young men and women and were absent from their families for years. Some left as children and returned as adults, with a spouse and children. While the reunion of ex-combatants with their families was often a joyous event, the former's return also triggered certain expectations and inequalities that caused unrest in their relationships with other family members. This created an environment that was particularly conducive to witchcraft.

Witchcraft, and in particular suspicions and accusations thereof, serve as a powerful framework for explaining sickness, misfortune, and death. It may be regarded as a cultural model through which people in Maringue perceive social relationships. Underpinning the seemingly vague expressions of former combatants like "they didn't want to see me well," "people of bad faith will say things," or "others started to look" is the fear of witchcraft, which is experienced as a mortal threat. After the war in Mozambique, former combatants feared for their lives.

4.4 "They did not want to see me well": Tensions in the family

I now want to return to the story of Fernando from the introduction. During his time with Renamo, Fernando married and had children. He did what was expected of an adult man, and indeed his father acknowledged that he was a "good man." However, at the same time his father said that Fernando could no longer live in Dondo because of the "hatred within the family." In this section I explore the possible roots of this "family hatred," that is, the tensions within the families of ex-combatants that create an environment conducive to *ufiti*. I have distinguished four crucial factors – jealousy, unmet expectations, the changed attitudes of the former combatants, and changes in the family structure – which I will address in turn.

First, the return of ex-combatants created new inequalities, and therefore reasons for jealousy within their families, which often lived in poor circumstances. Pedro, a former Renamo commander from Mutarara (Tete province), was lucky enough to get one of the

rare paid jobs within the Renamo party structure after the war ended. This work led him away from Mutarara, where his father and other relatives lived, and he told me he would never return to live there, as to do so would be "dangerous":

> Look, *mana* [sister], our race has these particularities. If someone is rich, or has a more beautiful jacket than you, or comes from Maputo, then you have people, *fala-fala* [who talk-talk], *feitiços* [witchcrafts]. Brrr [he pretends to shiver]. That is why I will not live in Tete. A guy does not even have to have stuff; the people only need to think.

Former soldiers were thought to have gained something from their time away from home. In reality, however, the opposite was often true: most Renamo combatants were deprived of education by the war, and despite receiving the demobilization allowance from ONUMOZ for 18 months, ex-fighters were, and still are, among the poorest segments of society. Yet in the wake of the war the demobilization allowance was often regarded as a significant sum of money, especially in rural areas, where the flow of cash was limited. This influx of money created social and economic disparities in a poor rural environment, which triggered jealousy, a potentially dangerous emotion (see also Schafer 2007:108).

Second, the presumed material wealth of ex-combatants raised expectations among relatives, who anticipated to share in the wealth, and a fear to disappoint relatives among ex-combatants. As Schafer (2007:107) notes, families and former combatants often compared the return from war with the return of labor migrants from South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. Labor migration had been a common strategy among young Mozambican men looking to escape the forced labor and pressing tax system of the Portuguese authorities and to seek their fortune as miners in South Africa or as cooks and cleaners in Southern Rhodesia (Allina-Pisano 2003:60; Lubkemann 2008:47-48). These labor migrants were expected to save a portion of their wages as gifts for family members (Schafer 2007:107-108; Lubkemann 2008:75-76). While the civil war formed of course different context, similar expectations were raised when sons, daughters, and brothers returned after years of absence. It was common knowledge that *desmobilizados* had received an allowance and a demobilization-kit, including an axe, a hoe, seeds, some clothing, and a bucket. Many ex-combatants spent their entire allowances on their relatives, yet syill feared that they would not meet their family members' expectations, since what the veterans brought home was significantly less than what the labor migrants had contributed in earlier years (Schafer 2007:107-108). As noted by Evaristo (quoted above), this could lead to tensions: "When he [the former combatant] returned there were no benefits. The others are beginning to look at him, for him to contribute. So for him it is better to be in a place where he was during his life in the military."

Third, some ex-combatants left the war feeling superior to those who had not fought in the war or with a newfound sense of independence. Rosa, whom I introduced above, continued her explanation of the dynamics of witchcraft by referring to another demobilized soldier in her neighborhood in Beira:

> There is a *desmobilizado* in my neighborhood who never went back to his home. He is drinking all the time. You know what he says: "Me? Going there? [home] I will die! I stayed here a long time; there I have nothing. I would be seen as somebody else. I will be seen as a more civilized person than they are. I will perish right away [*vou acabar logo*]. They will think they are nothing compared to me."

The former combatant in this account assumed that his community members and relatives would see him as more experienced and civilized than them, which he feared would cause him "to perish right away." While this fear may have been genuine, it also betrays a certain desire on the part of the combatant, who whishes to maintain a special status in the postwar period (see also Schafer 2007:107). When I asked two female former Renamo soldiers about the difference between them and other women who had not gone to war, one of them said, "We walked a lot, all the areas that I have seen! That is a difference." "Walking" was often identified as a defining feature of life with Renamo, as the soldiers had to carry weapons, loot, and other things over great distances. While this was often expressed as a negative experience, the idea of "having traveled" was also something that ex-combatants spoke about with pride.

It has been noted that the war generated a sense of independence among combatants due to their separation form home the control of senior family members (Borges-Coelho 2002; Granjo 2008).[87] This should be understood in the context of a more general decline in the control of elders due to labor migration, which provided young men with access to wealth and gave them more say in who they could marry (Lubkemann 2008:90; Schafer 2007). However, it seems that the war may have accelerated the erosion of the elders' authority. The area in which the elders traditionally exercised the strongest control was marriage, but they had no bearing on the former combatants', as most of them were already married when they demobilized. As noted above, it is as a result of such shifts of authority within family relations that social conflicts emerge and fears and accusations of *ufiti* seem to flourish.

This brings us to final source of family tension, which is that changes within the family that happened during the war may have caused certain shifts in the position of the demobilized combatant in relation to his or her relatives. After having spent seven

87 For similar observations outside the context of Mozambique, see Kalyvas (2006:57) and Banégas and Marshall-Fratani (2007).

years with Renamo, Rosa returned to her district of origin in Alto Molocue, the northern part of the Zambezia province. She soon found out that her mother had died during the war. In the meantime, her father had married two other women, who did not treat Rosa well. About her return to her village of origin, Rosa recalled the following: "They [her fathers two new wives] said 'this woman came out of war!' I could not stay in that house. Those women did not want to see me well [*não me queriam ver bem*]. I returned here [Maringue] and I never went back."

Upon returning to their families, many women found themselves in a difficult position. Women who were "taken" by Renamo were often sexually abused (Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008:358) and used as what others have called "bush-wives" (Coulter 2009; Van Gog 2009). When women like Rosa returned home, their family members and others often regarded them as "damaged goods," as they were thought to have "had many men" during their time with Renamo.[88] Many were at a marriageable age, which would normally entail possibilities for *lobolo* (bride price), a major source of income for the woman's family. This issue will be discussed further in the following chapter, but for now it suffice to say that most – if not all – women engaged in sexual and marital relationships (whether voluntarily or otherwise) with male combatants, and many also had children. For these women, the prospects for *lobolo* were not very favorable. Rosa's return to her family must be understood in this context. Her position was exacerbated by the fact that her mother had died in her absence. Her mother would have "spoken for her," but her father's new wives regarded her merely as another mouth to feed and felt no obligations to her. I asked Rosa what she meant when she said "they did not want to see me well." "*Inveja* [envy, an often-used reference to witchcraft]," she replied. The situation in the household became tense, and Rosa thought it was better to leave. She returned to Maringue, where she was reunited with her "husband," another Renamo combatant with whom she was in a relationship during the war.

Other former combatants found themselves in a difficult position at homecoming because some of their peers, who were also recruited by Renamo, had not returned, because they had disappeared or died. Antonio, a former combatant from the district of Caia, neighboring Maringue, explained why he did not settle in Caia after he was demobilized:

> After war it is better to stay alone. It's like this: I go to war with this guy [he puts his hand on the shoulder of his friend, another ex-combatant named Felix, who was also present at the interview]. He is my friend. I die and he returns. He will not survive this. My family will ask for me – "What happened? Where did he

88 As Honwana (2006:79) likewise notes, the participation of young women and girls in Renamo (but also in the government forces) and their sexual abuse during the war is shrouded in secrecy, silence, and stigmatization.

> die?" – and will always hold a grudge that he returned and I died. He will get sick and he'll die.

A similar line of reasoning was mentioned by Fernando, whom I discussed at the beginning of this chapter: "When we were captured or recruited for war we were not alone, no, we were with many from the district. This does not mean that everyone returned. Some lost their lives, others did not return to their families. Because of this my father arranged another place for me to live." Both Renamo and the government army recruited young men and women en masse. When Renamo took over a village in central Mozambique, for example, the movement recruited all the boys and young men (and sometimes women) that did not flee or were not linked to the Frelimo party. A new recruit joined Renamo alongside friends, relatives, and peers. Recruits from the same village were often placed in different battalions to prevent them from teaming up and fleeing. Consequently, many ex-combatants lost touch with their co-recruits. Upon their return, however, the family members of their fellow combatants who had not returned sought information about the disappearance of their loved ones. Generally speaking, the former combatants knew nothing of their colleague's whereabouts, but the fact that they were alive while their peers, relatives, and friends who went into the war with them had died or disappeared caused resentment and jealousy.[89] These ex-combatants feared that the family members of fallen recruits would kill them, not with physical violence, but through the use of *ufiti*. The close kin of these ex-combatants also feared being targeted asa "payback" for their good fortune in seeing their son or daughter return. If just wearing different clothes is seen as dangerous, one can imagine the terror that some ex-combatants felt before the relatives of their deceased comrades. To mitigate this fear, many of these former combatants chose to leave their home villages and settle elsewhere.

4.5 Mobility: Managing the threat of witchcraft

For people in central Mozambique witchcraft offers a framework for explaining misfortune, yet making sense of misfortune is not an end in itself; it is only the first step toward managing the dangers of witchcraft (see also Ashforth 2005:110). Besides exercising discretion about wealth and other good fortunes in life, people seek protection from witchcraft by calling on the powers of a *nyanga*. In case of sudden death, disease, or misfortune, a *nyanga* may conclude that the source of the trouble

89 Veale and Stavrou (2003:49) noted similar feelings of jealousy in relation to the return of abductees from the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda: "The final negative experience that returnees reported from the community is jealousy from those who are still missing family members and struggling openly with accepting those that have returned."

is a *nfiti* who is working behind the scenes, causing trouble in a certain person's life.[90] A *nyanga* may then offer a treatment to curtail the powers of the *nfiti* (see Bertelsen 2009). *Nyangas* are also visited for general protection, even if there is no direct sign of malicious intent by others.[91] They offer ceremonies, objects, and even spirits that are supposed to protect a person, his or her close family members, and his or her assets. Joining a Pentecostal or Zionist Church and consulting a prophet may fulfill a similar function in the quest for protection from witchcraft and other occult forces (Ashforth 2005; De Boeck 2005; Meyer 1998; Pfeiffer 2005).

A more drastic measure when one is faced with the threat of a *nfiti* or an accusation of witchcraft is to leave one's area of residence. In central Mozambique, it is not uncommon to hear that someone has decided almost overnight to move to the city of Beira or to another district, leaving behind networks of family and friends, land, and possibly a job. Anthropologists have observed how the fear of witchcraft or the fear of being accused of witchcraft is a possible trigger for mobility in Mozambique. Lubkemann (2008:328) has analyzed how widowed and divorced women from the rural district of Machaza moved to an urban area as an "exit strategy," severing ties with the consanguineal family to avoid accusations or fears of *uloi* (witchcraft). Raimundo (2009) has posited similar reasons for migration in northern Mozambique. She also notes that it was not the poorest people who left their village because of fears related to witchcraft, but rather the slightly better off, who had more reason to think people would envy them. This suggests that the decision of ex-combatants to settle away from kin is not a novel strategy, but rather a culturally and socially entrenched one. Notwithstanding the genuine feelings of terror *ufiti* can cause, *talk* of *ufiti* may also be an "exit strategy." It may for example be a polite way of saying that a former combatant is not welcome, or be part of a former combatants' strategy to escape the authority of senior relatives. But generally,

90 *Nyangas* are also sought after for their divination skills in the local courts of traditional authorities, to identify a thief or a witch. In such cases three *nyangas* have to be consulted to obtain an accurate verdict.

91 It must be noted that *nyangas* have a more ambiguous role than solely protecting people from malicious forces and identifying an *nfiti*. These traditional healers are also suspected of assisting people to practice witchcraft in order to accumulate wealth. Objects of wealth are at risk of sparking a witchcraft attack, yet they also cast suspicion on their owners. Those who have accumulated wealth are suspected of using invisible powers to do so. This is exemplified by the stories that went around in Maringue about several successful tradesmen in the town's market. These individuals were suspected of giving change-money that disappeared from people's pocket, or of having a kind of midget that assisted them in stealing money. These stories were always embellished with some gruesome detail, such as the protagonist having murdered one of their own children or at least having sexual relations with their own mother, that supposedly accounted for their having gained such magical assistance. Witchcraft is thus not solely a leveling force but also, as Geschiere (1997:5) has argued, an accumulative one. Geschiere (1997) describes witchcraft discourses as open and ambiguous, which makes them flexibly and highly important in discourses of power and development in postcolonial Africa.

I agree with Lubkemann's (2008:92-93) assertion that *ufiti* is not only a discourse but the inevitable by-product of social conflict and a strong motive for schism within families.[92]

However, ex-combatants decisions to settle outside the village of origin did not lead inevitably to the severing of ties with their relatives. This is illustrated by the fact that the veterans' settlement decisions were not always taken alone. As mentioned above, Fernando, he and his father discussed Fernando's settlement options, and eventually his father suggested that he should seek a place of residence elsewhere, from which he could "visit" Dondo. Similar to Fernando many other ex-combatants maintained ties to their relatives by visiting them. Recall Pedro, who was afraid to return to Mutarara (Tete), where his father and other relatives were still living, because he feared he would be seen as "rich." Yet this did not impede him from visiting the district frequently. Pedro once told me about his plans to buy some cattle and keep them in Mutarara, to leave something tangible to his children. On one occasion I ran into him at the market in Maringue. He was in a hurry to get to Mutarara because an uncle had died, and he and his brothers had to make several trips to the district to complete a series of funerary rituals. Pedro felt obliged to participate in the ceremonies, and contribute by buying alcoholic beverages for example. "Now they cannot say that those folks from the city did not fulfill their duties," he said.

Although Pedro said he never wanted to live in Mutarara, he wanted to be buried close to his family home, provided that he had left enough money to cover the costs of transporting his dead body to the district. He explained his reasons as follows:, "it has to do with the spirits. A family wants a spirit in the house. They can call the spirit to come home." Notwithstanding his decision to settle outside Mutarara because of the possibility of social conflicts and fears of witchcraft, Pedro regarded himself as a full member of his family, investing, helping out, and fulfilling his duties. Pedro's wish to be buried in Mutarara is telling, as he felt his spirit should go "home." Home is thus framed as the place where he will be an ancestral spirit one day, and this is the place where his family resides.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter started with the observation that while most veterans in Maringue sought to establish contact with their relatives after the war, many did not settle in their proximity. This prompted the central question of this chapter: "Why did the ex-combatants not go home?" To provide answers to this question, I have analyzed certain changes in family

92 See Ashforth (2005:113-114) for a critique of the idea that the witchcraft discourse is an idiom expressing conflict. According to Ashforth, such a notion of witchcraft leads one to treat statements of witchcraft as figurative or metaphorical, when they are actually intended as factual.

relations, contingent on the war (but not necessarily on war violence) that created an enabling environment for witchcraft dynamics.

The argument presented here is an attempt to describe some of the complexities of what is often framed as the "recipient community." Contrary to what most reintegration programs assume, former combatants do not "naturally" return home, nor is "home" necessarily an unproblematic and hospitable place. This chapter paints a more complex picture of veterans' return, as involving changing family relationships and shifting economic positions. The former Renamo combatants were not alienated from their relatives. On the contrary, as I showed in this chapter, the relationships between veterans and their relatives were highly important in shaping the former combatants' postwar lives, albeit they did not always settle in their proximity.

By focusing on witchcraft dynamics in family relationships, I have tried to shed light on some issues that are usually ignored in the analysis of reintegration processes. I hope to have shown that certain contingencies of the war, such as being away from home for years, the demobilization allowance, the stigmatization of female combatants, economic loss and gain, and the fact that some survived and others did not, changed the position of former Renamo combatants in their family and community networks in central Mozambique. The problems that former combatants faced in relation to their relatives were embedded in cultural models of reciprocity, obligation and the individual's position within the family.

The analysis presented in this chapter underlines a more general claim of this dissertation, which is that processes of reintegration of demobilized soldiers is not merely a question of coming to terms with (perpetrated) war violence and trauma. All too often, (post) war situations are analyzed through the window of violence and the need to deal therewith, resulting in a rather narrow understanding of social processes in war and peacetime (Lubkemann 2008:9-15). By zooming in on witchcraft dynamics in family relationships in central Mozambique, I have argued that an ethnographic understanding of the reintegration of former combatants should not focus solely on their roles as perpetrators of violence or on what dealing with a violent past means, but should instead situate the ex-combatants and their families in the complexities of social life.

The dynamics of witchcraft have offered a lens through which to examine family relationships in central Mozambique and how these were changed by the war, but not necessarily by war violence. To further strengthen this argument, it is necessary to explore two other "environments" related to kin networks: the socio-spiritual world and the practice of marriage, which will be addressed in chapter 5 and chapter 6 respectively. The topics addressed in these chapters are closely interrelated to subjects discussed here, such as models of reciprocity and obligation, but address also other forms of social navigation that profoundly shaped ex-combatants life trajectories.

5 WARTIME KIN AND WARTIME HUSBANDS

MARRIAGE, SEXUAL VIOLENCE, AND GENDER

5.1 Introduction

When I asked former combatants what they regretted most about their period as Renamo fighters, they often answered that the war impeded them from establishing a family. Balthazar whom I introduced in chapter 2, said for example the following: "I could have married five women if it were not for the war." (Balthazar had "only" three wives and eight children.) But while the war delayed or complicated their marriage possibilities, it did not stop most combatants from seeking a spouse. Especially in the last years of the war and the time between the peace accords and official demobilization (1992-1994), many combatants found a spouse or, in the case of many male combatants, several. Data drawn from a survey of almost all demobilized soldiers revealed that at the time of demobilization 51 percent claimed to be married, whereas at the time of their recruitment the majority were unmarried (Pardoel 1994:22).[93]

Marriage and establishing a family are perhaps the most important life projects for people in central Mozambique, as they are closely interwoven with cultural understandings of what it means to be a "real man" and a "good woman," but also a good daughter and son. Building on the complexities within family relationships discussed in the previous chapter, in this chapter expectations and roles within kin structures are further explored through understandings and practices of marriages. In this chapter I describe veterans' efforts to establish a family during and after war. More specifically, this chapter provides an analysis of ex-Renamo combatants' social navigations of the environment of marriage, by which I mean the relationships, practices, and cultural models surrounding marriage. While I aim to be sensitive to gender relations throughout this dissertation, in this chapter I focus explicitly on female and male veterans' different perspectives on relationships with the opposite sex and, moreover, on how their different power positions shape their possibilities for navigating the environment of marriage.

War is, as Sylvester (2011:1) writes, a powerful bodily experience, which makes it a highly gendered experience as well (Cockburn and Zarkov 2002; Enloe 2002; Goldstein 2001; Moser and Clark 2001; Nagel 2003; Nordstrom 2005). Gender is understood here

93 In her study on former combatants in Mossurize (Manica province), Schafer (2007:91) found that 70 percent of the Frelimo ex-combatants she interviewed had married during the war.

as situated, multi-positional, and fluid (Nencel 2007:98). The social (re)production of cultural understandings of masculinity and femininity can only be understood in relation to other markers, such as ethnicity, class, sexuality, age (Nencel 2007:98), and, of particular relevance to this study, militarism and war. War makes readily apparent how power relations are experienced through the body (Nagel 2003; Nordstrom 2005). As Enloe (2002) demonstrates, militarization and war often reinforce certain understandings of femininity and masculinity. Stereotyped images of the female victim and refugee and the male combatant and perpetrator resonate with warzone realities of women being disproportionally affected by violence and men predominantly perpetrating violence. However, this does not mean that all men, or even a majority, perpetrate violence (Connell 2002), or that women can be singularly categorized as victims (Coulter 2009; Nordstrom 2005). In fact, understanding gender as fluid, constructed, and reconstructed also allows for an analysis of militarization and war as possible times of change and experimentation in gender understandings and gender roles (Bouta, Frerks, and Hughes 2005; Enloe 2000; Massey 1994; Moran 2010).

The life trajectories of ex-Renamo combatants reveal not only the reinforcement of gender roles in war but also the possibilities for innovation and contestation of marriage practices and understandings. Both male and female combatants found themselves in unusual, constraining, and often dangerous circumstances in relation to the opposite sex, which they attempted to navigate in innovative ways. However, I argue that male combatants had more "freedom" or "authorizability" (Lubkemann 2008) to establish innovations in marriage practices. Female veterans' stories of their relationships with men during and after the war reveal women's structural vulnerabilities in the context of an armed military group, but are also deeply entangled with cultural models of womanhood and marriage, in particular the system of *lobolo* (bride price).

In order to describe veterans' navigations of the social environment of marriage, I will first provide a brief introduction to the meanings and practices of marriage in central Mozambique. Next, I will explore the interactions of violence, sexuality, and marriage through an ethnographic case study of a young pregnant woman who may have been raped and was forced into marrying her alleged rapist. Subsequently, I will focus on male combatants' social navigation of relationships with women during and after the war and on their innovations and limitations concerning marriage practices. This is followed by a similar analysis from the perspective of female veterans, which centers on particularly on the interactions between sexual violence, reputation, and marriage. The conclusion highlights the distributive nature of cultural models and underlines the importance of analyzing social navigation toward life projects as processes continuing over the course of both the war and the postwar.

5.2 Meanings of marriage

Marriage is a vital part of former combatants' and other people's life trajectories in Maringue. I understand marriage in central Mozambique as a significant or hegemonic "strand of meaning" (Lubkemann 2008:329) or "structure of sentiment" (Appadurai 1996) that informs the problems people have and the goals to which they aspire "in socially differentiated and culturally specified ways" (Lubkemann 2008:329). Marriage and establishing a family are central pursuits in people's lives in Mozambique as these goals are related to cultural understandings of being a good man, woman, son, daughter, father, mother, husband, and wife. In this section I will delineate the cultural models of marriage, which largely shapes how ex-combatants envisioned and established their families. Yet the hegemonic cultural imaginings of the practice of marriage and family relations do not reflect the actual social trajectories and organization of most veterans' families in Maringue; rather, these models provide the necessary background information for understanding how veterans imagined and pursued marriage in slightly innovative ways.

The model residential unit in Maringue consists of a man living with his wives and their children, often including the sons' spouses and their children, in a series of huts at some distance from their nearest neighbor. In the district's main village the latter is not possible due to the population density, but in the rural *zonas* homesteads are often located half a kilometer or more from each other, linked by narrow sandy paths that are traveled on foot, by bike, and occasionally by motorcycle. This gives the impression that the homestead is a rather independent unit, which it is in terms of sustainment.[94] Every family takes care of its own food and water. Depending on the organization within the family, tasks are divided among wives or else each wife takes care of expenses, food, and water for herself and her children.

In Maringue, families are characterized by a patrilineal descent system, which means that wealth and children belong to the line of the father. Although women after marriage reside with her husband and his family, she remains a member of her father's.[95] It is normal for a young couple, especially in the case of the eldest son, to live for a certain period at the house of the husband's parents (patrilocal), but eventually they may build their own homestead in the same community or a nearby zone (virilocal). In the event of divorce or the death of the husband, the children stay with his family. By tradition, a

94 In subsequent chapters, I will show that the extended family is in many ways not an independent unit; family members also take part in, for example, church networks and political-party structures.

95 This is exemplified by cases of protracted illness and health problems, which are often believed to be caused by ancestral spirits of the father's lineage line. This will be elaborated upon in chapter 6, where I deal with understandings of health and the "sociospiritual world."

widow marries one of her brothers-in-law; however, this practice has in recent decades strongly diminished.

By law, polygyny is prohibited in Mozambique, though this only applies to legally registered marriages, which are rare in the countryside. In Maringue, having several wives (polygyny) is the rule rather than an exception. Having multiple wives is a question of prestige, but is also seen as a necessity for a productive household, as women generally cultivate the land and perform domestic tasks, such as fetching water and cooking.[96] Economic constraints or religious constrictions are as reasons for men not to marry more than one wife.

Marriage in rural and urban areas in central Mozambique is ideally organized through the payment of *lobolo*, the bride price, which is given by the man to the family of his future wife in order to formalize the union (see also Sheldon 1991:29).[97] With the payment of *lobolo* the man acquires the rights to the sexual and domestic labor of the woman and to the children of the marriage, who are incorporated into his lineage of descent (see Chapman 2002:117). More than a payment that compensates a woman's family for her loss, *lobolo* is as a contract establishing ties between two families (Ajadjanian 2001:294). Traditionally, young men and women had little say in whom they were going to marry, as the matching and negotiating were mainly done by their elders. However, it seems that the influence of elders on marriage has declined in the twentieth century. Similar to Lubkemann's (2008:66-69) observations in Machaze (Manica province), this may be due to labor migration, which has increased young men's access to cash and their ability to pay the *lobolo* themselves. The civil war may have further eroded the authority of elders, especially in relation to male combatants, as the absence of elders during the war and combatants' access to wealth (such as loot or the demobilization allowance) increased their autonomy in choosing a spouse and negotiating the *lobolo*. In fact, as will be discussed later in this chapter, most ex-combatants chose their first wife themselves and arranged *lobolo* negotiations independently of their kin.

The value of the *lobolo* varies and often includes cash money, starting from approximately 100 euros, but may also involve goats, *capulanas* (typical cloths), traditional drinks, beers, other alcoholic drinks, the construction of a hut, and other things. The *lobolo* is regarded as significant income of wealth into the woman's family. However, its size depends greatly on the woman's virginity and reputation, therefore the

96 I deliberately refer to these tasks as demanding, as they are physically exhausting and time consuming: collecting water requires one to transport bottles weighing over twenty kilos often over long distances, while cooking involves fetching wood, making fire, and grinding corn, to name but a few aspects of the process.

97 The practice of *lobolo* is also common in southern Mozambique, I refer to Bagnol (2006), Granjo (2006) and Agadjanian (2001) for different studies on the salience of *lobolo* practices in rural and urban Mozambique.

virginity of girls is well protected.[98] Later in this chapter, we will see how the importance of virginity and reputation has complicated marriage possibilities for female veterans, albeit not in a singular way. Some women felt rejected by the system of *lobolo*, while others relished the support and legitimization of their social status of wives that this practice provides.

Lobolo is not a singular payment at the moment of marriage but rather a process involving several payments over time. It mirrors the process of the young woman gaining the status of a wife to her husband and of an adult woman in the community. This status is highly dependent on a woman bearing children and being a mother, as well as on her labor contributions (see also Chapman 2002:117; Lubkemann 2008:223). Difficulties with childbearing, and especially not bearing sons, are highly problematic and may lead the husband to delay payments of *lobolo* or else call for a divorce. If a divorce occurs before there are any sons born in the marriage, the woman or the woman's parents may be obligated to return a part of the received *lobolo*. If the couple has a son already, the son stays with the family of the man and the *lobolo* remains with the parents of the woman. This is more or less how people presented the "ideal" cultural model of *lobolo*, but there were just as many examples of people deviating from such "rules."

Even though in recent decades *lobolo* seems to diminish and change in practice and meaning, especially in urban areas, it continues to be regarded as a perquisite for a "full" marriage (Agadjanian 2001; Bagnol 2006; Granjo 2006). As marriage or several marriages are viewed as central achievements in an individual's life, the payment of *lobolo* is one of the most pressing concerns for young men. While experienced very differently by men and women, marriage is for neither party a single event, but is rather a process tied to wider kin relations and shaped by religion, a gendered division of labor, education, and politics. In the following sections I will further elaborate on how combatants' participation in Renamo changed some of their practices and understandings of marriage and shaped veterans' social navigations in pursuit of marriage. First, however, I will focus on the interactions between sexuality, marriage, and violence.

5.3 Between sexual violence and marriage

Based on an analysis of the sexual abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of girls and young women in war and postwar Mozambique, Carolyn Nordstrom (1997b:1) argues that

98 Especially in the *zonas* outside the main village of Maringue, little girls were often "promised" to a man at a pre-mature age with marriage taking place after their first menstruation. In this way, the parents are assured of the *lobolo* and the future husband is assured that the girl's' virginity will be guarded.

"what people tolerate in peace shapes what they tolerate in war," thereby suggesting that (sexual) abuse should not be rendered merely within the boundaries of war, but should instead be understood in relation to wider patterns of (in)tolerance that are underneath such abuses (Nordstrom 1997b:20; see also Olujic 1998; Sideris 2000). In this section I explore the interactions between sexuality, marriage, and violence in the context of central Mozambique. More specifically, this section demonstrates how different "kinds" of rape are constructed and how rape, apart from being a bodily experience, is a socially constructed experience as well (Alidou and Tursten 2000; Coulter 2009:134; Das 2008; Olujic 1998; Sideris 2003:714). It is the social perceptions of sexual violence that influence the lives of Mozambican women in general and of female combatants in particular.

The analysis begins with an apparent case of sexual violence that unfolded at the house of Mariano, a student living in Maringue town, who had invited me to visit his family in Nhagombe for a couple of days. Mariano was the son of Domingos, the *nfumo* (traditional authority) of Nhagombe, a *povoação* (populated rural zone) in northern Maringue. Domingos was the first person to settle in this area in 1992, which made him the leader (*nfumo*) of those who have come to live in Nhagombe since then. He had three wives, of whom Mariano's mother, Maria, was the eldest. I asked Mariano how many brothers and sisters he had. He answered that he had more than twenty, but that he could not give the exact number. Their homestead consisted of thirteen huts situated in a large swept courtyard, surrounded by dense bush and forest. There were also several granaries and a *machessa*, a semi-open hut where guests are received when the weather, whether intense heat or rain, did not allow sitting outside.

The trip to Nhagombe involved an hour-and-a-half *chapa* (mini-bus) ride from Maringue to Canxixe, followed by a seven-kilometer bicycle ride through dry forest and high grasslands. When we arrived at his house, Mariano's father was sitting under a large mango tree talking with some other men, including his eldest son, who also lived within the homestead with his first and only wife (he was a leader at the Catholic Church and therefore prohibited from marrying more than one woman). Mariano's mother was in her own hut, which was furnished with a mat and a cooking place, making dinner for her children, herself, and me. Mariano explained that she and the other wives took turns in cooking for their husband, and the same applied to sleeping with him. Tasks such as working the *machamba* and fetching water were joint activities. Domingo's family, like most rural families in Mozambique, was self-sustaining. They cultivated corn, sorghum, and some vegetables and kept several goats for meat. Any surplus vegetables were sold at the market in Canxixe.

When I woke up the first morning of my stay with Mariano's family, there was a group of visitors in the courtyard sitting under the big tree. Mariano informed me that they were holding a *sentada* (sitting session). A *sentada* with family members or neighbors is the first step in the resolution of conflicts between and within families. If

an agreement cannot be reached, the case will be taken to a local traditional authority or the police. This particular *sentada* included Maria, Domingos, their fourteen-year-old daughter Catherina, and four male members of a neighboring family. One of the men from the other family was alleged to have made Catherina pregnant but was not willing to admit this. Initially, the various parties were talking calmly, but as the conversation continued I noted Catherina's parents becoming increasingly angry as their daughter's suitor continued to deny his part in her pregnancy. Catherina herself did not say much. Finally, Domingos, infuriated, stood up and walked away from the meeting. Passing by the hut from where Mariano and I were observing the *sentada*, he hurriedly explained the situation: "My daughter was raped! I'm going to the police!" He mounted his bike and drove off, followed by his wife on foot. Both were going at full speed as they wanted to be at the police station, seven kilometers away in the neighboring village Canxixe, before the other family could "give money" (bribe) to the police officers. Up to this point my understanding of the situation was that the family was dealing with a criminal offence, namely rape. "What will be done? How can this be resolved? Rape is a serious thing," I wondered out loud. Mariano shrugged. "Rape is too big of a word for what happened," he said. "The problem is that he does not want to marry my sister. He already has a wife. That is why they went to the police. They want to make him marry her." Indeed, after spending all day at the police station, the two parties agreed on the *lobolo* and the marriage was assured. I asked Mariano what his sister thought about this solution. "She will have to leave school," he replied, which was not an answer to my question, but was the consequence that Mariano himself disliked the most. I never got a chance to talk to Catherina.

This family conflict and its solution reveal that girls and young women in Maringue, especially in rural zones like Nhagombe have little say in the process of selecting a husband, and that their virginity influences their position within the family. The fragment demonstrated that the parents of Catherina felt angry, but they were more worried about Catherina's pregnancy and lost virginity than about whether or not she was raped. It would have been hard, if not impossible, to find a man who was willing to offer a decent *lobolo* and to accept Catherina's child into his ancestral lineage. The best solution at hand was to marry Catherina off to her suitor, who possibly raped her. Catherina's parents seemed to be rather indifferent to the question of force.

As we will see below, rape seems to be subject to several degrees of morality. There are cases in which rape is considered an offence, such as when the victim is a married woman (or, put in emic terms, someone's wife). Taking the virginity of a girl, however, is regarded as a problem for the parents rather than a criminal offence. Consequently, the importance of virginity and *lobolo* are crucial for understanding the impact of sexual violence on the position of female combatants in their families. It is within this context that the experience of rape is socially modulated, which is crucial for analyzing female veterans' difficulties in navigating the environment of marriage and their often

problematic positions within their families. But before embarking on such an analysis, I will delve into male veterans' perspectives on sexual violence and their relationships with women during and after war.

5.4 The morality of wartime rape: A perpetrators' perspective

During the civil war rape and sexual abuse of women by male combatants was extremely common (Nordstrom 1997). Renamo combatants were infamous for structural raping women when they attacked a village, for the abduction of girls who were used as "sex slaves," and for sexual torture (Igreja et al. 2008; Nordstrom 1997ab), but unquestionably Frelimo combatants raped women as well (Gersony 1988:36-37; Igreja 2007:150-151).[99] Rape was used to terrorize and humiliate and was integral to the civil war rather than incidental. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to assess whether rape was "a weapon of war," that is, whether it was a planned and targeted policy (Buss 2009; Gomes, Leandro and Dias 2013:6). However, accounts of ex-Renamo combatants confirm that rape and sexual violence were central to the experience of war. Women's experiences of rape, abduction, and sexual abuse during the civil war in Mozambique have been documented in the postwar period (see e.g. Igreja, Kleijn, and Richters 2006:150; Igreja et al. 2008; Nordstrom 1997b; Scanlon and Nhavalino 2011; Sideris 2003, 2000), yet the perspectives of male combatants on rape and relationships with women have been largely ignored. In this section I tentatively explore the "perpetrator's perspective" and try to distinguish central themes in the recollections of male former Renamo combatants.

Officially the Renamo leadership prohibited sexual relationships between Renamo combatants and women from the population. As demonstrated in chapter 3, in Maringue people who informed to Renamo and the rebel's political members tried to keep the combatants in check. Renamo politicians, such as my research assistant Adão, stressed that sexual violence against women was limited to incidental acts by a few "crazy" combatants. But from the stories of rank-and-file ex-combatants it can be concluded that Renamo's prohibitions were structurally violated. When I asked Fazbem, a former Renamo commander, about relationships with women during the war, he first referred to Renamo's prohibitions: "Being together with a woman was punished. Dhlakama did not want to know anything about such things. Your throat was cut. But when you live so close to death [referring to fighting], you want to enjoy the good things in life." At this point Fazbem grinned and commented, "In the *tropa* we always had a mattress with us." For Fazbem and many other Renamo veterans, "taking women" to the base to serve as

99 Although there is some evidence that men also suffered sexual violence during the war, this is hardly talked about (Igreja et al. 2008).

girlfriends or wives was regarded as a "right" that came with the job of being an armed fighter (see also Schafer 2007; Wilson 1992:536). Access to women may have been an indulgence of war for young men from poor rural backgrounds who had limited *lobolo* prospects and little autonomy in choosing their wives (see also Finnegan 1992).

The perpetration of rape and sexual violence by combatants is attributed to a variety of dynamics typical of war and militarism. Fighters' sense of having a "right" to women, for example, has been observed in many other military contexts (Coulter 2009; Neitzel and Welzer 2011; Utas 2005a). High levels of sexual violence have also been attributed to a lack of discipline (Weinstein 2007), the objectification of women in "enemy territories" (Neitzel and Welzer 2011:223-225), and the "hypermasculinity" characterizing military organizations (Ben-Ari 1998:111-117; Schafer 2007; Utas 2005a). Utas (2005a:418), for example, has suggested that the widespread occurrence of rape during the war in Liberia must be seen as a "celebration of hyper masculine warrior identity" and as "a denigration and objectification of women-as-sex." Such dynamics unquestionably shaped Renamo combatants' perpetrations of sexual violence, but they do not automatically create a "soldier-rapist." As Adão's position showed, individual dispositions also shape moral interpretations of sexual violence, suggesting that there may exist a variety of *masculinities* even in a militarized context (Connell 2002:35, 2000). Furthermore, understandings of masculinity are not only embedded in militarism, but are also formed by cultural understandings of gender relations and the treatment of women. Wartime rape is not a violent phenomenon isolated to a specific military context, but rather, as Olujic (1998:31) argues, a form of violence that "highlights preexisting sociocultural dynamics."

For ex-Renamo combatants, military discipline was not the only moral framework prohibiting sexual violence. Whether or not rape was seen as a crime among combatants was very much shaped by cultural understandings of womanhood and marriage. The following excerpts from an interview with former Renamo commander Efrain, whom I introduced in chapter 2, reveal that combatants differentiated between several categories of women, which guided their moral interpretations of rape. When I asked him how Renamo commanders dealt with soldiers who took "the woman of another," he answered as follows:

> When we heard of someone forcing one [a woman] from the population to sleep with him, we called him here and gave him beatings [*xamboco*] in front of the woman's husband. After that we asked the woman if she had agreed to sleep with him. If she said that the soldier had forced her, ok. But if she accepted she would be beaten as well.

Later in the same interview Efrain appeared to go back on his previous statement:

> We recruited [boys] from 14 or 15 years old, because they don't know women. A person who knows a woman will think in his sleep about her. He will think, "*porra*, I left my wife. I'm in a bad situation. I will die without having made children." […] But of course there were soldiers who were already married. We had to change our ideas. So we recruited girls to stay in the base to satisfy these men. They were not going into the war; they were just staying in the base to satisfy the men.[100]

These remarks do not contradict one another as much as they may appear to for at least two reasons. First of all, it is noteworthy that in the case of the married woman the fact that the sex was forced was seen as a "good" thing, this is exemplified by Efrain's remark that a married woman who willingly has sex with a combatant should be punished as well. Second, the first excerpt shows that taking "someone's wife" is a crime, meanwhile in the second excerpt it becomes clear that "recruiting" girls to satisfy male combatants was regarded as a necessary measure and a straightforward solution to prevent combatants from taking other men's women. For the Renamo leadership, the issue was not whether the sex was forced but whether a woman already "belonged" to someone else or not. These were not military rules but rules based on cultural understandings of marriageable and prohibited women. This is not to say that the rape or abduction of married women did not happen; this was a common occurrence in fact, and often resulted in the husband leaving his wife (see Igreja et al. 2008; Nordstrom 1997a; Sideris 2003). The main issue here, however, is ex-combatants' layered understanding of womanhood and marriage, which guided their moral considerations of sexual violence. These understandings are mirrored in the family conflict concerning the pregnancy of Catherina, which I described above. The central issue for the parents was was not "rape" per se but the loss of the their daughter's virginity and the consequences for her marriage possibilities. It follows that the different layers of morality regarding sexual violence may not change much from wartime to peacetime. But while, in the case of Catherina, the issue of force was not regarded as relevant, the act was not without consequences, as Catherina's suitor was socially pressured by local authorities, Catherina's parents, and his relatives to accept the girl as his wife and to take care of the *lobolo* payments. In contrast, during the war Renamo combatants could rape with a certain impunity, because they were often stationed away from home, without the social pressure and policing mechanisms of their community (such as chiefs and elders).

Ex-combatants' sense of heightened liberty during the war, is neatly illustrated by a conversation I had warm November morning at the house of Matateo, a former Renamo commander with whom I had planned an interview. As was often the case, Matateo was not at home. However, there were three men sitting in the shadow of one of the

100 Interview with Efrain, 13/06/09, Maringue.

huts, drinking gin. Sweaty and tired from the twenty-minute bicycle ride, to Matateo's house I joined them on the mat where they were sitting The men explained that they were friends of Matateo, to whom they referred to as "*comendante*." Two of the men turned out to be ex-combatants as well. When I told them about my research project with Renamo combatants, one of them, Miguel, said quickly, "You can talk with me too, but first talk to Matateo." So I decided not to ask any questions, and instead we chatted idly as the men carried on drinking. When the conversation dried up, I picked up a schoolbook that had been left on the ground by one of Matateo' children. Observing me reading, Miguel started to talk: "I cannot read," he said. "It is because of the war. I was in the first class when I was taken to the war. I'm behind because of the war. I have two wives and five children. If it weren't for the war I would have had ten children!" At this point I could not refrain from posing a question. "But didn't you have women during the war?" I asked. His face broke into a big smile. "Yes, but only for three days, maybe a month, and then I sent them away. 'Go! [I said to them] I don't need you anymore.'" I probed further into the position of these women, reflected in the following dialogue:

> Nikkie: And these women, didn't they get pregnant?
> Miguel: They did.
> Nikkie: So you have more than five children, you just don't know where they are.
> Miguel: But I do know where they are! One of them lives here by Cruzamento and another in Catandika. There is one in Inhaminga and two in Beira. I know them all.
> Nikkie: Do you support these children?
> Miguel: No, I don't earn anything. Five here is enough. After the war I did not want anything to do with them [the other children and women]. I wanted to begin anew.

Miguel's reflections on his relationships is illustrative of how many combatants engaged in relationships with women from a village or a town, who were often referred to as *nenamoradas* (girlfriends), and who in some cases became camp-followers living outside Renamo's military bases (see also Roesch 1992:471). Many of these girls and young women were abandoned – often while pregnant – after a brief period of time.

It seems that in wartime women could be more easily abandoned because of the absence of relatives and traditional authorities, who may pursue the abandoners and force them to take these women as wives. At the same time, it was difficult during the war to establish a legitimate union between men and woman that is including the *lobolo* payments. As Miguel's words illustrate, in his view his partaking in Renamo meant that he could not establish a "real" family. He did not regard the five children he had during the war as "his children" because they were not included in his lineage and were not his responsibility since they were not born in wedlock. While Miguel knew of their

existence, these children did not exist in his assessment of his "family" and, related to this, of his prestige and manhood. Miguel's story was not uncommon, but there were also many Renamo combatants who did seek lasting relationships with women with some of these leading to marriage. These will be discussed in the next section.

5.5 Navigating marriage

"I lost time in the war. Now I'm making up for that. I started late. I could have had many more children!" These were the words of Adão, echoing similar laments made by Miguel and Balthazar, presented earlier in this chapter. At the time of recruitment, these combatants were often at a marriageable age, but the war caused them "*atraso*" (delay), in establishing a family (see also Schafer 2007:70). When I asked Adão why he wanted to marry during the war he said, "I was twenty years old when I went to war, I was an adult. Biology-wise problems needed resolving." Here, Adão was not only speaking about physical problems; his concerns were also of a social nature, informed by ideas of masculinity and manhood. While Adão regarded himself as an "adult" at twenty, without a wife, or wives, and children, he was not a "real adult man" by the standards of what it means to be an adult man in central Mozambique.

Adão's concern about "being an adult" resonates with recent scholarly debates about "youth," especially male youth in African war-torn and economically shattered societies, who have become a "permanent liminal category" (Hampshire et al. 2008:34; see also, Hoffman 2011:139-138; Turner 2004; Utas 2003; Vigh 2006). In many contexts across sub-Saharan Africa, diminished access to resources and life changes hinders young men's chances of marriage, of supporting a family, and thereby of becoming an "adult" (Chabal and Daloz 1999; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999:284; Utas 2003; Vigh 2006:100). Similar dynamics may be observed in Mozambique, where establishing a family also forms a key component of social and generational mobility for male youth, and it is therefore unsurprising that male combatants pursued marriage even during war.

Veterans' accounts of their relationships with women suggest that their participation in Renamo impeded marriage in at least four ways. First, Renamo prohibited relationships with women, especially for the lower-ranked soldiers (see also Schafer 2007). (Higher-ranked soldiers were often allowed to have girlfriends or wives.) However, as mentioned previously, such restrictions were often ignored and seemed to have loosened toward the end of the war. Second, finding a suitable woman may not have been easy for soldiers whose roles demanded high mobility throughout the country. As I will discuss below, marriages were a matter not only for the combatant and a girl or woman, but also for their families. Marriages were thus only possible for combatants who were stationed more or less permanently in a certain place. It is not surprising, then, that many combatants I met in Maringue had established a family during the war, as

the presence of the rebels' main base in the area meant that there were large numbers of combatants present at all times. A third impediment was the combatant's inability to get in contact with his kin. Ideally the man's family should also be involved in the *lobolo* negotiations, during the war this was however impossible, because the combatants could not communicate with their kin, nor visit them due to Renamo's restrictions. This is related to a fourth obstacle: namely combatants' inability to pay for, due to their lack of income and other financial resources (although some individuals had access to loot).

Yet despite these impediments, Renamo soldiers of both lower and higher ranks managed to engage in serious and lasting relationships with local women. Caetano's story is a case in point. When I met him and his wife in Maringue, they had five children and had just lost twin babies. When I asked Caetano about his marriage, he said he had "lost years in the war." At the time of his recruitment in 1982 he was approximately thirty years old, but still no family. He met his current wife during the war in 1990.

> Caetano: We met during an operation. I was on a mission to Maringue from Manica. We camped in the house of this one here [referring to his wife]. We lunched there and there I saw [her]. I was asking, "How are things?" I wanted to know how she was. "I don't have a husband" [she said]. But as this work was not worth much, I thus thought to finish with this job and then I would come back. When I was off, I went there, falling in love, falling in love [*nenamora*]. But as I'm not from here, I had to arrange an owner [*um dono*, a father] from here to be like my father. My father was far away. I went to ask this person if he wanted to be my father, you have to have a witness.
> Nikkie: For the *lobolo*?
> Caetano: You have to have witnesses. I did everything. So I arranged drinks [liquor] for my parents-in-law. I presented [myself to my parents-in-law] and *pronto* it was done. I asked if my girl could get to know my house [visit my family in another district]. Very well. I ordered to prepare a house next to the Nhamapaze River. [it was constructed over the course of] three months, then I handed it over to her parents. I was still working there [Renamo]. They did not make this agreement [General Peace Accords]. When I was finished [with the war] I ordered her to my house. I cannot disgrace the daughter of anybody. I could not run away after the war and leave her in disgrace. That is bad. I provoked her; then it is forever. So I took her. ONUMOZ took responsibility over the couple. They gave us everything: food, everything. And then we got this money, very little, for six months.

After Caetano met his current wife in Maringue during a mission with Renamo, they passed a period of "falling in love." She was his girlfriend and he visited her house whenever he could. While he did not explicitly say so, their relationship probably also

had a sexual character. Therefore, Caetano felt he had to marry her; as he said later on in the interview fragment, he did not want to leave "the daughter of anybody" in "disgrace," which underlines his relationship with her father. *Lobolo* arrangements were problematic, however, as he had no relatives in Maringue to represent him in negotiations between the two families. To resolve this problem, he asked someone to be "his father." Then he "did everything"; he arranged liquor and constructed a hut for his parents-in-law, complying with what was agreed upon for the *lobolo*, which legitimized their union. After the war he did not "run" but instead presented his wife as his "dependent" to ONUMOZ and took her to his family in Mopella (Zambezia Province).[101]

Caetano's tale is similar to Adão's experience, described in the introduction to this book. Adão once introduced me to his "wartime father," who had been part of the "population," that is, non-combatant people living in Maringue. Adão's had asked him to "do the ceremonies" that are normally undertaken by the parents of the husband. These wartime fictive kin relationships mirrored the position of the man's parents in the "ideal" model of *lobolo.* By establishing these fictive kin ties combatants sought to slightly adapt this model without jeopardizing the legitimacy of the marriage. "*Lobolo* was agreed upon as it should be," Adão commented, underlining that he undertook the process following more or less the expected "*lobolo* schema."

The strategy of finding "wartime parents" can be seen as an example of the innovative altering of cultural models in constraining and unstable contexts, in this case life in a rebel structure. Yet Adão's and Caetano's capacity for innovation may not be unrelated to Caetano's rank of commander and Adão's powerful position within Renamo's political wing, which may have provided them both with access to (looted) wealth that could be used to pay *lobolo*. Lower-ranked combatants had to resort to other solutions. Zeca, a former Renamo combatant from Caia, recalled his troubles when he wanted to marry "a beautiful girl" he had met during a military operation. He proceeded very "officially," asking her parents for permission to marry her after the war. "I did everything I could, but in those days I could not pay *lobolo*," he explained. "But when the war was over I went to her house to get her and when I got my first pension I went to her house and I paid *lobolo*. The first things I received [e.g. the demobilization allowance] I brought to the house of my parents-in-law." The payment of *lobolo* was one of the principal preoccupations of soldiers during and after the war (see also Schafer 2007:116-

101 While one can easily imagine the fear of denying something to an armed combatant, women were not necessarily forced into relationships with combatants. Relationships with soldiers could be beneficial for women and girls and their family members. For example, combatants could offer protection from other soldiers wanting to steal from or harass one's family. Igreja (2007) suggested that a marriage or a promised marriage to a soldier might have been strategy used by parents to protect their daughters from losing their virginity without being married. Furthermore, soldiers from both Renamo and the government army were regarded as good providers, as through looting they could become relatively wealthy (see Igreja 2007:164-166).

117). The demobilization allowance, which was distributed by ONUMOZ, was often used for *lobolo* payments.

The establishment of fictive kin relations and the determination to pay *lobolo* reveal how veterans went to great length to legitimize their wartime marriages for themselves, their wives, the family-in-law, and their own families. Peacetime, however, brought new challenges for their wartime marriages. Caetano, Adão, and many other combatants were not sure if their marriages would be seen as legitimate by their relatives. While some stayed in Maringue and never went back to look for their families, most did make an effort to find their families and to present their wives and children to them. In chapter 4 I discussed the case of Antonio, whose father, upon his son's return, commented, "you are a good person, you already have a wife, you already have children." In other words, Antonio's father regarded his son as an adult now. Adão seemed to have been less successful in "legitimizing" his marriage in the eyes of his kin. On his first return to his village of origin in Marromeu, Adão's father and brothers swiftly arranged a marriage with a local woman. This marriage was done "the right way," as his father and brothers were involved in the *lobolo* negotiations. But while his brothers and father wanted Adão to stay in Marromeu with this wife, Adão took her with him to Maringue, which he called "his home."

As I mentioned above, the autonomy that Adão and other veterans displayed vis-à-vis their patrikin can be situated in larger historical dynamics such as the growing independence of young male labor migrants and the erosion of the authority of elders, especially in the realm of marriage, resulting in intergenerational power struggles (Lubkemann 2008; Morrell 1998; Schafer 2007:114). But Adão's sense of autonomy was perhaps shaped even more by his participation in the war and his seven-year absence from his family. Furthermore, Adão's social status may also have contributed to his family's acceptance of his deviant settlement decisions. As he continued to be a Renamo party official, Adão was in fact regarded as a "big man" in the Renamo community of Maringue and Marromeu, where he represented the party in the local Municipal council.

Adão's alternative or innovative navigations of marriage practices may be regarded as relatively successful and sustainable. Borrowing Feierman's (1990) terms, we could say that his "discourse" was "authorized." Lubkemann (2008:316) has used these notions to posit an interaction between the "authorizability" – the ability of the propositional content to appeal and make sense to social agents" – and the "authority" of the innovator. Such a perspective would require one to consider Adão's social status and power position as a relatively high-standing local Renamo politician. Furthermore, an analysis of the "transformative effectiveness" (Lubkemann 2008:318) of Adão's innovatory marriage practice must also give due consideration to the "seamlessness with which it is stitched into the existing fabric of social discourse" (Lubkemann 2008:318). By seeking a wife and establishing "wartime parents," Adão followed the culturally scripted practices of *lobolo*, albeit in a way that challenged the authority of his elders. Yet by

establishing fictive kin relationships, he simultaneously reinforced the concept of the authority of elders. Innovative marriage practices such as those implemented by Adão and Caetano may be regarded as successful because they were in resonance with other fundamental "umbrella" models, leaving the hegemonic status of these central strands of social discourse (i.e. the practice of *lobolo*, authority of elders) uncontested (cf. Hinton 2005, Holland and Quinn 1997; Lubkemann 2008:317). It follows that these marriages were not surrogates for "normal" marriages but rather crucial steps in male combatants' trajectories toward manhood.

Combatants' establishments of wartime parents form a clear example of how veterans navigated the volatile and fluid context of war and social relationships *with* certain models, subtly changing them in the process. Examining marriages between former combatants and civilian women can allow us to provide a more nuanced picture of military life. Such a focus also reveals that the relationships between Renamo and the population were *not only* characterized by fear, destruction, and violence. These marriages are examples of how people forge alliances and continue in times of war to pursue certain "life projects," shaped by cultural constructs of manhood and marriage, in more and less successful ways.

5.6 Women in war: Violence, girlfriending, and marriage

In chapter 2 I made an explicit effort to depict female fighters' plurality of roles, narratives, and navigation strategies. I also demonstrated the limited value of analyzing the gendered experience of war merely through the lens of sexual violence, which risks presenting women as mere victims, devoid of agency, moral conscience, economic potential, or political awareness (Coulter 2009; Nordstom 1997b:36; Utas 2005a).[102] Yet to understand female veterans' life trajectories, especially in relation to marriage, a more in-depth analysis of their wartime relationships with men is needed. These relationships were characterized not only by sexual violence but also by strategies of "girlfriending" and marriage.

Rape and sexual violence were central to the experience of girls and women recruited by Renamo. The sexual abuse of *liga* and the abduction of girls to "satisfy men" are indications that women within Renamo were structurally raped. Yet talking about

102 Based on fieldwork in Liberia and Sierra Leon respectively, Utas (2003) and Coulter (2009) observed that the narratives of female ex-combatants were often shaped by the presence of a wide variety of humanitarian aid agencies. They argued that "the victim discourse" can become a means to gain access to aid monies and to attain the status of a victim. The humanitarian aid context of Mozambique was very different, as many female combatants were not officially demobilized by the ONUMOZ program and there were relatively few reintegration projects, especially in rural areas like Maringue (see also Schafer 2007).

such practices with female Renamo veterans proved very difficult. Female veterans would sometimes say they "knew nothing" about rape or sexual violence during the war. Others, such as Dona Ana, said frankly that they did not want to talk about the subject. Some female Renamo veterans said they had heard about incidents of sexual violence, while others claimed that all sexual relationships between male and female combatants were consensual. I did not probe women's silences, negations, or references to other people's experiences, since I wanted to allow them to set the limits of conversations about sexual violence. Rape, it seemed, was for most female Renamo veterans an experience that they could not or would not verbalize (see also Coulter 2009; Scarry 1985; Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004:1), as it was probably connected to feelings of pain, shame, and humiliation, but also to the social experience of rape, shaped by cultural models of sexuality, shame, and gender (Coulter 2009), to which I will return in due course.

Another way by which rape was rendered invisible in female (and male) combatants' narratives was by emphasizing Renamo's discipline and women's military agency. When I asked Sara, a former Renamo combatant, about sexual violence during the war, she refuted the idea that such violence was rife: "It was not obligatory between soldiers. It happened on a basis of understanding. When a man wanted sex with a DF [*destacamento feminino*] they talked. If the DF did not want to, it was over. Between soldiers and the population it was different. War is war." Sara's words must be understood in the context of her specific life history. She claimed to have joined Renamo voluntarily and recalled the war as a harsh, but also empowering, experience. Her eyes lit up when she remembered learning to use a weapon and how she wore "trousers." The reference to "DF," a term Frelimo used for female guerrillas during the independence war, is evidence that she regarded women within Renamo as combatants, as part of the military structure. When I met Sara in 2008, she was an active Renamo member, and her social circle was largely made up of Renamo veterans and party members. Furthermore, her business of selling homebrewed liquor depended almost solely on a clientele of Renamo veterans and party members. Her denial of sexual violence against women was perhaps genuine, but one can also imagine that for Sara to talk of sexual violence within Renamo would have been to undermine her narrative of self, which was deeply intertwined with Renamo veterans and the Renamo party.

One of the very few women who talked frankly about experiences of sexual violence was Sofia, the only female former Renamo combatant I met in Maputo. Sofia's position was very different to that of Sara and the other female veterans in Maringue, since she was not involved in any political or social network affiliated with Renamo. Furthermore, she was used telling her "war story." "If you would have met me ten years ago, I would not have said a word," she told me. "But now I learned to tell my story; I told it many times." Sofia had taken part in a training provided by ProPaz, an association of demobilized combatants, during which she apparently practiced telling her story. Indeed, she talked

almost without a pause for an hour and a half and only then let me pose some clarifying questions. On the subject of her recruitment she said the following:

> Not even falling in love I knew. I was only eleven, others not even eleven. They said to us, "Kids, you're going to be armed bandits." We said, "Do we have to walk with a weapon as well? *Ieh*, we are just children!" There it was sexual violence here and there. We cried but there was no other way. The man they gave to me, he said, "I have to go working, to battle." There he stepped on a mine. He died. I was happy, because that meant I did not have to walk with him anymore. But after that they beat me, because he had died. *Xiii*.[103]

After her first "boyfriend" or "husband" died, Sofia was "given" to another combatant, and then another one, but as time passed the nature of these relationships changed. "After a while it was not really obligatory," she said. "But if it was not for the war, I would not have been with that man. But there was no other way. I got together [with him]. […] There was one man and three women. Others had four."

Teresa, the former Renamo combatant whom I introduced in chapter 2, recalled similar experiences:

> Teresa: I had a friend in those days. But he died during an attack. From him I have a child. My first child, born with Renamo.
> Nikkie: Did it help to have a friend?
> Teresa: Sometimes, but between them they were corrupt. If only a commander liked you, there was no way you had to go [sleep with the man]. When he died it was worse. Men here and here. In war you are not for marrying. All [women] were free. [A man could] Only just like one [and take her]. Marriage was prohibited. Women, they suffered a lot."

When Teresa said "it helped to have a friend," she was referring to the practice of many women within Renamo of "marry" and "getting together" with other male combatants, the higher placed the better, in order to be protected from harassment by other men. In fact, all female veterans I interviewed said they were "together" with or "married" to one or several male combatants during the war. Some stressed that they were forced into such unions, others claimed they had a degree of agency in choosing and "using" these relationships. In her only reference to sexual violence, Dona Ana said that "one could not refuse if another soldier wanted you," but she then added, "we wanted soap," implying that staying with a particular man made life easier as it gave one access to looted goods. Especially in places such as Maringue, where Renamo's presence was consolidated

103 Interview with Sofia, 25/10/10, Maputo.

and combatants were stationed for long periods of time, relationships with men often resembled marriages in terms of terms of practices involved and expectations of both parties. Female combatants became "wives" and mothers and took up tasks normally done by women in the household, such as fetching water, cooking, washing, working the land, and taking care of children.[104] As Van Gog (2008:77) concluded based on research among women abducted by the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, "woman tactically reproduced existing social patterns in a context of war" in order for them to survive.

These wartime relationships were highly unstable, however. As Teresa explained, "sometimes they were corrupted," meaning that male combatants would often "share" their women. She also said that she could not refuse if a higher-ranked combatant wanted her. Furthermore, relationships with Renamo combatants who participated in operations and attacks often did not last long. Teresa's and Sofia's protector-husbands died during the war, leaving them vulnerable once more to sexual harassment by other male combatants. Sofia suggested that in such instances women would "find" another man for protection.

Similar patterns of relationships have been observed in armed groups in Sierra Leone (Coulter 2009; Van Gog 2008) and Liberia (Utas 2005a). Utas (2005)a calls female fighters' tactical relationships with men for protection and material benefits "girlfriending." Utas (2005a:407), meanwhile, terms such navigations "tactical agency" (Honwana 2000; see also Coulter 2009; Van Gog 2008), which draws attention to women's ability to make short-term decisions in constraining, unstable, and dangerous contexts.[105] Such conceptualizations of women's agency in war argue against an image of victimhood, depicting women as devoid of agency, and highlight simultaneously the relational and, in the case of female combatants, bounded character of agency (Utas 2005a:407). As Shaw (2002:19) argues, the agency of those who "employ the weapons of the weak" is a fundamentally different kind of agency to that of "those whose authority allows them to act upon the world through control of an apparatus of domination."

There were crucial power disparities between female combatants and male combatants and commanders. Yet the relations between dominating and dominated are not fixed, and a focus on this dichotomy may disregard the fact that environments of war are changing and multilayered phenomena containing a variety of relationships of power (Vigh 2006). Korf, Engeler, and Hagmann (2010:388) argue that by looking to

104 Teresa told me that it was also forbidden for the DFs to have children. She suspected that the women were given some kind of contraception in the form of an alcoholic beverage. Many of her former colleagues had problems having children after war, which Teresa also attributed to this particular drink.

105 Honwana (2000, 2006) draws on Michel De Certeau's (1984) distinction between tactics and strategies. Tactical agency refers to short-term responses in relation to the social structure, whereas strategic agency refers to the agency of those who can foresee future states of affairs (Utas 2005a).

avoid understating the power of the weak, we should not overestimate the coherence of the powerful, but rather replace dichotomies of weak versus powerful with an image of convoluted networks of different actors that are reshuffled through time and space in the context of conflict and violence (Korf et al. 2010:388; Nordstrom 2004). Given that female Renamo recruits participated in the movement for an average of eight years, their status and power positions within the rebel structure would have changed profoundly from the moment of their recruitment during which they felt vulnerable and were often subject to sexual violence, to their later roles as wives, mothers, and combatants. As Sofia's words illustrate, such changes were shaped by and reflected in their relationships with male combatants. It is in such a context that lasting and "full" marriages between male and female combatants must be understood. Female combatants' rise (and fall) within Renamo's social structures, as wives of commanders and *militares*, thus exemplifies the multiple relationships of power and how these changed over time in the volatile context of rebel life. Furthermore, their "narrative agency" in presenting themselves as "fierce fighters" and *militares* may offer another layer to these relationships of power. By excluding sexual violence from their narratives, Sara and Teresa emphasized other relationships and roles, creating perhaps a more acceptable narrative of self or, in the words of Nordstrom (1997a:22), a more "survivable world" on which to build their postwar lives. These narratives are therefore as much a product of these women's postwar trajectories as they are references to their actual war experiences. Moreover, they are key for understanding how female veterans imagined and pursued postwar social trajectories, especially those related to marriage.

5.7 "What kind of a daughter would I be?"

Like their male counterparts, female veterans identified marriage as one of their main preoccupations after the war. However, they found navigations of the social environment of marriage were in many ways more limited and troublesome. Women such as Sara experienced alternative gender configurations and a heightened sense of autonomy during the war, yet in their postwar social worlds their status as ex-combatants – and worse perhaps, ex-*Renamo* combatants – was met with stigmatization, rejection, and tension. Women's participation in Renamo, whether voluntary or not, strongly influenced postwar social dynamics in their families and communities, especially in the social environment of marriage (see also Honwana 2006:146-147; Igreja 2007:150; Sideris 2003:720-721).

Generalizations cannot capture to the variety of female ex-combatants' experiences after the war; nevertheless, three principal trajectories may be distinguished: 1) return to their families; 2) stay in Maringue, often with their war-husbands; and 3) return to their families, but later came back to Maringue. As Maringue was and still is a Renamo

stronghold, I encountered more female veterans who had stayed in or returned to the district. To balance the narratives of these women, I draw also on the experiences of female FAM and Renamo veterans I met in Beira and Maputo.

Female veterans' settlement trajectories were shaped by a multitude of factors, such as their previous rank, their relationships with Renamo leaders, practical issues such as transportation (not all women were officially demobilized and many thus had no access to ONUMOZ's free transportation to a place of their choosing), changes in the structures of their families (see chapter 4), the families they had established in Maringue, and their health, to name but a few. Yet all these factors, in one way or another, tied into understandings of gender and sexuality, which profoundly shaped how female veterans imagined their marriage and settlement trajectories and how they were received and regarded by their relatives.

When I asked Dona Ana why she did not return to her father and brothers after the war, she replied, "What kind of daughter would I be?"[106] Dona Ana feared she would be rejected or would disappoint her father. She was abducted by Renamo at the age of eleven and demobilized seven years later as a young woman of a marriageable age. She regarded herself as "damaged" as she had lost her virginity and borne the child of her since-deceased husband. Furthermore, she was well aware of the stigmatization of female ex-rebels, who were thought to have had "many men," to be "promiscuous," "difficult," "from the bush" (meaning "wild"), and "not wanting to obey a man." She thought of herself as a "bad daughter" on the grounds that her father and relatives would encounter difficulties in finding a man willing to pay a decent *lobolo* for her.

In Maringue, Dona Ana remained with five children between the ages of five and twenty-five (the sixth died shortly before her second birthday). She lived in dire poverty, not producing enough food on her *machamba* and barely able to make ends meet with *buscatos* (irregular informal jobs, such as cooking for large groups at events). The family's vulnerability was heightened by the absence of an extended family and difficulties in access to land for cultivation. Furthermore, female-headed households, though increasingly common, often incur suspicions of witchcraft and prostitution.[107] In Chapters 7 and 8 I will discuss how church networks and political parties provided alternative networks of assistance and protection to Dona Ana and other female veterans.

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106 Interview with Dona Ana, 22/06/09, Maringue.

107 The increase in female-headed households is a largely urban phenomenon in Mozambique (Agadjanian 2001:294), though it is gradually becoming more noticeable in rural areas as well. It is a trend initiated by male labor migration (Sideris 2003), further shaped by the war, as widowhood, abandonment, and rejection left women alone, often with children (Zimba 2010). Recently, the number of female-headed households has further increased because of the HIV/AIDS epidemic killing young people and leaving often grandmothers to take care of little children, and changing cultural practices surrounding widowhood. Traditionally, widowed women were incorporated into the family of a brother of the husband through a ritual called *kapitakufa*, which involved sexual intercourse between the widow and her brother-in-law.

My main argument here, however, is that female veterans' innovative navigations of the environment of marriage were less successful than the navigations of their male counterparts. This held for example true for many female Renamo veterans who did return to their families. One such woman was Elisa, who was living in Maringue with her three children when I met her. After demobilization, Elisa had returned to her family in Morrumbala. As described in the previous chapter, she found that her mother had died in her absence and that the new wives of her father regarded her merely as "another mouth to feed" and felt no obligations to her. She said her stepmothers were envious and did not want to "see her well." She thus decided to leave her family in law in Nampula and returned to Maringue, where she re-united with her "husband," another Renamo combatant, with whom she had had a relationship during the war. Yet this marriage did not involve the payment of *lobolo*, and as her husband had been recruited as one of the 15,000 soldiers in the postwar Mozambican Armed Forces based in Maputo, he subsequently left for the capital, where he married another woman. Thereafter, Elisa remained in Maringue with her three children. Her husband visited her occasionally, but they were not on good terms.

The stories told by Dona Ana and Elisa show how experiences of war, of life as a combatant, of (presumed) sexual violence, and of forced marriages, shaped the reactions and imagined reactions of their relatives and community members. The narratives of these female veterans illustrates not only how sexual violence is a physical act but also how such experiences may profoundly shape women's lives long after the event (Olujic 1998). Concurring with Coulter (2009), I understand rape as a socially constructed experience that is embedded in socially constructed gender relations and cultural models of sexuality that modulate the subjective expressions of trauma (see also Alidou and Tursten 2000, Coulter 2009:134, Sideris 2003:714). For female veterans in Maringue, this social experience of sexual violence was intertwined with the experience of being fighters and their years of rebel life, but in the aftermath of war it was also connected to kin relationships and the cultural model of *lobolo,* which shapes how women are regarded and imagine themselves as daughters and possible wives. These are examples of the layers of violence that people may experience and highlight, as Nordstrom (1997:116) argues, that violence is "something that reconfigures reality in its very occurrence, making the concept 'over' meaningless."

The vulnerabilities of female Renamo veterans I have sketched so far may not reflect experiences of *desmobilizadas* across Mozambique. As I mentioned before, Maringue district was for many Renamo veterans, male and female, a last resort, where they could turn to when they felt unwanted elsewhere (see chapter 4). Therefore, my analysis of female veterans' vulnerability may be overstated. To be sure, not all female veterans, perhaps not even most, were rejected by their parents or their pre-recruitment husbands. Many relatives chose to accept what had occurred during the war, perhaps aided by cleansing rituals (discussed in chapter 6). To balance my argument, I want to discuss

two cases of women who followed somewhat different trajectories than the ones I have discussed previously. The first concerns a relatively successful marriage between a male and female combatant. The second case offers examples of female veterans who turned stigmas around, presenting themselves as highly empowered.

First, I present the story of Monica, also known as Mae Odetta (Odetta's mother). I met Monica through Adão, who knew her from the war years in Maringue. He told me that Adão's children would always play with Odetta when they were living at the Renamo military base in Macoco (a rural zone in Maringue). Monica joined Renamo in 1980 when rebels passed through Chibabava, her village of origin. She said she joined the movement voluntarily because she wanted to "liberate the country from the dictatorship." Although Adão had already told me that she had a child during the war, when I got the chance to talk to Monica I still asked her if she had any children during the war. To my surprise she denied this.

> Nikkie: But Adão told me that his child and your child played together?
> Monica: I did made a child, but not with a husband. It was like a lapse, a coincidence.
> […]
> Nikkie: Why did you decide to live in Maringue [after the war]?
> Monica: I had a child. The man with whom I made the child followed me to Chibabava to pay *lobolo* to my parents. He was also a soldier, also from Chibabava. We decided to go back to Maringue because he could work here in the timber business.[108]

Monica's initial denial of her child provides a possible clue as to why female veterans remained with their wartime husbands. Monica initially regarded her child as "a lapse," born not of a marriage but of a casual, perhaps forced, sexual encounter. However, this lapse was made right when the father paid *lobolo* to Monica's parents. Married women who had been raped were often rejected by their husbands and so were children resulting from the rape, as they were born outside the lineage and could not be incorporated. Monica's words echo those of Miguel, who also regarded his wartime children as nonexistent.[109] By marrying the father, Monica made sure that their child was assured of a position in the father's family and lineage. Furthermore, the *lobolo* paid to Monica's parents also strengthened Monica's position as a wife, and probably also as a daughter.

108 Interview with Monica, 15/08/09, Maringue.

109 Such dynamics led Sideris (2003:270) to conclude that for women in southern Mozambique (but the same may hold true for women in central Mozambique) conceiving a child by rape often resulted in emotional, personal, and inter-marriage conflicts, such as a husband's rejection of his wife and these children (Nordstrom 1991).

For the second case of an alternative trajectory, I want to share a little more of the life history of Teresa, the "fearless" Renamo fighter I introduced above. Teresa also married a former combatant, an ex-Frelimo soldier. His family was outraged that he had married an "*anafalbeta*" (illiterate) from Renamo. Teresa said she suffered many insults: "'Are you going to marry her?!' they said. 'Don't we have women here? She is a soldier! *Analfabeta*, *bruta* [ugly person], is she a woman? Is she even a person? Can you not chase a woman of Frelimo?'"[110] Teresa considered herself "lucky," as her husband had not cared about the opinion of his relatives. When I cautiously remarked on the curious combination of a Renamo ex-combatant and a Frelimo veteran, she turned the stigmas around. "A military women is too strong for civilian men," she claimed. In other words, civilian men could "not handle" her. Anita, a former FAM combatant, who also married a former soldier, raised a similar point:

> I cannot marry a civilian man. Women like me, also my friends, we are trained like soldiers. We cannot go back to our boyfriends from before. […] I was managing like a man. Nobody can tell me what to do. And nobody can hit me; I was trained! My husband knows; there is respect. A civilian man cannot marry a soldier-woman as he will be afraid.[111]

These women presented an alternative discourse to the aforementioned trajectories shaped by vulnerability, in which they took pride in their past as *militares* but also in their present status of being "strong."

I heard such empowering narratives only from women I met in Beira and Maputo, who were most of them active members of veterans' organizations and who had undergone empowerment and self-esteem trainings that have become a mainstay of NGO reintegration programs. These women followed very different trajectories to those of the female ex-combatants in Maringue. The latter framed their life trajectories not in terms of choice but rather in terms of suffering, last resorts, and vulnerability. By no means do I think these women are only victims; their bounded social navigations is well captured by Aretxaga's (1997:16) concept of the "choiceless decision," which "at once questions women's passivity and victimization while it also challenges the liberal belief of agents' free choice" (Coulter 2009:150).

110 Interview with Teresa, 09/06/09, Beira.
111 Interview with Anita, 10/07/09, Beira.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter has focused on male and female ex-Renamo combatants' navigations of the social environment of marriage. Marriage, understood as a union established through *lobolo* negotiations, and childrearing are at the core of what makes people respected adult members within their families. Additionally, being married offers social and to a certain extent also economic security. Therefore, finding a spouse (or several) was for Renamo combatants one of the main preoccupations during and after the war. This chapter has presented combatants' pursuits of marriage as examples of their innovative navigations in a constraining and unstable context (Lubkemann 2008; Vigh 2006). I have shown how their navigations were shaped by the military context, but also how they navigated *with* certain cultural models of womanhood, manhood, and *lobolo*, which provided meaning and direction.

But the chapter has also argued that veterans' attempts to innovate were not necessarily successful, as these attempts had to resonate with dominant cultural models and were shaped by the individuals' "authorizability." More precisely, I showed that the possibilities for navigating the social environment of marriage during and after the war differed profoundly between male and female combatants. Male combatants' innovative navigations, such as establishing fictive kin relationships that enabled *lobolo* negotiations, were generally more readily accepted by their families and communities, and longer lasting than those of female combatants. Tactics such as "girlfriending," presenting themselves as *militares*, and settling away from their family demonstrated female combatants' (limited) room for maneuver, but such navigations were vulnerable to change and fleeting. Thus, while the navigations of Adão and Caetano bestowed on them the status of adult men, female combatants' positions were often compromised, as upon returning to their families they encountered or imagined encountering rejection and stigmatization, which were related to cultural understandings of womanhood and *lobolo*, as well as to the stigma of being an ex-Renamo combatant.

Nevertheless, both female and male combatants' social navigations reveal that their wartime lives were not merely a matter of perpetrating or coping with violence. Rather, their wartime social lives were shaped by "the pursuit of a complex and multi-dimensional agenda of social struggles, interpersonal negotiations and life projects" (Lubkemann 2008:13), of which marriage was a highly sought-after example. In the pursuit of such life projects, combatants established and maintained relationships with fellow combatants and civilians over the course of war and postwar. In other words, wartime social life in Renamo was not a clear-cut break with "society" or "civilian life," just as the postwar was not a break with the past. Both female and male ex-combatants' navigations revealed a complex patchwork of ruptured, maintained, established, and changed relationship with girlfriends, spouses, relatives, and fellow combatants. This

patchwork of relationships is further explored in the next chapter, where I discuss relationships with the invisible world.

6

NAVIGATING THE SUPERNATURAL WORLD

HEALING, MEMORY, AND MORALITY

6.1 Introduction

In August 2007, I visited JustaPaz, one of the few NGOs working on conflict transformation in Mozambique. In their office in Matola, a satellite city of Maputo, I had a conversation with Francisco Assix, a project manager, about the ways Mozambicans dealt with the atrocities of the war. According to Francisco "truth and justice come through traditional leaders and healers. It is believed that in a normal situation a human being cannot kill another human being. So there have to be bad spirits present causing these events. Therefore the killer has to be cleansed. And after that, someone cannot be called a killer anymore."[112] Cleansing rituals have facilitated the reincorporation of former combatants into families and communities in many parts of Mozambique (e.g. Bertelsen 2002; Granjo 2007a, 2007c; Honwana 2003; Igreja 2007; Lundin 1998; Nordstrom 1997a). These practices and related understandings of what it means to be a killer must be conceptualized as part of a social world that has both a material and an immaterial realm that are intimately related (Ellis and Ter Haar 2007:387; Granjo 2007b; Igreja 2007; West 2005). However, a mere focus on cleansing rituals provides a rather one-dimensional analysis of ex-combatants' relations with the spiritual world and their family members.

This chapter builds on topics discussed in chapters 4 and 5, further delineating ex-Renamo combatants' navigations of social environments characterized by kin relations, this time from the angle of the supernatural world. The aim of this chapter is twofold. The first aim is to demonstrate the centrality of relationships with spiritual beings in the wellbeing of ex-combatants and their family members. Like most people in central Mozambique, ex-combatants consider themselves in constant relation to an invisible world inhabited by spiritual beings of many sorts. I demonstrate how the "spirit idiom" (Ellis and Ter Haar 2007:387) forms an interpretative frame shaped by cultural models of health and wellbeing that affect not only the individual but also his or her family members. This leads me to an analysis that, in contrast to most studies on the reintegration of former combatants, does not merely focus on cleansing rituals, but considers veterans' relationships with spiritual beings also outside the realm of war. former combatants I interviewed in Maringue had indeed participated in welcoming

112 Interview with Francisco Assix, Justapaz, 20/08/2007, Matola.

rituals and healing and cleansing rituals "to let the ancestors know that an element of the family had returned" and to "shake off bad spirits" respectively. However, these "rituals of return," as I have called them, tell only a part of the story of former combatants' postwar trajectories, and they hold only a fraction of the relationships with spiritual beings in ex-combatants' social lives (see also Honwana 2003, 1996; Igreja 2003, 2007).

The second aim of this chapter is to demonstrate that the "spirit idiom" in Maringue is also shaped by a cultural model of morality, which is reflected in notions of war, of legitimate and illegitimate violence, and of retribution. As Francisco Assix's words revealed, cleansing rituals changed the position of veterans, as after undergoing these rituals they "could not be called killers anymore." This implies that the "spirit idiom" shapes notions of violence (how do people come to perpetrate violence?), responsibility (when is someone responsible for the violence perpetrated?), and reconciliation (after the spirits have been washed away the individual is not a killer anymore) (e.g. Granjo 2007a, 2007b; Honwana 2005; Lundin 1998; Nordstrom 1997a). Yet my observations from Maringue suggest that spiritual beings may also be approached as witnesses of illegitimate violence (cf. Igreja 2003; 2007) and bearers of punishment. By demonstrating how some ex-combatants came to be regarded as "war criminals," haunted by the spirits of people they wronged during the war, I situate interactions with spiritual beings in the context of postwar memory construction and some form of transitional justice

To demonstrate how relationships between ex-combatants and spiritual beings unfolded and were interpreted I will first set the stage and try to tentatively map the supernatural world. I will then further analyze the "spirit idiom" by describing a case of spiritual affliction, which is followed by a layered analysis of notions of health and healing, memory telling, and morality that are embedded in the "spirit idiom." All of these debates underline the transformative and dynamic character of the supernatural world (Honwana 2003:61; Kwon 2006). Next, I focus on veterans' narrations of relationships with ancestral spirits before, during, and after war. This is followed by an analysis of cleansing rituals. Finally, I address ex-combatants' interactions with avenging spirits. The conclusion draws attention to the importance of the everyday idiom of spirits in interpreting health, history, and actions.

6.2 Mapping the supernatural world

In Maringue, as elsewhere in Mozambique, people live in social interaction with a supernatural world that is home to spiritual beings with effective powers over the material world (see also Ellis and Ter Haar 2007:387). This "sociospiritual world" (Lubkemann 2008:69) fundamentally shapes people's everyday existence through the interpenetration of the social world by spiritual beings.

Spirits interact with their hosts and their hosts' family members in a variety of ways. Spirit possessions, broadly defined as "the hold exerted over a human being by external forces or entities more powerful than she" (Boddy 1994:407), is the most visible, dramatic, and perhaps also most researched form of spiritual interactions (see e.g. Boddy 1994; Crapanzano and Garrison 1977; Igreja 2007; Janzen 1992; Lambek 1981; Stoller 1995).[113] Spiritual interactions are not confined to instances of spirit possession, however; they also take place in dreams, through ceremonies, and in everyday interpretations of illness, bad luck, and death (Ellis and Ter Haar 2007). For most people in Maringue the "idiom of spirits" is always present in ontological and epistemological stances of everyday life (Ellis and Ter Haar 2007:387-388, see also Boddy 1994; Crapanzano and Garisson 1977; Lambek 1981; Van der Port 2005). The "spirit idiom" is crucial in understanding ex-combatants' social navigations of the sociospiritual world, as these were marked not only by spirit possessions but also, and perhaps even more so, by more "mundane" interactions between the supernatural world, ex-combatants' relatives, and the ex-combatants themselves.

For *Maringuenses*, the sociospiritual world is inhabited by an open-ended spectrum of spirits that can be roughly divided into two main categories. The first category consists of the ancestral spirits, referred to as *antepasados* or *seculos.* These are spirits related to the father's lineage and are often located in the place where the father's family resides: they are grandparents, uncles, aunts and great grandparents who are in many ways remembered and worshipped privately within the homestead. Ancestral spirits have an ambiguous status, as they may be a powerful protective force, but when discontented they may cause misfortune, health problems, and death.

The second category of spirits consists of spiritual beings from outside the lineage, which are far more heterogeneous. This group comprises a range of spirits, such as ghosts (*fantasmas*), spirits related to certain natural places (e.g. rivers, mountains), and spirits of the dead, especially of those who died a premature or violent death. This latter category is of particular interest here, as it consists of avenging spirits, including the spirits of civilians killed during the war, that haunt the living and seeking retribution for wrongs done to them. Such spirits have a personal identity (e.g. João, former combatant), gender (in the case of avenging spirits, almost always male), ethnicity (e.g. spirits from Zimbabwe, speaking Shona), and a specific story of their death (e.g. murder, theft, abandonment).

In Maringue, people identified a variety of "types" of avenging spirits, describing several recurring scenarios. Some were spirits of people murdered generations ago, such as the *nkamwene* or *chikwambo*, who was murdered by his greedy parents-in-law

113 The literature on spirit possession in Africa alone is far too extensive to discuss in full here. I refer to Boddy (1994) for a literature overview and to Ellis and Ter Haar (2007) for more a recent discussion of spiritual power in African politics.

sometime in the distant or recent past.[114] A second, often interrelated, scenario involved the spirits of labor migrants who were robbed and murdered on their way back from Zimbabwe.[115] A third scenario had its roots in war, but not necessarily the civil war. In Maringue, people spoke of spirits called *masoldier*, which were the spirits of soldiers who died in the war. People could step on these spirits, but as *nyanga* (healer-diviner, also called *curandeiro* in Portuguese) Elvira indicated,

> Many [*masoldier*] appear in the person that finds a dead soldier. Where the soldier died are also his things. The soldier has a watch, money, a bag, a radio, a weapon, boots. Nobody will come to get the soldier. The person who encounters such a situation and does not bury the soldier, but takes his things will be haunted by the spirit of the soldier."[116]

Other *curandeiros* and pastors of Pentecostal churches, who are also consulted for healing, referred to the spirits of the dead soldiers as *mfukwa* or *magamba*, that are regarded as evil spirits, who "want to see blood." Some said that *magamba* spirits had been warriors during the reigns of Monomotopo, Nhugunhana, and Makonde who had fought the Portuguese. Still others said that *magamba* spirits were the spirits *capricornicos* (traitors), who gave information to the Portuguese during the independence war. Francisco, a pastor of one of Maringue's many Pentecostal churches, described these spirits as follows:, "when they [the traitors] were captured [by Frelimo] their heads were held above a drum and their throat was cut. Blood spilling all over the drum. Such a man returns as a *magamba*. Bad people and bad spirits."[117]

This is far from a conclusive "typology" and often these names were used interchangeably. When I asked *nyangas*, traditional authorities, and pastors, to give details on the different kinds of spirits, I received as many categorizations as there were people I talked to. There were also geographical differences in the categorizations of spirits. *Magamba*, for example, was in Mutarara a nearby district in Tete province, an all-encompassing category for avenging spirits (Marlin 2001:181), while in Gorongosa *magamba* was a postwar phenomenon related to war violence, especially that directed

114 Marlin (2001:137-140) and Pfeiffer (2002:187) also encountered the phenomenon of *nkamwene* or *chikwambo* in the neighboring district of Mutarara.

115 In Mutarara and Manica, these spirits of mugged and murdered labor migrants returning home from Zimbabwe were referred to as *mfukwa* (Pfeiffer 2002:186-187; Marlin 2001). In the south of Mozambique, Honwana (2006:106-108) found that people were harassed by the spirits of people who were not properly buried during the war. These spirits, called *mphukwa*, are bitter and angry and can cause harm to those responsible for their death and the relatives of these persons. In the south the *mphukwa* are spirits of soldiers from the violent Nguni wars. These are also avenging spirits.

116 Interview with Elvira, Maringue, 27/07/09.

117 Informal conversation with Francisco, Maringue, 01/07/09.

at women (Igreja 2007; Igreja et al 2008). In Maringue *magamba* were known before the war and were related to labor migration to Zimbabwe. As people in Maringue also indicated, the term *gamba* derives from the Shona term for "soldier."[118]

To understand how relationships between the living and ancestral and avenging spirits fit "within the wider system of meaning" (Lambek 1981:60; see also Igreja 2007:90) and more specifically how this "spirit idiom" has shaped ex-combatants' social navigations, I will now reflect on the spirit idioms in relation to healing, memory telling, and morality.

6.3 "When the spirit falls into her": Spiritual afflictions, healing, and meaning

In central Mozambique, the health of one's mind and body is intimately related to the spirits of the dead. To be healthy requires a harmony between the living and their social and ecological environment, including the sociospiritual world (see also Granjo 2007b; Lubkemann 2008). But this harmonious state is easily disrupted by witchcraft, as was shown in chapter 4, or by the interventions of discontented ancestral spirits or a type of malevolent spirit that I refer to as avenging spirits. Indeed, similar to and very much intertwined with witchcraft, spiritual agency is for people in Maringue a highly important interpretive model to make sense of illness, misfortune, and death, as well as of past deeds. As Honwana (1996:1) writes, "the power of 'spiritual' entities remains paramount in both the causation of trauma and in community-based approaches to healing." In other words, the supernatural world deeply shapes the ways in which suffering is experienced, interpreted, and dealt with (see also Honwana 1996; Igreja 2007:90; Janzen 1992:xi; Pfeiffer 2006:82).

In Maringue, relief from spiritual afflictions is sought by consulting a *nyanga*, a pastor of a Pentecostal church, or a *profeta* (prophet, a kind of healer-diviner) of a Zionist church (see also Pfeiffer 2002:186-187). In their quest for healing, people are not exclusive, and may consult a church leader and a *nyanga* and also pay a visit to the hospital (see also Pfeiffer 2006). Yet *nyangas*, pastors, and prophets have very different understandings of the nature of these spirits and of healing practices. For a *nyanga,* spirits are ambiguous entities, as they may cause harm but can also be "worked with" in healing processes. In the discourse of the Pentecostal churches such cooperation with spirits is out of the question, as witches and spiritual beings are understood as evil and accomplices of the devil (see also Van Dijk 1997; Meyer 1998; Pfeiffer 2002:190; Van der

118 Marlin (2001) also notes that *gamba* in Shona (the language spoken in Zimbabwe and in Manica province) means "strong brave person," "personal provisions for a journey" (Hannan 1984:181), or a "strong, muscular person" or soldier.

Pijl 2010:185-187).[119] Pastors in Maringue preached fiercely against consulting the *nyanga* (*curandeiro*) and traditional practices such as ancestor worship.[120] Pastor Sixpence, a pastor of a Pentecostal church in the main village, for example, remarked, "tradition only leads to sons accusing their fathers of witchcraft because a *curandeiro* had said so. Then there is no respect. *Curandeiros* make confusion. They make people scared of their own family members and scared to have development."[121] At the same time, Sixpence also acknowledged that witchcraft was generally a family affair. This demonstrates that while pastors of Pentecostal churches acknowledge the presence of spiritual forces and witchcraft, they reject "traditional" practices and beliefs and provide a reinterpretation of these beliefs (see also Meyer 2004; Van der Pijl 2010: 185-187) in which spirits are demons that need to be exorcised and witches work with the devil.

Pastors also differ from *nyangas* in their methods of "taking out" the spirit. Representatives of Pentecostal Churches exorcise spirits through prayers, through which they receive the power of the Holy Ghost, the strongest spirit of all (see also Pfeiffer 2002; Igreja and Lambranca 2009; Van der Kamp 2011).[122] During a service of the African Assembly of God in Maringue, I observed the following: Pastor Paulo grabbed the head of a woman, who was kneeling on the floor. He closed his eyes and started to murmur. Because I was close to them, I could understand him [and maybe because of the presence of the missionaries and myself he did not speak ChiSena but Portuguese]. "*Sai!*" [Leave!] he said strongly in the woman's ear, then louder: "Leave, leave, in the name of Jesus! Leave!" ["*Sai, sai, in nome de Yesu! Sai!*"][123] As has been noted by many scholars in the African context and beyond, the Pentecostal churches and the Zionist and Apostolic churches distinguish themselves from other forms of Christianity through

119 Pastors were very straightforward about the demonic status of avenging spirits. However, this was not the case with the ancestral spirits, who they regarded as capable of causing harm but simultaneously protective.

120 Pentecostal discourses often involve a break with the past, in this case a break with traditional practices, but also with certain behaviors that are regarded immoral such as consuming alcohol and visiting prostitutes. Yet for adherents, the "break with the past" is neither abrupt nor complete. Meyer (1998:339) identifies a gradual process of conversion that allows individuals to "move back and forth between the way of life they (wish to) leave behind and the one to which they aspire" (see also Oosterbaan 2006:155)

121 Interview with Pastor Sixpence, Maringue, 18/08/08.

122 Healing practices differ between Pentecostal churches and the Zionist and Apostolic churches in Maringue. In the former, pastors practiced healing through prayer and fasting. In the latter, meanwhile, there is a specific person to deal with healing issues, referred to as a prophet (*profeta*). He or she (prophets are, like *curandeiros,* often women) is a spirit medium, but unlike the *curandeiros* the prophets work with the Holy Ghost. They also use roots and other substances (e.g. flour, milk) to make medicine to cure people from all kinds of diseases. Prophets are therefore often seen as similar to *curandeiros*.

123 Observation, Assembleia de Deus Africana, 14/05/08, Maringue.

their preservation of "indigenous spiritual ontologies" and their ritual engagement with the sociopiritual world (Meyer 2004; Pfeiffer 2002; Robbins 2004:129).[124]

Nyangas' practices for healing spiritual afflictions are of a different nature. The various *nyangas* I met in Maringue demonstrated a wide variety of methods for diagnosing their patients. Some worked with the roots of plants, or "read" bones, ivory artifacts, or stones, which they scattered on the ground in front of them. Others used their dreams to consult spirits, who gave them advice on a particular case. I also heard of *nyangas* using iron and fire to identify a witch or a thief. Most *nyangas*, however, worked with one or several spirits, who would "fall" into the *nyanga* and provide insights into and solutions for health problems. In the remaining part of this section I will provide a case of a healing consultation of Maria, Adão's younger sister, who was unable to conceive children.[125]

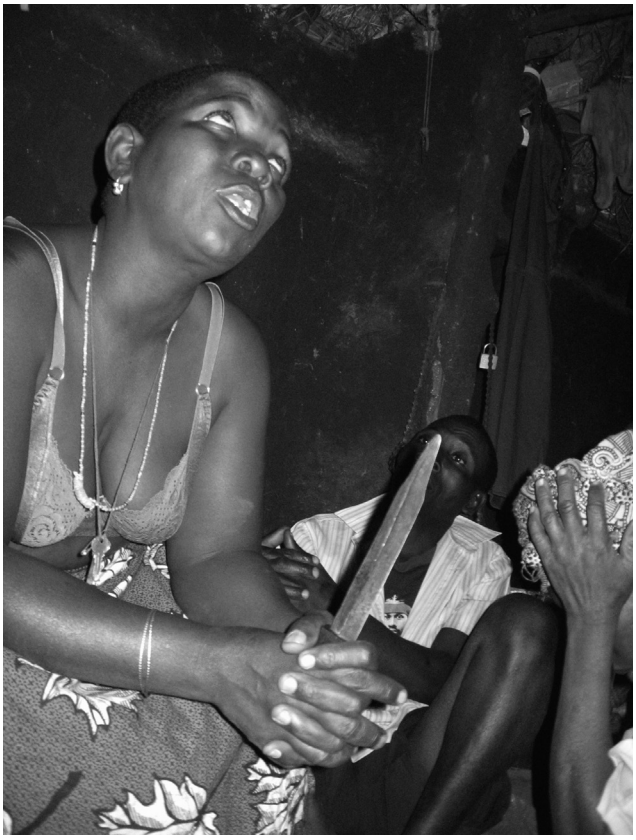
"Come, you can be there when her [the nyanga's] spirit falls into her [*quando caie o espiritu*]" said Adão as he ushered me into the largest hut in his courtyard. It was pitch dark inside the small space. The *nyanga*, a woman called Elvira, did not look up when I entered; she was focused on her objects on the floor: a small pot, a necklace with colorful beads, two teeth of a predatory animal, and a decorated knife in a holder. Slowly, she took off her headscarf and her t-shirt and picked up the knife. She was sitting on her knees in only her bra and *capulana* (typical cloth), rocking slowly back and forth and whistling. After five minutes or so she stopped whistling, coughed, and started singing a monotonous tune. Outside someone softly played a drum. Her hands, which held a knife, were shaking, while her body was moving back and forth faster and faster, going toward a climax. Finally, she screamed intensely and fiercely drew the knife from its holder, spreading her arms. Her head fell backwards and her eyes rolled back.

The screaming was a sign for Adão, his first wife, and his brother and sister, to join me in the hut. The spirit greeted us and in particular Maria, and as this consultation concerned her fertility problems she gave a two *meticais* coin to the *nyanga,*[126] The spirit spoke to us with a deep voice. Later Adão explained that the spirit was a male named João, from Manica province. João had been robbed and murdered by Elvira's grandparents. He returned to the family as a spirit and haunted Elvira. Her affliction was resolved by a *nyanga* who was able to identify João and encounter a solution, which

124 It is noteworthy that the Catholic Church in Maringue related pragmatically to the values and ideas of the adherents. During my time in Maringue, certain restrictions of the Catholic Church loosened; for example, ceremonies to honor the ancestors that were prohibited before, were now no longer viewed as a sin (conversation with Pai Chirco, 23/06/08, Maringue).

125 Observations on 9/08/09, Maringue.

126 Elvira's problems were typical of a person who has a bad spirit (*pessoa que tem espiritu mao*). For women, symptoms include a delayed (first) menstruation, not being able to get pregnant, miscarriages, and infant death. Other symptoms of a spirit's presence include *mal-estar* (not feeling well or feeling weak), headaches, fever, and rapid heartbeat. For men, impotence is an indicator of spirit possession. For men impotence is also an indicator of spirit possession.



Picture 1: Nyanga Elvira, during a spirit consultancy (photo by author)

was that João wanted to work through Elvira as a healer. This is a typical account of how a person becomes a *nyanga*. It almost always begins with the *nyanga* being sick or experiencing an abnormal physical state, which is caused by a spirit.

The consultation took some ninety minutes, during which time Maria's social life and her problems were analyzed. Most of the time the spirit was talking, but he also asked questions to Maria and her brothers. It was established that Maria and her relatives had visited many *nyangas* but had never resolved her problem. The spirit explained that other *nyangas* had mistakenly identified Maria's ex-husband, from whom she had been forcibly separated during a Renamo attack, as the cause of her fertility problems. The ex-husband did, however, send an *mfukwa* (evil spirit) after Maria, but this would be easy to send back. According to the spirit Joao, what was actually haunting Maria was the spirit of her father's sister, who had suffered during her life because she died childless. The spirit explained, "the right measures were not taken for her, and she [the father's sister] had to return to make them remember that they treated her very badly." Maria's problems were attributed to disharmonious relationships within the family.

This consultation exemplifies the multiplicity of narratives that were and potentially can be constructed in relation to the social history of Maria's family, which demonstrates the loose and polysemic character of the interpretation of spirit possessions and interactions in general. Additionally, it underlines the importance of the presence of family members of the father's side at both stages of the healing process (consultation and treatment). Since a person is situated in the father's ancestral lineage, the patrilineal ancestral spirits, in particular, can protect or "annoy" a person. Moreover, while the spirit attacked Maria, the cause of the problem was mistreatment of Maria's aunt by Maria's father and his siblings. This implies that the responsibility for the problem rests with the entire family, and not just with Maria. When the spirit affliction is not resolved properly, the spirit "begins to go around and make the relatives ill"; in other words, all relatives are potential victims of the spirit's rage (see also Honwana 2005:86).

Maria's case reveals not only much about cultural models of healing and illness, but also illustrates how spirit possessions can be understood in terms of embodied discourse (Shaw 2002:4; Stoller 1995), which resonates with Connerton's (1989:74) assertion that the past is not only remembered through words or texts, but is also "sedimented in the body." Maria's consultation with the spirit also involved several embodied practices and memories, which were related to the family histories of both Elvira (who killed João) and Maria as well as to the history of Maria's spirit. The histories of the spirit and the patient's family are interlinked by a drama that unfolded in the past, and that gives meaning to both the spirit's anger and the patient's affliction. It is through these stories that *nyanga's* may develop the treatment of the patient, which in Maria's case included the appeasing of her aunt's spirit. While this case involved a family drama, spirit possessions may also bear witness to mass violence and disruption, involving war-related individual and social suffering (e.g. Honwana 2003, 2002; Igreja 2007, 2003; Igreja et al. 2008; Kwon 2006; Marlin 2001; Perera 2001). Such embodied memories through spirit possessions have been studied in relation to counter-hegemonic or subversive discourse in contexts of gender inequality (e.g. Boddy 1994), as well as in the context of mass atrocity (e.g. Baines 2010; Perera 2001; Shaw 2002).

A final layer of analysis relevant to the role of the "spirit idiom" in ex-combatants' life trajectories is the moral dimension of this idiom. Spirit talk is permeated with moral understandings about people's actions, people's lives in general, and their deaths in particular. Maria's case reflects several understandings of morality: childless women (like Maria's aunt) are seen as having a "bad" life, for example, while João's murder by Elvira's parents-in-law was regarded as a bad deed. The afflictions caused by spirits are thus understood as ways to draw attention to such wrongs and to provide means to re-establish harmonious relationships. The "spirit idiom" may thus involve a wide range of ideas about what it means to lead "a good life" or to be a "good person," and it forms a central interpretative framework through which one's death can be classified as good, "suspicious" (often related to witchcraft), or "bad" (see also Kwon 2006:125). Such

interpretations seem highly contingent on the people involved (e.g. *nyanga*, the spirit's host, relatives), their gender, status, age, and life and family histories, but are also shaped to a large extent by the environments in which certain "wrongs" happen. As will be demonstrated below, while in peacetime a violent death is considered a "bad" death, in wartime this was not necessarily the case. War was a context in which "bad" deaths had different interpretations and different spiritual consequences. I suggest that there exists something like a "moral hierarchy of spirits," a hierarchy that is highly contingent on the context and actors (including the spirit) involved, but that is nevertheless provides a robust framework for interpreting affliction and past behavior, as well as comprising elements of justice and punishment.

In this chapter I understand the sociospiritual world as a social environment where a variety of cultural models of health, healing, and morality intersect with interpretations of the past. It is through such a framework that I approach ex-combatants' social navigations of the supernatural world. In the following sections I will first address "rituals of return," which includes rituals for and relationships with the ancestral spirits and purification rituals, before turning my attention to avenging spirits.

6.4 "Without the presence of the family people get crazy"

Veterans' relations with their *antepasados* were ambiguous. On the one hand, the ancestors were regarded as a strong protective force. On the other hand, ancestral spirits were seen as potentially disruptive and were thought to cause illness or other inconveniences. In this section I will present two examples of veterans' relationships with ancestral spirits. The first concerns the protective capacity of spirits and illustrates the continuity of relations between humans and spirits as well as between family members during and after the war. The second example details a more malicious side of ancestral spirits and underlines possibilities for healing and perhaps family cohesion.

"In all the wars my grandchildren will have to go and return alive"

Fernando, a former Renamo combatant, told me that it was the spirit of his grandfather that guided him through the war.[127] In 1976, before the civil war had started, his grandfather appeared in a dream to tell him that Fernando would go to war, but that he would return unharmed. Reflecting on this dream, Fernando pointed out that his grandfather had been correct: "I was captured in 1979 and I stayed until 1994, 16 years! And I returned alive. I was hit by bullets." To prove the force of his ancestral protection Fernando pulled up his shirt, to show me a bullet hole in his arm and two scars where bullets had entered his chest and had come out on the other side. "My grandfather liked

127 Interview with Fernando, 15/06/09, Maringue.

war," Fernando added. "He fought in the Makonde war and was always with me in war. Sometimes he would appear in my dreams and tell me from which side the enemy would come. He was always right."

For Fernando and many other combatants, the ancestral spirits were a source of protection and guidance in the uncertain and dangerous environment of war. Many of the combatants performed certain rituals for the ancestors (e.g. making small offerings of liquor), and it has been noted that some soldiers tried to return to their homesteads for short periods to honor the ancestors (Honwana 2003:3). Besides being a source of guidance and strength, these relationships may, as Schafer (2001:228) has argued, also be seen as an attempt by combatants to maintain connections with their former lives. Concurring with Schafer (2001), I see such practices as examples of how combatants were not completely socialized by the military context, but maintained different relationships throughout war outside the armed group.

After the war, Fernando's grandfather visited Fernando's sister in a dream, in which he said, "Did I not say that my grandchild would return safe? In all the wars and the wars of the future my grandchildren will have to go and return alive!" I asked Fernando if he was grateful to his grandfather, to which he replied as follows: "Every month before the new moon I go outside to a tree where I put some flour, beer, and a cigarette. And I say, '*vovo* [grandfather] I'm here, I thank you!'"

Like Fernando, many former combatants spoke of performing ceremonies for the ancestors to thank them for a safe return or, as Adão phrased it, "to let them know a member of the family had returned."[128] Often these ceremonies were performed when the veteran arrived at the family house for the first time after the war. Adão explained that these resembled common ceremonies designed to attain the protection of the ancestors ahead of travels or migration (e.g. labor migration to Zimbabwe), and to thank the ancestors after a safe return (cf. Honwana 1998:3). Other veterans recalled that upon their homecoming rituals were performed for those who had died in their absence. These rituals involved a ceremony called *kupitakufa* (*kufa* means death or to die), which serves to cleanse the people near the deceased from the pollution of death. This cleansing process traditionally consists of a series of ceremonies over three days including sexual intercourse by the closest relatives of the deceased. If *kupitakufa* is not conducted, "no person will come to drink water in the house" because it is polluted, and the relatives of the members of the household are believed to get sick and possibly die.[129]

128 Conversation with Adão, 22/07/09, Maringue.

129 Similar cleansing rituals are conducted if a house or hut burns down (*kupitamoto*). The man and woman (women) communicate to the neighbors that the ritual has been conducted by shaving their heads, though it is often already known through the grapevine. However, while vividly present in the narratives of many people in Maringue, it seemed that these rituals were becoming increasingly rare due to religious considerations, the idea that these were "backward" traditions, and the danger of contracting HIV.

In contemporary Maringue this ritual is becoming less and less common, but several veterans recalled that in the wake of war, they could not set foot on the premises of their home before certain purification rituals concerning death were performed.

Yet not all ex-combatants said to have conducted such ceremonies. Some were never reunited with their family for various reasons, while others, especially those who adhered to certain Christian churches, did not practice ancestor worshipping. Former combatant João was one of those who said that his family did not perform these rituals.[130] When I asked why, he explained that it was "because we pray," thereby indicating that his family was part of a Christian church. Catholics, but also adherents of other Christian churches, were generally discouraged from performing certain "traditional" rituals. While in practice many people who "pray" performed such rituals as well, in João's case this did not happen.

Those ex-combatants who mentioned taking part in ceremonies for the ancestors were organized recalled that these involved a variety of practices including visiting a specific tree, clapping hands, making offers of alcoholic drinks, and holding a feast. "Without the presence of the family, without the slaughtering of a goat or chicken, people get crazy," explained Januario Neve when I asked him about rituals held for ex-combatants returning after the war.[131] He emphasized the social and also psychological value of such moments, which underscore a person's place within a family. Whatever social problems lay ahead, for those ex-combatants who experienced such ceremonies, these had been joyous moments.

"Mae, I am here now"

The second ethnographic example of veterans' relationships with ancestral spirits concerns Thomas, a former Renamo commander who became one of my key informants. Thomas assisted me on visits to high-ranked Renamo veterans. One day in November 2008 we were planning to visit a former Renamo general.[132] When I met Thomas at the marketplace, he looked bewildered and said that he had a headache. I joked that he had probably drunk too much last night, because I knew him to be a heavy drinker. He denied this, however, and explained that he had gone "*malouco*" (crazy) during the night. He had had a dream about his mother, in which she had told him that he could not drink anymore or he would become gravely ill. He took this very seriously, and made a solemn vow not to drink alcoholic beverages again (which lasted about a year). At the time I thought this was a positive development, and it did not occur to me to ask more questions about the dream. When I returned to Maringue for my second period of fieldwork in 2009, I met Thomas again. One evening he came to my house to chat and we shared a beer. He told me the whole story of the dream he had had the year before:

130 Interview with Alfredo, 3/08/09, Maringue.
131 Interview with Januario, 12/06/08, Merione, Maringue.
132 Observations, Maringue, 13/11/08.

> Do you remember when I went crazy last year? That was not a *magamba* but another kind of spirit. I woke up in the middle of the night, outside, naked. Fatima [Thomas' wife] tried to calm me down with water but had to tie me up with a cloth. She went to get Parafino [a friend] and he succeeded in dressing me. He took me to a *profeta* [a medium from the Zionist church, often equated with a *nyanga*] of the base [military Renamo base]. This one worked with a *gamba*; during the war there were many of these.[133]

The *profeta* explained to Thomas that his mother wanted her son to perform an *nsembe* (a ceremony for the ancestors). Thomas reflected on why his mother's spirit was haunting him and how this could be resolved:

After the war I did not return home and I never performed a ceremony for her death. She said I had to do this. That is why I could not drink anymore. When we [Thomas and his brother Efrain] went to Mutarara two weeks ago to bring condolences [*sentimentos*] to the family of my uncle, we also did a ceremony for my mother. […] We gave her beer, poured it on the ground, and talked. "*Mae*, I'm here now," [I said]. If we would have had seven days we could have made *cabanga* [traditional alcoholic drink]. I could not have done this before, because Daniel [Thomas' youngest brother] had to be there as well, because he is the youngest of the same belly. Since the ceremony I can drink again. Haven't you seen me? Drunk? Before I got sick, but not anymore.

> After the war Thomas had made several trips to Mutarara, where his father lived, but neither he nor his brothers performed a ceremony for his mother's death. Thomas justified this by pointing out that his youngest brother (from the same mother) had never been in Mutarara at the same time as he was. This episode reinforced the fact that the ceremony should involve not only the individual with the problem (Thomas) but the close relatives as well (in this case children from the same "belly"). This suggests that his mother's anger was not merely Thomas' problem but could also affect his brothers, as they were in the same relationship to their mother and had equally neglected her.

The stories of Thomas and Fernando show that one's relationships with their ancestral spirits were in many ways crucial for one's health, one's safety, and one's relationships with other family members. By communicating to the ancestral spirits or the recent dead that one of their relatives has returned, these ex-combatants related not only with the dead but also, and predominantly, with the living relatives. The spirits' acceptance of the returning ex-combatants was an important moment in the reestablishment of

133 Conversation with Thomas, 30/06/09, Maringue.

kin relationships. In different ways, both cases show how ex-combatants relations with their family, the living, and the dead were not necessarily severed during the war, but rather were ongoing and, in the case of Fernando, even considered essential for survival. These relationships with spirits played an important role in shaping ex-combatants' post-war relationships with their patrikin. The rituals that former combatants described are a moment in which the continuation and restoration of certain relations that were changed by their physical absence is apparent, yet the impact of these relationships goes beyond such ritual moments. Furthermore, these rituals acquired their meaning from cultural understandings of family, health, and absence rather than from violence and peace.

6.5 Washing away "the idea of the bush"

In this section I discuss a second set of "rituals of return," namely "cleansing rituals" (Granjo 2007b; Honwana 2005). It is to such rituals that Francisco Assix of Justapaz (quoted above) was referring when he said that following their performance "someone cannot be called a killer anymore." He and many others (Boothby 2006; Gibbs 1994; Honwana 2005; Lundin 1998; Nordstrom 1997a) deem such practices crucial for the process of reconciliation between former combatants, their relatives, and even community members. These rituals accompanied the return of many ex-combatants, as well as of other people "affected" by the war, and are probably the best-described part of Mozambique's (informal) process of transitional justice (see e.g. Gibbs 1994; Granjo 2007a, 2007c; Honwana 2002, 2005, 2006; Lundin 1998; Nordstrom 1997:145-147, 209-211).

Nordstrom (1997:198) has argued that these rituals should be regarded as "sparks of creativity for peace" (Nordstrom 1997:198) or as practices developed in the absence of an official transitional justice process (Perera 2001:191). Cleansing rituals, but also welcoming rituals (described above), are however best understood as existing rites performed in a new context, although one can question the extent to which war constitutes a new context for people in central Mozambique, considering that the liberation war and the civil war together span over three decades. Granjo (2007a:125, 141-142) and Honwana (2006) have noted that in southern Mozambique these rituals resembled the purification ceremonies performed when people returned from prison or the mines in South Africa. Similar to war, prisons and mines are seen as "bad" and "polluted" places or situations. Following Stovel's (2008:306) observation that "'tradition' is inspired by a group's past, but is constantly being adapted to meet new political and social circumstances, and is capable of synthesizing external elements," I argue that these rituals probably adapted to the context of war and large numbers of returning combatants. This means that these cleansing rituals did not acquire their meaning solely

from the war and its violence, but rather from cultural understandings of family, health, absence, and social pollution.

When asked to explain the reasons behind cleansing rituals, the veterans spoke of "washing away the idea of the bush [*o mato*]" or "the blood of war." Alfredo, a former Renamo combatant who was recruited at the age of eleven, said that the spirits "had to be taken out to not think too many things. Walking in the bush, one does a lot of things. Some go crazy. It all has to be taken out to be normal again."[134] According to Ronaldo, another former Renamo combatant, this was important because "the spirit that worked with me [during the war] was aggressive, [so] after the war I decided to take this spirit out because I needed a civilized spirit […]."[135] I asked Ronaldo if many of his colleagues had similar experiences. "Every person decides what he wants to do," he explained. "But many did take out that heat you pick up in the bush." "And what happens if this heat (*calor*) is not taken out?" I asked. "A person can become crazy," Ronaldo answered.

Ronaldo explained how he was cleansed: "The *curandeiro* had a pan with roots and boiling water. It was put between my legs and the *curandeiro* put a *capulana* over my head. It was hot and steamy and this way the spirits were taken out."[136] Many former combatants mentioned the use of steam from a pan containing certain roots and plants. Some said the *nyanga* would walk around them waving an animal's tail. Others said that these rituals also included "vaccinations," which involved making small incisions in the skin with a razor.[137] These incisions are made on particular parts of the body where a spirit is likely to enter, namely the forehead, chest, loins, and arm and leg joints. This is a common technique used by *nyangas* to protect people from spirits and witches.[138] As every *nyanga* seems to have his or her own specialties (e.g. roots, spirits), it seems only logical that these cleansing rituals were not performed uniformly, however, the use of steam seemed to have been central in the execution of these rituals in Maringue.[139]

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134 Interview with Alfredo, 03/08/09, Maringue.

135 Interview with Ronaldo, 04/08/09, Maringue. Ronaldo may have referred to a spirit that he possessed, perhaps a spirit that was "given" to him by a *nyanga*, as many combatants sought such protection. Yet I am inclined to think that his use of "spirit" on this occasion as a metaphor for his own state of mind.

136 Interview with Ronaldo, Mairngue, 04/08/09.

137 These rituals did not involve the verbalization of what people experienced during the war. Apart from symbolizing the past and the "rite de passage," these practices can be regarded as a physical experience. In southern parts of Mozambique veterans were sometimes even asked to perform specific battles and killings that took place during the war (Granjo 2007a:128). As Honwana (2006:121) states, "they [former combatants] were directed not to look back but to start afresh after ritual procedures." Other studies (Gibbs 1997:228) have shown the limitations of "western" psychologists in Mozambique, as their aim is exactly the opposite: to make people verbalize their experiences.

138 For an analysis of cleansing rituals conducted in southern Mozambique, see Granjo (2007:388).

139 In the south of Mozambique cleansing rituals were performed differently (see Honwana 2006:111-114, 2005:93; Granjo 2007c).

Given that spiritual relationships are collective matters rather than individual ones, cleansing is performed not only to protect the individual from spiritual harm but also, and perhaps even more so, to safeguard the collective sociospiritual balance (see also Granjo 2007c). This is exemplified by the words of Ronaldo: "With my first money from ONUMOZ I went to a *curandeiro*. I went with my wife and my son, and he began to take out the bad spirits." I asked why it was important that his son and wife were present at the ceremony. Ronaldo answered, "they were present because they were obligated to see if the spirit of war in fact left or not."[140] A "hot" demobilized combatant is a danger not only to himself or herself but also to his or her family, as the combatant might become "confused," "start drinking and killing people as they used to," have bad dreams, or "go crazy," or else angry spirits might come after his or her relatives. Spirits "picked up" during the war and avenging spirits are perceived as a threat by those who "have" the spirit, as well as by their family members. Therefore, these purification rituals were always done in the presence of the combatants' family, if possible family from afar and even neighbors, as an assurance that the "heat" had been taken out.[141] This resonates with what Honwana (2005:92) calls "social pollution," which in this context means that the combatants' contact with death and bloodshed affects the social body. This makes the cleansing process a fundamental aspect of protecting the collective against pollution and thus, as Honwana (2005:92) continues, "of the social reintegration of war-affected people into society."

Honwana (2006:111-114) suggests that such cleansing rituals can be seen as *rites of passage* from a realm where social norms were broken to a peaceful one where killing and violence are not normal. To a certain extent this is a fruitful framing, as it underlines the ambiguous threshold (or liminal) position of the returning ex-combatant as a danger to the sociospiritual balance and their symbolic change of status after the cleansing is done. One could argue that returning ex-combatants constitute "matter out of place," to use the term of Mary Douglas (1966), who also stressed that such "matter" is "polluting" and cause disorder and danger to the "social order." Combatants' references to war in terms of "blood," "heat," "the bush," or "the spirit of war" may be understood as references to pollution. This pollution or "heat" arises from contact with death and blood, but is generally also associated with sex. These are situations that leave a stain on a person and make the body 'hot.' A person who has had sex is said to have a "hot body," as is a woman who is menstruating. In these cases the "heat" dissipates with time, but in the pollution of dead is graver, therefore contact with death needs to be followed by the performance of purification rituals. It makes sense, then, that the necessity of such

140 Interview with Ronaldo, Maringue, 04/08/09.

141 The rituals regarding the ancestors always involved other relatives, but not all ex-soldiers conducted cleansing rituals with their family members in their home village, usually because there were no longer in contact with their relatives. Several former combatants said that they performed the rituals in the presence of their newfound family.

purification rites wsa felt not only by combatants but also by others affected by the war violence, as the latter could have also "picked up bad things" (Schafer 2007:107).

Certainly not all ex-Renamo combatants went through such cleansing rituals; as mentioned above, some Christian veterans said the church forbade such practices. My research assistant Adão, for example, regarded these cleansing rituals with suspicion and labeled them "backward."[142] Some experienced spirit exorcisms during praying sessions in Zionist churches (Honwana 2006:110). Other said they were "praying," but that they performed "the necessary rituals" anyway. All in all, these rituals of return were a widespread practice, also among the ex-Renamo combatants who participated in this research.

However, as I argued in the introduction to this book, a mere focus on ritual moments, often conceptualized as "community-based reintegration mechanisms," offers a rather ahistorical and apolitical understanding of veterans' postwar social lives and their communities (see also Scanlon and Nhalevilo 2011; Schafer 2007:167-168; De Vries and Wiegink 2011). There are at least three reasons for this. First and foremost, such rituals comprise a limited timeframe, namely the moment of return. Second, a mere focus on cleansing rituals may disregard the possibility that "successful" ritual reincorporation may not be lasting, as the past is constantly negotiated in the present. (see also Bertelsen 2002:116-128; Schafer 2007). It can be tentatively argued, for example, that the current dominant image of the "forced combatant" cleansed of the bad spirits of war (see e.g. Granjo 2007c: 390-391) fits neatly in the national discourse on the war, which is based on amnesty and peace, and largely avoids dealing with themes such as responsibility and justice. This discourse is far from fixed, however, as memories of the past may change over time and processes of transitional justice may be altered and initiated even long after a atrocities were committed (Antze and Lambek 1996; Ferrándiz 2006; Klep 2012; Robben 2012). Thus while the image of the "forced combatant" suggests otherwise, understandings of ex-combatants and atrocities have a profoundly political dimension.

Furthermore, as I show throughout this book, a mere focus on such rituals presupposes a "break with society" upon recruitment, as war is framed as an environment of heat and bad spirits, and a "break with the past" upon one's return to "society," washing away the heat of the war. Such framings not only result in a simplistic understanding of ex-combatants' life trajectories; but also present an unproblematic understanding of the community ex-combatants return to. Throughout this book I demonstrate from a variety of angles that veterans' navigations are best understood in terms of a

142 Adão often expressed a deep suspicion of "tradition" and especially "*curandeirismo*" (visiting healer-diviners), yet at the same time he would take his sister to a *nyanga* to resolve her infertility problems, as discussed above. Such seemingly contradictory actions and statements are well documented in relation to religion and health in Mozambique (e.g. Pfeiffer 2002) (Interview with Adão, 17/06/09, Maringue).

mixture of ruptures and continuities, which are not easily captured in dichotomizing categories of before and after war and civil and military life. I also show that "home" and "community" are not singular, welcoming entities, but rather heterogeneous, deeply entangled in the war and shaped by local dynamics. Yet in this chapter I want to take these larger arguments further into the realm of the sociospiritual world and to show that ex-combatants' relationships with spiritual beings go far beyond the "washing away of the spirit of war" or "thanking the ancestors." There relationships penetrate deeply into their personal histories, bodily experiences and local understandings of morality and punishment.

6.6 The avenging dead: A moral hierarchy of spirits

In this section I will focus on veterans' interactions with avenging spirits, which are spirits of people who died a violent death or whose dead bodies were maltreated, that cause illness, misfortune, and death. As described above, such spirits are known as for example *nkamwene* (son-in-law), *gamba*, *mfukwa*, *masoldier*, and *chikwambo*. Here I focus specifically on the spirits of people who were killed during the civil war, because it was such spirits that haunted several former combatants in Maringue. I will delineate how ex-combatants related to such avenging spirits and, moreover, will shed light on the multiple narratives existing in Maringue about ex-combatants' misfortunes and illnesses, which were in some cases attributed to spiritual revenge and retribution for committed atrocities.

Analyzing the interpretations, and practices in relation to avenging spirits provides a frame for understanding what is seen as "bad" deaths and, moreover, how the perpetrators of illegitimate violence are punished.[143] Avenging spirits were not necessarily people who had been killed during the war, as dying, especially in battle, was an expected aspect of the war (see also Granjo 2007b). When I asked my research assistant Marco about the nature of "bad" or avenging spirits, he said the following:

> Bad spirits are people that have been murdered, for example those who came back from Zimbabwe and were ambushed by lazy bandits. These spirits come back to hunt these bandits.
> Nikkie: So if bad spirits are the spirits of people who died in a violent way, then there must be many bad spirits from the wartime.

143 In contrast to the idea of a "bad" death, I want to propose the idea of a "good" or "expected" death, which is dependent on an individual's status and age but also on the context of his or her death. The death of a young child or an old person may fall into this category, but so too, as I mentioned previously, may the death of a soldier "in war."

> Marco: *Olha* [look], during war, during a battle one side shoots the other and the other side shoots back. Then people die. War is war. In war people die, so not every victim comes back as a spirit.[144]

Many people echoed Marco's phrase "war is war," which was often followed by "in war people die." Death was expected in war. The death of a soldier, in particular, was not regarded as an extraordinary event. Such deaths were most certainly mourned, at least by the deceased's relatives, but were also in some way "anticipated" and did not challenge any social or moral order. Consequently, soldiers who died in battle were generally not expected to return or linger as spirits. A similar view was expressed by Francisco, a pastor of a Pentecostal church, who also offered some clues at the sorts of spirits who did return to haunt the living:

> Soldiers who died in the war, those spirits we don't have. But if a simple person was killed in his house without a good reason, then his spirit will haunt the perpetrator. But from the war no, only when someone is killed who did nothing – that is a serious problem.[145]

"Bad death" during war is thus the death of a "simple person," as Francisco put it. Civilians (but also combatants) who died in extraordinary cruel or shameful ways, or whose bodies had been abused after their death, are considered to have suffered "bad deaths." It is their spirits that may "return" or "linger." It is thus not necessarily a violent death that makes a spirit come back to haunt the living, but unjustness of an act of violence or treatment of the dead body.

Igreja (2007, 2003) and Marlin (2001) observed that such spirits, who in Gorongosa were called *magamba*, commonly possessed young women within the family that was regarded as responsible for the spirit's ordeal or for dishonoring the dead body of the soldier.[146] I observed similar patterns in Maringue, but due to my focus on former combatants I also noticed another pattern of spirit afflictions concerning male former combatants who were regarded as having done "bad things" during the war. In contrast to *magamba*-like possessions of women, these former combatants were regarded as incurable. People's narratives about such afflictions caused by avenging spirits seemed to deviate from "normal" spirit afflictions in their emphasis on retribution. To understand the impact of such narratives, I will first present the story of a woman called Rebecca, who recovered from her spirit affliction caused by an avenging spirit she had "picked

144 Conversation with Marco Mabulez, Maringue, 17/06/08.

145 Informal conversation with Francisco, Maringue, 01/07/09.

146 Marlin (2001) and Igreja et al. (2008) attribute the apparent preference of *magamba* for female hosts to the marginalized position of women and situate this in a context of changing gender relations in central Mozambique.

up" during the war. Then I will present the case of Fazbem and his mysterious illness, attributed by most people to "bad violence" during the war.

"You took me to make me a cooking fire": Spirits narrating the war

Rebecca was a small and frail woman. She was HIV-positive and lived alone in a small hut in the shadow of the Catholic mission, from which she received food and social assistance. She was also a *nyanga*, and this was why Adão and I had set out to talk to her. When I asked her how she became a *nyanga,* she told us a tale of various layers of suffering. As her story unfolded, she seemed to forget her frailty and she enacted the story as much as telling it, making bold gestures when she imitated the Renamo commander who forced her to commit a "crime, too big [and] too serious."

> Rebecca: It began with blood that came from my sex. It was a lot. When it was too much my husband took me to a *nyanga*. He said that the blood was coming out because I was also a soldier and that one day I had encountered a dead person. In those days I was almost a soldier, very courageous. And one day I had taken someone's head, the skull, to use to make a cooking fire [using the skull to secure the pot above the fire]. Those people's spirits were saying, "*porra voce*! [damn you] You took me to make me a cooking fire!"
> Nikkie: They were spirits of soldiers?
> Rebecca: Yes, spirits of the war between Frelimo and the *Matsangaissas*. It is this spirit that heals with me now. He is called Alberto.
> Nikkie: How did he die?
> Rebecca: He died because of the war. I was almost a *guerrilleira* in those days; I did not have fear. That day that I took the head, there was no other way to make a fire. And I did not expect to live longer.
> Nikkie: Why did you not expect to live more?
> Rebecca: I was taken in Nhamundu to Gorongosa as a porter [*liga*]. There was commander Anaona, who led the group on this day. We stopped in a place where there were dead bodies. "Take those heads and make a fire!" [she was commanded]. After cooking porridge [*xima*] on top of the heads, I did not feel well. I went to sleep but I could not. I felt weak, I could not make a child and my other children all died. I tried to take out the spirit but the spirit would not let himself be taken out. The crime I committed was too big, too serious. It continues in my body until now.[147]

Alberto, the spirit that caused Rebecca's health problems, had been a soldier who had died "of war," a "normal death." However, what happened to his body was not normal,

147 Interview with Rebecca, Maringue, 03/08/09.

as his skull had been used by Rebecca to make a cooking fire, probably during a *liga* mission.[148] The spirit hung onto Rebecca and caused her weakness and infertility. This became clear when Rebecca's husband took her to a *nyanga*, who made the spirit speak. The spirit was appeased, as he was willing to "heal" with her so she could become a *nyanga* herself. But Rebecca said she never completely recovered, as she was not able to have children and she still felt weak, because, as she explained, "the crime was too big."

Rebecca's trajectory of becoming ill, consulting a *nyanga*, and finally placating the spirit closely resembles Igreja's (2007; see also Igreja et al. 2008) analyses of *magamba* spirit possessions in nearby Gorongosa. Igreja (2007) describes the diagnosis and healing process of women's spiritual afflictions, which involve the enactment or verbalization of the story of the spirit in the presence of the host's relatives. These spirits' narratives may not only reveal wrongs committed by the host, but also by the host's relatives. Then the *gamba* spirit demands reparations, which are often met by choosing one of the young female relatives to become the spirit's wife, or as happened in Rebecca's case, by the host's agreement to work with the spirit as a healer (Igreja et al. 2008:359-360; Igreja 2003), as also happened in Rebecca's case.[149]

The postwar spirit possessions and the related healing processes can be regarded as comprised (embodied) storytelling, which offered possibilities for breaking the silence about the war and perhaps may even have generated reconciliation (Englund 1998; Honwana 2003; Igreja 2007; Igreja et al. 2008:366; Marlin 2001). It may be argued that by re-enacting collective memories, spirit possessions force war survivors to deal with the memories of armed conflict (Honwana 2003). However, it is not the story of the host that is central in the healing session but rather, as the vignette about Rebecca's haunting underlined, the story of the spirit (Igreja 2007; Igreja et al. 2008). It was the soldier who had been suffering and had to be appeased and it was Rebecca who had committed the "crime." Nevertheless, in this process Rebecca's story was told as well. As Igreja et al. (2008:354) point out, such dialogical communications between spirits, hosts, and *nyangas* construct a certain narrative of the war and bring to the fore common but often silenced or taboo experiences, such as *liga*, the abduction of women to Renamo bases, and people being killed and tortured. Igreja (2007, 2003; see also Igreja et al. 2008) describes how postwar spirit possessions in Gorongosa became a stage for voicing violent incidents that happened during the war. He argues that such practices broke silences about the suffering of war and offered possibilities for healing and in some cases even empowered the position of women in the household. In other words, spirit possessions may "bespeak the necessity of dealing with the horrors of the war" (Igreja 2007:3 cited in Baines 2010:422-423) and perhaps give voice to those who are silenced

148 I could not establish whether Rebecca had been a Renamo combatant or not. Thus, I took her remarks as an example of the blurring of lines between civilians and combatants, as described in chapter 3.

149 For more in-depth analyses of these healing trajectories, see Igreja (2007) and Igreja, (et al.2008).

(Argenti-Pillen 2003; Baines 2010; Perera 2001). Yet spirit possessions are not only about "breaking silences" and "counter discourses" (Behrend and Luig 1999); they also play a role in the construction and reconstruction of shared memories of historic events and larger social patterns (e.g. migrant labor). Narratives of spirits such as Rebecca's may thus be perceived neither as true accounts of factual misdeeds nor as a mythical stories but rather as a multi-layered and gendered narratives and a "multidimensional and collective truth" (Igreja 2007:337).[150]

In the following section I want to add another layer of understanding to spirit possessions in the aftermath of war by analyzing narratives about veterans who suffered spiritual afflictions, which were related to the use of illegitimate violence during the war, as well as interpreted in terms of punishment.

The haunting of Fazbem: Justice and punishment

Fazbem was a former Renamo commander, recruited at the age of eighteen at school. He was the son of the *régulo* of Palame, a *povoa*ção in the north of Maringue district. His "royal blood" probably added to his fame.[151] Fazbem was a man of thirty-something years of age, but he was only the size of a child. He was just over one meter in height and his arms and legs were a quarter of the size they once were, he claimed. When I met him, he was unable to walk or even sit up straight. He spent his days in a hut at his father's homestead, in a bed made of wooden planks softened by several blankets. He liked visitors, and the two times I met with him he welcomed me enthusiastically with his characteristic high-pitched and quavering voice.[152]

Fazbem was great conversation on almost any topic, but he was especially thrilled to talk about his time as a Renamo soldier. He recalled great victories, shrewd schemes, and the women he "took." This was a time when he was "a big man," in stark contrast to the man he had become now. He told me his illness had started in the wake of war, but before demobilization: "In 1992 when the war ended I was in Manica close to Zimbabwe. We walked from there to Gorongosa and then the sickness began, I noticed it in my knees." "What kind of sickness do you have exactly?" I asked. "My bones are disappearing," he replied. "I have been in hospitals in Maputo and in Beira but they cannot find an explanation for why my bones are like this. They examined my blood but it was normal. They took a piece of my bone and put it back then it stayed firm.

150 Spirit possessions are gendered phenomena and, as Igreja et al. (2008) note, may involve a transformation in power relations, as women such as Rebecca become healers or sanctuaries for the spirits, which brings with it a change in status and perhaps even economic possibilities, as healing is a lucrative practice.

151 I have not used a pseudonym here, because he was such a well-known individual in Maringue and his illness was so specific that many *Maringuenses* would immediately recognize him from the descriptions.

152 Conversations with Fazbem, Maringue, 23/05/08; 11/11/08.

[…] But there is no cure." At times Fazbem was in pain. He drunk alcohol and smoked marihuana to ease his suffering.

The disappearance of Fazbem's bones had not gone unnoticed by people in Palame and in Maringue more generally. Indeed, I became aware of Fazbem's illness within a few During my first weeks in the town several people had already told me about Fazbem's mysterious illness. It would come up during casual conversations over dinner with leaders of the Catholic communities, during interviews with elders, and in small talk in the street. Fazbem and his life story were well known in Maringue, although everyone, including himself, related a slightly different version of the origin of his mysterious illness.

Most interpretations of Fazbem's illness were predicted on the idea that during his time as a soldier Fazbem had done something "bad" – specifically that he had killed a civilian. During a dinner at the house of the priest, I spoke with two community leaders of the Catholic Church from the northern *zonas* of Maringue (Palame and Merione).[153] The two men, named Januario and Pedro, started to talk animatedly about Fazbem. Januario seemed very impressed by what happened to the former Renamo commander. "Ah, Fazbem, the son of the *regulo*. *Xii*, he is the son of the *regulo*. He was a man like us. You could sit with him around a table. But he was a soldier," he said. Pedro continued: "He was a soldier, yes, but he killed a person of the house [*pessoa da casa*, civilian]. Not just a military person [*pessoa militar*] that you can do, but a person of the house, you can't." Januario explained: "He wanted a girl that was already married. He demanded her and killed the man [husband] and took the girl. Now all his bones are getting smaller. He is like a child." Pedro indicated Fazbem's reach on his own arms. Beto, an electrician who was also present at the dinner, pointed out the obvious irony in the first name of the disabled former soldier: "It would be better to call Fazbem *fazmal* [does bad]."

These commentaries entail a variety of moral understandings of violence. As Pedro said, a "person of the military" you can kill. This would be seen as legitimate violence. However, as he elaborated, "you cannot kill a person of the house," a civilian. Yet Pedro did not refer to *any* civilian, but rather someone who belongs to a "house," a family. "He was a soldier, yes," Pedro said, implying that a soldier was allowed to kill, but not just anyone. Januario contributed a further layer to this morally complex conception of violence by saying that the woman (or girl) in this case "was already married," which added gravity to Fazbem's crime. As I described in chapter 5, taking a married woman was regarded as a very serious offence both within Renamo and among the population. Murdering the husband, moreover, was regarded as extraordinary and illegitimate violence. Thus, the seriousness of the violent act contributed to the interpretation of Fazbem's current state of being. Though Januario and Pedro did not say it in so many

153 Informal conversation, 02/05/08, Maringue.

words, they clearly believed that the spirit of the civilian he killed was causing Fazbem's condition and that he was being punished for a crime.

Thomas, whom I introduced earlier in this chapter, added another element to the story of why Fazbem was haunted, namely that the victim had threatened the Renamo commander before he died. Thomas said that he was a colleague of Fazbem during the war, and he claimed to have been at his side the very day the civilian husband was killed:

> Fazbem had not killed the man, yet. He just took one of his wives away to the base in Maringue. But the husband followed him to the base and demanded his wife back. Fazbem laughed at him and stabbed him with a knife. While bleeding from his neck, the man said, "You will regret this. I will haunt you." The man died and then he [Fazbem] started to get sick.[154]

Thomas also related Fazbem's illness to the killing of a civilian, and noted that the victim ushered a warning of Fazbe postwar troubles. Generally, most people agreed on the "fact" that Fazbem had done something "bad" during the war and that his strange illness was a punishment for this crime. Fazbem, they seemed to agree, had been a "big man" – the son of a *régulo*, a high-ranked Renamo combatant known for his wits and brutality – but had now shrunk to a "small man" – a child in fact, no man at all.

However, there were alternative explanations for Fazbem's illness. *Nyanga* and former Renamo soldier Fernando, whom I introduced earlier in this chapter, suggested that Fazbem was being punished for disobeying a *nyanga*: "He [Fazbem] just did not do what the *curandeiro* told him to do when he wanted to be a *chefe* [leader, big man]."[155] In Maringue it is commonly known that people who want to be rich or "*chefes*" ask a *nyanga* to use his or her powers to help them. However, becoming rich is not without sacrifice, as it is said that *nyangas* make outrageous demands of their "clients," such as killing one's child or having sex with one's mother. If a client fails to follow the order of the *nyanga*, the clients go mad or something terrible will happen. Fazbem's strange illness, Fernando thought, was the consequence of such disobedience.

Fazbem himself had yet another interpretation of his illness. During my second visit to his hut, I dared to confront him with the stories that others had told about the origin of his illness. "If I may ask, I have heard other people say that you…" He interrupted me by saying that he was indeed "famous," referring to his accomplishments during the war, which he had earlier proudly recounted. My inquiry concerned a different matter, however. "Indeed you are well known," I continued. "But the people here say your illness is a punishment." He nodded. "It is a punishment to lie here, that's for sure," he said. I continued: "That is not exactly what I mean. People here in Maringue say you did bad

154 Conversation with Thomas, 30/06/09, Maringue.
155 Interview with Fernando, 15/06/09, Maringue.

[*fez mal*] during the war." He nodded again. "Some people say that I took the wife of somebody else and that I killed this man. It is propaganda." "Propaganda?" I repeated, because I did not know quite what he meant. "Yes, propaganda. They, from Frelimo, wanted to take me with them. The governor was here, with whiskey. They wanted me to come with them." Earlier in the interview he had explained to me that he was part of the Renamo intelligence service and that Frelimo was interested in collaborating with him. He suggested that the stories about his illness were a kind of slander campaign against him designed to prevent him from being considered by Frelimo as a worthy collaborator. For Fazbem, his illness had a biomedical cause, one that no-one in Mozambique could explain.

The multiple interpretations of Fazbem's affliction demonstrate that narratives of war and health, though often deeply intertwined, are manifold and polysemic. These interpretations range from avenging spirits to the wrath of a *nyanga* and are influenced by the narrators war experience and social and political position. While Fazbem recalled a glorious war in which he rose through the ranks to become a senior Renamo combatant, others – mainly civilians, but also other combatants – recalled a war in which combatants used their rank and power-through-the-gun to harass and harm married woman and family men. It is within such narratives that health, spirit possession, morality, and retribution intersect. These are not only the interpretations of *nyangas*, pastors, or other mediums, but mostly the narratives of "lay adherents" (Spierenburg 2000:77), for whom possession by avenging spirits forms an interpretative frame for understanding war violence and its consequences.

These narratives deviated slightly from ordinary narratives of spirit possession in that they involve a spirit that "haunts" the individual veterans (and never one of their relatives) and there is no prospect of recovery. Rebecca was able to come to an agreement with her spirits and to get them to "work" for her in her healing practices. Fazbem, however, has been irreversibly transformed into a small man and neither biomedicine nor *nyangas* seem to be able to stop his torment. There were many other stories of veterans being paralyzed or rendered permanently impotent, which were afflictions that people often related to atrocities committed against civilians. Marco related another example of an ex-Renamo combatant who allegedly took a woman and killed her husband. "He [the combatant] could not have sex," Marco explained. "He never knew why until he went to a *curandeiro*, who told him that he [the combatant] had murdered the woman's husband, who was haunting the commander. He could never have sex. The man was all right, but he could never have sex never with the woman." In this case the ex-combatant was "unmanned," as he was unable to set up a family.

The permanence of such afflictions is telling. Most afflictions that are attributed to disharmony in the sociospiritual world, such as infertility and impotence, are thought to be curable. People may visit countless *nyangas*, *profetas*, pastors, and hospitals in search of healing or, in other words, to restore certain relations with spiritual beings. Yet in the

stories about ex-combatants there was no possibility of healing, as their relationships with the spirits of their victims were deemed beyond repair. Perhaps their crimes were, as Rebecca put it, "too big" and "too serious." The multiple narratives about Fazbem's illness exemplify how the idiom of spirits is related to understandings of health, morality, and justice in the context of war and violence against civilians. In the eyes of those who narrated the suffering of Fazbem and other veterans, the latter's afflictions were regarded as some kind of justice done.

6.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that veterans' social navigations of the sociospiritual world were of vital importance for their health and relationships with relatives and community members. While "rituals of return" (cleansing rituals and rituals for the ancestors) and spirit possessions have received ample scholarly attention (Boothby 2006; Gibbs 1994; Granjo 2007a: 126-127, 2007b; Honwana 2006; Lundin 1998; Nordstrom 1997:145-146), the accounts presented in this chapter demonstrate that ex-Renamo combatants' navigations of the supernatural world go far beyond these ritual moments. Moreover, ex-combatants relate to a myriad of spiritual beings ex-combaee that are not easily captured by analyzing one "type" of spirit or one ritual practice, or presenting by one-dimensional interpretations of such practices.

In this chapter I have tried to draw attention not only to ceremonial moments and spirits possessions but also to the everyday idiom of spirits. This idiom offered a powerful lens through which to explore cultural models of wellbeing and morality. In addition to studies that have analyzed spirit afflictions in relation to their possibilities for healing and truth telling after mass atrocities (Honwana 2002; Igreja et al. 2008; Perera 2001), I explored spirit afflictions from the angle of justice and retribution. Drawing on narratives about the spirits of "innocent" and "respected" civilians who are "behind" the former combatants who killed them and cause suffering and illness, I argued that the spirit idiom also involves understandings of the legitimacy of violence, justice and punishment. This challenges the somewhat romanticized idea that local transitional justice practices work "naturally" toward healing and reconciliation, and adds nuance to a simplistic understanding of ex-combatants' "community-based reintegration." Following Kwon (2006:5), I argue that elements of justice embedded in local ritual practices and meanings should be understood as culturally grounded concepts and should not be framed in terms of international justice, human rights, or, particularly relevant to this study, combatant reintegration processes.

Furthermore, as was discussed in the introduction to this dissertation, a mere focus on reintegration rituals is inadequate for understanding the complexity of reintegration processes of ex-combatants as it overlooks the role of wider social and

political cleavages therein (Schafer 2007:167-168). "Rituals of return" are not a recipe for accepting returning veterans, as claimed by Granjo (2007c:382), among others. His description of veterans being accepted by their family and community members and being "reunited with home" (Granjo 2007c:382) is in stark contrast to veterans' social difficulties in relation to witchcraft, marriage, and relationships with spiritual beings, to name but a few of the issues I have delineated in previous chapters and elsewhere (Wiegink 2013a). The chapters in the section "Family Affairs" demonstrated in a various ways the centrality of kinship relations in veterans' social and spatial trajectories. While the war between Renamo and the Frelimo government provided the backdrop for such dynamics, each of the preceding chapters showed that it was often not war violence or the ex-combatant-as-perpetrator that influenced veterans' positions in relation to their kin and other people, but rather other factors that were contingent to war. The chapters showed how ex-combatants and their relatives navigated the environment of kinship *with* cultural models of expectations, obligations, absence, gender, adulthood, marriage, health, healing, and morality. This provided a layered understanding of what lies behind concepts such as the "returning combatant" and the "recipient community" and situated the ex-combatants and their families in the complexities of social life.

As was also argued in the introduction to this dissertation, a mere focus on rituals of return also offers a rather ahistorical and apolitical understanding of veterans' postwar social lives and their communities (see also Scanlon and Nhalevilo 2011; Schafer 2007:167-168; De Vries and Wiegink 2011). Therefore, in the next section I situate ex-combatants in social environments that are largely shaped by political dynamics and political actors.

PART III
POLITICAL NAVIGATIONS

7 "IN THE HANDS OF THE PASTOR"

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES, SOCIAL SECURITY, AND POLITICS

7.1 Introduction

"Here in Mozambique, the churches, eeey, a lot! On Sundays you hear dukudukudukuduku… [sound of the drums]."[156]

On a Sunday morning in Maringue, the air is filled with the sound of drums coming from the various churches located in the village. This sound experience starts at nine o'clock, with the ringing of the bells of the Catholic Church carrying throughout the village, calling (or reminding) the parishioners to come to Mass. When at ten o'clock the Mass starts, people in the church start to play the drums These are followed by the drums of the African Assembly of God, and then one by one the drums of the Colheta, the Alliance, the Ministry of Nike, the Gospel of God, Corpus Cristo, Zionist and in turn by other churches, initiating the Sunday services.[157] In these churches there are people singing, clapping, and dancing, these activities that are is interspersed by preaching, praying, and reading from the Bible. "We have sinners in our midst! We have witches in our midst!" the pastor of a Pentecostal church might preach to his church crowd. "Don't go to the *curandeiro*, they work with the devil!" is another reoccurring warning.

Church members of the principal churches in Maringue come from all different social strata: peasants in their worn-out but clean shorts; women wearing their most beautiful *capulana* (if they have more than one); many children, often barefoot; young teachers in their impeccable white shirts; and staff from the district's administration in their best suits. The church communities comprise "natives" of Maringue and civil servants from the city of Beira. They are former combatants, Frelimo supporters, Renamo veterans, merchants, farmers, civil servants, and students. Sixteen years ago, many of the church members found themselves on different sides of the bloody civil war, in which the farmer from Maringue was seen as an "armed bandit," and the civil servant was regarded as a representative of a "dictatorial regime."

Initially such observations made me think about churches as physical and social spaces that transcended the otherwise pervasive political divides in Maringue. But soon I found that most church leaders were as much entangled in politics as anyone else in

156 Interview with ex-soldier Finia and her husband, 20/05/08, Maringue.

157 I refer to the names of the churches as the pastors and church members in Maringue used them. These names are however often not the official names of these churches, as these

positions of authority, and that most church communities could not be characterized by solidarity or political reconciliation, or as "spiritual kin" (cf. Scheutze 2010). Nevertheless, they did form networks of social and economic assistance and mobility, which were invaluable for the postwar trajectories of many ex-combatants.

This chapter is the first of three in which I explore ex-combatants' navigations of social environments outside family structures and that are intertwined with political dynamics. Chapters 7 and 8 focus on the permanence of asymmetric personal relationships of dependency, and chapter 9 focuses on veterans' relations and encounters with the state. In different ways, these first two chapters underline the importance of social networks and so-called *big man dynamics* (Daloz 2003; Utas 2012). This ties into two theoretical debates. First, the benefits of social relations have been described by the notion of *social capital*, which was defined by Bourdieu (1985:248) as "the aggregate of actual and potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition." Such connections are based on trust, reciprocity, and obligations (Lin 2001; Portes 1998). Social capital may become economic capital when converted into for example jobs or veterans pensions. Social capital is regarded as an important component of ex-combatants' reintegration processes (Colletta, Kostner, and Wiederhofer 1996:18; Leff 2008) and is instructive for my analysis of ex-combatants' social navigations as it draws attention to the benefits of membership of a group or network (Portes 1998; Bourdieu 1985). This will be exemplified by ethnographic accounts of veterans' participation in church networks and networks of fellow Renamo veterans.

However, the most central aspect in analyzing ex-Renamo combatants' social navigations of church networks and former military networks is related to a second theoretical debate about asymmetric dyadic relationships. Such relationships have been conceptualized as a form of patronage (Foster 1963:1281) and as big man dynamics (Daloz 2003; Murphy 2003; Utas 2012). Big men are individuals with personal power who are situated in strategic positions between (state) institutions and the population and have the ability to distribute resources, thereby creating "loose social webs based on the ability to gather followers" (Hansen and Stepputat 2006:12; Sahlins 1963:289; Utas 2012:8). Following Utas (2012), I situate big men and their followers in networks of dependency. A network implies a fairly open set of vertical and horizontal social relationships (Utas 2012:9, following Duffield 2002:154) and in which participation cuts through socio-economic, geographical, and political divides and involves different motivations for and outcomes (Utas 2012:13-14). In chapter 8 I will consider these conceptualizations in more detail.

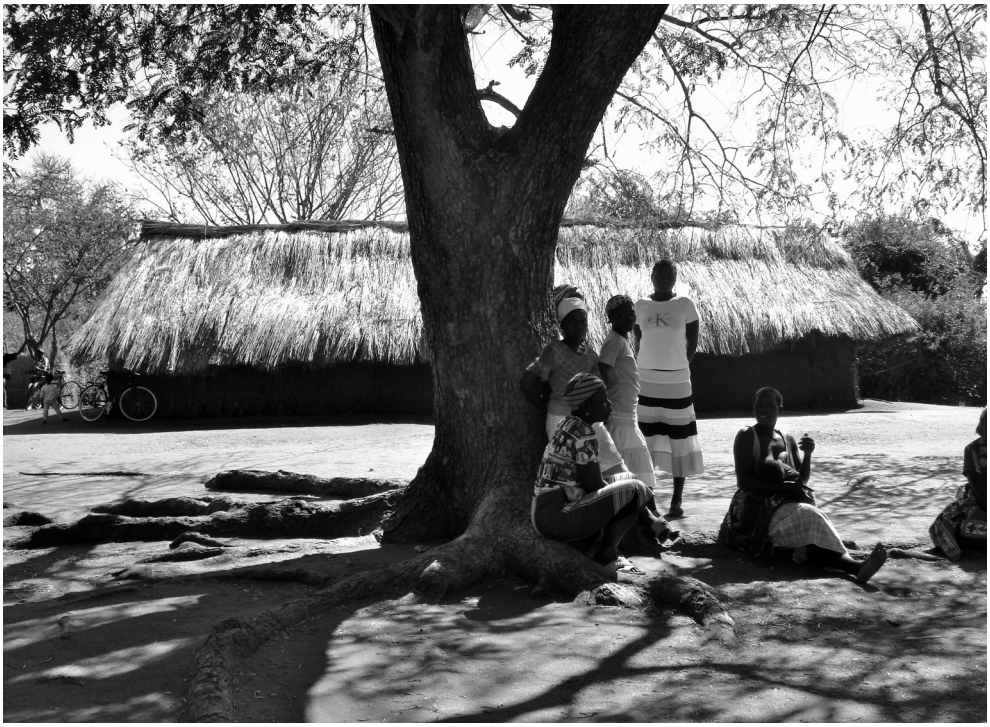
Chapters 7 and 8 illustrate that these networks consist of changing sets of power relations, as people have differentiated access to resources and social capital. These two chapters demonstrate how ex-Renamo combatants' navigations of networks and relationships of dependency may create social and economic opportunities. Yet they

also show how the prevalence of informal ties over formal ones may enhance social and political exclusion. Chapter 8 will focus on former military networks, while the current chapter describes veterans' social navigation of church networks. In chapter 6 I showed the role churches played in healing spiritual afflictions and performing rituals of "taking out the spirit of war"; in this chapter I focus on the social environment of churches, which are analyzed as institutions and networks and situated in the changing political dynamics of Maringue.

Several studies on ex-combatants have identified the reconciliatory possibilities of participation in church networks for post-war reintegration. Studies conducted in Liberia (Utas 2005b:147-148) and Peru (Theidon 2004:203-204), for example, show how ex-combatants converted to Pentecostal Churches in search of acceptance and forgiveness, both from God and from the local community. Generally, it has been argued that Pentecostal Churches promote a break with a past dominated by "devilish forces" (Engelke 2004; Meyer 1998).[158] This discourse seems to have explanatory potential in war, postwar, and other violent contexts, such as among converted gang members in Honduras (Wolseth 2008) and Brazil (Oosterbaan 2006). Wolseth (2008:97) argues that "conversion to evangelical faiths is for some a way of overcoming 'poisonous' social environments such as the street and the violence that they encounter there by metaphorically situating them in the sanctuary of the church." In such analyses conversion is thus regarded as enhancing a break with a violent past, which is considered a perquisite for reintegrating into a community or, as Theidon (2004:203-204) puts it, for "re-humanizing" perpetrators of atrocities.

Notwithstanding the value of such analyses, the scrutiny of ex-Renamo combatants' navigation of church networks in Maringue shows a different dynamic. Rather than enhancing a break with their rebel past, church participation represents a continuation of combatants' wartime religious and social practices. This chapter develops two arguments. The first is that relationships with other church members and pastors built over the course of war and peace made veterans' participation in church networks meaningful. In other words, veterans' current participation in church networks can only be understood by examining their pasts and the war and postwar history of Christian churches in Maringue. Second, similar to the authors mentioned above, I argue that participation in church networks provided ex-combatants with possibilities for social

158 Several scholars have also shown that while the discourse of the Pentecostal churches proclaims a complete transformation and promise to offer healing and protection, for church members the "break with the past" is neither abrupt nor complete. Meyer (1998:339), for example, observed a gradual process of conversion that allows people to "move back and forth between the way of life they (wish to) leave behind and the one to which they aspire."



Picture 2: Catholic Church of Senga Senga, Maringue (foto by author).

and material security in their postwar trajectories.[159] Relationships of dependency with church leaders are central in creating such possibilities. This offers further evidence for the main argument of this dissertation, which is that war and postwar life trajectories are shaped not only by violence, a violent past and a break therewith, but also by certain relationships established and maintained during the war and the postwar period.

To develop these arguments, the chapter commences with a historical background of churches in Maringue, focusing on the period of Renamo occupation and postwar political dynamics. Subsequently, I delve into Maringue's current church landscape and provide a description of two veterans' navigations of church environments in their search for social status, security, and patronage.

159 I refer to Van der Kamp (2011) for a different analysis of church participation. Van der Kamp (2011) argues against regarding conversion as a coping mechanism offering security and cultural continuity. She characterizes women's conversions to Brazilian Pentecostal churches in Maputo as "violent" and possibly involving greater hardship and insecurity (Van der Kamp 2011).

7.2 A brief history of Christianity in central Mozambique

This chapter takes as its point of departure the observation that Christian churches in Maringue, as elsewhere, do not exist in a merely religious and politically neutral space. As institutions, churches and their leaders influence and are greatly influenced by politics and (other) structures of governance (Comaroff 1985; Cruz e Silva 2008, 2001; Freston 2001; Gifford 1995; Meyer 2004; Ranger 2008). On the African continent churches have supported, opposed, and turned a blind eye to oppressive regimes. They have played a role in the struggle against colonialism and in democratization and peace processes, but have also supported rebellions against post-independence regimes, such as Renamo in Mozambique and UNITA in Angola (Gifford 1995, 1998:528-529; Meyer 2004; Ranger 2008). In other words, Christian churches, in all their variety, have not played a singular role in national politics in Africa (Gifford 1995; Ranger 2008).

The formation of Christian communities in central Mozambique is related to both the sociospiritual world and cycles of oppression, violence, and war during the last century (Igreja and Dias-Lambranca 2009:274). People in central Mozambique first came in contact with Christian religious beliefs through the "complicit influence of colonialism and Catholic missionaries" (Das Neves 1998 cited in Igreja and Dias-Lambranca 2009:274). The Catholic Church played a major part in Portuguese colonial rule through education and nation-building projects (Cruz e Silva 2001; Van der Kamp 2011:83; West 2005:109-132). The Zionist and Apostolic churches (so-called African Independent/Indigenous/Initiated Churches, AIC)[160] and Pentecostal churches arrived in central Mozambique with labor migrants from Zimbabwe and South Africa.[161] Before the 1960s these churches met resistance from the colonial government and the Catholic Church, but when Frelimo started to gain support for their armed struggle for independence, the colonial administration sought alliances with other Christian

160 AIC is a debated term (Meyer 2004). AIC churches were generally seen as "authentic" or "traditional," in contrast to mission or mainline churches. However, Meyer (2004:450-451), among others, has questioned the suitability of the term "independent," in the concept of African Interdepend Churches as it obscures the political and historical background of these churches and fails to acknowledge their interrelatedness with "mainline" churches. For example, most AICs in Mozambique can trace their roots to Pentecostal churches that arrived in South Africa in the early 1900s (Pfeiffer 2002; Pfeiffer et al. 2007:698). There are important differences between AICs and mainstream Pentecostal churches, but they share core Pentecostal features, such as a belief in the healing power of the Holy Spirit and the authority of the New Testament, and ritualized speaking in tongues (Cox 1995; Pfeiffer et al. 2007:698).

161 A discussion of the typology of the different churches in Mozambique is beyond the scope of this study. For the purpose of this study I distinguish between the Catholic Church, Pentecostal, and Zionist churches, as these distinctions were made by the research participants. I refer to Anderson (2000) for a discussion of this terminology and for criticism on such categorizations (Engelke 2010; Meyer 2004).

churches. In this more open environment the number of Zionist churches increased significantly (Igreja and Dias-Lambranca 2009:275).

In Maringue these religious institutions arrived later and were less prominent than in neighboring districts. Only the Catholic Church, the Assembleia de Deus Africana, Zionist churches, and the Johane Malanga church[162] existed in Maringue before the civil war. This is probably due to Maringue's geographic isolation, the absence of an administrative unit (Maringue only became a district in the 1980s), and the limited importance of the area in terms of trade. Unlike in bordering districts, there was no Catholic mission in Maringue. There was a Catholic priest, Mateus, who lived in the locality of Nhamvu for some time, but he left after independence. After that, the Catholic communities in Maringue depended on the mission in Chemba.

When Mozambique gained independence in 1975, the Frelimo government abolished religious and traditional practices and institutions, including Christian churches, which resulted in dramatic change in the religious landscape. In the revolutionary ideology of the Frelimo party, the traditional authorities, *curandeiros*, and other religious groups and institutions were seen as obstacles to the modernization of the country (Hall and Young 1997). Many Catholic missionaries were expelled from the country, as they were regarded as an extension of colonial dominance (Vines and Wilson 1995).[163] Those who stayed were forced to refrain from holding sermons in public and were also targeted for abuse. Their humiliating and violent treatment by Frelimo officials is still fresh in the minds of some of the elder pastors in Maringue.[164] Pedro, a former Renamo combatant, became a pastor of the Zionist church during the war in 1986. Before the war he was a member of the Johane Malanga Church in Maringue. He remembered the maltreatment of churchgoers by the ends of Frelimo officials:

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162 In Maringue people refer to this church as *Johane Malanga* or as the *vapastori*. The term Johane Malanga probably derives from the name of a Zimbabwean pastor John Maranke, as people in Maringue often confuse the letter "r" for "l." Maranke claimed to have undergone a series of extraordinary experiences that made him a "prophet of God" (Jules-Rosette 1980:3, 1975). He was at the forefront of the apostolic movement, the largest African Initiated Church (AIC).

163 The Frelimo leaders were predominantly from the south of Mozambique, where Protestant churches were more popular as the Catholic Church had fallen into discredit before independence due to its ties to the colonial administration. In northern provinces, however, the Catholic Church had supported Frelimo during the struggle for independence (Vines and Wilson 1995:132).

164 In post-independence Mozambique Jehova Witnesses were discriminated against and persecuted by the Frelimo regime. It has been documented that approximately ten thousand Jehovah's Witnesses were forcibly relocated in the Carico wilderness of Milange in Zambezia province in 1975-1976 (Vines and Wilson 1995:132). Jehovah's Witnesses had a particular role in post-independence Mozambique, During the civil war, Jehovah Witnesses are known to have violently resisted Renamo (Wilson 1992). By maintaining an apolitical position, Jehovah's Witnesses have been persecuted in both wars. In present-day Maringue, the church keeps a low profile and has only a few members.

> In that time, nobody was allowed to pray here! The Frelimo government was prohibiting people to pray, yes! If [you would] cause problems, [you were] tied up, taken to prison, others were killed by Frelimo. I was not yet with the Zionist; I first entered the Johane Malanga church. We were beaten [*xambuqueado*] here. [A member of] Johane Malanga does not eat pork. The government arranged pigs and killed them here. Obliging us to eat them. "Eat!" [they shouted] "Why do you not eat pork?" And then they [the adherents] were killed, tied up, and [or] transferred to other areas. "Why are you praying? Call God to come here." Frelimo was doing things like this. The Portuguese government did not prohibit it.[165]

Such confrontations occurred predominantly in the more populated zones of rural districts where Frelimo members and officials were present. The institutions of the new Frelimo government, such as *secretarios de bairro*, were visible in Maringue's main village but did not reach the remote areas of the district. Fernando, who lived in Macoco, a remote area 40 kilometers east of the main village of Maringue, had been "praying" in the Alliance, an evangelical church, since 1983 without any problems. "Frelimo had no means to prohibit us from praying, because they did not put their feet here. They were far from here," he explained. It must be noted that the missionaries of such churches did not travel far into the district either. It was people from the *zonas*, like Fernando, who visited the main village and brought the church back with them.[166]

Frelimo's attempts to abolish religion were only superficially successful in Maringue (see chapter 3). Moreover, their abolishment of churches and their of Christians instilled discontent in parts of the rural population. According to some people, this was one of the reasons why the *Maringuenses* supported Renamo, as it had a very tolerant attitude toward religion (cf. Hall and Young 1997; Vines and Wilson 1995:134).[167] When Renamo troops occupied an area, they allowed and even encouraged religious practices. Pedro, whom I introduced above, claimed to have joined Renamo because he saw the war as a religious mission to liberate the believers from Frelimo oppression:

165 Interview with Pedro, 13/08/09, Maringue.

166 In the 1980s the number of Protestant churches in Mozambique rose significantly, not only because Renamo was welcoming and encouraging churches in their "liberated zones," but also because the Frelimo government loosened its repression of religious institutions (Vines and Wilson 1995; Vines 1991:106-105).

167 Renamo had established close ties with the Catholic missions and received funding and intelligence from right-wing Evangelical churches in the United States, South Africa, and Southern Rhodesia (Freston 2001:123; Van Koevering 1992; Vines 1991). This support must be situated in the wider context of the Cold War and right-wing assistance for armed groups fighting against Soviet-supported regimes.

> As I see it, Renamo did not come with evil [intent]. Renamo liberated many populations, liberated many *zonas*, provinces! Those who were oppressed are free now. Here it is full with churches, thanks to Renamo. Frelimo prohibited even the *padres* here. But Renamo achieved democracy, implemented democracy. […] Renamo up until now has not yet entered in government. [Renamo] is still in opposition. But many people here see that we are doing well [now], because many people died here, killed, were tied up, fled, because they prayed. […] Now it is full with churches, we all have the strength to pray. We see *padres*. […] Now we are praying well, we are not prohibited. Now the government allows it. We must pray, thanks to Renamo [*pela graça de Renamo*].[168]

This religious tolerance was reflected in the experiences of many Renamo combatants. Christian combatants continued "to pray" during the war, and many others converted to one of the Christian churches.[169] Zionist churches, Johane Malanga, the Assembly of God, and the Catholic Church were a continuous presence in the lives of Renamo's troops. This point was clearly articulated by Elisa, a former Renamo combatant:, "I began [to pray] there in the *mato*, the war." "So there were churches?" I remarked. "There was any type of church!" she exclaimed. "We prayed well! Catholic, Johane Malanga, Zion…."[170] This did not mean that there were church buildings, as "praying" during the war largely took place in "the bush." "We went into the bush to sing, there was no church or anything. Under a tree, in an open space we came together," explained Januario, a member of the Catholic community of Palame. "We sang, very quietly. […] Drums made too much noise. And we had to check that there were no helicopters."[171]

The formation of churches in Maringue was greatly influenced by the wartime mobility of soldiers and Renamo captives, who brought with them churches that were unfamiliar to the district. The ranks of Renamo were, especially in the beginning, predominantly filled with people of the Ndau language group from the south of Sofala province and Manica province. They brought with them the Ndau language, which became the *lingua franca* of Renamo, as well as the Zionist church. During fieldwork, the Zionist church was still regarded as a "Renamo church," as it was particularly frequented by Renamo guards and Renamo members. Several people discouraged me to visit this church as they thought it would damage my reputation with the government authorities, since the "armed men" of Renamo were still a sensitive issue. I thus decided not to visit the church, though I had conversations with Zionist pastors on several occasions.

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168 Interview with Pedro, 13/08/09, Maringue.

169 It should be noted that the soldiers of the FAM were also often members of a church, even though the Frelimo party had abolished religion (Schafer 2007).

170 Interview with Rosa, 14/08/09, Maringue.

171 Conversation with Januario, 12/06/08, Maringue.

One of these conversations took place in the courtyard of Renamo's political office in Maringue, where I had arranged to meet three pastors. We sat in the shade of a tree, the pastors and Adão and I cross-legged on a mat in front of them. When I asked a question about the origin of the Zionist church in Maringue district, one of them remarked that "it was the soldiers of Renamo who brought this church here. They came from that side in the south." It turned out that these pastors were themselves ex-Renamo combatants. Two of them were originally from Chibabava, a Ndau area in the south of Sofala province. "We brought the church to here from our home," one of them explained."And the population, did they pray with you?" I enquired. One of the pastors from Chibabava nodded, and said:

> It was like this: when we attacked then Frelimo fled and we put up a church in that zone and the population prayed with us. […] We held service on Sundays. There were pastors that went from here to Malawi to get Bibles from pastors there. And at the end of the war there were white people who came to help us.[172]

The pastor framed Renamo's struggle as something akin to a religious mission to convert the population. While this was not a common interpretation of the war, his description of church activities is exemplary of how churches in wartime Maringue functioned. There were also various communities of the Catholic Church assisted by the mission in Chemba and foreign priests in Malawi. As Vines and Wilson (1995:134) note, after a humiliating expulsion by the Frelimo government, the Catholic Church thought it had found an ally in Renamo.

There were several Pentecostal churches present in Maringue during the war. The Assembleia de Deus Africana is a notable example. At the time, this church was led by pastor Samatere, who, as I mentioned in chapter 3, was once summoned by the Renamo leadership to testify about Renamo combatants' abuses of civilians in Maringue. Other pastors and religious leaders were employed as *blocos*, part of whose role was to force the population to contribute food to Renamo. The pastors were regarded as community leaders with authority over the civilian population. The rebel movement attempted to use religious structures and leaders in the implementation of its repressive regime. Willingly or not, church leaders had to align with Renamo or leave the district (cf. Vines and Wilson 1995:134).

None of the former combatants or civilians who lived under Renamo occupation recalled religious activities as being forced. While many combatants converted to one of the several churches during the war, there seemed to have been no pressure to do so. Combatants' accounts of wartime religious practices and beliefs were generally framed in terms of protection and guidance. Just as some soldiers consulted a *curandeiro*, others

172 Conversation with Zionist pastors, 12/08/09 Maringue.

addressed the prophet of the Zionist church or "prayed" at the Assembleia. Sara was one of those Renamo fighters who had become a church member during the war. She said she joined the Assembleia during the war, because she felt the need to pray for protection. "I prayed a lot to escape bullets and not to see so much suffering," she said.[173] Nowadays she does not attend the church's services as frequently as she did before. Marcia, another ex-Renamo combatant, made a similar point, "I prayed in the Catholic Church during the war. But now, sometimes I go, sometimes not. I prayed for the war to be over. Now it's over and I don't go anymore."[174] By "praying," these women mean the collective partaking in a religious service, probably involving dancing, singing, and drumming, as I will describe further below.

During the war religious practices were a source of hope and protection, but after the war reasons for "praying" disappeared, at least for some. For other ex-Renamo combatants, participation in church networks formed a crucial element of their postwar survival. On a national level churches played a vital role in the commencing and facilitating of the peace negotiations (Van den Bergh 2009:27-30; Vines and Wilson 1995:136-145).[175] Furthermore, as I argued in the previous chapter, churches played an invaluable role in postwar healing practices. But church networks were perhaps even more important in offering networks and relationships through which Renamo veterans could find social assistance and protection, as the following sections will illustrate.

Although not all ex-Renamo combatants were church members, the majority of the veterans who participated in this research said they were "praying" (see Annex 2). Most ex-Renamo combatants I spoke to were members of one of the Pentecostal churches, the remainder generally considered themselves Catholic or Zionist (see Annex 2). In other words, there was not one "Renamo church," although the Zionist churches renowned as such. Rather, veterans' church membership – both during and after the war – reflected the variety of churches in wartime. I heard of few cases of ex-combatants who had converted after the war. Such conversions may have been more common were more common in other areas of Mozambique; this subject merits further investigation.

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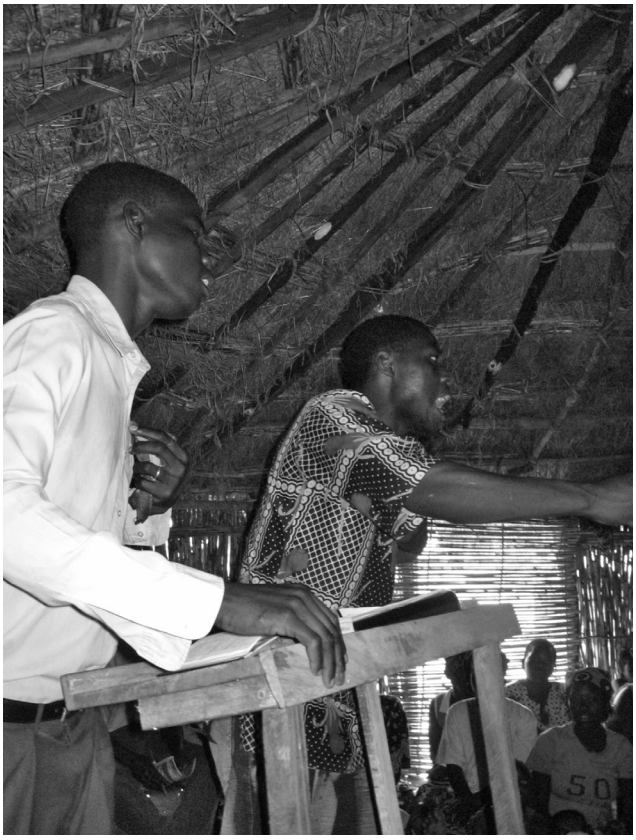
173 Interview with Sara, 03/08/09, Maringue.

174 Interview with Marcia, 14/08/09, Maringue.

175 In the early 1980s, the Catholic Church and the Mozambican Christian Council (CCM, the umbrella organization of 17 Protestant churches) pressed for dialogue between the Frelimo government and Renamo. In this process, the Catholic Church made good use of their ties with Renamo to start peace negotiations. For example, it was the Bishop of Beira, Don Jaime, who established the first contact with the Renamo leader, Dhlakama, to initiate the peace talks (Van der Bergh 2009). In the aftermath of the war, the CCM played a prominent role in the collection of arms (under the slogan "swords into ploughs") and in other, more top-down initiatives (Van den Bergh 2009:27-30; Vines and Wilson 1995:144-145). It has generally been acknowledged that faith-based organizations have a unique mediation position in peacemaking processes, as they are often located between the top-down actors and the grassroots level, and ideally have the confidence of both (Appleby 2001:821; Lederach 1997:22). Their role on the local level is less recognized.



Picture 3: A service at Pastor Sixpence's church (photo by author)

7.3 Entering Maringue's churches

My explorations of Maringue's church networks began in Maringue's Catholic parish, as this was my home during the first six months of fieldwork. Through my discussions with church Renamo veterans I was soon introduced to Maringue's vast and varied church landscape. This included the Catholic mission, the Zionist church, the Johane Melange church, the Jehovah's Witnesses, and an high number of Pentecostal churches (see Annex 1).[176] Of the latter I counted six different types in Maringue town, among which was the Assembleia de Deus Africana, but there were probably more.

All churches generally had their *sede* (base) in Maringue town, where most district church leaders resided and where the largest and best maintained church buildings were located. Some of the churches were brick constructions, such as the church of

176 Maringue did not have a mosque. While approximately twenty percent of Mozambique's population is Muslim, there were, as far as I could tell, only a handful of Muslims living in Maringue at the time of fieldwork (see Annex 1).

the Assembleia. Others were built with wattle and daub. Most of these churches had a various congregations, referred to as *comunidades* (communities), in the rural areas outside Maringue town. The Assembleia, for example, had six communities in rural zones, the Catholic mission over thirty. These communities were headed by a local leader, had their own church buildings, and were visited on regular intervals by the district pastors or, in the case of the Catholic parish, the priest.

Furthermore, the district's church leaders maintained ties with churches in other districts, as part of a hierarchical church structure that extended from the provincial to the international level. Maringue's Catholic parish, for example, fell under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Beira and was also in close contact with Catholic missions in neighboring districts. Pastor Samatere, district pastor of the Ministry of Astrico, said people from the United States had brought this Ministry church to Mozambique. He often received visits from the provincial leader of the church, and occasionally international delegations.[177] Pastor Samatere's activities for the church were characterized by a high level of mobility both nationally (within the district and the province) and internationally (across borders in Zimbabwe). The churches in Maringue are thus part of extensive networks reaching into the district's rural zones, but are also embedded in provincial, national, and global structures (see also Van der Kamp 2011).[178] Furthermore, as we will see below, the church leaders are also involved in government and political-party networks. The following vignette is intended to illustrate when and how people in church networks interacted.

On a sunny Sunday morning during my first period of fieldwork, I attended the sermon of the Assembleia de Deus Africana, better known as "pastor Umberto's church."[179] I arrived with Dona Ana, an ex-Renamo combatant and one of my key research participants, whom I introduced in chapter 5. She regarded herself as a devoted member of "pastor Umberto's church" and was excited to show me the place where she "prayed" every Sunday. She was dressed in her newest *capulana*, and her six children wore clean clothes, with the eldest ones wearing shoes instead of their usual flip-flops.

The Assembleia had one of the biggest church buildings of Maringue. In contrast to most churches in the district, which were constructed of wattle and daub, the Assembleia was built from brick and had a corrugated iron roof, which was still partly under construction. Walking on the sandy road toward the church we were met by the singing and drumming inside. We entered through the back door. Inside, there were approximately fifty people all seated on the right side of the church, where they

177 Conversation with pastor Samatere, 07/06/08, Maringue.

178 Many of these churches had Zimbabwean, South African, Brazilian, or American origins. See e.g. Van der Kamp (2011) on the south-south transnational dimensions of Brazilian Pentecostalism in Mozambique.

179 Observations during church servive of the Assembleia de Deus Africana, 23/11/08, Maringue.

could evade the heat of the midday sun. In the back were women and children sitting on mats. A little further down the aisle there were benches, occupied by men in (often oversized and threadbare) suits, youngsters in their school uniforms, and civil servants in their impeccable white shirts. In the middle of the church three young men were enthusiastically beating the drums. The other people in the church were clapping their hands and singing a rhythmic song.

Dona Ana and her smaller children sat themselves down on one of the mats in the back. Just as I was preparing to sit next to them, one of the church's leaders appeared. He was a short man with a round belly whom I had previously gotten to know as one of the district's police officers. He greeted me cordially, shaking my hand enthusiastically, and directed me to the first bench. He offered me a seat next to the administrator's wife, Catherina. Apparently we were both considered guests of honor. Feeling slightly uncomfortable, I took a seat and clapped along with the rhythm.

After a while pastor Umberto made an entrance. Upon his arrival the drums grew louder and faster, and everybody rose to their feet. Pastor Umberto was a man in his fifties or sixties, with an open face, an almost permanent smile, and graying hair. He was originally from Caia district, but his parents had moved to Maringue when he was a boy. The family was relocated to a communal village in Caia during the liberation war. In 1972, he was recruited by Frelimo to fight the Portuguese army. After independence he returned to Maringue to avoid recruitment by the government army, which was now engaged in conflict with Renamo. "I had seen enough of war," he said during an interview we had some weeks after I attended the church service. During the war he had experienced Maringue as a tranquil place, where he was able to establish a family and a church community. He lived in Phango, a village near Renamo's military base. But after some years the war "became too much" and he and his family fled to Malawi. After the peace accords were signed in 1992, he was one of the first to return to Maringue and reestablish his church.[180]

During the church service pastor Umberto wore a neat suit and shiny shoes. He smiled to the church members and gave me a surprised but welcoming look. Then he sat next to the church leaders on chairs facing the crowd, joining in with the clapping and singing. When the pastor stood up, all became silent. He took up his position behind a high table on which a Bible was placed. Next to him stood one of youth representatives of the church, who translated every word into ChiSena. "Hallelujah!" the pastor began, and the crowd replied, "hallelujah!" This dialogue was repeated several times, then Umberto started speaking. He welcomed everyone, and greeted administrator's wife Christina and me explicitly, and then he opened the Bible and read a verse. In his preaching pastor Umberto spoke about how God takes care of those who follow him. To illustrate this, he gave the example of AIDS, stating that those who "pray" will not get

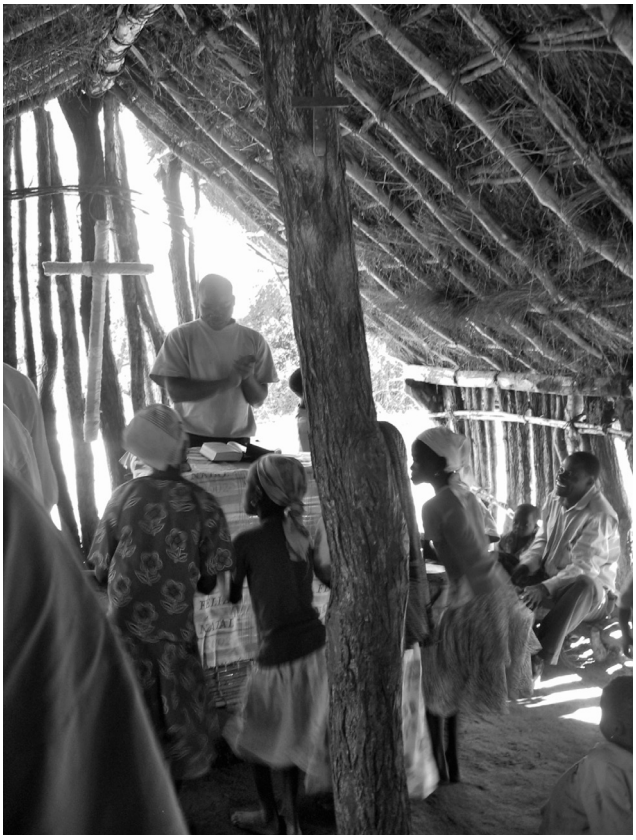
180 Interview with pastor Umberto, 26/08/08, Maringue.

sick. "Trust in God," he almost screamed at the end, "outside, there are family members, neighbors who want to bewitch and kill you." "Hallelujah," he yelled one more time; the crowd repeated this and the drumming resumed. The preaching, collecting money, and presenting the coming weeks activities, was on intervals interrupted by the rapid drums, singing and clapping.. Groups of dancing children and youths took the floor one after the other, first the small girls, then the boys, then the adolescents. The dust kicked up by the dancing created a whirling, shimmering haze.

When, after two hours, the sermon was drawing to a close, the pastor asked us to close our eyes and pray. Peeking through my eyelashes, I noted that some the smallest children put their hands devotedly in front of their eyes. When the drumming and the singing started again, about fifteen people formed a line in front of the pastor and the other leaders of the church. They then took it in turns to kneel and receive a prayer. Pastor Umberto grabbed the head of a woman kneeling in front of him. He closed his eyes and murmured, first incomprehensibly, then louder and more clearly. As he spoke in ChiSena I could not understand what he was saying, but it was likely something similar to the utterance of pastor Paulo ("Leave in the name of Jesus"), discussed in chapter 6. As mentioned previously, the Pentecostal church pastors pray to exorcise the bad spirits causing disease and misfortune in people's lives. Dona Ana considered this the most important moment of the service, as through these prayers, she said, "people were helped." Her children were more exited about the dancing and the drums.

After the service, I joined Dona Ana and her children again outside the church. She lingered chatting with two women, also ex-Renamo combatants. The schoolteachers left together, and the administrator's wife stayed behind with the wife of the director of agriculture. These two women were in many ways alike. They were both from cities in the south of Mozambique, where they had started "praying" in other communities of the Assembleia. They wore similar outfits and both had round figures. Together they got into the only car parked outside the church, leaving the other churchgoers in a cloud of dust as they drove away.

Participant observation of church networks and services, such as the one described above, gave me a more complete picture of ex-combatants' lives. Not only did church services, especially those of Pentecostal and Zionist churches, entail practices of healing; they also offered me the opportunity to observe t social interaction between veterans and other *Maringuenses*. As described above, the administrator's wife attended the same service as ex-Renamo combatants, like Dona Ana. I was intrigued by this image of two women from opposing political parties, with completely different backgrounds and socio-economic positions, praying together every Sunday morning. They form only one example of the diversity of people participating in church communities. During the war church communities consisted of largely Renamo combatants and "natives" from Maringue. In the mid-1990s, with the arrival of government institutions in the district,



Picture 4: Catholic mass, Maringue (photo by author).

also civil servants, government officials, the special police force (FIR), and Frelimo party members entered the district and its church communities. As a result church communities began to cross socio-economic and political divides like never before. The possible implications of this will be discussed in the next section.

7.4 Church networks: Spiritual kin?

The diverse people participating in Maringue's church communities tempted me to see churches as places where political divides were transcended. These ideas were reflected in studies arguing that church communities may serve as surrogate families (Meyer 2004:461, see also van Dijk 1997; Englund and Leach 2000:235) or as "spiritual kin" (Scheutze 2010). Pentecostal churches, in particular, often advocate a break with the extended family and the traditional practices of the past by referring to believers as "brothers and sisters in Christ." These churches are known to stimulate a new form of community beyond the family, the ethnic, or even the national group (van Dijk

2002; Meyer 2004:461; Scheutze 2010). Consequently, participation in Pentecostal church networks is regarded as being particularly attractive for people who have been "uprooted" from their kin networks (Chabal 2009:48). These may be people who recently moved to urban areas, people afraid of witchcraft accusations or attacks (Van der Kamp 2011; Lubkemann 2008:326-329), or former combatants, afraid or unable to return to their village of origin.

At first this image of the "surrogate family" or "spiritual kin" seemed rich and fitting in relation to veterans' participation in church networks, as many of these veterans were uprooted, living far away from their kin. These church networks were indeed crucial in ex-combatants' search for social, spiritual, and material security. However, conceptualizing these networks in terms of family, or even community, presupposes a certain homogeneity, boundedness, and internal solidarity that were in fact not present.[181] Pentecostal churches, in particular, attract people from a wide variety of political, socio-economic, and ethnic backgrounds (Meyer 1998:319-320). Consequently, church members' identifications with the church are similarly variegated.

For Dona Ana, the church and in particular pastor Umberto were essential for her social security. As will be elaborated upon below, her relationship with the pastor was shaped by dynamics of dependency and reciprocity. Yet for Catherina, the administrator's wife, the Assembleia in Maringue was an inferior version of the church she had previously attended in Maputo. Her relationship with the pastor was also shaped by the high status of her husband, with whom pastor Umberto was engaged in a relationship of dependency. People like Dona Ana and Catherina hardly interacted with each other. Dona Ana for example referred to her fellow church members as "sisters" and "brothers," but this indicated only people who were associated with Renamo. These two women exemplify the little interaction there was between church members associated with Renamo and those from outside the village, who were generally aligned with Frelimo.[182] In other words, joined participation in church networks did not overcome the socio-economic and particularly the political divides that shaped Maringue's social life in general. In Maringue, church communities did thus not facilitate reconciliation, which studies mentioned above suggest church communities did in other postwar contexts. However, these communities did aid former combatants in their search for a tolerable life after the war.

In what follows I want to focus on the relationship between church members and church leaders, as this is key for understanding veterans' church participation. The

181 As I have pointed out in the introduction to this book, the use of the word "community" is problematic for various reasons, including its connotation of homogeneity (Amit and Rapport 2002).

182 Members of Zionist and Johane Melange churches seemed to be more politically homogenous. These churches were largely seen as "being with Renamo" and as far as I know were avoided by civil servants and others who were "with Frelimo."

centrality of the individual's relationship with the pastor (or priest) figure in Maringue is exemplified by how people referred to churches not by their name (e.g. Assembleia de Deus) but rather by the name of the church's main pastor (e.g. "pastor Umberto's church") (cf. McLauley 2013:12). This underlines the importance of the individual's relationship with the pastor as opposed to their relation with the church as an institution. Relationships between church leaders and members may be regarded as "dyadic contracts" (Foster 1963:1281), as they bind individuals rather than groups. To return to the Assembleia de Deus, I argue that the largest common denominator of the church members was their relationships with the pastor, in this case pastor Umberto.

Pastors and other church leaders occupy specific positions of power in Maringue. They exemplify the argument made by Van Dijk, Reis, and Spierenburg (2000:6) that "healing power (the power to counteract illness and misfortune) and political power (the power to order and reorder social relations) are closely interwoven." Both of these powers, they venture, rely on claims to specific relations to the spirit world. I would add, concurring with Scheutze (2010), that pastors also lay claim to specific relations in the social and political world. In my view, pastors are the central nodes within church networks, as they interact in a variety of ways with people of different socio-economic backgrounds and political affiliation. Their position in such networks provides pastors with status, influence, a certain material wealth, and authority (cf. Scheutze 2010). They may be regarded as spiritual as well as community leaders, as they settle conflicts, offer assistance, and represent the population in governance structures (cf. Manglos 2011).

Several authors have attributed the rise of Pentecostal churches in the global south to the malfunctioning of the formal state apparatus, suggesting that religious movements can be seen as new forms of power that fill a void left by the state (Ellis and ter Haar 1998:194-195; Gifford 1998). This holds true for church communities in Maringue, who for example often assist in the resolution of conflicts and frequently offer a social security network to people in need, which may be regarded as tasks of the state. However, what is of more interest of the argument made here, is that these church communities and formal politics in Maringue are deeply intertwined (cf. Ellis and ter Haar 1998:195; Meyer 2004). Church leaders did not form alternatives to the formal district governors or to traditional authorities such as the *régulo*, *sapanda*, and *nfumo*. Yet pastors did exercise a certain control over their church communities. At the same time, they maintained formal and informal ties to the district government and political parties. Therefore, pastors can be regarded as brokers, a central characteristic of big men (Utas 2012), occupying a position in between their church followers and the local government. Similar to traditional authorities, pastors are attractive allies for governing and political actors. As I have shown above, Renamo attempted to involve pastors and other religious leaders in its structures of governance. In contemporary Maringue, the pastors of Zionist churches were still seen as supportive of Renamo, as many of them were former Renamo combatants. Pastors of Pentecostal churches mean-

while were generally associated with the district government and the Frelimo party. Among these pastors were also pastor Samatere and pastor Umberto, who had been "with Renamo" during the war. The district government asked Pentecostal pastors to speak on national holidays and during official visits of for example the President, and employed them for paid jobs, such as registering voters in preparation of the 2009 national elections. Allocating these paid positions to the pastors may be seen as a way for the local government to reward the pastors for their loyalty. As Gifford (1998:341) notes, Pentecostal leaders easily "walk the corridors of power" and align themselves with the government, which may be relatively profitable for them and their followers. It is in this context that relationships between ex-Renamo veterans and church leaders must be understood.

In the next sections I will describe two Renamo veterans' navigations of church networks. I will pay particular attention to the centrality of relationships of dependency (patrimonial ties) and how these provided social and material security.

7.5 Dona Ana: "In the hands of the pastor"

Dona Ana became a member of the Assembleia de Deus Africana, or as she called it "pastor Umberto's church," during the war. She joined the church in 1986, when she was stationed as a combatant at Renamo's headquarters, Casa Banana, in Gorongosa. When I asked her why she joined the Assembleia at that moment in time, she shrugged. "There were many churches. I just thought it was a good moment for praying," she replied. After demobilization in Maringue, Dona Ana found herself in an insecure position. She was a single mother, with, as far as she knew, no family to return to. While she maintained close ties with the Renamo party, the party could not sustain her. As described in chapter 5, the absence of a husband and kin made it difficult for women like Dona Ana to acquire land in Maringue. Furthermore, single women are also easily targets for suspicions of witchcraft and spiritual attacks. Her membership of the Assembleia provided a solution, as the pastor offered her a piece of land.[183] "I got to live on his land," Dona Ana explained. "I was in the hands of the pastor. He left, then this other one came, Samatere, and now I'm with pastor Umberto. And like this we continue." Subsequent pastors took Dona Ana under their wing and she remained a loyal member of the Assembly. When I met her in 2008, she and her children lived in dire poverty and were socially vulnerable, yet Ana's participation in the Assembleia made her life slightly more manageable.

Dona Ana's and other female Renamo veterans' reliance on church networks can be understood as part of a broader trend of women's participation in Pentecostal churches.

183 Land cannot be bought in Maringue, but is instead allocated by traditional leaders. In this case, however, the land was appointed to Dona Ana by a pastor.

As has been observed in Mozambique (van der Kamp 2011; Pfeiffer 2002; Scheutze 2010) and beyond (Comaroff 1985; Meyer 2004; Robbins 2004), church networks, and particularly Pentecostal churches, greatly appeal to African women of various socio-economic backgrounds. It has been noted that women experience increasing insecurity in relation to their health, marital and family relationships, and livelihoods in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and economic changes (Pfeiffer 2002; Pfeiffer, Gimbel-Sherr and Augusto 2007; Van der Kamp 2011; Klaits 2010; Scheutze 2010). The position of female veterans in Maringue, as I described in chapter 5, is shaped by similar difficulties and is further complicated by their status as devaluated brides. According to Scheutze (2010:iv), who conducted fieldwork among Christian women in Gorongosa, church networks may offer women "networks of support that people create and sustain and that help to make life more manageable."[184]

There are at least five characteristics of church networks that make membership attractive for women in general, and female veterans in particular. First, churches may offer essential practical assistance in times of exceptional hardship. During fieldwork I observed how church networks donated food and money to people who, for example, people lost their harvest to uncontrolled fire, as often occurred during the dry season, or became sick. Second, churches, especially Pentecostal churches offer healing practices that are free of charge, whereas *curandeiros* and *profetas* often charge high fees for their healing practices (cf. Pfeiffer et al. 2007:695-696).

Third, as Oosterbaan (2006:148) notes, church members may consider themselves as being in a separated social space in which people are protected fro evil. Church members are protected by the Holy Spirit and will not be troubled by witchcraft, spirits, and disease (cf. Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; van Dijk 2004; Pfeiffer 2002; Meyer 1998; Scheutze 2010). This is illustrated by a preaching of Pastor Umberto, during one of the services I attended he said the following to the churchgoers: "God will save those who follow him! Pray and you will not get that AIDS." He added that one also should not visit prostitutes or drink too much.[185] Dona Ana said that she and some other people "who prayed" were often asked to assist the hospital in disposing of the bodies of people whose family members did not come to pick them up. Church members would transport these bodies from the hospital to the cemetery, where they would then bury them. Other people, including medical staff, would not touch the dead bodies or come near them, since they believed that death causes sickness and needs to be accompanied

184 Scheutze (2010) paralleled women's increasing participation in Pentecostal churches with other emergent forms of spirit-mediumship (Igreja 2007), arguing that these are not separate developments but are born of similar processes of insecurity (Scheutze 2010).

185 Observations during a service of the African Assembly of God, 23/11/08, Maringue.

by purification ceremonies. Dona Ana and other members of the Assembly did not fear these "pollutions," as they considered themselves protected by the Holy Spirit.[186]

Fourth, participation in a church network provided women like Dona Ana with a respected position in society. Single women, female headed of households and female Renamo veterans were all categories that triggered stigmas of prostitution, promiscuity, and witchcraft. A number of people told me that men visited Dona Ana's house and that her eleven-year-old daughter was working as a prostitute at night in the bars near the market square. Such rumors, whether true or not, made the family vulnerable to witchcraft accusations and attacks, as single women (and even little girls) are often suspected of trying to seduce the husbands of other women through magic.[187] Being a church member allows women to participate in a network, which mitigates certain stigmas and makes them "good" or "better" community member in the eyes of gossiping and malevolent neighbors, although in Dona Ana's case the rumors did not cease completely.[188]

The fifth and final characteristic of church networks that make them attractive to women is the relationship of patronage with the pastor. Again Dona Ana's church membership is a case in point. After demobilization, Dona Ana found herself in an insecure position. As mentioned before, she was a single mother, with, as far as she knew, no family to return to. While she maintained close ties with the Renamo party, the party could not sustain her. As Dona Ana said, she had been "in the hands of the pastor" ever since. In return, she has been a loyal member of the Assembleia and, moreover, a loyal follower of pastor Umberto.

This loyalty was demonstrated during a period of political "troubles" in the run-up to municipal elections in November 2008. Armed Renamo men roamed the village and put up several roadblocks on Maringue's main roads. Vehicles were stopped and people were checked, as Renamo suspected massive electoral fraud in Beira by using so-called ghost-tables and phantom registration lists. One night, Renamo combatants stopped a vehicle carrying several *antigos combatentes*, who were severely beaten. This happened in front of pastor Umberto's house. Umberto assisted in the sheltering of the startled *antigos combatentes* and brought several of them to the hospital. The next day, Dona Ana heard through her connections with Renamo that pastor Umberto was going to be beaten up by Renamo combatants. As soon as she could, she went to the pastor's house and urged him to flee the district. In the end, however, the pastor did not leave but instead decided to confront the Renamo soldiers; as he said to Renamo combatants, "I

186 Conversation with Dona Ana, 22/06/09, Maringue.

187 Women are suspected of witchcraft more often than men (Serra 2009), especially elder women, who are believed to be jealous of other women's youth and their ability to have children (Ashforth 2005:75-76).

188 Ashforth's (2005) informants in Soweto were not so convinced of this, however, as in their opinion a practicing religion could be used to disguise one's true identity as a witch.

Picture 5: The Catholic Church of Maringue town (photo by author)

was also a soldier, […] weapons do not frighten me."[189] Dona Ana's decision to warn him, however, is telling of her loyalty toward the pastor, thereby transcending their political divides. She decided to share her inside information on Renamo with a Frelimo veteran, but who was also the pastor of "her" church, to whom she owed her very existence in Maringue. This was one of the rare instances I know of in which relationships within the church networks proved more important than political associations. This incident also revealed the salience of relationships of reciprocity and dependency for daily survival.

7.6 Thomas: "We are the owners of the church"

As a second case, I want to present the navigations of Thomas, a former Renamo commander and a member of the Catholic parish in Maringue. As Thomas was one of my key research participants I have mentioned him on several previous occasions. Thomas was originally from Mutarara, where he grew up in a Catholic family. During

189 Conversation with pastor Umberto, 23/11/08, Maringue.

the war he continued to attend the Catholic mission near Casa Banana and later in Maringue. He eventually became one of the church leaders of Maringue's parish.

Thomas took great pride in his position within the Catholic parish. One day while we were strolling around the premises of the church, he said, "we are *os donos* [the owners] of the church here." When I asked him whom he meant by "we," he said he was referring to himself and other former Renamo combatants. During the war, Thomas explained, it was he and several other ex-combatants and civilians who kept the parish going, with the assistance from Catholic communities in Chemba and a foreign priest located in Malawi. They organized the Sunday Mass and took the initiative in expanding the parish. "There was nothing here, and we built this house and the church," Thomas recalled.[190] The small white church was one of the most beautiful church buildings in Maringue, and the first to be built not merely out of mud and rubble. The house next to the church, constructed from bricks, was used as accommodation for the nuns, who arrived in 1995. The erection of these small structures in a place where all of the (brick) buildings had been destroyed was, in Thomas' opinion, a sign of progress in the wake of war. He felt proud talking about his contribution to the development of the church, which he interpreted as a contribution to the development of Maringue at large. The arrival of foreign nuns and a foreign priest and the expansion of the Catholic parish in Maringue further contributed to Thomas' sense of pride in and attachment to the Catholic parish in Maringue.

Thomas' membership of the Catholic Church appeared to be one of the steadiest elements of his turbulent postwar life. He shifted between jobs with the district government, in a beer brewery in Maputo, and within Renamo's intelligence department. He also had an alcohol problem. I first met Thomas in May 2008, when he and his family had just moved from Maputo back to Maringue, partly because Roberto, the Chilean priest, had offered him a job on a project run by the Catholic NGO CARITAS. Thomas was chosen for the CARITAS job because of his long-standing relationship with the foreign nuns and his friendship with Maringue's priest. These relationships were forged through his work as a local church leader, but their endurance probably owed much to Thomas' amicable personality. The priest remarked several times that he relied on Thomas for friendship and information, and that he wanted to help him "get his life straight." Thomas and the priest had a highly personal relationship that was shaped by mutual dependency. It was also an unequal relationship, however, as the priest occupied a more powerful position in the church network, not least because he had resources to allocate. It was thanks to his powerful status that the priest was able to find Thomas a job.

Thomas' employment by CARITAS show how his church membership and in particular his relationship with the priest offered possibilities for social and economic

190 Conversations with Thomas, 19/06/08, 25/08/08, Maringue

wealth and mobility. The job granted Tomas access to a motorcycle, a status symbol in Maringue, and gave Thomas the change to develop his own network of dependents. For example, for one of the projects, which involved digging wells for some of the more remote communities of the district, Thomas and the other coordinator, one of his closest friends, had to employ people in a food-for-work system. Such jobs were in high demand in Maringue, which situated Thomas and his companion in positions of relative power.[191] He was able to distribute resources and, in so doing, to establish and reinforce relationships with others, especially fellow church members. The leverage that came with the CARITAS job enabled Thomas to further strengthen his position of authority in the church network and to create "wealth in people," that is the type of personal power that comes from maintaining a network of dependents. Thomas is thus a classic example of a broker, a type of entrepreneur who occupies a strategic place in a network of social relations and has the ability to directly and indirectly put people in touch with each other for profit (Boissevain 1974:148-149).

The above further illustrates the centrality of personalized relationships between church leaders and followers in ex-combatants' the participation of church networks. These are unequal but mutually beneficial relationships, marked by the exchange of resources, services, and loyalty through dynamics of reciprocity and obligations (see also Scheutze 2010). Through their networks and status, pastors and priests occupy positions of status, influence, and authority (see also Scheutze 2010). Furthermore, through donations, and NGOs, church leaders often have access to resources such as money, work-for-food, and *buscatos* (odd jobs). In Maringue's context of poverty and scarcity the importance of such resources is enormous. Consequently, church leaders' ability to attract followers may rely more on their resources and capability to serve as a"patron" than on their "charisma" (Gifford 1998:520-521; Scheutze 2010:244).

Concurring with Gifford (1998:520-521), I argue that these church leaders may be regarded as occupying "big men" positions (cf. McLauley 2013; Utas 2012). Such positions may be intentionally sought, as was the case with Thomas, who through his NGO job was able to distribute resources and to forge relationships of dependency with other church members, but they may also be (unintentionally) ascribed, as was perhaps the case for the Catholic priest. Either way, pastors' big man positions play a vital role in understanding why and how former combatants participated in church networks and engaged in personal relationships of dependency with pastors. Such dynamics are central to understandings of power relations and politics in general, as will be

191 Recruitment for the food-for-work jobs was decided by the priest, as well as influenced by the district administration. Thomas told me, frustrated, that before a project could start he had to submit a list to the administration with the names of the people who were going to be employed. On one occasions this list was rejected because it included Renamo members. When the CARITAS leadership in Maringue refused to change the list, the project was temporarily suspended and the food for the workers was stored in a warehouse for several weeks.

discussed in the following two chapters. Here I hope to have shown how ex-combatants' navigations of church networks, and in particular of their relationships with church leaders, opened up possibilities for social and material security, as well as for social mobility.[192]

7.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have analyzed Renamo veterans' participation in church networks. I argued that in the postwar period, church membership formed an integral part of Christian ex-Renamo combatants' quest for social, material, and spiritual security. However, unlike scholars who have interpreted ex-combatants' conversion to the Pentecostal faith as part of a postwar search for forgiveness, reacceptance, and a new start (Del Pino 1996; Theidon 2004; Wolseth 2008), I described how ex-combatants' navigations of church networks in Maringue are rooted in their wartime experiences. These navigations did not involve a radical break with the past, but are better understood in terms of continuity over the course of war and peace. Notwithstanding the profound political and social changes in church networks in the postwar period, veterans' membership of their wartime churches prevailed in many cases. I argued that this membership became particularly meaningful through personal relationships of dependency with church leaders. It is mainly through these dyadic relationships that veterans have access to social security and, in some cases, material wealth. This, I contend, can be understood through cultural models of leadership and power relations that are largely shaped by personal ties of dependency. The salience of such models in Maringue is explored further in the following chapter, which looks at veterans' social navigations of former military networks.

192 Church members may rise through the ranks of the church through long-term church participation, and may eventually establish a church of their own. This is one of the reasons why Pentecostal churches have "mushroomed" in Maringue, as in other places in Mozambique (see e.g. Schuetze 2010:244). Opportunities for social mobility within churches are different for men and women, however. All but one of the church leaders I knew of in Maringue were men (cf. Robbins 2004).

8 ABOUT EATING AND DRINKING

FORMER MILITARY NETWORKS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

8.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on Renamo veterans' navigations of former military networks. In the view of the international post-war "recovery industry," the continuation of wartime networks is often regarded as posing a danger to the stability of war-torn African states (Utas 2012:19). This view is particularly apparent during the demobilization of armed groups, a process that is intended to separate combatants from the influence of the command and control structure[193] and to prepare them for a place in civil society without the "camaraderie and support system of the structured armed force or armed group" (UN 2006:387). Demobilization is considered unsuccessful if the opposite happens, that is, if ex-combatants stick together to chart their paths in civil society. The fear is that their potential for organized violence remains, because groups of ex-combatants could easily be remobilized by rearming them. According to this notion of demobilization, one would be forced to conclude that in Maringue demobilization has failed, as for most Renamo veterans the "colleagues of war" and other members of the former rebel movement form their main social and political network.

In this chapter I describe ex-combatants' navigations of former military and political party networks. These networks are delineated by horizontal and vertical relationships shaped by big man dynamics. The main argument holds that these networks were crucial for Renamo veterans' postwar social lives as they provided these individuals with a sense of belonging, social protection, and, in some cases, economic opportunities. However, this chapter also reveals that the instability of relationships of dependency between big men and followers in political-party networks causes competition, frustration, polarization, and violence.

This chapter provides further evidence for the main argument of this book, which is that veterans' post-war life trajectories are based not on a break with the past but rather on relationships and networks that continue throughout the war and postwar periods. This does not mean that these networks and the relationships within them have remained the same over the course of war and peace. On the contrary, one of the aims of this chapter is to show how these networks have changed in the post-war

193 "Command and control structure" is a commonly used military term that denotes the exercise of authority and direction by a designated commander over his forces in pursuit of a specific mission.

period. Nonetheless, the main argument of this chapter is that the ties established with "colleagues of the trenches" and the former military leadership during the war continue to play a major role in veterans' social lives.

The focus on veterans' relationships with members of the former armed group allows me to address two presumptions that underlie conceptualizations of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs. The first is that armed factions function as military organizations and that they therefore can be terminated by decommissioning weapons and by dismantling the command and control structure (Hoffman 2007:660). Concurring with Hoffman (2007:660), this chapter will show that the DDR framework fails to recognize the role of big men dynamics and patronage relations in (former) military networks, which in many African contexts dominate everyday existence, including military life (see also Murphy 2003). As has been observed in a variety of African postwar contexts (Hoffman 2007:660; Themnér 2012; De Vries and Wiegink 2011), after demobilization ex-combatants often remain dependent on their commanders. As this chapter will reveal, attempts to dissolve these networks may be in vain. Even more, by ignoring the ties between former combatants and members of their former armed group their potential for social and economic integration is left unexplored.

This ties into the second presumption about demobilization addressed in this chapter, namely that the continuation of wartime networks is a threat to peace and hampers reintegration. This is not necessarily the case. Various researchers have shown how former military networks may be involved in a myriad of activities, such as their involvement in electoral campaigns (Christensen and Utas 2008; Kriger 2003), as disciplined work forces (Hoffman 2011, 2007), in illicit trade (Persson 2012; Reno 1998), in private security (Christensen and Utas 2008; Cock 2005; Diphoorn 2013; Frerks, Gompelman, and Van Laar 2008; Singh 2008), and in violent action and renewed warfare (Hoffman 2007; Themnér 2012). I contribute to this body of scholarship by analyzing the intertwinement of ex-combatants' networks and political parties in Mozambique. I will show that such networks were vital in ex-Renamo combatants' postwar lives and could thus employed in reintegration processes in general. At the same time, I will also pay attention to how the instability of these networks and political parties' competition over "wealth in people" enhanced polarization and in some cases violence.

The chapter starts by offering a conceptual framework for understanding relationships between ex-combatants, former military linkages, and political parties through the notions of neopatrimonialism, big men, and networks. This is followed by an analysis of Renamo veterans' navigations of former military networks in Maringue. First I discuss relationships among veterans, which in some ways mirror the networks of social assistance discussed in the previous chapter. Subsequently I offer an analysis of veterans' navigation of political parties, focusing not only on Renamo but also on

veterans' "defection" to other political parties. This section demonstrates the flexibility of positions in networks and relationships shaped by big man dynamics, but also shows how this changeability enhances competition, frustration, and the occurrence of violent incidents.

8.2 Big men, networks, and politics

The former Renamo military networks in Maringue cannot be regarded separately from the political party that Renamo has become since the signing of the Peace Accords in 1992. Therefore, to understand ex-combatants' navigations of these networks, it is necessary to know what "political parties and "political power" mean in Maringue. This is best illustrated by a discussion I had with Pai Denzja, a fervent Frelimo member (as was noted in previous chapters), and João, the district leader of the marginal *Partido para a Paz Democraçia e Desinvolvimento* (Party for Peace, Democracy and Development, PDD).[194] Politics was one of their favorite topics of conversation, and on this particular day they were trying to explain to me how politics in Mozambique worked. Even though João was with the PDD, he acknowledged that there were only two relevant parties in the Mozambican political realm, Frelimo and Renamo.[195] "It is like two parties [*festas*]," said João. "One party has grilled chicken, Coke, and Fanta. The other party has rice, sand, and a simple curry [*caril*]. Where would you eat?" "At least we are all eating!" Denzja joked. "And when you're a member of a party you eat well. Look at that motorcycle." Denzja pointed at João's shiny new bike, standing by the side of the dusty road that skirted Denzja's courtyard. "There is nothing wrong with people from parties eating well," Denzja concluded.

Eating and food were recurrent themes in people's descriptions of their living conditions and politics. In a place that has been ravaged by famine and where food shortages are an annual occurrence, having enough to eat is one of the most pressing aspects of life. People also talked about eating as a reference to power. Witches are said to turn into hyenas at night that "eat people," or to send snakes to your house to "eat your money." Political leaders, meanwhile, are said to "eat well," referring to both their physical corpulence and their personal aggrandizement. The notion of "eating" is also

194 Conversation with Pai Denzja and João, 10/11/08, Maringue. Five former Renamo members of parliament founded the PDD in 2003. Raul Domingos, a former Renamo politician and negotiator of the peace accords, is the PPD's leader. PDD was never an alternative to the two major political parties. In 2005 the party only got two percent of the votes, which was below the five percent required by law to elect a member of parliament.

195 Note that this conversation took place in 2008, before the rise of the *Movimento Democratico de Moçambique* (Mozambican Movement for Democracy, MDM).

commonly used to describe corruption and other misuses of state funds.[196] As Denzja said, "when you're a member of a party you eat well. And there is nothing wrong with that." Following the same logic, Caetano, a former Renamo combatant, expressed his hopes for the national elections in 2009: "If Renamo wins, it is our time to eat."

These references to "eating" are captured in what Bayard (1989) has called *"politique du ventre"* (belly politics), referring to the accumulation of wealth through political power, to family lineage, and to witchcraft, and the physical corpulence of "big men" (Bayard 1993; Bayard, Ellis, and Hibou 1999). But what is equally crucial in political dynamics, as described by Denzja and João, is how powerful people – in this case, political leaders – distribute resources to their followers. It is accepted and expected that leaders of political parties use their funds (predominantly state funds, but also donor money) and power to reward their supporters, creating relationships of reciprocity and dependency (see also Chabal and Daloz 1999). Corruption and the misuse of state funds are thus tolerated, as long as the gains are divided through the logic of patronage and benefit the entire network. These traits have been widely observed in African political systems and have been characterized by notions such as clientalism, patronage, big men, and (neo)patrimonialism, which are intended to capture the interconnectedness of the formal and informal (see e.g. Bratton and van der Walle 1997; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Ferguson 2006; Pitcher, Moran and Johnston 2009; Reno 1998; Utas 2012; De Waal 2009). In this thesis I deploy the concept of *neopatrimonialism* to characterize the political context that ex-combatants navigate. Below I will discuss dynamics within this context using the concepts of *big man* and *networks*.

Neopatrimonialism is generally understood as a system of rule in which the formal (i.e. the legal-bureaucracy) and the informal (i.e. personal connections between leaders and subjects) co-exist and are intrinsically interconnected (Braathen, Bøås, and Stræher 2000; Erdmann and Engel 2007; Pitcher, Moran, and Johnston 2009:129).[197] Pitcher et al. (2009:132) note that almost every Sub-Saharan African country has been dubbed patrimonial or neopatrimonial, characterizations that are used to understand the poor economic development, weak state institutions, persistent corruption, and protracted armed conflicts in such places (e.g. Bayard, Ellis, and Hibou 1999; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Reno 1998).[198] The roots of neopatrimonialism have been located in an "African tradition of communalism," organized by patron-client relations or so-called big men

196 This is exemplified in the often heard expression "*o cabrito come onde esta amarado*," meaning "the goat eats where he is tethered."

197 This is reflected in the distinction Weber (1964) made between legal domination and patrimonial domination. While the first is based on systems of legal bureaucracy and impersonal ties, the latter is based on personal relationships.

198 See Erdmann and Engel (2007) for a discussion on the use of patrimonialism and neo-patrimonialism. While patrimonialism refers to a system shaped only by informal relations, neopatrimonialism connotes a hybrid structure involving two co-existing, interwoven types of domination, the informal and the legal-bureaucratic (Erdmann and Engel 2007).

dynamics, which have been said to be based in the legacy of colonial rule, in the lack of institutionalization of the state, and in the conjuncture of informal and formal networks of domination (Chabal and Daloz 1999; Daloz 2003; Erdmann and Engel 2007; Utas 2012). I do not want to go so far as to characterize the Mozambican regime as neopatrimonial,[199] and I question the value of neopatrimonialism for explaining the lack of economic development or transparency in governance endemic on the African continent as a whole (see also DeGrassi 2008; Pitcher et al. 2009). However, I do think that observing the relationships between political parties and former combatants through a neopatrimonial logic – that is, one that emphasizes the permanence of personal relations in the political system – helps one to understanding the dynamics of these relationships. I see this neopatrimonial logic as a cultural model that shapes the practices and meaning of power and politics in Mozambique, and in particular veterans' social navigations of the political and (former) military environment.

To analyze how the neopatrimonial logic takes shape in ex-combatants' navigations of political and former military environments, I employ the concepts of *big man* and *network*, as used in Utas' (2012) edited volume on conflict and informal power in Africa. Big man is a term with local resonance. In Maringue people would refer to "*os grandes*" ("the big ones"), when talking about people in certain powerful, often political, positions. But the main reason to employ the notion of big man is its analytical usefulness. Marshall Sahlins (1963:289) famously described big men in Melanesia as individuals with personal power that is the outcome of a series of acts that "elevate a person above the common herd and attract about him a coterie of loyal, lesser men." In other words, these are not official or inherited positions, but are achieved, changeable, and context dependent. While also describing them as "princes among men" (Sahlins 1963:289), Utas (2012:8) situates big men in strategic positions between (state) institutions and the population, that allow them to distribute resources to their followers, thereby creating "loose social webs based on the ability to gather followers."[200] Big men are therefore part of informal structures of economic and political power, which are parallel to and intertwined with formal structures (see also Daloz 2003; Hansen and Stepputat 2006:12). Similar to Sahlins (1963:292), Utas (2012) underlines the fragility and temporality of a big man's position, "as loyalty must continuously be reinforced and dissatisfaction among followers may have grave consequences for his authority" (Utas 2012:7, see also Chabal 2009:105; Pitcher et al. 2009:138-139). Utas' understanding of big men dynamics is particularly useful in describing the rise (and fall) of ex-combatants in big man

199 Sumich (2008) has criticized Chabal and Daloz's (1999) assessment of the lack of elites in Africa. Based on an historical analysis of the emergence and consolidation of Frelimo power in Mozambique, he argues that Maputo's middle-class elite found opportunities in the liberalizing state rather than in patrimonial networks (Sumich 2008).

200 Utas (2012) sees the term big man as gender neutral, reflecting the fact that women can also attain the status of big men.

positions, because it draws attention to the fluid and contingent character of these positions as they depend not only on the political context, but also on one's character and attitude.

Relationships between big men and followers are in many ways similar to patron-client ties, which are vertical and asymmetric relationships in which one partner is quite different from the other in position and obligations (Foster 1963:1281; Käihkö 2012:187). Followers' contributions to these relationships are often intangible and may include loyalty, political support, and information. The big man, meanwhile, may offer concrete forms of support, such as economic benefits and protection. He or she may provide assistance or security to people living often precarious lives, and who are largely devoid of power and material wealth (Utas 2012; Wolf 1966:16-17). In a context such as Maringue, such relationships go well beyond economic considerations, as they also shape people's social status. As Hoffman (2007:651) writes "[t]he social being of an individual is measured by the people with whom one has relations of dependence or for whom one acts as a patron. The capacity to maintain a social network […] is the mark of status." Hoffman underlines the centrality of the notion of "wealth in people" to characterize power relations in Sub-Saharan Africa (Guyer 1993; Hoffman 2007). Relationships between big men and followers are more complex than Foster's (1963) "dyadic contract" between a patron and his or her client, as big men can be regarded as brokers, nodes in a network that comprises them and other, perhaps bigger men.[201] Furthermore, a mere focus on patron-client relations would not capture the importance of horizontal relationships and people's shifting of power positions (Utas 2012).

Following Utas (2012:8-9), I situate big men and their followers in networks, which I regard as "interconnected groups of decentralized components with significant autonomy making room for competition within shared strategies" (Utas 2012:9, following Duffield 2002:154). Networks are unstable, changing, and adaptable and comprise individuals with very different reasons for participating therein (Utas 2012:13-14). The postwar transformations of former military networks are exemplary of the salience of these ties, but also of their adaptability. Likewise, positions within these networks are not fixed, big men may lose their legitimacy, and followers may establish ties with other big men. This means that *the* Renamo Network does not exist, and nor does it entail a fixed hierarchy. These networks are thus not merely horizontal systems, and nor are they shaped only by hierarchies of patrons and clients. Additionally, they cannot be characterized as social, political, or even both (Vigh 2006); rather, they are rhizomatic, making, breaking, and remaking connections (Hofmann 2011:9; Vigh 2006)

201 Weingrod (1968) pointed out that in general anthropologists do not understood patronage as related to the formal system of government or authority, but rather as a social relationship, a lopsided friendship (e.g. Foster 1963; Scott 1972; Weingrod 1968; Wolf 1966). Political scientists, meanwhile, have understood patronage as a feature of government, used by politicians to votes during election time.

and may be seen as "intricate webs of power" (Utas 2012:14). These networks have formal and informal characteristics that are interconnected. Applying such an understanding of networks to the former military networks discussed in this chapter, one note that ex-Renamo combatants find themselves, as followers and as big men, exist in a variety of horizontal and vertical relationships, which are informally and formally situated in a political-party structure and Maringue's political environment at large.

8.3 The colleagues of the trenches

"You can see them drinking together"

When I asked around in Maringue about ex-Renamo combatants, people would often mention "*a margem de Nhamapaza*" (the bank of the Nhamapaza River) as an area where many such individuals were living. This area is located west of the village, on the far side of the Nhamapaza River. The water runs mainly underground, but small pools are created in which women do their laundry and fetch water when the wells have dried up. Due to the proximity of water, the soil of the *margem* is productive for agriculture. The area is not as densely populated as the village, but inhabited by families living in homesteads located at certain distances from each other.

Picture 6: A homestead in the Nhamapaza margem (photo by author).

My first visit to the *margem* was in the company of Daniel, the son of Sara, a female ex-Renamo combatant who lived in the main village but had a *machamba* in the *margem*. We left at six in the morning, passing by his mother's *machamba*, where she was manually plowing the land. We wanted to visit former Renamo combatants, but as we should have foreseen, none of them was at home, as people use the cool early hours of the day to work on the land. We were lucky to run into Pedro, who was not working because he had been out all night drinking *nipa*, an alcoholic beverage brewed from corn. When I expressed my interest in talking to former combatants, he offered to gather several of his "colleagues" in the afternoon. Though doubtful whether the meeting would take place, Daniel and I returned later that day.

On our way to the meeting place, we passed by the house of Balthazar, a Renamo veteran whose story I presented in chapter 2. He had just returned from his *machamba*, wearing large rubber boots and covered in dirt. While he washed himself, we met his mother, his three wives, and their children. Three of them had large swollen bellies, light, almost yellow, skin, and disturbingly thin arms and legs. I could not take my eyes off them. There was also a baby, who was fat and laughing, crawling happily around in the sand; the other children hid behind their mothers and silently stared at me. One of the women was not wearing anything from the waist up, something unseen in Maringue town. This snapshot of family life added to the rural feel of the *margem* and, moreover, emphasized the hard living conditions people faced there.

Balthazar then took Daniel and me to another house, where several men and women were indeed waiting for us. Five men were sitting in a circle on pieces of wood in the shade of a tree, while a few meters away, in the shadow of a hut, two women were sitting on a mat. Pedro welcomed us enthusiastically, presenting me to Adriano, Charles, and two other men whom I would never get to know. They were all Renamo veterans. They came from different districts within Sofala; not one of them was originally from Maringue. After the war, they were demobilized in the assembly area of Nhacamala and decided to settle in Maringue. At that time, the area was hardly populated and there was land in abundance. In concurrence with local traditional authorities, pieces of land were allocated to the *desmobilizados*. "There was nothing but grass here," Adão recalled. "It was the *desmobilizados* who started to open the area again." For former combatants like Pedro, the fertile banks of the Nhamapaza River had been an excellent location to start cultivating, which was how most former combatants sustained their post-war livelihoods.

During the meeting at the *margem*, the men and women were passing around a Coca-Cola bottle filled with *nipa*. Some of them seemed already quite drunk. "Write down! I am suffering!" one yelled. Apparently, Pedro had told them that I had been taking notes during our earlier conversation. The man continued aggressively: "I only have this pair of trousers [indicating his ragged jeans], every day *a capinar* [working the field], and I fought! I am suffering!" Then the aggression turned toward me. One

of the women yelled something in ChiSena from a distance. Balthazar translated: "She said, that they did not go to the *machamba* today, because they were waiting for you." I instantly felt guilty, but Balthazar and Daniel, the only ones who had not touched the *nipa*, comforted me. "Don't worry," Daniel whispered. "You just gave them an excuse to drink." Yet my awkwardness and feelings of guilt worsened when one of the men called for more *nipa* and asked me to pay for it. I was not sure if I wanted to contribute to things getting out of hand, as one of the men was already coming too close, his breath, hot and heavy with alcohol, stinging my eyes. I did not know what to do. Fortunately, at that moment *comendante* Matateo arrived and took charge of the situation. As I will show below, he had significant authority over the Renamo veterans and could be regarded as a gatekeeper. After I gained his confidence and his support for my research, I was never aggressively approached by any of the Renamo veterans again.

After this first awkward meeting, I returned many times to the *margem* to visit the houses of former Renamo combatants. On almost every occasion, I encountered more or less the same group of veterans sitting in the shade of a tree in the courtyard of someone's house, sharing a kind of homebrewed liquor. During such drinking sessions I chatted with them and their family members, although for interviews I tried to select more sober moments. These gatherings rotated: one day the wife of Tacherwa would make *nipa*, the next week there was *pombe* (an alcoholic beverage brewed from corn) in the house of Savimbe, and so on. Sara also brewed *nipa* and sold it to a loyal clientele of former Renamo combatants. If they were not at someone's house, the veterans could often be found in one of the bars of the village.

Many ex-Renamo combatants, especially men, were heavy drinkers, which caused them medical, social, and economic problems. It is beyond the scope of this study to establish whether alcohol abuse is more common among former combatants than among other people, but as other scholars have noted (Finley 2011; Schafer 2007:109), excessive drinking is a common trait among veterans of many wars. It may be a way to numb the memories of war, or to escape the situation of enduring daily hardship. Furthermore, in Maringue alcohol consumption is also a social event that underlines friendship or bonds of trust. When I asked about relations between Renamo and Frelimo, people often said "there was nothing bad," and to illustrate this point they would note that "you can often see them drinking together." This was mere rhetoric, however, as in reality "social drinking" did not cross political divides. Certain drinking stalls were only visited by "Renamo," while others, such as *Olho Olho*, the fanciest bar in town, set up by the administrator's wife, were frequented solely by "Frelimo." Carlito's bar, next to the market square, was an exception, as it attracted a politically mixed clientele, probably because of its convenient location.

For me, visiting the *margem* and participating hesitantly in social drinking gatherings formed one of the main points of entry into ex-combatants' networks. These drinking clubs were for many ex-Renamo combatants the principle manifestation

of their ties of friendship with fellow veterans. Such gatherings made me realize that bonds established during the war were integral to the social network of former Renamo combatants in the *margem* and Maringue town in general. In the following sections I will first further discuss horizontal relationships between Renamo veterans before turning my attention to vertical relationships between rank-and-file veterans and former commanders.

The search for safety

> I arrived home. There I found that my parents had died. I was troubled. I did not even feel safe anymore, to live in a zone without direct family members. I left. […] I grew up in the war, and I got used to being with other soldiers like me. At my home, I did not see anyone that could take care of me. So, I chose to live here [Maringue], with my colleagues of the trenches.[202]

These are the words of Olivia, a skinny woman with an aggressive way of talking. She could not tell me how old she was when Renamo captured her. She grabbed her breasts and said, "*nkabe*" (ChiSena for "no" of "not,"), meaning she did not yet have breasts when she entered the rebel movement. After demobilization in Maringue, Olivia traveled to her district of origin, Mossurize (Manica province), where she found out that her parents had died. Even though other relatives received her well and performed the necessary ceremonies, Olivia did not feel safe living without direct family members and decided to return to Maringue. She said she had grown up in the war, and it was in the company of other ex-combatants that she felt safe and "taken care of."

Olivia's story is typical of many former combatants I met in Maringue. As I described in chapter 4, on their return to their places of origin, many demobilized combatants found that their families had disappeared, that family arrangements had modified or that their relatives had expectations the veterans' could not meet. Their families and home villages proved to be insecure environments, prompting the ex-combatants to settle elsewhere, away from their kin. They did not reside just anywhere, however, but instead chose a familiar place where they knew people and their way around. Maringue was such a place. It also offered military security, access to fertile land, and, by being close to Renamo's leadership, ex-combatants were assured that if Renamo would remobilize they would be able to participate. However, most ex-combatants exclaimed that being in the company of fellow veterans had been their main reason for settling in Maringue.

Co-participation in war seems to generate a sense of belonging and comradeship among combatants (Ben-Ari 1998:98-101; Finkel 2010; Finley 2011; Grossmann 1995;

202 Interview with Olivia, 04/08/09, Maringue.

Kalyvas 2006:46).[203] As Grossmann (1995:90) has noted, sharing highly stressful times together and risking your life in the pursuit of common goals (be they ideological or criminal) creates a particular connection between combatants that "is a hell lot stronger than the bond between husband and wife." What happens to this "strong bond" when the guns are put down? Evaristo, a disabled former government soldier I met in Maputo, claimed to feel comfort in the presence of other former combatants, because they shared memories of troubling times:

> We are bound to the past. There are ghosts that creep up on us. With a friend of the war you can talk about it. "Do you remember that time when the war was hot? When that guy tried to kill me?" The family would want something. The *desmobilizados* also, [he] needs affection, but the family does not give that. So he goes where he feels welcomed [*acolhido*].[204]

Yet the significance of a shared war past is not limited to being able to talk about traumatic experiences. It may be quite the opposite: that someone understands your experiences without the need to explain them (Finely 2011). During informal meetings in Maringue, the former combatants recalled predominantly glorious and adventurous aspects of the war, in which they found a sense of pride, good cheer, and nostalgia (see chapter 3). Indeed, the sense of shared identity may be more attributable to shared fond recollections, than the traumatic memories.

Furthermore, it can be argued that in groups of war colleagues veterans found a social environment that in some ways resembled kin structures. (Former) soldiers' conceptualizations of military structures in terms of kinship are quite common. Commanders are often depicted as father figures, the entire organization is presented as a family, and fellow soldiers are seen as brothers (Grassiani 2003; Grossman 1995; Murphy 2003). In Maringue, many ex-Renamo combatants referred to Dhlakama as "*pai*" (father) and to other veterans as "brothers and sisters [*irmões*]."[205] Family references are thus readily applied, but what does this say about the content of these relationships?

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203 As Kalyvas (2006:46), Grossmann (1995), Finkel (2010), and other scholars have noted, what motivates combatants in war is usually not ideology, hate, or fear but rather peer pressure, regard for their comrades, respect for their leader, concern for their own reputation, and the desire for the group to succeed. In the aforementioned studies this has been called "primary group cohesion."

204 Interview with Evaristo, President of ADEMIMO, 16/12/08, Maputo.

205 Schafer (2007:84) has noted that in the *Forças Armadas de Moçambique* (FAM, Armed Forces of Mozambique) the government was presented as the father, commanding his sons, the soldiers, who followed blindly. At the same time, people in Maringue, including veterans from both sides of the armed conflict, often characterized the war as a "war between brothers," implying, in contradiction to the international and Frelimo government depiction of Renamo as puppets of the Apartheid regime, that this was a fight fundamentally between Mozambicans.

Kinship relations in an African context are often based on interdependency and reciprocity (Geschiere 1997; Chabal 2009), and the same was true of the Renamo networks I encountered (see also Van Gog 2008:81-90). On many occasions I observed how Renamo veterans offered each other assistance in building houses or harvesting crops, and in times of acute sickness, death, and urgent need. On one trip to the Nhamapaze *margim*, Adão and I visited the house of Tacherwa, a former Renamo combatant we had planned to interview. During the usual greeting ceremony, I noticed Tacherwa had been drinking. His eyes were red, and he seemed to doze off during the conversation. We soon decided to leave. At that moment Tacherwa's wife appeared, greeting us on her knees from a distance, a respectful way of welcoming guests. Then she chased down and caught a chicken, bound its feet together, and offered it to Jordão. On our way back, Adão said he was worried about this family. Tacherwa had been drinking a lot recently and was not contributing to the household, he explained. He said he would send his wife by to give them "something."[206] Adão was taking care of this family by keeping an eye on them, visiting, and by giving them goods. The chicken he was offered reflected this reciprocal relationship between Adão and the family of Tacherwa. This is an example of an unequal relationship of exchange, however, as Adão is a high-placed Renamo member and Tacherwa a former rank-and-file combatant. Thus, Adão may be regarded as a "big man" and Tacherwa as part of his clientele.

Veterans thus engaged with each other in horizontal and vertical relationships of obligations and dependency, which may make a difference in their daily struggles for survival. But while these networks resembled certain elements of family structures, they did not fully replace the latter, as I showed in chapter 4 (cf. Utas 2005:143). They did, however, form a social security network, through which, in the words of Olivia, ex-combatants could feel "taken care of."

Former commanders as gatekeepers

Vertical relationships between veterans often resembled linkages in the former military hierarchy, but were also endowed with new meanings in the postwar era. The position of former Renamo "commanders" is illustrative in this respect. Their positions in veterans' networks can be characterized as those of gatekeepers and intermediaries (Themnér 2012). Based on observations in a variety of African postwar contexts, Themnér (2012:208) describes former commanders as "jealously guarding access" to ex-combatants, as they "intuitively" sense that such access may be an economic and political asset. He situates these mid-level ex-commanders in between rank-and-file ex-combatants and big men in political and military elite groups for whom ex-combatants may serve as workers, personal security guards, or as fighters in the event of renewed warfare. Former commanders can thus be seen as brokers with

206 Interview with Tacherwa and conversation with Adão, 10/09/09, Maringue.

significant "wealth in people." This is exemplified by *comendante* Matateo, a former Renamo commander who, to borrow Themnérs's (2012) expression, "guarded access" to ex-Renamo combatants in the *margem* of the Nhamapaza River. He even determined my own access to ex-Renamo combatants' networks. On my first visit to the *margem*, as I described previously, a group of Renamo veterans received me with suspicion and aggression. Some of them were not willing to talk to me. One of the veterans said, "you cannot talk to us before you talk to *comendante* Matateo." Matateo had not been their commander during the war, but he had been a high-ranked Renamo combatant who, in the words of one of the veterans, had "really hit it in the war, with big arms."[207] They talked about him with respect, recalling his accomplishments in the war, but also with fear. After the war, Matateo continued to work at "the base" and also occupied a position within the local Renamo party structure.

When *comendante* Matateo arrived at this first meeting in the *margem*, his powerful position was immediately apparent. With one gesture he ordered Balthazar to make sure that one of the drunkards left the meeting. Then he asked for two chairs (not pieces of wood, mind, but real chairs reserved for honorable guests) to be put in the shade of another tree, where Matateo and I could talk more privately. He distanced himself physically from the rank-and-file veterans, and immediately acknowledged his gatekeeper position. "I'm the *chefe* of the former combatants," he said to me. "The Renamo delegate does not know of your work here. What are you doing? Does the administration know you're here?"[208] Matateo's questioning made apparent his position as a broker between the veterans' community, the Renamo party leadership, and perhaps also the district government. He would not bear the sole responsibility for a white woman talking to Renamo veterans in Maringue, because *desmobilizados*-issues were regarded as politically sensitive at the time of research. My presence needed to be authorized by his superiors. With their approval (which I already had), Matateo said I could "walk around as I pleased" (*a vontade*) and talk to people in the *margem*. He disapproved of me "walking around with a boy," referring to Daniel, who had accompanied me on this occasion. Matateo suggested that he or someone of his choosing should accompany me on my visits to Renamo veterans' homes.

The loyalty of rank-and-file veterans toward former commanders is partly based on their relationships established during the war. As insurgent groups such as wartime Renamo expand territorially, the influence of the top leadership disperses and the authority of the middle commander increases (Themnér 2012:209). Commanders then become combatants' main reference of authority, and it is within such smaller groups that dynamics of comradeship and loyalty are strongest (Ben-Ari 1998:98-101; Finkel 2010). As explained above, such feelings of affinity and belonging often persist after

207 Group conversation, 03/10/08, Maringue.
208 Conversation with Matateo, 03/10/08 Maringue.

demobilization (see also Themneér 2012:210-211; Utas 2005) and may be, as Themnér (2012:210) argues, exploited by former commanders in order to retain control over rank-and-file veterans.

However, the status of individuals such as Matateo, who in were by my research participants referred to as "*comendantes*" (commanders) are not necessarily born of their prior military rank. *Comendante* Matateo was not the wartime commander of the Renamo veterans in the *margem*, and nor did he necessarily hold the rank of commander in the wartime rebel hierarchy. He was called "comendante" largely due to his postwar position within the Renamo party and his relationships of dependency with the rank-and-file veterans. Similar to what Hoffman (2007:651-653) observed among the Sierra Leonean Civil Defense Forces, military titles received a different meaning in the postwar period, as they were used to "map patronage networks." Thus while there is no doubt that Matateo's wartime rank contributed to his big man status, his position was shaped even more by his postwar ties to the Renamo political party and military wing.

Comendante Matateo's position as a broker and a big man was further strengthened by his political position within Renamo's local party structure. He was responsible for the "social issues of *desmobilizados*," which meant that he registered former Renamo combatants in Maringue. Matateo said he did not know why he was ordered to register Renamo *desmobilizados*, yet some of the veterans interpreted this process as a first step toward securing a veteran pension. This strengthened Matateo's relationships of dependency with the rank-and-file veterans in the *margem*, as he was presumed to be in charge of distributing pensions in the event that such funds became available. Additionally, Matateo was a member of Renamo's "presidential guard." He was one of the few armed combatants at Renamo's military base, which was still operative at the time of fieldwork. These "armed men" were specially selected on the basis of their accomplishments during the war. In the eyes of Renamo veterans, these men (they were as far as I know all men) occupied privileged positions. They received a subsidy from the Renamo political party and were regarded with respect and, in some cases, fear.

Thomas, another former commander who was also active at "the base," said he could arrange for me to visit one of the Zionist churches, which were generally associated with Renamo and "the base." "I will take you there and they will talk to you," he claimed. "I know them all. I used to be their commander. They are afraid of me." Thomas said he currently worked with Renamo's local intelligence section, gathering information about the daily comings and goings in Maringue.[209] He was probably exaggerating somewhat his influence on the Zionist pastors, but there was no way of knowing as he had reputation for being a brutal and ruthless fighter. Furthermore, he was in a position to spread rumors that could discredit people in the eyes of the Renamo leadership. I did not take Thomas up on his offer to introduce me to the Zionist pastors, but his remarks

209 Conversation with Thomas, 25/08/08, Maringue.

clearly demonstrate his position as a big man, albeit one whose power was built on fear rather than loyalty.

Thomas and Matateo form two different examples of former Renamo commanders occupying the position of big men, wielding control over rank-and-file veterans. Their status as *comendantes* was based not only on their rank in the (former) military hierarchy but also on their positions in postwar networks of dependency. For ex-combatants, relationships with such brokers were essential, since they provided them with links to the Renamo party and its military wing as well as with material benefits.

8.4 Navigating politics: "Where would you eat?"

In the following sections I will delve into the relationships between former combatants and political parties in Maringue. While the focus is on Renamo veterans, I also refer to Frelimo and MDM in order to make visible how the Renamo party and specific Renamo leaders are losing legitimacy in the eyes of their followers, and why and how Renamo veterans switch their loyalty from one party to another. But first I will set the stage for veterans' navigations and describe the different political parties according to a neopatrimonial logic.

Frelimo: "Owning the country"

One can safely argue that the Frelimo party and the district government are Maringue's most powerful political players in terms of resources. Since the first democratic multiparty elections in 1994, Frelimo has won every national election.[210] Frelimo's dominance of the state apparatus has resulted in a blurring of party and state, leading to the characterization of Mozambique as a "one-party state" (Pereira 2008; Sumich 2008). This conflation of party and state was clearly evident in Maringue. During the campaign period before the national elections in 2009, I visited the house of a known Frelimo member. His daughter told me the latest news. "Last night our flag of Mozambique was stolen by Renamo," she said. "Why would Renamo take away the national flag?" I asked. "Because Mozambique belongs to Frelimo, of course," she said matter-of-factly.[211]

Despite this professed blurring of the party and the state, the district government and the Frelimo party were two different structures in Maringue. The district's administrator, directors, technical staff, and civil servants of the government apparatus came from outside the district. This was in contrast to the first secretary and other

210 In 2003 Renamo won the municipal elections in four municipalities. In 2008 Frelimo lost only in Beira, where former Renamo mayor Daviz Simango won the elections as an independent candidate. In the 2013 elections Frelimo was challenged by MDM, a movement founded in 2008 by Daviz Simango, who won in several municipalities.

211 Conversation with Lourdes, 17/08/09, Maringue.

members of the Frelimo party, who were "*natural*" ("natives,") or at least came to Maringue during the war. While the district government is in charge of the distribution of funds and services, they work in close cooperation with the Frelimo party leaders, who are key in maintaining relations with local party members, as they have knowledge of the district's history, conflicts, and alliances.[212]

Being a Frelimo member in Maringue, as probably elsewhere in Mozambique, has many advantages. Frelimo members have easy access to government services, such as documentation, transport, and other connections to "Beira," the provincial center of power. Furthermore, they seem to have easy access to diplomas, as the prominent members of the Frelimo party passed the 10th grade without having attended a single class. Three government resources that are used to consolidate support for the Frelimo party are worth mentioning in more detail because they came up frequently in conversations with Renamo veterans: 1) funds for hiring of people for *buscatos* (odd jobs); 2) veterans' pensions; and 3) the "seven million," the district development fund. I will discuss these in turn.

First, as there are few permanent jobs in the district for the predominantly unqualified *Maringuenses*, *buscatos* are one of the few means to earn cash money. The district government is the main recruiter for *buscatos*, which range from construction work and cooking to working on a NGO project and temporary positions in the electoral apparatus. Civil servants often rely on the networks of the Frelimo party leaders to find people for such jobs. As shown in the previous chapter, these opportunities are generally offered to Frelimo supporters such as the pastors of Pentecostal churches.

A second resource used by Frelimo to consolidate support was pensions for *antigos combatentes*. The veterans of the war for independence receive a range of benefits and a monthly pension from the Mozambican government, which in Maringue are regarded as highly generous. Those who received a veteran's pension were regarded as "*folgados*," which can be roughly translated as "people who can relax." In Maringue such pensions were also distributed to several men who were not *antigos combatentes* but were instead generally high-ranked Frelimo members who were closely connected to the party's first secretary. These pensions provided the first secretary with a means to "take care" of his followers. Renamo veterans perceived such practices with particular frustration and anger yet expected the same from their own party leaders if Renamo were to come to power.

212 The district's administrator and Frelimo's first secretary often differed in their strategies and goals, and both were situated in complex power dynamics involving government and party structures on the provincial and national levels. However, for the sake of the argument of this thesis I leave these internal Frelimo dynamics out of the analysis.

The third resource that the district government and Frelimo were able to "distribute" was the so-called seven million.[213] This is a popular reference to the decentralization policy officially called the District Development Fund. This fund allows district governments to distribute approximately seven million Meticais (approximately 200,000 USD) of credit to income-generating projects developed by inhabitants of the district. It has been compared to a system of microcredit, in which the local government functions as a bank, supervising the distribution and the repayment of loans This last part of the process has failed dramatically throughout Mozambique, as evidenced by the fact that in 2008 less than ten percent of the distributed credit was returned.[214]

The way in which the Frelimo party and the district government consolidate their power through this development fund is well illustrated by the position of *régulo* Nhachir. Nhachir was the most powerful traditional leader in the district of Maringue, since Maringue town is located in his *regulado* (the area that the *régulo* governs). In June 2008, when the deadline for project proposals for the seven million was approaching, the *régulo* asked for my assistance in typing up his project using my laptop. The *régulo's* project involved the breeding of cattle, a scarce resource in Maringue. I felt awkward assisting in his application, because the allocation of the "seven million" was notorious for corruption, but at the same time it felt wrong to refuse a fairly simple request from the chief who had warmly welcomed me into his *regulado*. My dilemma was quickly resolved, however, as someone from the secretariat of the district administration volunteered to type out the project for the *régulo*. In September 2008, the district consultative council[215] assessed the project proposals, and a few months later the approved projects were announced. Around that time, I passed by the *régulo's* house and asked him about the result of his project. He smiled. "It would have been outrageous if my project hadn't have been approved," he said. "I can destroy other people's projects!"[216] The *régulo* suggested that he was able to influence the process of allocating the funds and thereafter the implementation of these projects, and that if he would not receive a part of the seven million no one in his *régulado* would. Therefore, he had never doubted that his project would be accepted.

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213 The use of the District Development Fund for patronage practices is not a solely local phenomenon. In recent years the government has received increased criticism for the way in which it deploys these funds (Mozambique News Reports and Clippings, 14/04/2013).

214 It has been documented that only 9.5 percent of this money has been returned to the district governments (All Africa, 27/01/2011; 25/10/2010).

215 The District Consultative Councils are in charge of managing the District Development Finds. This council consists of representatives from the population, namely religious leaders, traditional leaders, political leaders, and community representatives. This council was founded to form a counterbalance to the district government and to express the will of the people, but was in Maringue and many other districts dominated by the local government as it is chaired by the district administrator, who wields significant power over decisions made.

216 Conversation with Regulo Nhachir, 29/09/08, Maringue.

Régulos, like Nhachir, seem to be in an in-between situation: they are the "big men," the "kings of the land," chiefs by ancestral inheritance, but since 2002, traditional authorities have also increasingly participated in official government structures (West and Kloeck-Jensson 1999). They receive a subsidy for their services as community leaders and are in various ways incorporated in the formal bureaucratic workings of the district government (Kyed and Buur 2006:564, 571). Several authors have argued that recognizing the community leaders is a strategy through which the Frelimo government has tried to gain more control over the rural territories and population (Bertelsen 2003; Kyed and Buur 2006). In Maringue these subsidies and the awarding of projects to *régulos* were generally interpreted as "Frelimo tactics" to "buy off" *regulos*.

Renamo veterans' considered it for them to be impossible to successfully apply for the District Development Fund. In fact, I did not hear of one ex-Renamo combatant who submitted a project proposal. The following remark made by Zacharias, Renamo's second leader in Maringue illustrates this sense of exclusion:

> A friend of mine handed in a project for the seven million. It was not approved because he is my friend; he is not even a member of Renamo. They want to keep the money within the party. The President [Armando Guebuza] said that projects have to go to the poorest people in society, and there are many of those in Maringue. But that does not happen; the money goes to those who have a card [Frelimo membership card].[217]

Perhaps this particular project was declined for reasons other than the applicant's friendship with Zacharias. Nevertheless, I heard many similar stories about Renamo members or people associated with Renamo were being excluded from these funds. Taken together, this stories suggest that funds were distributed along political lines, strengthening patrimonial ties between the local district government, the local wing of the Frelimo party, and Frelimo members in Maringue.

Buscatos, veterans' pensions, and awarding people funds under the seven million policy are ways in which the Frelimo party leaders are able to reward supporters for their loyalty and, in during elections, votes. The neopatrimonial logic that shapes the workings of governance in Maringue may be beneficial for those inside these Frelimo networks, yet these dynamics are also exclusionary and arbitrary (see also Chabal 2009). Not everyone can have access to the aforementioned resources of the state. As Vigh (2006:108) argues, patrimonial ties thrive in a context in which economic resources are scarce, as jobs and benefits provided by the governmental authorities become objects of competition and a means for securing political and social influence (see also Metsola 2006:1130). In Maringue, *buscatos*, veterans' pensions, and the seven million

217 Interview with Zacharias, 29/08/08, Maringue.

represent a considerable source of wealth, and as Frelimo party leaders and government representatives have the power to allocate this wealth, they are able to consolidate power positions. This makes participation in Frelimo networks attractive, also for Renamo veterans, even more so since the Renamo has fewer resources to divide.

Renamo: "When we win, it will be our turn to eat"

The poor state of the Renamo party in Maringue was reflected in its headquarters. When I first visited the district's Renamo office, it was no more than a broken car in a large empty courtyard surrounded by bush. This struck me as surprising, as I had somehow expected more from Renamo's headquarters in Maringue, a place regarded as the movement's stronghold. Nevertheless, the party office was frequented by large numbers of ex-combatants of all military ranks, for whom the headquarters was a place for social gatherings, political meetings, and, as I assessed, affirming their participation in Renamo networks. Above I focused on the importance of feelings of belonging and social security that Renamo networks can provide, especially in relation to fellow veterans. Here I analyze Renamo veterans' participation in Renamo networks in terms of big men dynamics. This illuminates former combatants' expectations of and loyalty toward Renamo leaders, but shows at the same time how the latter are losing legitimacy as big men since they have scarce means to reward their followers.[218]

To understand former combatants' positions in relation to Renamo, it is first necessary to differentiate between the positions of rank-and-file veterans, former commanders, and *politicos*. For the rank-and-file veterans, participation in relationships of dependency yield largely intangible, but nonetheless valuable, benefits, such as protection, social security, and the promise of material wealth. Higher-positioned Renamo veterans, such as former commanders, generals, and *politicos*, have more opportunities to carve out a position for themselves as big men, as they were more likely to be employed in Renamo's party structure or in its military wing, which provided them not only with status but also with (temporary) job opportunities. They occupied a position in between rank-and-file veterans and "bigger men," which in Maringue included Renamo's military commander, the Renamo delegate, and the national party leadership.

Adão, as I mentioned previously, is an example of a big man with a network of dependents within larger Renamo networks. He can be regarded as a "node" or a

218 It is unclear how Renamo acquires the funding for the party and its military wing. In the wake of war, external donors provided funding for the newly founded Renamo party, as keeping Renamo "on board" was seen as crucial to the peace process (Manning 1998). However, these donors turned their attention elsewhere after the 1994 elections. Currently, Renamo receives membership contributions and government funds, which are allocated according to the number of seats the party holds in parliament. Financing for Renamo has decreased since the 2009 elections, when the party went from having 90 seats to 51 (website Think Africa Press, http://thinkafricapress.com/mozambique/frelimo-renamo-brink, accessed 13/08/2013).

broker. In addition to knowing many rank-and-file ex-combatants in Maringue with whom he maintains reciprocal relationships as described above, he is in close contact with the district's Renamo delegate and is even an acquaintance of Dhlakama. Adão occupied a variety of paid and unpaid positions within Renamo. He was a member of the municipal council of Marromeu, one of the few towns where Renamo won the municipal elections in 2003. After Renamo's defeat in November 2008, Adão returned to Maringue, where he worked unpaid for the Renamo party. In 2009 he was elected as a Renamo party representative in the local unit of the Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat (STAE), a temporary paid job. During Dhlakama's visit to Maringue in August 2009, Adão stood next to Renamo's leader on stage, translating his speech into ChiSena. For the Renamo leadership, Adão is a loyal and valuable supporter as his wide network of rank-and-file veterans were a great source of information about politics, violent incidents, and the general "ambience" in Maringue.[219] Such information was often valuable for the Renamo party and the military base (as well as to me). Access to information, especially in a polarized political context, may thus be an important "currency" in big men dynamics.

Adão was able to become a big man thanks to his position as a *politico* (a politician), during the war. After Adão's first day in battle, Dhlakama summoned him. "Adãozinho [little Adão]," Dhlakama had said. "You went to school, did you not? And you speak a little bit of Portuguese, do you not?" Adão answered these questions in the affirmative, as he had finished grade four. Then it was thus decided that Adão would be trained as a political member, whose job would be to inform combatants and the population about the objectives of Renamo. Through this work he got to know many combatants and citizens in Maringue. Furthermore, he maintained close contact with the Renamo leadership. These ties remained after the war and contributed to Adão's privileged position, which was and continues to be rooted in his ability to maintain relationships with a large number of people in different positions affiliated with the Renamo party.

In contrast to higher ranked Renamo members, like Adão, most ex-Renamo combatants were, however, poor and illiterate. They demobilized as simple rank-and-file combatants and had few employment opportunities in either Renamo's military wing or its political structure. Their possibilities for navigation of political party networks were limited and characterized by "waiting" and frustration.

Ex-Renamo combatants would frequently illustrate their political position by saying, "when Renamo wins the elections, it is our turn to eat." These veterans felt entitled to rewards for their wartime services and their continued loyalty. One of these former combatants was Caetano (introduced in chapter 5), a tall, thin man, who always wore the same ragged clothes and smoked cigarettes rolled using paper from his children's

219 Interviews and conversations with Adão, 17/06/09, 17/08/09, 18/08/09, Maringue.

notebooks. On days when he had no money for tobacco, he only smoked the paper. Of his Renamo membership Caetano said the following:

> Frelimo is paying the *antigos combatentes* because they are in power. Now this Renamo is not able to pay because the party is not in power. […] The money the party gets is not enough to pay the pension. And this is how we remain, we live like this, we live in poverty, in disgrace. […] We want our party to win but we don't have luck.[220]

Ex-Renamo combatants in Maringue expected the Renamo political party, and Dhlakama in particular, to take care of them after the war. Such expectations were born of a mixture of promises made during the war, policies regarding *antigos combatentes* (who were "taken care of" by the government), and big man dynamics. However, the Renamo party, Dhlakama, and the local Renamo leaders had not lived up to these expectations and were therefore losing legitimacy.

Several veterans said they felt "forgotten" from the moment that Renamo became a political party and had to look for educated people to become representatives in parliament (Manning 1998). From Maringue's bush, the leadership moved to Maputo, which my research participants imagined as a place of luxury, power, and possibilities. There were few ex-combatants included in this privileged group. Ex-commander Efrain expressed concerns about the decisions made by the Renamo leadership in the wake of the war. He said, "Dhlakama made mistakes with us, [those] who were with him in the *mato*. He put *dotores* [doctors, educated people] within the party. They came from outside and were in fact Frelimo. But what he should have done is send us to school."[221] Efrain's testimony illustrated two crucial aspects of the neopatrimonial logic in party networks. First, Dhlakama was expected to take care of the people loyal to him, in this case ex-commanders who fought with him in the war. Second, that this would have provided Dhlakama with loyal party members. He suspected that the "educated people" Dhlakama employed were "with Frelimo" and were contributing to the decline of the party. In Efrain's view, Dhlakama was not taking care of his followers, which diminished his legitimacy and power as a big man. Later in our conversation, Efrain also hinted at the possibility that Dhlakama had secretly aligned himself to Frelimo. This was a common rumor in Mozambique, it implied that that Dhlakama was deliberately keeping Renamo weak, which contributed to Frelimo's political dominance.

Yet despite such rumors and Dhlakama's inability to take care of "his veterans," Efrain and most other ex-Renamo combatants I met in Maringue remained loyal to Renamo. This is well illustrated by the story of Oscar, a former Renamo combatant and politician.

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220 Interview with Caetano, 26/11/08, Maringue.

221 Interview with Efrain, Maputo, 12/10/10, Maputo.

When Renamo arrived in Maringue he fled the district to avoid recruitment. But soon he decided to return to Maringue, as the woman he was in love with had stayed behind. Before long Renamo recruited him. As Oscar was relatively educated and eloquent he was trained and put to work as a politician. After the war he continued to work for Renamo, rising to the position of the third district party leader. One day, however, his wife and the mother of his six children left him for another man. Shortly afterwards, to make matters worse, Oscar got sick. He could not keep his job in the Renamo party, and he was unable to work on the land; consequently his family fell into dire poverty, and were forced to live on handouts from the Catholic parish.

When I met Oscar he was a fragile, trembling man, covered with the festering sores that seemed to be endemic in at the time in Maringue. More worrying was the large tumor on his back, which caused him terrible pain. Yet Oscar's broken voice told the story of an energetic, intelligent, persistent man. He said that Frelimo members had tried to "buy him." "They [the Frelimo members] said, 'sir, you are in a sad situation, you are sick and your wife ran away with someone from Renamo. That is what they [Renamo] did for you. We can help you,'" Oscar recalled. "But here they mixed up social things with politics," he added determinedly. "I'm strong and I know what I stand for." Some days, however, his convictions were not so strong. Oscar knew that it was unlikely that he would get better and that he would return to work for Renamo. In fact, he felt forgotten and bitter. The Renamo leaders rarely visited and he never received any financial aid from the party.[222]

One afternoon in August 2009, with the 2009 national elections fast approaching, Oscar and I were sitting on a mat in his courtyard. We heard drums and singing in the distance. "It's Simango's party [*Movimento Democratico de Mocambique,* MDM]," Oscar explained. "They are celebrating at Bento's house." I had known Bento as a person who leaned slightly toward Renamo, but like many people, especially Renamo supporters, he had joined the newfound MDM. "So he [Bento] also went with them. What about you?" I asked Oscar, bearing in mind his feelings of betrayal by Renamo. Oscar's reply was defiant:

> I won't. Dhlakama is my father. I came to him when I was a boy. The son who doesn't get along with the father goes to the uncle. Simango is the uncle. It is not bad to go to the uncle, but I will see what the father can give me. I will still wait some time.[223]

Ex-Renamo combatants often made references to "waiting" and "patience" when asked about their relationship with the Renamo party. Mario, a seventy-something-year-old

222 Conversations with Oscar, 5/09/08, 01/10/08, Maringue.
223 Conversation with Oscar, 07/08/09, Maringue.

Renamo veteran with grey hair and watery blue eyes, said he had not returned to his village of origin in Tete because he was "waiting for some things." This casual remark made it sound as if he were waiting for a bus, when in fact he had been waiting since the end of the war, some sixteen years before. I asked him what exactly he was waiting for. "Things the big one [*o grande*, i.e. Dhlakama] promised me: money, subsidy. And I did not have the money to go home." When we were more or less at the end of our conversation, he said gloomily, "we can only wait for death."[224] I felt intensely sad for this man, who had probably hoped for a better life, but who also seemed to realize that his hopes had been in vain. Three months after our conversation Mario passed away.

The Renamo leadership was well aware of the expectations of Renamo veterans and their increasing frustrations. On his visit to Maringue in 2009, Dhlakama pleaded for patience and perseverance. "It is like a woman in labor, she is suffering," Dhlakama said during his speech. "You, being Renamo, are suffering. But after labor the new mother is satisfied. She has a baby. Have patience!"[225] Every election stirred up hope among Renamo veterans and thus reinforced patrimonial ties between veterans and the party. Since 1999, however, Renamo has been gradually less successful in every election. As several observers have concluded, over the past two decades Renamo has proved incapable of forming a genuine opposition party (Manning 2010).[226] Renamo is disorganized, and the leadership is said to be undemocratic, rigid, and incapable of formulating a comprehensive political program.[227] Renamo representatives generally blame their successive electoral losses on electoral fraud, leading them to boycott parliament and, more recently, the municipal elections held in November 2013. Generally, Renamo's political prospects seem rather bleak, and while Dhlakama had asked for patience, many veterans I spoke to claimed their patience had been tested enough. This "crisis of patrimonialism" (Richards 1996) resulted in an increasing number of higher-ranked Renamo veterans "switching sides" and joining either Frelimo or MDM. Others have probably joined Renamo's recent remobilization.

It must be noted that the ex-combatants' expectations of and associations with Renamo that I have described in this section may be rather localized phenomena, particular to Maringue. Interviews with several interviews with ex-Renamo combatants in Caia, a neighboring district, that suggested that these Caia-based veterans were less involved in the Renamo party. When I asked Zeca, one of these ex-combatants, whether he was still a Renamo member, he answered as follows: "Of course not! Politics kill;

224 Interview with Mario, 25/07/09, Maringue.

225 Observations during visit of Dhlakama to the village of Maringue, 18/08/09.

226 Mozambique news reports and clippings, 23/10/2013; http://www.issafrica.org/iss-today/renamo-should-take-its-battle-to-the-polling-stations, accessed 26/11/13.

227 Mozambique news reports and clippings, 23/10/2013; Renamo's political program for the 2009 national elections consisted of no more than two A4 pages.

because of politics I'm behind. I could have been way further in my life."[228] However, Zeca said he did interact intensively with other ex-Renamo combatants. "The people who were with me in the troops here in Caia I see a lot," he explained. "I miss those who are far away. It is difficult to stay in contact, especially because some were known by other names, like tiger or lion."[229] Zeca's testimony suggests that veterans' participation in the social network of former combatants is a fairly widespread phenomenon, whereas strong involvement in the Renamo party network may be particular to Maringue and certain other places. There are two possible reasons for this. First, it may be that Renamo veterans like Mario, who expected "things" from the Renamo leadership, remained in Maringue "waiting." These were often veterans who were already close to the Renamo leadership during the war, such as Jordão and Oscar. Second, the presence of the military base may have provided Maringue's branch of the Renamo party with more resources and opportunities to maintain ties with followers, and offer them protection, jobs, social security, and a sense of belonging. Comparable dynamics may be at play in districts with a similar history of Renamo domination and where Renamo als stations "armed men.".

From the above it becomes clear that Mozambique's two main political parties have different levels of power and access to resources, which influences their ability to reward followers and maintain networks of dependency. Following the analogy proposed by Pai Denzja and Caetano, it can be argued that Frelimo is "eating" while Renamo is "waiting for its time to eat." As Chabal (2009:140-142) has noted, multiparty democracy creates competition between the patronage networks of political parties, in which the ruling party has often far more leverage than the opposition. This means that Renamo and Frelimo do not exist in separate worlds. Renamo supporters, for instance, relate their marginal position to Frelimo, which is "eating alone." Frelimo, in turn, seems determined to "steal" Renamo supporters, especially those of higher ranks. Recently a new player entered the political arena, the *Movimento Democratico de Moçambique* (MDM), adding another dimension to the competition for "wealth in people" in Maringue. In the next section I will explore veterans' navigations between these political parties.

"A person will never forget who feeds him": Switching sides

When I returned to Maringue in June 2009 after five months in the Netherlands, I found that the political landscape had changed significantly in my absence. The main reason for this change was the increasing popularity of MDM in central Mozambique. The party was established by Daviz Simango, the son of Uria Simango, one of the founders of Frelimo, who was allegedly killed by his fellow party members. Daviz Simango was a Renamo politician who served as the first Renamo mayor of Beira, a position through which he gained significant popularity. However, before the municipal elections in 2008

228 Interview with Zeca, 22/07/09, Caia.
229 Interview with Zeca, 22/07/09, Caia.

the central Renamo leadership decided that Simango would not be allowed to run for mayor again. Angered by this, Simango left Renamo and founded his own political movement, MDM, drawing particularly on the support of disillusioned Renamo supporters. But he also seemed to have gained popularity among a younger generation of Frelimo members, who regarded Frelimo's party and state apparatus as inaccessible.

One of the first people I visited after my return to Maringue in June 2009 was the *régulo* Nhachir. MDM's arrival had increased his concern with the multiparty democratic system. He felt the need to explain me how a new party could emerge, and he seemed almost embarrassed by the trouble this had caused for Mozambique.[230] "You know, Frelimo is the father and all these [the other parties] are his children. We children know this. But sometimes the children and their father do not get along so well," the *régulo* said.[231] The arrival of MDM laid bare the instability of networks shaped by big man dynamics, as individuals in high political positions changed sides, joining the potentially big man Simango. These switches demonstrate that the legitimacy of big men is continuously questioned and contested. The relationships of dependency between big men and followers – or, to use the words of the *régulo,* fathers and children – are based on a voluntarily compliance of subjects with their domination (Pitcher et al. 2009:139). The big men in political networks have certain obligations to their supporters, and the fulfillment of these obligations gives them legitimacy. When a big man is not able to provide for his followers, the latter may align themselves with another big man (Utas 2012).

To demonstrate the volatility of these political networks and veterans' possibilities for navigation, I will now present two cases of former Renamo combatants who switched their loyalty from Renamo to big men of different political parties, and who became or aspired to become big men themselves. One of them was Andre, a short man with a round belly who was a constant presence at Frelimo gatherings and festivities on public holidays. I was surprised to hear that Andre used to be a Renamo combatant and even a presidential guard. He admitted that he switched to Frelimo because he saw that Renamo would never win the elections. "They know how to make war, but no politics," he said to me during one of our conversations.[232] He seemed pleased with his decision, which had proved highly beneficial for him. In between two of my fieldwork periods he was elected first secretary of Frelimo, the party's highest position in the district. After his election, Andre replaced all the existing Frelimo party officials with

230 There were several incidents in the run-up to the elections in 2009 that were in Maringue often referred to as "confusion," troubles. Four months before the elections, on the 9th of June, Renamo soldiers took Simango's car under fire. Simango was not in his car, but the incident stirred a lot of discussion, especially about Renamo's "armed men," who were seemingly untouchable, as the Diario newspaper wrote: "they cannot be arrested, that would cause a bloodbath" (El Diario 11/06/09).

231 Informal conversation with Regulo Nhachir, 11/06/09, Maringue.

232 Interview with Andrei, 27/10/08, Maringue.

other (predominantly younger) Frelimo members who were loyal to him. In this way he was able to consolidate his position as a big man within Maringue's Frelimo network. As mentioned in chapter 3, Andre's rise to the position of first secretary was accompanied by a rise of political violence in Maringue. In chapter 3 I mentioned that Andre had a more aggressive attitude toward Renamo. Adão one told me this was because "he has to hit people, otherwise they will think he is still with Renamo. He has to hit his friends. And by doing that he makes Frelimo dirty."[233] It seemed that Andre needed to underscore the exclusionary character of switching parties, or at least that was how his aggressive conduct was interpreted by Adão and other Renamo veterans in Maringue.

A second example of an individual who navigated between political parties is Thomas, an ex-Renamo commander whom I described in chapter 7 as a typical broker. Similarly to Andre, Thomas tried to maneuver himself into powerful positions in the Catholic Church, as I discussed in chapter 7, as well as in political parties. However, Thomas' navigations were less successful, perhaps because they were not so definite. He did not emphasize the exclusionary character of relationships with political leaders, but rather tried to have the best of both worlds. In the 1990s, he had been working as a civil servant for the agriculture department of the district administration, suggesting he was "with Frelimo." Yet at a certain point, Renamo offered him a job in Maputo, which he could not refuse, so he was "with Renamo" again (or perhaps he had always been a double agent). During the war he worked in Renamo's intelligence branch, and on his return to Maringue in 2008 he was employed in this line of work again. Then in 2009 Thomas joined the emerging MDM and even became the party's district delegate. His house became the unofficial MDM headquarters in Maringue, frequented by many of his "Renamo friends" who seemed to lean to MDM. With his shift to the MDM party it seemed that a part of Thomas' network also switched positions.

Thomas told me excitedly about the motorbikes he and some of the newly appointed MDM leaders were going to receive and the salary MDM had promised him. However, as the weeks passed the motorbikes and the salary did not materialize, and Thomas and his followers grew more and more impatient. As a consequence, the MDM in Maringue was slowly disintegrating. This process was accelerated by propositions Thomas received from Maringue's administrator, who had offered Thomas a permanent job. Thomas was excited to be courted by such a powerful man. "Did you see me? Sitting next to him?" he asked me, referring to a dinner on 25 June, Independence Day. He was invited to join the table of the district administrator and sat between him and the first secretary of Frelimo. I sat at another table, occasionally catching Thomas grinning at me, obviously pleased to be sitting between the two "biggest men" of the district. "But what about MDM?" I asked. "The administrator says 'work is work, and politics are politics,'" Thomas answered. "And

233 Informal conversation with Adão, 18/08/09, Maringue.

a permanent job is hard to find. I have to decide quickly."[234] Thomas never got his permanent job in the district government, however, and MDM in Maringue collapsed. Work is not work in Maringue, work is politics, and by offering Thomas a job, the administrator made, in my opinion, a political move intended to weaken MDM.

Eventually Thomas was offered an unpaid job as Frelimo's leader of the 2009 electoral campaign. During this campaign there were several violent incidents, which were largely the responsibility of Frelimo's beating squads, groups of young Frelimo supporters who were armed with sticks and passed by people's houses to ask which party they were going to vote for. In the eyes of Renamo members this was partially Thomas' doing. On election day, Thomas was pounced upon by some of his former Renamo colleagues and heavily beaten. When I returned to Maringue a year later in 2010, Thomas had left the village. While he was reported to have received a significant sum of money from Frelimo, his wife and other family members had seen nothing of this. "He drank it all alone," his brother explained to me. "'Money does not stay,' I said to him. 'Relatives they stay.' Now he is saying the same to me when he wants a pair of shoes. He's not right in the head that brother of mine."[235] Thomas' navigations of various political networks proved to be rather unsuccessful. Perhaps he was not able to maintain ties with his followers, or he changed his loyalty too swiftly and in doing so lost credibility. In the end, it seemed he even failed his family, losing their goodwill and assistance.

Thomas' navigations show the unstable character of these political networks and of big men's positions, and that relationships of dependency with political party leaders and former commanders are not fixed, as big men may lose power and followers may seek beneficial relationships elsewhere. This does not mean, however, that ex-Renamo combatants could switch sides as and when they pleased, nor that their decisions were entirely cost-benefit considerations. Three caveats should be made in this respect.

First, as Oscar expressed above, ex-Renamo combatants' positions vis-à-vis Renamo are characterized not only by an expectation of material benefits but also by feelings of belonging and loyalty. Oscar felt that he had been raised and taken care of by Renamo's leader during the war. His disappointment in Renamo did not mean his loyalty toward Dhlakama and his affinity with Renamo had disappeared. As relationships between Renamo leaders and rank-and-file combatants continued over decades, their meaning was derived as much from a sense of loyalty and belonging as from an expectation of material rewards.

Second, not all ex-Renamo combatants had the same opportunities to move between political parties. Renamo veterans' positions in the former military and political-party hierarchy influenced their possibilities for "defecting" to Frelimo. Many Renamo veterans were convinced that the Frelimo party had a policy for buying high-

234 Conversations with Thomas, 08/06/09, Beira; 30/06/09, Maringue.

235 Conversation with Efrain, 12/10/10, Maputo.

placed Renamo members and armed presidential guards stationed at the military base. Some of these Renamo members defected openly; others, especially those still employed by the military base, "disappeared." Such factors may explain why individuals like Oscar and Mario, both old and sick Renamo veterans, would "wait some more," while ex-combatants of (previously) higher rank, like Andre and Thomas, were more bold in their navigations of the political landscape. The differentiated opportunities for navigation also have a gender component. Almost all of the female Renamo veterans I met had been rank-and-file combatants and their involvement in ex-combatants' networks was generally as followers. These women had few opportunities for social mobility within Renamo's political and military structure and were therefore of little interest to Frelimo.

Third, the scope for maneuvering between different political parties was further diminished by the threat of violence. During wartime, defection from Renamo was punished by death. After the war, Renamo became a political party and was largely demilitarized, which loosened the strict military rules and opened up more space for manipulating and navigating different networks associated with political parties (see also Utas 2012). Nevertheless, both Renamo and Frelimo used repression and violence to either keep people within the party or punish them for defecting. On one occasion during my time in Maringue, Renamo's presidential guards caught "one of their own," who apparently had been bought by Frelimo and had plans to leave Maringue. They buried the man in sand, leaving his head sticking out of the ground. He was left in this position for one night. In the media this was portrayed as an example of Renamo's "savage" nature.[236] But what this case of violent revenge makes even more apparent is Renamo's powerlessness, as it cannot prevent Frelimo's practice of buying Renamo members. Thus, competition between and within political party networks were key factors behind of political tensions in Maringue, and may even be regarded as a cause of violence.

Nevertheless, the switching of Renamo veterans to Frelimo was an increasingly common occurrence in Maringue. Oscar underlined the effectiveness of Frelimo's "buying" practices, noting that "somebody will never forget where his food comes from." This comment is telling, as it reveals how the legitimacy and accountability of political actors is closely related to "taking care" of followers, and at the same time how ties shaped by big man dynamics are potentially flexible.

236 TVM news item 22/07/09; conversation with Oracio, 22/07/09, Caia; telephone conversation with Vinte 22/07/09.

8.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have addressed ex-Renamo combatants' navigations of former military and political networks in Maringue. I showed how relations among fellow former combatants and between former combatants and Renamo prevailed in the insecure post-war period. These relations comprise veterans' main social networks, which continue to this day, almost two decades after the war. These networks consist of a meshwork of horizontal ties between fellow veterans and vertical ties between rank-and-file veterans and big men, often their former commanders and politicians. Participation in such networks provides Renamo veterans with social and physical security, a sense of belonging, and for some social mobility and economic benefits. Ex-combatants' navigations of these former military networks are therefore crucial for comprehending their post-war social lives and their imagination of possibilities for a more tolerable life. The analysis provided further evidence for one of the central arguments of this dissertation, which is that reintegration processes are shaped by continuities as well as ruptures. More specifically, this chapter has underlined how official demobilization was not defined by a break with military ties; rather such relationships continued, albeit in a different fashion, in the period after the war.

This observation poses questions about the conceptualization and implementation of demobilization as a central component of DDR programs. My findings enforces observations made by Themnér (2012) and Utas (2005b) that the dismantling of the command and control structure is often in vain, as it may be worthwhile for ex-combatants to maintain ties with their former military group for various reasons (cf. Debos 2008; Hoffman 2011; De Vries and Wiegink 2011). The ties within such networks may be particularly persistent when they are not based exclusively on a military logic. I argued that Renamo veterans' participation in networks of fellow veterans and the Renamo political party was shaped by big man dynamics, which have wider resonance with cultural understandings of political power relations shaped by a logic of neopatrimonialism (cf. Hoffman 2007).

Former military networks may thus contribute to reintegration processes. However, this chapter also highlighted the instability of networks shaped by big man dynamics (Utas 2012:7). I demonstrated how Renamo's leaders are losing legitimacy as big men as they are increasingly unable to cater for their followers, resulting in dissatisfaction and frustration among the latter. The positions of most rank-and-file Renamo veterans regarding Renamo's leaders can be characterized as "waiting for their time to eat." However, I encountered several, especially higher-ranked, former Renamo combatants who "defected" and attempted to establish ties with other political parties. As such navigations took place in a social and political context shaped by convergence of political parties, patrimonial politics, a semi-militarized security situation, Renamo's

marginalization, and competition over "wealth in people," they contributed, in my view, to political polarization and violence in Maringue.

Yet Renamo veterans' feelings of marginality, their expectations of a Renamo electoral victory, and their status of "waiting" cannot be understood fully without taking into account their expectations and conceptualizations of the state. It is to this subject that I devote the following chapter. These are the focus of next chapter.

9 "ONLY A BIT MOZAMBICAN"

CITIZENSHIP AND EXCLUSION

9.1 Introduction

> They are building a hospital now. But they only employ people with a card, a card of the party in power [Frelimo membership card]. How can this country develop if not everybody can work? Are we not Mozambicans?![237]

> If I were a *Maputeco* [person from Maputo] and would ask for money from the government, they would give it to me. But being a *Maringuense*, no, I will never get anything.[238]

These two remarks were made respectively by Caetano, an ex-Renamo combatant, and Oscar, a Renamo politician, during a conversation we had in the shade of a mango tree in Oscar's courtyard. Both men have been introduced in previous chapters, where I described their trajectories within Renamo and their dire living conditions. These quotes reveal an aspect of veterans' social navigations that has hitherto gone unanalyzed, namely the role of the state. In the previous chapter I described rank-and-file veterans such as Oscar and Caetano as "waiting" for their party to win the elections. I situated veterans and their relationships with Renamo leaders in the context of big man dynamics. Chapter 8 looked at how and why Renamo veterans' continued to participate in Renamo networks, but it did not explore in detail what is entailed in veterans' expectations of winning the elections and how this was related to Renamo veterans' idea of the state.

This chapter focuses on Renamo veterans' dual relationship with the state. On the one hand, Renamo veterans regard the state, dominated by the Frelimo party, as limiting their navigations toward a more tolerable life. In Caetano's words, the "party in power" makes it impossible for Renamo members to partake in economic activities initiated by the state, such as the construction of a new hospital in Maringue. Oscar underlined that a *Maringuense* (i.e. a Renamo supporter) would not get money from the government, whereas someone from Maputo would. This chapter demonstrates how ex-Renamo combatants understand their hardship as a consequence of their marginal position in

237 Conversation with Oscar and Caetano 09/09/08, Maringue.
238 Conversation with Oscar and Caetano 09/09/08, Maringue.

relation to the state, which makes them "only a bit Mozambican." On the other hand, the chapter shows that the state is central in Renamo veterans' imaginations of their navigational possibilities. As Caetano's and Oscar's words reveal, many former Renamo combatants have specific expectations of the state: it *should* provide jobs, it *should* "give money," and so on. I argue that Renamo veterans' understanding and expectations of the democratic state must be regarded largely in terms of exclusive caretaking, an conception that is shaped by the neopatrimonial logic discussed in chapter 8, but that is also specifically related to the veterans' positions vis-à-vis the state.

In order to analyze Renamo veterans' dual relationship with the state, I use a notion of the state that comprises two interconnected features: first, the state system, involving institutions and practices of the state, and second, the "state effect" (Mitchell (2006), meaning the representations and understandings of the state (Sharma and Gupta 2006:19). In other words, the state does not only consist of institutions and bodies that execute state functions; it is also imagined and socially constructed through everyday practices (Das and Poole 2004; Diphoorn 2013:21; Kapferer and Bertelsen 2009:2; Trouillot 2001:131). These two features are co-implicated and mutually constitutive (Sharma and Gupta 2006:19). Moreover, as Sharma and Gupta (2006:19) note, "the dialectic between practices and representations opens up the possibility of dissonance between ideas of the state gleaned from representations and those arising from encounters with particular officials." Such conflicting effects of the state may challenge its hegemony and singularity and call attention to the contradictions that it congeals (Sharma and Gupta 2006:19). How such contradictions affect people's daily lives is best understood through the notion of citizenship.

The chapter starts by developing a differentiated notion of citizenship. This is followed by an analysis of how Renamo veterans are rendered unworthy citizens by the ruling Frelimo government, and how they are largely excluded from the social and economic benefits allocated by the state. The focus then shifts to ex-Renamo combatants daily experiences with state institutions and functionaries, which are characterized by exclusion. Finally, I show how these exclusionary practices and policies contributed to the veterans' perception of the state as an exclusive caretaker.

9.2 Veterans and citizenship

War veterans are a particular type of citizen. Soldiering is often tied to concepts of citizenship, as it may be an obligation to the state (i.e. military conscription) (Gill 1997; Theidon 2007) but is also regarded as the ultimate sacrifice for the nation (Anderson 2006:145-148, 159). In the aftermath of war, veterans may be regarded as heroes and rewarded as such, but they may also pose a violent threat to the legitimacy of the state (Mashike 2004). Even years after a war has ended, former soldiers can present

a challenge to the authority and monopoly on violence of the state, as has been documented in Zimbabwe, for example, where veterans of the liberation struggle have become a powerful force in politics since the 1990s (Alexander et al. 2000; Fontein 2006; Kriger 2003; McGregor 2002). In November 2000, war veterans in Mozambique were involved in violent demonstrations, during which over a hundred people – both veterans and civilians – were killed (Schafer 2007:1). Furthermore, associations of demobilized combatants have been using the threat of violence in their negotiations with the government for legislative changes in policies regarding, among other things, pensions (Wiegink 2013b). Since late 2012, Renamo veterans in central Mozambique have remobilized leading to a series of violent incidents and clashes with the national police and army, which have resulted in an "undeclared war."[239]

Renamo's return to violence happened after I left the field and is therefore not incorporated into my analysis. However it is useful to consider these recent developments here as they underline how *desmobilizados* of the civil war have become an increasingly potent force in Mozambican politics. Renamo's remobilization puts the analysis of this chapter, which depicts Renamo veterans as increasingly frustrated with democracy and Frelimo rule, in a different light. These these recent developments demonstrate that ex-combatants' uneven reintegration processes may function as a useful lens to explore questions of state formations and emerging forms of unequal citizenship (cf. Metsola 2006). More importantly perhaps, they highlight the importance of understanding how former Renamo combatants experience and imagine the state.

Generally understood as the relationship between the state and the individual, citizenship has been understood by anthropologists as a notion "that is ascribed different meanings and significance in particular historical, cultural, social, and political contexts, and that is evolving in response to changing worlds" (Sørensen 2008:424). Ong (1996) argues that the construction of citizenship takes place within asymmetrical relations of power and is subject to constant contestation. She (1996:737) defines citizenship as "a cultural process of 'subject-ification,' or subject-making, which entails the dual dimensions of 'self-making' and 'being-made'" (Ong 1996:737). But while constructions of citizenship may be the mediated outcomes of nation-state projects and the subjects' efforts (Sørensen 2008:425), they are inherently about inclusion and exclusion, and this boundary drawing is largely done by the state (Benhabib 2002a; Wimmer 2002). However, this is not an either-or matter of who is a citizen and who is not, but should be understood as "a spectrum of variable rights and denial of rights" (Stasiulis and Bakan 1997:114). Citizenship is thus a "negotiated relationship" (Stasiulis and Bakan 1997:112) as evidenced by terms such as flexible citizenship (Ong 1999), differentiated

239 Website All Africa 8/02/2014; Online newspaper A Verdade, 27/7/2013; Online newspaper O Pais, 12/08/2013; Mozambique news reports and clippings, 4/04/2013.

citizenship (Young 1999), cultural citizenship (Rosaldo 1994), and passive and second-class citizenship (Benhabib 2002b:452).[240]

For the purposes of this chapter, I employ Benhabib's (2002b:454) three-way understanding of citizenship as comprising privileges of political membership, social rights and benefits, and a collective identity (Hedetoft and Hjort 2002). Such an understanding of citizenship allows for the fact that one can have access to one component but may be denied access to another. As I will show below, Renamo veterans have access to political membership, as they can vote and participate in elections, yet they are denied access to state benefits and are discursively depicted as (former) enemies of the state. Thus, rather than approaching citizenship as a formal set of rights, I approach citizenship as a set of practices, in order to emphasize the fact that "*de facto* equality before the law is not automatically given by the *de jure* membership of the polity" (Kyed and Buur 2006:566).

In various African contexts, the citizenship debate has focused primarily on the inability or (perceived) unwillingness of states to cater equally for all citizens (Halisi, Kaiser, and Ndengwa 1998; Kyed and Buur 2006:566).[241] This debate has been related to conceptualizations of African states as failed or patrimonial, and focuses on how in the absence of or in conjunction with the state, alternative systems of governance, legality, and citizenship have come to operate (Chabal and Daloz 1999; Utas 2012). Following De Boeck's (1996) observation of an implosion of the state-society model, Von Lieres (1999:146) suggests a move away from "the idea of the citizen as bearer of rights towards the idea of the citizen as participant and claimant, embedded in a series of networks guaranteeing inclusion and preventing marginalization from wider social and political processes." In the context of Maringue, such theorizing about citizenship may prove instructive for our understanding of church networks (chapter 7) and former military and political party networks (chapter 8), which showed how people in Maringue live in a context shaped by "multiple sovereignties" (Bertelsen 2009). Comaroff and Comaroff (2006:35) define sovereignty as "the more of less effective claim on the part of any agent, community, cadre, or collectivity to exercise autonomous, exclusive control over the

240 Benhabib (2002b:452) distinguished three distinct groups of people marginal to the civil community. First, there are the "aliens" and "foreigners" Second, there are those who "do not belong among the sovereign people in virtue of relevant identity-based criteria, but nonetheless fall under its domination" (Benhabib 2002b:452). And third, there are those who enjoy "second-class or passive citizenship status" within the polity but who are considered members of the sovereign people by virtue of cultural, familial, and religious attachments (Benhabib 2002b:452).

241 Mamdani (1996), for example, famously developed the distinction between citizen and subject, between the right-bearing person living under the rule of law as a citizen of the state and the subject living under so-called customary authorities, such as kings and chiefs, deployed by the colonial state in a system of indirect rule. But as Nyamnjoh (2001) has argued, Africans "are both citizens and subjects […] sometimes they are more citizen than subject and sometimes more subject than citizen."

lives, deaths and conditions of existence of those who fall within a given purview, and extend over them the jurisdiction of some kind of law." Following such a definition, it can be argues that party leaders, (former) commanders, and church pastors attempt to be sovereign actors exercising control over Renamo veterans. The legitimacy of these claims derived not only from spiritual and military authority, but also from the protection, social and material security, and economic possibilities that these networks offer Renamo veterans. These networks do not exist in the void created by a "failed" or "frail" state, but are intertwined with the (district) government, the Frelimo political party, and veterans' imaginations of the state (cf. Bertelsen 2009:137). This creates citizens who steer to be included in certain networks, but who are also often excluded of certain networks, in particularly of the state.

This chapter seeks to examine how the boundaries between exclusion and inclusion are drawn, and therefore addresses a second debate on citizenship in sub-Saharan Africa about the role of memory construction. Collective memories of the past, Dorman Hammett, and Nugent (2007:13) have argued, are often built around (colonial) oppression and an image of an "other" against which the positive in-group identity is defined. Furthermore, as Metsola (2010:590) points out for Namibia, "such historical interpretations are not merely a matter of national imaginary. They are highly significant to current socio-political relations, defining terms for inclusion and exclusion." In a similar vain, Ranger (2004:223) has argued for Zimbabwe, that while the glorification of liberation struggles celebrated the heroism of the war veteran, this glorification also had a flipside, as such depictions of the past "divide up the nation into revolutionaries and sell-outs." A similar case can be made for Mozambique.

In the wake of independence, Mozambican citizenship was generally defined by loyalty to Frelimo and commitment to its vision of the future (Buur 2010; Dinerman 2006; Sumich 2013:99). Frelimo's leadership aimed to create *o Homem Novo* (the New Man), the ideal modern Mozambican, freed of superstition and ethnic alliances (Hall and Young 1997). As Sumich (2013:99) summarizes, "those who committed themselves toward this ideal were citizens, while those who subverted it, or wilfully disregarded it, became *o inimigo interno* (the internal enemy) and were outside the moral bounds of the body politic."[242] In contemporary Mozambique, the ruling Frelimo leadership continues to be in a position to determine "the practices and behaviours that [make] one a loyal citizen and, conversely, those that [make] one an 'alien' or enemy" (Sumich 2013:99). However, since the adoption of liberal democracy in 1990, Sumich (2013) argues, Mozambican citizenship has become a "floating signifier," a symbol with no

242 The *inimigo interno* became a wide category of people with traits exemplified in Xiconhoca, a comical image of an unemployed, rude drunkard, exemplifying all anti-social and anti-Frelimo behavior (Buur 2010). In recent years, Xiconhoca has come to represent societal and political failure in general, also providing criticism to the Frelimo government. See, for example, the newspaper A Verdade's weekly item "the Xiconhoca of the week."

fixed meaning. As Sumich (2013:110) further observes, "[o]utside the party elite, it is not clear who will be privileged, as Frelimo has made a bewildering series of alliances with foreign investor, donor countries, Pentecostal churches, Islamic brotherhoods and other groups that can bolster the party's position."

But while in recent years the borders of the insider group have become more loosely defined, ideas about certain outsiders have remained largely unchanged. War rhetoric continues to be used to draw the borders of inclusion and exclusion based on alliances to either Renamo or Frelimo (Igreja 2008; Kyed and Buur 2006:565). Kyed and Buur (2006:565) observed that state representatives in a rural district in Manica presented Frelimo as the embodiment of peace and bringers of development and democracy, whereas Renamo was depicted as the "confused" and "evil" other. As I will show below, state representatives in Maringue used similar characterizations of Renamo and Frelimo. To understand how such imaginaries came into being and how they were consolidated in postwar citizenship practices concerning Renamo veterans, it is necessary to address the construction of historical interpretations of the past and, related categorizations of war veterans in Mozambique.

9.3 Veterans and the state: Memory, attitudes, and policies

Former soldiers play a specific role within a state and the construction of its history. They may be glorified as the heroes of great victories, but they may also be a reminder of a failure, guilt, and shame that is rather (selectively) forgotten (Buckly-Zistel 2006; Cohen 2001), or something in between. Civil wars pose even more challenging questions to the position of veterans, since such conflicts involve at least two armed groups fighting in the same territory. How a government deals with war veterans depends on the type of peace agreement made to end the war as well as on resources available, but perhaps even more on the politics of historical interpretations of the war, which are, as Kriger (2003:20-23) observes, often ignored in studies of reintegration and peace building. In this section I approach Renamo veterans' position as unworthy citizens as being shaped largely by the ruling Frelimo elite's historical narrative of the civil war.

The memory construction of past atrocities is highly influential in shaping the identity and legitimacy of political, ethnic, or religious groups, as these memories contain sensitivities and emotions of blame, victory, pride, and shame (Alexander, McGregor, and Ranger 2000; Buckley-Zistel 2006; Mallki 1995a; Shaw 2007). The state is often in control of how the past is remembered through symbols, media, and textbooks (Cohen 2001:243). But while the state may attempt to advance a certain master narrative of the past, memories are never univocal; they are always challenged, shaped, and re-shaped in the present (Antze and Lambek 1996:xii-xiii; Nazarea 2006:325; Nora 1989:8; Robben 2012; Werbner 1998). Scholarly works on the politics of memory

often make a distinction between "official memory" produced by the state and "popular memory" – or, better put, "memories," as such communal recollections are far from homogenous – that emerges on the local level (Antze and Lambek 1996:xx; Cham 2008; Theidon 2006). Yet these popular memories do not exist in isolation from the state, and vice versa (Robben 2005:142).

In Mozambique such memory struggles are apparent in the depiction of and policies concerning war veterans. Below I will address Renamo veterans' historical interpretations of the war and how these relate to their attitudes toward the state. First, however, I wish to look at the ruling Frelimo elite's historical narratives of both the liberation struggle and the civil war. While there are several practical and administrative reasons for a differential treatment of war veterans, I argue that the "Frelimo" interpretations of these conflicts has largely determined who has access to the resources of the state and who does not. These interpretations have resulted in three categories of war veterans have emerged in Mozambique: *antigos combatentes*, former FAM soldiers, and ex-Renamo combatants. Not all war veterans in Mozambique fit into these categories, such as the ex-militias who were never officially recognized and demobilized by ONUMOZ, and the Mozambican soldiers who fought in the Portuguese army.[243] Furthermore, these categorizations suggest an illusory homogeneity therein and obscure cases of people who switched categories or fall into several categories. Nevertheless, it is through these classifications that the fault lines of Mozambican veterans' inclusion and exclusion from appreciation and resources of the state are determined. Additionally, this differential categorization has shaped how Renamo veterans imagine how war veterans should be treated as they juxtaposed their positions to former FAM soldiers and *antigos combatentes.* This does not mean that veterans did not have any influence on these categorizations and corresponding policies, but rather, as I will show in the following sections, that these categorizations largely define ex-combatants' abilities to contest the state.

Antigos combatentes and the glorification of the liberation struggle

Frelimo has been in power in Mozambique since independence in 1975 and has won every national election since the first multiparty elections in 1994. Consequently, the Frelimo party's version of the past has come to dominate the construction of the official memory construction of the country's recent history (Igreja 2008; Pitcher 2006). The "Frelimo version" of the past is characterized by a glorification of the liberation war and

243 In 1973 more than half of the soldiers employed in the Portuguese security forces in Mozambique, over 35,000 troops, consisted of locally recruited black troops (Newitt 1995:532). Apart from the former soldiers of Portugal's elite forces who joined Renamo after independence, there is little known about the trajectories of the veterans of the Portuguese army.

a silence concerning the civil war.[244] As in other countries that were born of liberation struggles, such as Zimbabwe (Alexander et al. 2000; McGregor 2002) and Namibia (Kossler 2007:362; Metsola 2010), the Frelimo leaders in Mozambique base their legitimacy and national identity on their liberation war credentials (Igreja 2013; Schafer 2007:124). In the national elections of 2009, the slogan of the Frelimo party was "*Frelimo é que fez, Frelimo é que faz*," which can be broadly translated as "it is Frelimo that did, and it is Frelimo that does," the "did" referring to the liberation war and presumably also to the (staggering) development of the country after independence. Such references reinforce the Frelimo elite's claim of being the "owners" of Mozambique and provide legitimacy for their rule (Pitcher 2006; Schafer 2007).

This is not to say that the Frelimo elite's historical narrative of the liberation war is uniform and uncontested. The suspicious deaths of various prominent Frelimo members who were critical of the party, such as Uria Simango (Igreja 2008:554), the rapid post-war accumulation of wealth by Frelimo leaders (Pitcher 2006), and the disregard of certain groups privileged during Frelimo's socialist period (Guerra 2012) have been a source of debate both within Frelimo and in the public sphere (Igreja 2008:554). Furthermore, Frelimo's liberation struggle and its implementations of drastic post-independence policies were experienced and narrated differently across Mozambique, as was demonstrated in chapter 3 (see also West 2005).

Nevertheless, the liberation war has a prominent position in memorialization practices in Mozambique. This is illustrated by its myriad manifestations in the public sphere in the form of celebrations on national holidays, such as Heroes Day and the Day of the First Bullet Fired (the start of the Liberation Struggle); names of schools; impressive murals; and roads named after prominent Mozambican politicians, such as Eduardo Mondlane, Frelimo's founding father, as well as other African leaders, such as Kenneth Kaunda, and socialist "heroes" like Vladimir Lenin and Mao Tse Tung. These are reminders of Frelimo's "victory" over the Portuguese, part of what Kossler (2007:362) calls "the glorification of history of the liberation warfare."

Not surprisingly, the veterans of the liberation struggle, called *antigos combatentes*, are regarded as national heroes and are rewarded as such. They are the most privileged veterans in Mozambique, as they fought in the war that granted Frelimo the legitimacy to rule Mozambique. Indeed, the Frelimo ruling is comprised chiefly of *antigos combatentes*, who occupy the most important governing positions in the country, from the republic's presidency to the administrator of Maringue. Most other *antigos combatentes* I met during fieldwork, generally men and women in their fifties and sixties, occupied privileged positions in Maringue's local government.

244 The construction of a nation's history is always a selective process, see Anderson (2006), Cohen (2001:243), and Antze and Lambek (1996).

One of these *antigos combatentes* was Henriques, Maringue's district leader of the Association of *Antigos Combatentes*. Henriques was a tall, elegant man in his early sixties. He proudly recounted how he had outsmarted Mozambican and white soldiers from the Portuguese army who had mistakenly suspected him of being a Frelimo fighter. They had stripped him naked in preparation for his execution. "'Say goodbye to life,' they said to me, and gave me half a beer," Henriques recalled. "But then a sudden wind blew dust in the air. The grass was burned like now, and all the ashes flew in the air." At that moment Henriques started running for his life. He ran to his house to get some clothing and then presented himself at the nearest Frelimo base to join the guerrillas and fight against the Portuguese army.

After independence Henriques had had to lay low, as Renamo was known to maltreat and kill *antigos combatentes*. He stayed in Maringue under Renamo occupation. "Thanks to the community we [*antigos combatentes*] survived," he explained. "I lived like a simple person. Participating in *liga*, *bloquos*. War is suffering that I know. We just continued. In my heart I was a *militar*, but I could not be open about that." In 2000, Henriques and other *antigos combatentes* started receiving their pensions; "and we will receive until we die," he added. He explained that an *antigos combatante* receives a pension ranging from 3,370 to 5,120 Meticais (approximately 80 to 120 Euros), depending on his or her previous military rank. Given that the minimum wage in Mozambique at the time of fieldwork was approximately 1,800 Meticais, the pension represented a significant income. Henriques summed up some of the other benefits enjoyed by the *antigos combatentes*:

> We will receive [pension] until we die. After that there is an indicated relative that has to present himself to the administration and will receive money for the coffin and for another six months of the pension after the death. The children of *antigos combatantes* have the right to a scholarship until [they are] eighteen years old. School is free up until the twelfth grade. In the hospital we do not pay anything, neither do our children and wives. We also get a discount on flights to Maputo: we fly for half the price with transport of the state.[245]

In Maringue, such benefits are widely regarded as being extremely generous. The *antigos combatantes* are seen as privileged citizens since they are "taken care of" by the government. The allocation of pensions and benefits to *antigos combatentes* is regarded as a legitimate and just policy. And while there is a younger generation of Frelimo supporters who are frustrated with the political dominance of the *antigos combatentes*, their status as national heroes is never questioned, not even by Renamo veterans. Indeed,

245 Interview with Henriques, 27/10/08, Maringue.

Renamo veterans regarded the *antigos combatentes* as an example of how war heroes were supposed to be treated.

The civil war: Awkward veterans

While the Frelimo elite's historical narrative is built around the liberation war, other aspects of the country's recent past are "forgotten" (Pitcher 2006:88-89) or silenced (Igreja 2008).[246] This holds particularly true for the civil war. The General Peace Accords (GPA) signed on 4 October 1992 permitted an official silence, as truth seeking and investigations into war crimes were not an option for Frelimo or Renamo (Igreja 2008:540).[247] These accords included a blanket amnesty for all involved in the war and did not offer any suggestions for platforms to discuss people's various experiences of sixteen years of war (Graybill 2004:1124-1125; Igreja 2007:22). As Igreja (2008) observed, the war is not completely silenced, but there is little room for versions of the past that do not "fit" with the dominant Frelimo narrative (Igreja 2008).

The character of the civil war and its consequences for the positions of former combatants were well summarized by Henriques, who compared the civil war to the liberation struggle:

> They [the government] know who have been fighting for the people of this land. We were fighting for the liberation of men and land. It is very different from this war that ended just now. It even has a different name, how is it again? … The destabilization war.

Henriques differentiated between the anti-colonial struggle and the civil war, saying that the latter was fought for less glorious causes. While *antigos combatentes* fought "for the liberation of men and land," Renamo and FAM veterans were involved in a conflict with a far more ambivalent character, Henriques said. The war did not end in a (moral) victory, but rather with the destruction of the country (Hanlon 1996). It did not fit with Frelimo's narrative of a glorious struggle for "men and land" and was silenced rather than remembered (Igreja 2008; cf. Anderson 2006:191-210). This was reflected in different attitudes and policies toward the veterans of the civil war.

The Frelimo government's perception of civil war veterans in Mozambique was shaped by dilemmas typical of the aftermath of civil war, whereby there are invariably two former armed groups that needed to be dealt with. In such a context, a privileged

246 Pitcher (2006:88-89) writes of an "organized forgetting" in Mozamican politics, whereby government officials and business elite's have ignored and distorted the socialist past in order to build a national identity around neo-liberalist values, opening doors for domestic and international investors.

247 Interview with Don Jaime Gonçalves, Archbishop of Beira and negotiator during the peace process, 28/02/2008, Beira.

treatment of one of the former belligerents could result in renewed hostilities, yet at the same time, public opinion may be against rewarding those held responsible for atrocities (Schafer 2007:124-125). ONUMOZ and later the Frelimo-dominated government dealt with these dilemmas in different ways. To avoid conflict and political preferences, and to underscore the "brotherly" aspect of the war, ONUMOZ did not differentiate between ex-Renamo combatants and ex-FAM soldiers; they were all referred to as *desmobilizados* (demobilized people).[248] Furthermore, the initial reintegration program, involving a demobilization allowance, transportation to a place of one's choosing, and in some cases access to an employment creation program, was largely funded and executed by ONUMOZ and international donors that advocated an inclusive understanding of *desmobilizados* (Alden 2002; Schafer 2007:123).[249] But when payments of demobilized soldiers ceased in 1996 and employment creation programs were concluded in mid-1997, the international donor community declared the reintegration process successful and turned its attention to more developmental issues (Alden 2002:342; Schafer 2007:130-138).

From that moment onward, the Frelimo government set the agenda for demobilized soldiers. The inclusive category *desmobilizados* became meaningless, as in the eyes of the government ex-Renamo combatants and former FAM soldiers were two very distinct types of *desmobilizados*. The ruling Frelimo party privileged its "own" veterans over the Renamo ex-combatants. However, as I have argued elsewhere (Wiegink 2013b), the government's position toward former FAM soldiers can be characterized as ambivalent. These veterans were not treated with the same generosity as *antigos combatentes*, because the Frelimo government did not have the funds to reward the demobilized government soldiers. Furthermore, FAM soldiers had acquired an unsavory reputation during the war, and it was thus considered inappropriate to recognize them as national heroes and reward them as such (Schafer 2007: 124-125).

Legislation concerning former FAM soldiers was far from straightforward and left most with no benefits. Decree 3/86, which was issued in 1986, stipulated how pensions were to be organized and only covered those men and women who served in the military service for ten years or more (Taju 1998:50). While this Decree excluded Renamo from normal pensions, Taju (1998:95) noted that the same Decree regulated the pensions of disabled soldiers, handicapped during military service, which included disabled ex-Renamo combatants. The aspect that was most problematic for ex-FAM

248 For example, the general survey of (presumably all) *desmobilizados* did not differentiate between Renamo and FAM *desmobilizados* (Pardoel 1994). Interview with Ton Pardoel, 09/06/11, Veghel.

249 GTZ and OIM organized several reinsertion programs for demobilized combatants, such as income-generating projects, but failed to create long-term employment or income-generating capacity for ex-combatants. Some of the demobilized soldiers I spoke to had participated in skill-training courses during their time in the assembly area or just after demobilization. However, in general these trainings had little impact on their lives. For an overview of the external assistance to demobilized soldiers in the 1990s, see Schafer (2007:123-138).

soldiers was the prerequisite of a minimum of ten years of military service in order to receive a pension. Most of them had served longer than the obligatory two years but less than the minimum of ten years, and consequently were not entitled to pensions (Wiegink 2013b).[250]

Veterans' associations have increasingly contested this policy since 2006, with members branding themselves "forgotten sons of the state" (Wiegink 2013b). During fieldwork in 2009 and 2010 I learned of over fourteen different associations that were placing pressure were trying to pressure the government to change legislation concerning veterans through negotiations and the threat of demonstrations and violence (Wiegink 2013b). Parallels can be drawn between the struggle of veterans in Mozambique and that of former combatants in neighboring Zimbabwe, where, as Alexander et al. (2000) and Kriger (2003) have noted, veterans of the national liberation war have struggled for access to state resources and have criticized government officials for living in luxury while "the forgotten fighters were languishing in poverty" (Kriger 2003:256). However, there is one critical difference between these two contexts: while the Zimbabwean veterans fought in the liberation war that defined the guerrilla's legitimacy to rule the country (Alexander et al. 2000, Kriger 2003), the former FAM soldiers fought a far highly ambiguous war. The FAM veterans represent an awkward reminder of a war that does not fit into the ruling Frelimo elite's narrative of the past (Wiegink 2013b). The recent changes in legislation concerning veterans' pensions and the founding of the Ministry of the Combatant, suggest that the negotiations between veterans' associations and the government gone some way to improve the lot of ex-combatants. Despite their inclusive character, however, these changes have almost exclusively benefited FAM veterans, as I demonstrate in the following section.

Renamo: "They messed up the country"

In Frelimo elite's narrative of the civil war Renamo is the main aggressor in the conflict. The former rebels are either depicted as *bandidos armados* (armed bandits), or as the puppets of foreign regimes aiming to destabilize Mozambique (Igreja 2008). This latter interpretation of Renamo was evident during Maringue's official festivities on 4 October 2008, a national holiday to celebrate the signing of the GPA.[251] The Director of Agriculture (replacing the Administrator) gave a speech in which he provided his view on the war:

250 The Decree also excluded those FAM soldiers who were recruited below the age of 16, as this was an illegal practice that was not supposed to happen and was denied for a long time by the Frelimo government.

251 The celebrations of the signing of the peace accords were generally held separately by Renamo and Frelimo. On 4 October 2008, the audience consisted solely of Frelimo supporters, civil servants, and some students from the secondary school, who were obliged to attend by their teachers.

> This 4 October is special because it has been sixteen years since the war of sixteen years came to an end. It was the war of destabilization and vandalism. Here we don't want to see our neighbor living well. That is why South Africa started this war against us together with the Portuguese. It was not a war among us Mozambicans, but a war in which Mozambicans were used by foreigners to destabilize the country.

As this quote makes apparent, the Director of Agriculture considered the Portuguese exiles and the neighboring countries Rhodesia and South Africa responsible for the war. Though perhaps coincidentally, the phrase "here we don't want to see our neighbor live well" is often used in relation to witchcraft, implying that prosperous people are envied and are obvious targets for witchcraft. The Director referred to the external forces from neighboring countries that precipitated a war in which Mozambicans were "used," thereby framing Renamo as a puppet of external actors. In such narratives, the Frelimo government is portrayed as the blameless sovereign, victim of the penetration of foreign armed forces into its territories, which it tried to defend (Igreja 2008:547-551). This interpretation of the war is favorable for the Frelimo party, as it portrays Renamo as the aggressor and thereby discredits the Renamo party as a worthy political opponent (Igreja 2008:553).

Renamo Members of Parliament, and Renamo politicians and intellectuals have articulated alternative memories of the national liberation struggle and the civil war in parliament, the media, and the public sphere (Igreja 2013). But as Igreja (2013) shows, Frelimo's ruling elite has not accepted such alternative propositions in its historical interpretations.[252] Renamo has called for a truth commission on several occasions, primarily because they believe that this would result in – for Renamo – more favorable conceptions of the past (Igreja 2008:553-554). But so far the government, religious organizations, and civil society organizations such as Justapaz, the League of Human Rights, have not responded to this call. As Igreja (2008:552) suggests, behind Frelimo's refusal may be a fear of a counter-version of the past that would destroy the image of Frelimo as the blameless victim of an aggressive Renamo.[253]

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252 See Igreja (2013) for a description of how decentralization policies in Mozambique have resulted in a more pluralist practice of democracy. Igreja's analysis addresses how the Renamo-ruled Municipal Council in Beira named a square after Renamo's founder, Andre Matsangaíssa, and how this caused Frelimo Members of Parliament to revert certain decentralization laws. Igreja (2013) argued that while officially the Matsangaíssa Square did not last long, as the subsequent Frelimo-dominated council immediately changed the square's name, it did not affect how people in Beira perceive, and refer to these spaces of memory. Therefore, Igreja (2013) concluded, the naming of the square contributed to a more pluralistic memory debate in Mozambique.

253 Investigations (e.g. a truth commission) may also disclose the physical elimination of dissident voices within the Frelimo party and the rapid post-war accumulation of wealth by Frelimo leaders (Igreja 2008:554, Pitcher 2006).

Frelimo's ruling elite's interpretation of the war has largely shaped the government's position regarding former Renamo combatants. In the wake of the conflict the government's position toward Renamo ex-combatants was very clear: they were not entitled to pensions, as the government did not want to reward those believed to be responsible for causing the civil war (Schafer 2007:124).[254] Even though Renamo was accepted as a political party, its military past was deemed illegal by the Frelimo government, and its former combatants were regarded as "sell-outs" who fought against the state and were therefore unworthy of any state resources (Schafer 2007:124). Initially, Renamo veterans complained that they had a right to pensions as these were promised to them during the war, but the government claimed that it could not be held responsible for promises that the Renamo party had made to its soldiers.[255]

However, in 2009 the Frelimo government's stance toward Renamo veterans changed. In the run-up to the national elections that year, President Guebuza promised, rather vaguely, that all demobilized soldiers would receive pensions. Initially, I was under the impression that he was referring merely to pensions for demobilized FAM soldiers, yet the campaign stressed "inclusion," suggesting that Renamo veterans would also be considered. Indeed, at the start of the second term of Armando Guebuza's presidency there were some notable changes in policies concerning veterans of the civil war. One of these changes was the founding of the Ministry of the Combatants in January 2010. This replaced the Ministry of the *Antigo Combatente*, which dealt with issues related solely to the veterans of the liberation war. The Ministry of the Combatants concerns issues of the liberation war *and* demobilized soldiers of the civil war, including both former Renamo and government forces.[256]

I visited the Ministry of the Combatant twice in October 2010. It was a small building in between two enormous apartment blocks on Maputo's 24 de Julho Avenue. I spoke with Alexandro Chuva, the National Director of the Social Insertion of Demobilized Combatants. One of the first things I asked him about the government's reason behind the founding of the Ministry. He answered as follows:

> During his travels in the districts, our President saw that Mozambique needs a more inclusive politics, including those on the government's side and those on the side of the oppositions. It was about setting up an objective institution for

254 I focus here on demobilized Renamo combatants. The policies toward Renamo's presidential guards are different, as in the GPA it was specified that after the first elections these combatants would be incorporated into the National Police. This never happened, however, and these armed men are employed by Renamo until this day. It is noteworthy that in current negotiations between Renamo and the government, jobs and pensions for these combatants are one of the issues on the agenda.

255 Newspaper Noticias, April 11, 1996 cited in Schafer (2007:124).

256 Before the founding of the Ministry of the Combatants, issues regarding demobilized soldiers from the civil war were addressed at the Ministry of Woman and Social Action.

> all. Like this, the Ministry began. […] In the end, the troops of Renamo and of Frelimo were Mozambicans. We can say that this war happened, but they were Mozambicans fighting Mozambicans.[257] To maintain a difference is to weaken the country. Here we receive all strata. There is no difference.

But while on paper this inclusion was effective, in practice there were profound differences between the Ministry's attitudes toward veterans of the "opposition" and those of "the government" as well as the access they had to the Ministry's limited funds. The functionaries at the Ministry provided contradictory testimonies about the position of Renamo veterans in the Ministry. This vagueness resulted in the de facto exclusion of Renamo veterans from resources to be distributed by the Ministry of the Combatants. When I asked Alexandro Chuva how pensions for Renamo veterans were calculated, he answered, in concurrence with recent legislative changes, that this figure was depended on the number of years one spent in military service, as it was for the former government soldiers. And here was the catch: there is no official record of how long Renamo veterans fought in the war. When I shared this observation with Alexandro Chuva, he nodded:

> In Renamo there was no control. They have to make a register, but still they have not done this. They have rights [to pensions], but the demobilization cards do not show the day they entered and for many incorporation was compulsory. Nobody can tell you when they entered. They were children or students. On the side of the government there is more or less control, but Renamo does not have any association of *desmobilizados*.

In other words, ex-Renamo combatants are unable to prove how many years they fought and are consequently ineligible for pensions. According to Alexandro Chuva, the problem lied partially in the lack of organization of Renamo *desmobilizados*. This was an odd remark, as most associations of *desmobilizados* include former soldiers from the government armed forces *and* Renamo (Schafer 1998). As mentioned before, in the wake of war there was specific attention for parity between the former fighters of the warring parties, which was reflected in the focus of associations of demobilized combatants. For example, the largest association of *desmobilizados*, the *Associação Moçambicana de Desmobilizados de Guerra* (Mozambican Association of the Demobilized of War,

257 Here a link might be made to Anderson's (2006:203-204) concept of reassuring fratricide, which holds that considering a war as a war "between brothers" serves narrative purpose of the nation, whose "violent deaths must be remembered/forgotten as 'our own'." Such a framing is reassuring as it suggests that in the end all turned out well, as the brothers stayed together. Narratives of this kind do not threaten the nation state, and may even make it stronger. Applied to Mozambique, Renamo could be regarded as brothers gone astray, but brothers/Mozambicans nonetheless.

AMODEG), made sure that if a former FAM soldier were to become president of the association, a Renamo veteran would be vice-president, and vice versa (Schafer 1998). But while such rules are still upheld, in practice these organizations have far more former FAM members than ex-Renamo members. Perhaps as a consequence, the associations' lobbying of and negotiations with the government have focused primarily on issues affecting demobilized soldiers of the government forces.[258] This was illustrated by a list of demands proposed by the *Foro Mocambicano para Ex-Combatentes* (Mozambican Forum for Ex-Combatants, FOMEC), in which over fourteen veterans' associations participated, that included pensions for Renamo veterans, but as the director of one of the veterans' associations explained, these were along with pensions for deserters considered the most controversial demands.[259]

This controversy was, in my view, related not only to the bureaucratic issues mentioned above but also to Frelimo government's images of Renamo as unworthy of receiving state funds. Alexandro Chuva characterized the war as follows: "There was no responsibility. But it was very violent, and it destroyed the economy. It is best to forget about this. […] It was all arranged in the peace accords. The colleagues of Renamo felt bad. They had been instrumentalized by external forces." His secretary joined the conversation, offering his assessment of Renamo's exclusionary position:

> They stigmatize themselves. They do not feel comfortable being in public as they are linked to the past of destruction and violence; they are afraid that people will point the finger and say, "it was them who messed up this country." […] They are illiterate. They were peasants. When the war ended they went back to their *machamba*. That is what they chose.

The National Director nodded in agreement. "And they are also aggressive," he added.

Both men described Renamo as the main aggressor in the war. They depicted Renamo veterans as violent, backward, illiterate, and incapable of negotiating with the government. Furthermore, they claimed that Renamo veterans acknowledge their responsibility for the war and that they are afraid to be judged. The pair even suggested that Renamo veterans consider themselves unworthy of receiving pensions.

This conversation exemplifies functionaries' mistrust of Renamo and the stereotyping and vilification of Renamo veterans, which are largely based on the dominant "Frelimo" conception of Renamo. Such narratives frame Renamo as the "dangerous other" and legitimize the de facto exclusion of ex-Renamo combatants from resources of the state, in particular pensions, thereby marginalizing them as citizens.

258 Interviews with Tafula Quamba, AMODEG, 16/12/08, Maputo; and Jacinta Jorge and Armando, ProPaz, 16/12/08, Maputo.

259 Interview with Jacinta Jorge and Armando, ProPaz, 16/12/08, Maputo; conversation with Jacinta Jorge, 12/10/10, Maputo.

This conversation at the Ministry also shows that the Frelimo elite's narrative of the civil war shaped not only the formulation of policies regarding Renamo veterans but also the implementation and daily interpretations of certain policies by civil servants and government representatives such as Alexandro Chuva. To paraphrase Metsola (2010:590) once more, narratives about the past are thus not merely memory constructs; they influence policy and procedure and thereby generate categories of people with differentiated access to state resources (Broch-Due 2005:14). How Renamo veterans experience such categorization in everyday life is the focus of the next section.

9.4 Experiences and understandings of the state

In this section I will examine how Renamo veterans from Maringue experience, interpret, and imagine the state. I not only consider encounters with state institutions and functionaries but also focus on how Renamo veterans imagine the state and how their experiences and representations are mutually imbricated (Sharam and Gupta 2006:19). What follows is a three-way analysis that loosely accords with Behabib's (2002b) three components of citizenship, involving 1) veterans' experiences of exclusion from social rights and benefits in their encounters with state institutions and functionaries; 2) Renamo veterans' discontent with the dominant narrative of Frelimo's ruling elite and their alternative narratives of the war as a "fight for democracy"; and 3) Renamo veterans' interpretations of "democracy," which reveal their perceptions o of state-citizen relationships.

Exclusionary encounters

Renamo veterans' most direct and frequent experiences with state institutions were their encounters with the bureaucratic apparatus of Maringue's district government. To understand the nature of such encounters, it is first of all important to note that the district government is largely experienced as an external structure that "arrived" in Maringue after the war. As I described in chapter 3, Renamo, as a political party but perhaps even more as a military structure, governed Maringue until 1997, offering limited social services such as healthcare and education. The government apparatus consolidated in Maringue from 1997 onwards.

In Maringue, "*a administracão*" (the administration) was the most common term for referring to the state, its political power, and Frelimo. The administration was one of Maringue's largest and best-maintained buildings, situated right at the entrance of the town. It was the main building on the "government square," a plaza where various other departments of the district government were located, including the residence of the administrator, the highest government official in the district. When President Guebuza visited the district in 2009, 300 meters of road in this square was asphalted. Together

with the market place on the other side of town, this was the center of social activity in the town. In and around the administration I always ran into *régulos*, pastors, *antigos combatentes,* Frelimo politicians, and functionaries. It was the place where government meetings where held, where state funds were distributed, where one could arrange an audience with the administrator, and where identity cards were issued.

One afternoon in December 2010, I met up with Adão. He had just returned from a visit to the "administration" to arrange a copy of his identity card, but this had been complicated. Copies of identity cards are provided free of charge by the district government, as such copies are a necessity for school registration and other government services. However, the functionary at the administration's front desk had asked Adão to pay 100 Meticais (approximately three Euros), which was a small fortune to him. Adão called this "abuse." I said this was outrageous and I suggested Adão should file a complaint. He merely shrugged and said, dismayed, that it was no use for people like him. It may be that the civil servant who asked Adão for money wanted to take advantage of a peasant's ignorance of bureaucratic procedures. But Adão interpreted this as an exclusionary policy directed at Renamo members, confirming that they were not regarded as full citizens.[260]

Similar difficulties surrounded Renamo veterans' access to pensions. As mentioned above, during the 2009 electoral campaign there were rumors of pensions for *desmobilizados*, including ex-Renamo combatants. I asked Matateo, a former Renamo commander and Renamo's district representative of ex-combatants' issues, what he made of these rumors. He said he had orders "from Maputo" to register Renamo veterans, showing me a large notebook with tables where he listed veterans' names, dates of birth, dates of recruitment, places of demobilization, and so on. When I asked him about the purpose of this registration, Matateo said that it was "possibly for pensions." But he was very skeptical. "Only those with money will be able to get the necessary paperwork done," he reasoned. Applying for pensions is a highly bureaucratic process, one that is hampered for most ex-Renamo combatants by the prerequisites, namely having a demobilization card and an identity document.

The Renamo veterans in Maringue carefully held on to their demobilization cards, the presentation of which was a requirement for receiving demobilization allowance in the period between 1994 and 1996. The veterans sensed that if they were ever to receive benefits from the state or the Renamo party, this card would be essential. Some *desmobilizados* had lost their cards, often when their huts had burned down, a relatively common occurrence since fire is used to clean the fields and to hunt animals. The loss of one's demobilization card was regarded as a tragedy. Yet the identity card was an even more problematic prerequisite for Renamo veterans. Obtaining one was perceived as

260 Conversation with Adão, 12/11/2010, Maringue.

Picture 7: Maringue's administration (photo by author)

a daunting undertaking, as it required one to know people within the administration, which most Renamo veterans did not, or to bribe functionaries, which for most ex-combatants was financially impossible.

The experiences of exclusion were not only felt in such "daily" encounters with the state, but were, by some former combatants, also felt in relation to national politics and political discourses. This is exemplified by the words of ex-Renamo combatant Caetano, whom I introduced in chapter 5. He, his wife, and their five children lived in a single nearly collapsing hut. The family did not have enough money for clothing and school supplies, and while they sustained themselves with food from their *machamba* and an occasional donation from the Catholic Church, they regularly experienced periods of food shortage. Caetano reflected on this situation of hardship in relation to wider policies and debates on poverty:

> When President Guebuza says, "we want to stop absolute poverty," I doubt this. He says so, but he will not achieve this. Why, you will ask me. Because the soldiers of Renamo are only a little bit Mozambican [*são pouco Moçambicano*]. During ONUMOZ [the demobilization period], we ate together with those of Frelimo. We all ate the same. I was receiving here and he was receiving the same on the other side. Now ONUMOZ has left, and the government of Frelimo

> is not able to maintain equality. They pay one part, but the rest they do not. Is that how we will stop poverty? If Renamo does not win the elections the *desmobilizados* will die like this, in a life of disgrace.[261]

As Mozambique is one of the world's poorest countries, discourses on the eradication of absolute poverty shape politics on both the national and local level. For people like Caetano, however, these discourses are meaningless, as he knows he will never get "paid." For him and many other Renamo veterans the wrong party is in power. They equated the government with Frelimo, which is therefore only interested in helping those who are members of the Frelimo party. As I mentioned in chapter 8, former Renamo combatants regard policies designed to generate income, such as the "seven million," as examples of how the government is handing out money to a privileged group of people related to the Frelimo party. These Renamo veterans are aware that they do not fall into this fortunate category and are thus not eligible to share in the government's resources. While some Renamo veterans spoke about this exclusion in fairly mild terms, musing that things were "not completely all right," other veterans used far stronger language. Oscar, the former Renamo politician whom I introduced in the previous chapter, said angrily, "To them [pointing in the direction of the district administration] we are less than insects. Those who are rich do not see us. We just see the dust of their cars."[262] Caetano expressed similar sentiments:

> How do you think a former combatant feels who suffered and now has to suffer again to feed his children? While someone from the other party receives [subsidy, salary, pension] and his children can go to school? That is not a good situation. But I stay calm. I do as my leader [Dhlakama] tells me to do and stay calm. I don't demand anything. I don't take up a gun. We'll wait for the elections.

Despite Caetano's claims of remaining peaceful, later in the same interview he said, "who provokes a cobra has to know: this is an animal that can bite." Renamo's potential for renewed violence came up occasionally in conversations with Renamo veterans in Maringue, especially when the discussion touched upon the state's (Frelimo's) differential treatment of certain citizens. Almost all of the demobilized Renamo combatants who were interviewed for this study said they did not want to "go back to the bush," but sometimes the combination of poverty, feelings of exclusion, and the sense of an increasingly hopeless political future seemed too trigger the consideration of "taking up a gun" again. This strengthens observations made in chapter 8, where Renamo

261 Interview with Caetano, 20/10/08, Maringue.
262 Interview with Oscar, 09/09/08, Maringue.

veterans were characterized as "waiting" and increasingly frustrated with Frelimo, the Renamo leadership, and "democracy" in general.

In this section I have shown that Renamo veterans felt excluded from social rights and benefits, one of the components of Benhabib's (2002b) conceptualization of citizenship. Such exclusionary practices were experienced not only by Renamo veterans but also by Maringue's rural population at large. For Renamo veterans, this exclusion was largely interpreted as politically motivated. Renamo veterans' exclusionary encounters with the state illustrate Sharma and Gupta's (2006:11-12) observation that such mundane procedures provide clues for understanding "how state authority and government operate in people's daily lives, and how the state comes to be imagined, encountered, and reimagined by the population." These exclusionary encounters were interpreted by Renamo veterans in terms of continuing animosities between Renamo and Frelimo, and, as I will further explain below, also fuelled veterans' conceptualization of the state as an exclusive caretaker.

"We brought democracy": Exclusion from history

A second component for understanding Renamo veterans' relations with the state is closely related to the Frelimo elite's conception of the civil war and how Renamo veterans feel excluded from this "national" narrative. In various ways, Renamo veterans felt "their war" was misinterpreted by "Frelimo." Many ex-Renamo combatants I spoke to were well aware of how the Frelimo government viewed Renamo during the war. This became especially clear when I showed Renamo veterans and party members in Maringue Alex Vines' (1991) book *Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique.* As discussed in chapter 2, they were appalled by the book's title; as one of the veterans reflected, "that means that Renamo did not have political ideas! That we were armed bandits!" Renamo's main representative in the district, the Renamo delegate Jaime Pereira, elaborated on these remarks: "Now they talk about democracy in Maputo, thanks to Renamo! Frelimo wanted to prohibit the *régulo* [chief]. […] And now, every *régulo* has his flag. They [the government members in Maputo] have reconsidered the ideas of Frelimo. All thanks to us."

In chapter 2 I demonstrated how Renamo veterans often framed the war in terms of a "struggle for democracy." I argued that such an interpretation of the war, whether post facto or not, provided ex-Renamo combatants with a sense of purpose and perhaps self-worth. Here I want to link such interpretations of the war to Renamo veterans' experience of exclusion from official history telling in Mozambique. During another meeting with Jaime Pereira at Renamo's office in Maringue, he expressed his frustration over the fact that Renamo and its "war for democracy" do not feature in Mozambique's dominant history writing. "There is nothing in our history books," he said. "On the cover there is a nice picture of Chissano and Dhlakama shaking hands, but when

you open the book there is nothing. There is no one who writes history here."[263] The delegate was referring to the famous picture of Renamo's leader, Alfonso Dhlakama, and Mozambique's President Chissano shaking hands after the General Peace Accords were signed in Rome, which features on the cover of a history textbook widely used in the country's schools. In the delegate's view, what is missing in such history books, and in history writing in general, is mention of the importance of Renamo's struggle for democracy in Mozambique's recent history. By doing so he suggested an alternative narrative about the war, which contradicts the dominant Frelimo narrative.

Renamo's professed aim of bringing Mozambique's democracy has become a central feature of Renamo's current raison d'être and of veterans' interpretations of the war. In chapter 2 I argued that such interpretations are part of veterans' narrative of self-worth and purpose of the war, here I aim to show that they also shape ex-combatants' postwar expectations of how they are supposed to be treated by the state. An ex-Renamo combatant summarized Mozambique's recent history in one sentence: "Frelimo brought us independence and we brought democracy."[264] Such a view equates Renamo's war with Frelimo's struggle against colonialism, giving both wars similar moral connotations. Additionally, the veteran equated former Renamo combatants with the *antigos combatentes* of the liberation war, thereby suggesting a revalorization of ex-Renamo combatants, who should be rewarded for their role in "bringing democracy" in the same way that *antigos combatentes* are rewarded for "bringing independence." This is thus a call for material benefits, in particular veteran pensions. The ex-combatants' focus on pensions reflects their sense of injustice at the privileged treatment of *antigos combatentes*, who are seen as an example of how war veterans should be treated. Furthermore, the allocation of pensions to Renamo would also mean a change in the dominant perception of the war and of Renamo veterans. The latter would cease to be seen as enemies of the state or as "armed bandits," and would instead by viewed as people who "fought for democracy." In this way, combatants would be elevated to the status of full citizens who, like the *antigos combatentes*, also enjoy extra rights and benefits.

To return to Benhabib's (2002b) three-way conceptualization of citizenship, one can argue that Renamo veterans in Maringue only enjoy access to the political rights of citizenship. However, they find themselves largely excluded from social rights and benefits provided by the state, such as receiving identity documents and copies thereof, receiving funds from, the "seven million," and receiving veterans' pensions. Furthermore, they do not recognize themselves in the Frelimo elite's dominant historical narrative of national unity and identity. To fully understand ex-Renamo combatants' feelings

263 Conversation at the Renamo headquarters in Maringue, 06/10/08.
264 Interview with Oscar, Maringue.

of exclusion and expectations of the government, it is necessary to first examine their understanding of "democracy" and their imaginations of the state.

Exclusive caretaking: Imagining the state

In this third and final section I want to address how Renamo veterans imagine the state and state-citizen relations, and in particular their own ideal positions as citizens. These imaginations of the state are shaped by the tension between the practices and representations of the state encountered in everyday life (Sharma and Gupta 2006:19). In other words, these imaginations are formed by the dialectic between the exclusionary encounters described above and a particular notion of "democracy." In this section I show that for ex-Renamo combatants "democracy" is profoundly linked to socio-economic prosperity and shaped by a patrimonial logic (see chapter 8).

Adriano was one of the ex-combatants I met in the Nhamapaza *margem* of Maringue. His home was one of the most miserable houses I visited. He, his wife, and their children lived in two small huts that were on the verge of collapsing in a messy courtyard. The children looked skinny and unhealthy, and Adriano himself seemed to have a different infection each week. During our previous meetings Adriano had been drunk, but this afternoon he was sober. We began talking about his time with Renamo. I asked him why he fought in the war. "For democracy," he replied."Did you succeed?" I enquired."Despite the past times we are alive," he responded quietly. "There are some signs of the good life, but it is not completely all right."[265] For Adriano, democracy meant "a good life," one unlike his own. This echoes the account of Caetano (presented above), who like Adriano took pride in being party of Renamo's "struggle for democracy," but who was at the same time disillusioned with what democracy had brought them.

I argue that Renamo veterans' imaginations of the state are characterized by *exclusive caretaking*. This perception is connected, first and foremost, to the experience of soldiering and of being a veteran. As described above, ex-Renamo combatants compare themselves with *antigos combatentes* and expressed that Renamo veterans should be treated with similar dignity and be taken care of by the state, because they consider themselves "the fighters for democracy." This image of the state as a caretaker was further strengthened by Renamo's wartime promises of riches and benefits for its veterans when the conflict came to an end and by the demobilization process as it was executed by ONUMOZ. As Caetano, whom I quoted above, said, "During ONUMOZ [demobilization period], we ate together with those of Frelimo. We all ate the same. I was receiving here and he was receiving the same on the other side." Ex-Renamo combatants often claimed that during the ONUMOZ mission they were "taken care of," as they received clothing, tools, and a bi-monthly allowance. In their eyes, ONUMOZ

265 Interview with Adriano, 10/09/09, Maringue.

had acted as the state, and this had shaped their ideas about how veterans should be treated by the state.

But while Caetano and other Renamo veterans spoke of the lack of equity between people who are "with Frelimo" and people who are "with Renamo," their imaginations of the state did not necessarily involve equal citizenship for all Mozambicans. On the contrary, they imagined state-citizen relations in terms of exclusivity. The various forms of the Mozambican state, such as the colonial administration and the post-independence government privileged certain categories of people over others. An example of such a privileged group is the *assimilados* (assimilated Africans) under colonial rule. These were Mozambicans who had received a certain level of education and who were considered citizens and lived under a civil law, while the majority lived under state-enforced customary law (Bowen 2000:69). In the wake of independence Frelimo also privileged certain groups of people, such as *antigos combatentes* and people from the south of Mozambique. The Frelimo government deemed others unworthy of participating in society, such as the unemployed and the homeless, who were sent to re-education camps in the remote north of the country (Hall and Young 1997). This provides further context to Renamo veterans' imaginations of state-citizen relations in terms of boundary drawing and differentiated citizenship.

References to exclusivity should thus not only be seen as a criticism of the workings of the state, but are a fundamental feature of Renamo veterans' imaginations of state-citizen relations and democracy. Building on observations made in chapter 8, it can be argued that Renamo members expected also exclusionary practices from their party if it were to come to power, only then they would be the ones to benefit. For Caetano, Adão, and many others, democracy effectively means that the winning party has four years of power to reward its supporters. References to democracy are thus not necessarily related to a coherent set of government practices and ideologies, but rather refer to patrimonial understandings of the distribution of resources and power (see also Vigh 2006:121). For Renamo veterans, "democracy" implies a political system that promises "the good life" when their party wins the elections. The tension between such imaginings of the state and veterans' encounters with the state sheds light on ex-combatants' frustrations with the state, on the one hand, and their hopes and expectations of the state, on the other.

9.5 Conclusion

In this final empirical chapter I have explored relations between Renamo veterans and the Mozambican state. Specifically, I have sought to understand why former Renamo combatants feel "only a bit Mozambican" and why they perceive the state as both an obstacle in their quest for a better life, and as an aid that might offer a way out of their miserable lives. I argued that veterans' imaginations of the state are shaped by a cultural

model thereof as an exclusive caretaker. This further underlines the importance of the "navigating *with*" perspective used in this dissertation, which links social navigation to a cultural model approach.

To understand why Renamo veterans were regarded as unworthy citizens, I first demonstrated how the memory construction of wars in Mozambique shaped different categories of Mozambican war veterans. I argued that policies and attitudes toward ex-Renamo combatants are highly influenced by the ruling Frelimo elite's narrative of the war, in which Renamo is portrayed as the main aggressor and the perpetrator of atrocities. Such narratives about the past render Renamo veterans unworthy citizens and shape the formulation and implementation of policies concerning Renamo veterans. Subsequently, I approached citizenship practices from the perspective of former Renamo combatants. I focused on the latter's exclusionary encounters with state institutions and representatives, which are largely interpreted in relation to political polarization between Renamo and Frelimo. I then looked at how Renamo veterans felt excluded from and misrepresented in Mozambique's dominant historical narrative. Following Benhabib's (2002b) three-component conceptualization of citizenship, I showed that Renamo veterans have access to political membership, as they can vote and participate in elections, yet they are denied access to state benefits and are discursively branded as (former) enemies of the state, which results in their exclusion from a collective identity.

Yet Renamo veterans' interpretations of their positions vis-à-vis the state cannot be understood in separation from their imaginations of what state-citizen relations should be. I have shown how Renamo veterans' imaginings of citizenship are shaped by an image of the state as an exclusive caretaker, and how they consider the allocation of social rights and benefits in exclusive terms, determined by the party that is in government. This view reinforces my characterization of former Renamo combatants as waiting for the Renamo party to come to power and reward them for their loyalty (see chapter 8). Such understandings of politics and the state shape the logic behind Renamo veterans' actual and, perhaps more significantly, veterans' imagined navigations of state institutions, and may simultaneously contribute to an increasing sense of frustration among Renamo veterans.

Over a decade ago, Alden (2002:353) summarized the reintegration process of ex-combatants in Mozambique by referring to a comment made by General Douglas MacArthur: "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away." While at the time this seemed an appropriate way to describe the outcomes of the largely successful DDR program executed by ONUMOZ, in contemporary Mozambique this perception could not be further from the truth. This chapter did not offer a comprehensive analysis of Renamo's recent remobilization, but it did show that "old soldiers" in Mozambique had not simply "faded away," but rather occupied particular political positions and articulated specific demands on the state. Therefore, the recent remobilization of Renamo veterans cannot be understood independently of veterans' relations with the state, memory politics, and

veterans' understanding of democracy. This brings us to the concluding chapter of this book, which considers the broader implications of the study of veterans for postwar societies.

10 FINAL REFLECTIONS

In October 2012 Renamo's leader, Alfonso Dhlakama, left Maputo for "the bush." He reestablished one of Renamo's former bases in Satandjira, in the Gorongosa Mountains, and was joined by approximately 800 armed Renamo men. Over the course of 2013 there have been reports of clashes between Renamo combatants, the police, and the military (Vines 2013). There have been several attacks on civilians traveling the EN1 in Sofala, the sole highway that links the north and south of Mozambique. Although traveling is generally considered safe with a military escort, these also have been under fire.[266] In Februray 2014, it was reported that the presence of armed men had caused over 2,000 people to fled parts of central Mozambique. And as a result of these violent incidents, Renamo and the government have begun a series of negotiations about Mozambique's electoral law and demobilization of Renamo's combatants, which at the time of writing have yet to yield a solution.[267]

These troubling events, labeled as "war"[268] by some, can be situated in larger patterns of Mozambique's increasing disparities between rich and poor, increasing political instability, and rising economic opportunities due to, among other things, the recent discovery of large offshore liquid gas reserves along Mozambique's coastline. But they may also be related to a crisis of patronage in Renamo's leadership, as Renamo veterans of different ranks have become increasingly frustrated with their leaders.[269] These developments happened after I left the field and are of such a recent nature that it is difficult to establish what their impact is and will be. Nevertheless, Renamo's armed revival shows, in an unfortunate way, the role that veterans may play as political and violent actors in contesting the state, and casts doubts on the generally hailed process of reintegrating ex-combatants in Mozambique (see e.g. Alden 2002). Furthermore, these recent developments underline some of the arguments I have made about the

266 Mozambique News Reports and Clippings, 4/04/2013; newspaper website O Pais, "Renamo Intensificia Ataques a Colunas de Viaturas entre Muxungue e Rio Save," accessed on 13/08/2013; website canalmoz.co.mz, "Renamo Deixou um Morto no Ataque ao Quartel da FIR," accessed on 13/08/2013. In a blog posted on the Global Public Square, Alex Vines also presented his analysis of the current troubles, http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2013/06/25/is-mozambique-sliding-back-toward-conflict/, accessed 28/06/2013.

267 Mozambique News Reports and Clippings 12/08/2013;

268 Mozambique News Reports and Clippings; newspaper website A Verdade, accessed 23/01/2014.

269 Mozambique News Reports and Clippings, 14 /04/2013, "Dhlakama says Renamo generals threatened to kill him."

continuation of wartime networks. But above all, they show that an understanding of "reintegration processes" from the view of former Renamo combatants is more relevant than ever.

This dissertation has provided an analysis of the war and postwar social navigations of ex-Renamo combatants in central Mozambique, by which I have critically reflected on the notion of reintegration of ex-combatants and on what is often called the "recipient community." All too often ex-combatants' life trajectories are understood in terms of ruptures: a break with society upon recruitment and a break with the past upon reintegration (see e.g. Cobban 2007; Granjo 2007; Honwana 2006:49-50, 2005; Leff 2008:14; Lundin 1998; Minter 1989; Nilson 1993; Roesch 1992:472; Wilson 1992:545). Such a conception underlines the role of war violence in ex-combatants' trajectories and thereby obscures other processes and relationships. Furthermore, it offers a rather simplistic understanding of the "community" to which veterans return. This dissertation adopted a different perspective. By combining the notion of social navigation with a cultural model approach, I have provided a novel way to explore the trajectories of veterans, in which war is conceived not as an aberration of social life but as a social condition among others. I developed three main arguments in this dissertation. The first is that Renamo veterans' navigations in war and postwar are shaped not only by the perpetration of, and need to deal with, violence, but also, and perhaps predominantly, by envisioned and culturally scripted "life projects." Second, Renamo veterans' navigations are best understood as comprising a mixture of ruptures and continuities of relationships and networks. And third, the "community" in which reintegration is supposed to happen must be seen as an open, heterogeneous, and conflict-ridden context, embroiled in war and postwar conflicts and frictions, and simultaneously shaped by its specific local history.

The purpose of this final chapter is to summarize these arguments and to draw out and emphasize the main theoretical contributions of this dissertation. I will first address anthropological debates on combatants, veterans, and war, and draw out the potential of my proposed analytical framework for the study of war and postwar social life. Next I will situate the findings of this dissertation in multidisciplinary debates on the reintegration of ex-combatants. Finally, I will return to the Mozambican context and explore what the life trajectories of ex-Renamo combatants can tell us about Mozambique as a postwar society.

10.1 Veterans revisited

This dissertation provided a novel conceptual framework that combined social navigation and cultural model theory to analyze the life trajectories of ex-Renamo combatants. This innovative framework is embedded within, and thereby builds

upon, two anthropological debates. First, this dissertation contributes to ethnographic approaches to asymmetric wars, which have underscored that war is not an exceptional phenomenon that interrupts "normal" social and political life (Debos 2011:410; Lubkemann 2008; Richards 2005; Wood 2008). This dissertation took as its point of departure, Lubkemann's (2008:13) view that war is not to a situation of "all terror all the time," but rather that it is as a transformative "social condition" through which people seek to establish culturally prescribed life projects. Often combatants' trajectories are analyzed through the lens of perpetrated, experienced, and witnessed war violence, which leads to a conception of wartime as an aberration of social life. As I mentioned above, this results in a focus on "breaks" and on the need to deal with violence in the aftermath of war. Throughout this dissertation I have shown that the reintegration of demobilized soldiers is not a simple matter of coming to terms with (perpetrated) war violence and trauma, which led me to develop a notion of ex-combatants that was socially multi-dimensional and culturally specific.

Violence and struggle were not absent from ex-Renamo combatants' trajectories; on the contrary, their lives were profoundly shaped by conflict, friction, and insecurities. The majority of the men and women whose stories have been shared in this dissertation lived in a context of structural violence, exclusion, and political tension. Their lives were marked by daily hardship, scarcity, and insecurity. Furthermore, their everyday existence was shaped by social struggles, involving the fear of witchcraft attacks, the possible wrath of avenging spirits, and incidents of political violence. These were violent aspects of veterans' lives, influencing their possibilities for and directions of social navigation. It is precisely such struggles that are often obscured by an emphasis on war violence or the need to deal therewith in analyses of wartime and postwar social life.

In order to explore of ex-combatants' life trajectories beyond the hegemonic heuristic of violence and to situate them in the social condition of war, I combined the notion of social navigation with a cultural model approach. This brings me to the second anthropological debate addressed in this dissertation, involving recent studies by for example Debos (2011), Hoffman (2007), Themnér (2012), Utas (2012, 2005) and Vigh (2006) on (former) combatants that focuses explicitly and implicitly on combatants as social navigators in unstable contexts. Like these studies, this dissertation employed the notion of social navigation as developed by Vigh (2006) to analyze ex-combatants' behavior, movement, and decision making in the present as well as in relation to an imagined future. Social navigation draws attention to the "way in which agents seek to draw and actualize their life trajectories in order to increase their social possibilities and life chances in a shifting and volatile social environment" (Vigh 2006:11). It illuminates how (former) combatants seek to steer and imagine their social trajectories, and how at the same time the social environment influences their maneuverings (Vigh 2006:238). In other words, social navigation "places our focus on the intersection of agency and structure" (Vigh 2006:238). The notion of social navigation allows use to account for

the variation in trajectories of people enmeshed in war and postwar contexts and to illuminate how people's wartime behavior is shaped not merely by dealing with, avoiding, or perpetrating war violence but also by their futures, which are envisioned in culturally specific ways.

In order to analyze the world of change, conflict, and heterogeneity in which social navigations take place, I employed Vigh's (2006) notion of "social environment." Based on Bourdieu's concept of field, a social environment situates agents in concrete social situations structured internally by certain rules and power relations. Social environments are intrinsically multilayered phenomena containing a multitude of negotiations of power, networks, events, and relationships that change, overlap, and contradict within "fluctuating social structures" (Vigh 2006:12-13). In this study "social environment" served as an analytical tool to explore the volatile and changing clusters of networks and relationships that ex-Renamo combatants navigated and whose character, dangers, and possibilities were constantly assessed and reinterpreted (Vigh 2006:12).

Yet to understand ex-combatants' life trajectories throughout war and postwar, it is necessary to demonstrate how ex-combatants move in relation to these structures and how these structures shape and confine ex-combatants' trajectories (i.e. social navigation), but also how combatants navigate *with* these social structures and thereby reproduce and change them. I therefore combine Vigh's (2006) concept of social navigation with a cultural model approach, which taken together form the "navigation with" perspective. A cultural model approach offers a notion of culture as an array of understandings or models that range from personal to institutionalized, and that operate as meaning-making sources (D'Andrade 1990:809; D'Andrade and Strauss 1992; Holland and Quinn 1987; Shore 1996:315; Strauss and Quinn 1997). It assumes a structuration process (Giddens 1984) between models existing in society and those in people's minds (Robben 2010; Shore 1996). This structuration process does not happen in a one-to-one correspondence, as individuals internalize models and subsequently participate in the enactment (or alteration) of their publically-instituted forms. In so doing, they may reinforce or subtly modify their mental models, albeit within certain boundaries (Giddens 1984; Hinton 2005:25; Strauss 1992).

In relation to social navigation, I understand cultural models as "a sextant," an instrument used by sailors to calculate their position relative to the changing night sky (Baumann 1999:78). Cultural models are similarly related to people's changing positions and contexts, as it is *with* these models that people navigate. Throughout this dissertation I have shown that the multiple, changing, and perhaps contradictory understandings of what it means to be a father, daughter, wife, community leader, believer, political member, and (former) combatant are crucial for comprehending the "reasoning" behind ex-combatants' trajectories. A cultural model approach illuminates, for example, why Adão would go through the trouble of arranging "fictive parents" in order to establish a marriage in the midst of rebel life. This approach helps us to understand why an

ex-Renamo combatant would wait for more than sixteen years for his former rebel leader to live up to his promises. In other words, a cultural model approach provides a means to grasp how veterans' navigations were shaped and imagined as part of culturally scripted "life projects" (argument 1).

The theoretical relevance of combining social navigation with a cultural model approach is further demonstrated when analyzing different possibilities for and outcomes of social navigations. Ex-Renamo combatants did not have equal navigational opportunities, these differed profoundly along the lines of gender, former military rank, age, and personality. In chapter 5 I showed how male combatants such as Adão had been able to adapt marriage practices during war in accordance with hegemonic cultural models of *lobolo*. However, I also showed how female combatants' navigations of the "marriage environment" were far more restricted and how their deviations from the *lobolo* model (e.g. marrying another former combatant or remaining alone) were less accepted by their relatives and others. Their innovations to the cultural model of *lobolo* seemed to have been less "socially sensible" (Lubkemann 2008:318) – that is, less in congruence with the hegemonic cultural model – than the *lobolo* innovations of Adão. This shows that differences in social navigation possibilities are shaped not only by the context of war but also by differentiated access to cultural knowledge, which means that not everyone has equal possibilities to emphasize or change cultural models (Hinton 2005:26-27). I showed that such variations have an individual character, they may be dependent on one's character or previous military rank, but I also demonstrated that they may vary along social lines, such as gender and age (cf. Hinton 2005:26; Strauss 1992; Tyler 1969:4). This underscores the value of combining a cultural model approach and the notion of social navigation for understanding the degree to which ex-Renamo combatants' navigations could be regarded as successful or failed, and for accounting the role of power relations in veterans' quests for a securing a tolerable life for themselves and their families.

In short, combining the notion of social navigation with cultural model theory provided a means to analyze social life in conflict and war, not in opposition to peace and everyday life, thereby showing that these are not structurally different social processes (cf. Lubkemann 2008; Richards 2005; Vigh 2006). It offered a socially multi-dimensional perspective on (former) combatants as social navigators situated in a particular cultural and political context.

This perspective may also be valuable outside the Mozambican context, as it allows one to paint a more nuanced picture of combatants as not merely violent actors and perpetrators (or in the case of child soldiers, victims) who need to leave "their past behind" in order to "reintegrate" into "society," but also as social beings enmeshed in a variety of relationships that profoundly shape their postwar trajectories. Such a perspective may lead to a focus on how violence problematizes matters of marriage, livelihood, childcare, relationship with ancestral spirits, and so on, and how people go

about realizing such life projects in socially differentiated and culturally specific ways (cf. Lubkemann 2008:325). This perspective is particularly relevant in contexts of protracted and recurring violent conflict where mobilization for war is a returning event and where soldiering has come to be viewed as just one of many ways to make a living (see e.g. Debos 2011; Hoffman 2007). Finally, this study offers several critical observations about common conceptualizations of reintegration in the context of Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs. These observations will be discussed in the next section.

10.2 Rethinking reintegration

This dissertation was inspired by skepticism with the concept of "reintegration," which is generally used to describe the return of ex-combatants to civilian life (see e.g. Alden 2002; Humphrey and Weinstein 2007; Knight and Özerdem 2004; Theidon 2007; UN 2006). This term is generally used in humanitarian program language as a container notion for a range of processes occurring after disarmament and demobilization. The notion of reintegration, and even more reintegration program, seems to assume that ex-combatants need to be supported and equipped to successfully re-enter a peaceful society (Krijn 2007). Furthermore, the concept presupposes a return to a pre-war status quo (Van Gog 2008), implying that social and military life are two separate spheres. This dissertation has tried to debunk some of these assumptions about former combatants, their postwar trajectories, and the communities they return to.

In this section I want to reiterate how an anthropological inquiry into the life trajectories of former combatants can contribute to ongoing multidisciplinary debates about reintegration. This ethnography provides a detailed account of how, in a great variety of ways, context matters. Nevertheless, I will not repeat the cliché that reintegration processes are profoundly context dependent, as this has become a staple notion among scholars and DDR practitioners alike. Nor will I provide concrete recommendations for DDR programs, as this study has not focused in detail on the program and policy-making dimensions of the reintegration of Renamo combatants. But by drawing together some of the critical observations about assumptions related to the reintegration concept addressed in the previous chapters, I hope to provide analytical tools for grasping *how* we can understand the social context in which former combatants' trajectories unfold.

Two main observations can be distinguished in this respect. First, as I mentioned above, one of the main arguments of this dissertation (argument 2) holds that Renamo veterans' navigations are best understood in relation to a mixture of ruptures and continuities of relationships and networks. This dissertation has shown that Renamo combatants, despite the constraining structure of the military organization of which

they were a part, sought to maintain and establish social relationships outside Renamo, which included interactions with spirits (chapter 6) but also marriages and fictive kin relationships (chapter 5). Demobilization did not mark the end of such relationships; on the contrary, in many ways wartime relationships shaped Renamo veterans' postwar trajectories. This was also exemplified in ex-combatants' relationships with fellow veterans, their participation in networks based on Renamo's military structure (chapter 8), and involvement in church networks, which were often rooted in wartime religious conversions (chapter 7). The social lives of Renamo veterans can thus be best characterized by a complex patchwork of continuities and ruptures of relationships, practices, and interpretations. Such dynamics are not easily captured by seemingly dichotomizing categories of war and peace, civil and military life, and victims and perpetrators, nor by singular understandings of "home" and "community."

This dissertation has provided a different perspective to dominant framings of veterans' life trajectories in terms of breaks: a break with society upon entering the military group and a break with the past upon returning to civilian life (Cobban 2007; Granjo 2007; Honwana 2006:49-50, 2005; Lundin 1998; Minter 1989; Nilson 1993; Roesch 1992:472; Theidon 2007; Wilson 1992:545). I showed that in Mozambique this break with the past was particularly emphasized in the attention paid to "cleansing rituals", which were intended to "take out the bad spirits of the war," and rituals for the ancestral spirits (chapter 6). Such "rituals of return" are seen as the key to the success of Mozambique's peace process (Cobban 2007; Granjo 2007; Graybill 2004; Honwana 2006; Lundin 1998), and are also regarded as a fairly problem-free and low-cost means of ensuring reintegration in other contexts (Kaplan and Nuisso 2012; Özerdem 2012; Theidon 2007; UN 2006). Yet I called for caution in relation to such community-based reintegration mechanisms, as these initiatives are often hailed as attractive bottom-up solutions, but do in fact simplify a very complex situation (cf. Schafer 2007; Stovel 2008) Moreover, such mechanisms may emphasize a break with society (entering a realm of evil spirits) and a break with the past (being cleansed of evil spirits), thereby concentrating only on a part of ex-combatants' postwar trajectories. A mere focus on such "rituals of return" thus obscures how certain networks, relationships, and practices continue over the course of war and peace.

Furthermore, an emphasis on "breaks" obscures a range of former combatants' possibilities for reintegration. This is particularly evident in the postwar continuation of wartime military networks and relationships between veterans, former commanders, and Renamo party leaders, as discussed in chapter 8. This study provides further evidence of the potential utility of wartime networks in reintegration processes. These networks may offer a sense of belonging, protection, and economic opportunities for veterans and thereby play a great role in ex-combatants' civilian lives (see also Finley 2011; Persson 2012; Themner 2011, 2012; Utas 2005; De Vries and Wiegink 2011). In concordance with other studies on the continuation of former military networks in African (post)

war contexts (e.g. Hoffman 2007; Themner 2012), I also found that the participation of ex-combatants in such networks was shaped by big men dynamics (Daloz 2003; Utas 2012). Rank-and-file Renamo veterans often engaged in unequal relationships of mutual dependency with their former commanders and Renamo politicians, which were shaped by expectancies, loyalty, and economic prospects. This casts a different light on the notion and practice of demobilization, as it suggests that efforts to dissolve the command and control structure may be in vain. I do wish to downplay the violent threat that ex-combatants embody (see e.g. Kingma 2004; Mashike 2004), but I want to stress that as such networks are not likely to disappear in the wake of an armed conflict, they might as well be treated as an asset for reintegration. At the very least such networks should be taken into account in analyses of ex-combatants' postwar trajectories.

The second critical observation of the reintegration concept ties into the third main argument of this dissertation, which is that the communities into which ex-combatants are supposed to reintegrate should be understood in terms of heterogeneity and conflict. In "DDR language" community reintegration is regularly described in rather vague phrases such as "a dual process of individual adaptation and community acceptance and support […] through integration into community" (Wessels 2006:199). In such definitions the "recipient community" (UN 2006) is presented as a static, bounded entity that either welcomes or rejects the returning former combatants. I argued that all too often the focus in studies about reintegration tends to be on the ex-combatants rather than on the communities they return to, as if the latter are less problematic and less dynamic than the former (see also De Vries and Wiegink 2013). This dissertation has advanced a more complex, heterogeneous, and conflictive understanding of the context in which reintegration takes place. In chapters 2 and 3 I showed how Maringue was not a place where Renamo combatants "returned to," but rather a place where they had lived for a certain period of time and interacted with the population in a variety of ways. Such interactions were characterized violence and force, but also resulted in marriage, economic profiteering, and participation in the Renamo administrative structure. I argued that as a consequence of these interactions, civilians in Maringue had an ambiguous view of Renamo veterans' positions, and in some cases saw them as "their own." This contributed to ex-Renamo combatants' acceptance as fellow *Maringuenses* after demobilization, at least by some inhabitants of the district. In chapter 3 I also described how in the wake of war Maringue became increasingly politically divided and conflict-ridden due to the return of refugees, the expansion of government institutions dominated by Frelimo, the presence of Renamo's military base, and Renamo's de facto hold over the district. Maringue's inhabitants were thus embroiled in war and postwar conflicts and frictions that were shaped by the national dynamics of war as well as by Maringue's specific local history and antagonisms. To speak of a "recipient community," as a homogenous, bounded and harmonious entity is in such a context pointless.

The "recipient community" was further probed and problematized in chapter 4, where I described ex-Renamo combatants' experiences upon their return to their families. I showed that, contrary to what most reintegration programs assume (e.g. UN 2006), former combatants do not "naturally" return home, nor is "home" necessarily an unproblematic and hospitable place. Many studies on returning ex-combatants in Mozambique have framed the veterans' homecoming as a process of coming to terms with war violence (e.g. Granjo 2007a:140, 2007b:391; Honwana 2006:61; Nordstrom 1997; Roesch 1996; Thompson 1999:193). In contrast to these studies, I showed that it was not necessarily the need to deal with war violence that caused ex-Renamo combatants' difficulties on their return to their families, but rather certain contingencies of the war, such as being away from home for years, the possession of a demobilization allowance, the stigmatization of female combatants, and the fact that some survived and others did not. Embedded in cultural understandings of reciprocity, obligation, and the individual's position within the family, such contingencies caused envy and created fertile ground for suspicions about witchcraft attacks. This analysis further highlights the complexities of what is often framed as the "recipient community," underlining my claim that this should be regarded as a dynamic, heterogeneous and conflict-ridden entity.

This ethnography of ex-combatants' trajectories in Maringue has been very context specific, but the critical insights gained therefrom resonate across many places where ex-combatants find their ways as civilians, often accompanied by costly Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration programs, such as those that have been implemented in Colombia (Nussio 2011; Theidon 2007), Afghanistan (Frerks, et al. 2008), Sierra Leone (Humphrey and Weinstein 2009; Leff 2008; Williamson 2006), Liberia (Pugel 2009), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Douma and Van Laar 2008). By focusing on continuities rather than breaks and on social struggles rather than violence, and by considering ex-combatants as social navigators, this dissertation has endeavored to demonstrate how ethnographic studies can contribute to debates about the reintegration of former combatants.

10.3 Mozambique and its veterans

In this final section I consider some of the implications of the study of ex-Renamo combatants' life trajectories for Mozambique as a postwar society. One could argue that this dissertation has offered a different analysis of Mozambique's widely hailed transition from war to peace. If Mozambique is indeed a success story (Cobban 2007; Graybill 2004:1127; Weinstein 2002), then the roots of this success, I have argued, are to be found not merely in local reintegration rituals or people's creativity for peace, as Nordstrom (1997a), among others, has argued, but also, and perhaps even more so, in the blurring of the categories of combatant and civilian, victim and perpetrator. This

dissertation provided several examples of the blurring of these categories. It showed how ex-combatants and civilians engaged in a range of interactions with fellow Renamo combatants and Renamo's administrative structure (chapter 3), how civilians and combatants established marital relationships and ties of fictive kinship (chapter 5), and how Renamo combatants became church members thereby establishing relationships with pastors and other churchgoers (chapter 7). Such relationships contributed to the ambiguity of the categories of civilian and combatant, and, at least in Maringue, enhanced the coexistence of people who were entangled in the violent conflict (cf. Argenti-Pillen 2003; Macek 2005). This analysis offers a far more nuanced reading of local peace processes than one concerned solely with purification rituals conducted in order to incorporate ex-combatants into the community (see e.g. Nordstrom 1997; Granjo 2007a, 2007c), as it goes beyond the moment of return and situates veterans in a complex patchwork of relationships that were ruptured, but also maintained or established during the war and postwar.

Recent remobilizations of Renamo combatants in central Mozambique cast doubt on the success of the country's peace process and reveal how certain segments of the country's population continue to be deeply divided along wartime lines. Remobilization is a complex process, involving not only ex-combatants, but also their political and military leaders, the political momentum, and a range of contextual factors (Debos 2011). Thus, the stories told by ex-Renamo combatants in Maringue cannot explain why and how Renamo's recent revolt came to pass, but they can provide some clues at to the combatants' motivations for picking up the arms again.

As was discussed in chapter 8, ex-Renamo combatants' social lives were deeply intertwined with former military networks, comprising fellow veterans but also the Renamo political party and Renamo's military wing. Such ties were in many ways essential for ex-Renamo combatants' postwar social lives, since they offered social, physical, and material security and a sense of belonging. But Renamo veterans' positions vis-à-vis Renamo "big men" are also characterized in terms of frustration and waiting. I described how Renamo leaders were increasingly losing legitimacy as "big men," as they had few resources to divide among their followers, resulting in tensions and veterans' defection. Many Renamo veterans were waiting for the moment when Renamo won the elections, and they expected to be rewarded for their loyalty with veterans' pensions and to be recognized as fighters for Mozambique's democracy. The current remobilization of a group of Renamo veterans may be another expression of such loyalties, frustrations, and expectations. Furthermore, it is not unlikely that these veterans remobilized in the hope of being demobilized again, as the ONUMOZ demobilization program was for many of them a period in which they were "taken care off" and treated equally to former FAM soldiers (chapter 9). Such expectations must be understood in relation to ex-Renamo combatants' dire living conditions, which I have sought to emphasize throughout this book. As I argued in chapter 9, ex-Renamo combatants interpret their

daily hardship predominantly in terms of marginalization by Frelimo and the state, yet they simultaneously imagine the state as a caretaker who should look after those who have fought for democracy.

The dynamics of exclusion and increasing inequality affecting Renamo veterans have wider resonance in Mozambican society. These developments must not be regarded solely in the context of the Frelimo-Renamo divide, but should also be seen in relation to multiple actors and developments related to the global economy. The recent expansion of Mozambique's coal exportation and possibilities for gas extraction has brought multinationals to the country, leading to a substantial increase in GDP.[270] This presents the Mozambican state with opportunities for economic growth, but also opens the possibility of (renewed) conflict, which may be fought along "old" divides. These recent developments in Mozambique mean that the question of Renamo veterans' integration remains urgent and open-ended. Though stemming from a mixture of factors over which Renamo veterans have little influence, remobilization may offer novel navigational opportunities in their search for a tolerable life. This underlines once more how ex-combatants continuously maneuver in precarious and changing contexts and it highlights how the lines of war and peace are porous for people navigating unstable social environments shaped by poverty, social struggles, and political tension.

270 Mozambique saw an average GDP growth of 7.2 percent between 2000-2010. In 2013 and 2014 growth is expected to be around 8 percent (website African Economic Outlook, http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/countries/southern-africa/mozambique/, accessed 23/01/2014; Mozambique news reports and clippings, 28/12/12)

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Religion in Maringue

Table 1: Religion in Maringue, census 1997[271]

Total	Zionist	Catholic	Protestant	Muslim	Other
100%	48.8%	25.8%	3.0%	0.0%	22.4%

Table 2: Religion in Maringue, census 2007[272]

Total	Zionist	Catholic	Protestant	Muslim	Other
78,130	9,717	7,994	14,849	50	45,525
100%	12.4%	10.2%	19.0%	0.1%	58.3%

The data in the first table derived from the national census of 1997. The data in the second table derived from the census done in 2007. Notable is the strong increase in Protestantism (including Pentecostal Churches), which reflects general patterns of growing Protestant Churches in Mozambique (Van der Kamp 2011; Scheutze 2010). The decrease in Zionism can be explained by its central role during the war and its ties to Renamo. As Renamo as a political party is declining, it seems that Zionist Churches are also losing popularity.

271 Data from *Perfil do Distrito do Maringué Província de Sofala, edição 2005*, translation by author. Based on data from 1997 national census.

272 Data from the 2007 census by the *Instituto Nacional de Estatistica*.

Annex 2: Christian religion among ex-Renamo combatants

Table 3: Church participation of ex-Renamo combatants in Maringue

Church	Percentage (%)	Number
Catholic	18.3	11
Zionist	21.6	13
Pentecostal churches	24.9	15
Johane Malanga	6.6	4
Jehovah's Witness	3.3	2
Total of religious former combatants	**75.0**	**45**
Not Christian	25.0	15
Total	**100.0**	**60**

The most notable difference between table 2 and table 3 is the percentage of non-religious or non-Christian people. More than half of the population in Maringue says not to be religious, while among my research participants this was only 25 percent. There are at least two reasons for this discrepancy: first, most former combatants were located in Maringue town, where percentages of Christianity are higher. Second, church networks were one of the ways in which I came in contact with former combatants. Therefore Christians may be overly represented in my research participants.

Yet, the churches ex-combatants attend largely resemble the percentages of general church membership in Maringue (table 2). Pentecostal Churches were the most frequented by my research participants, and Zionist Churches and the Catholic Church also have relatively large numbers of ex-combatant members. In reality the Zionist Churches are probably most frequented by ex-Renamo combatants, especially in the rural zones of the district. Yet Zionist churches are underrepresented in my data, because of my focus on Maringue town and the churches' political sensitivity. Furthermore, these data may have a Catholic bias, because during my residence in the parish I met relatively a lot of Catholics.

SAMENVATTING

Deze studie gaat over de levenstrajecten van ex-strijders van de voormalig rebellen beweging Renamo (*Resistência Nacional de Moçambique*, het Mozambikaanse Nationale Verzet) in centraal Mozambique. Het proces waarbij strijders hun wapens neerleggen en een civiel bestaan opbouwen wordt vaak aangeduid met de term re-integratie. Dit proces, dat vaak samengaat met ontwapening, demobilisatie en re-integratie programma's (*Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*, DDR) wordt gezien als een essentieel element van vredesprocessen in conflictgebieden overal ter wereld, omdat vaak wordt gedacht dat als de re-integratie faalt voormalig strijders de wapens weer op zullen pakken. Deze studie onderstreept het belang van een succesvolle transitie van een militair naar een burgerbestaan voor vredesprocessen, maar komt tegelijkertijd tot de conclusie dat de gangbare conceptualisering van re-integratie een beperkt beeld schetst van de (voormalig) strijders en hun sociale relaties tijdens en na de oorlog.

Vaak worden de levenstrajecten van voormalig strijders beschreven aan de hand van twee breekpunten: de rekrutering door de gewapende groep, soms gemarkeerd door het gebruik van geweld tegen familieleden, en de terugkeer naar de samenleving, vaak beschreven als een breuk met het gewelddadige verleden. De sterke focus op deze sociale breekpunten in studies over ex-strijders leidt er toe dat hun transitie van een militair naar een burgerbestaan vaak worden omschreven in termen als re-integratie, re-acceptatie, terugkeer, *reconciliation*, reconstructie en re-incorporatie. Expliciet of impliciet benadrukken deze termen echter de rol van geweld en negeren zij de complexiteit van het sociale leven van (ex-)strijders. Zij worden neergezet als soldaten en gewelddadige actoren, maar daarbij worden andere sociale rollen genegeerd, zoals het zijn van een echtgenoot, zoon, dochter, mede-kerkganger en mede-veteraan. Deze sociale rollen hebben mede bepaald hoe zij de oorlog hebben ervaren en hebben daarmee ook deels hun naoorlogse leven beïnvloed. Daarnaast leidt de focus op de genoemde twee breekpunten tot een simplistische omschrijving van de gemeenschappen waar strijders naar terugkeren, alsof deze niet door de oorlog beïnvloed zijn.

Aan de hand van levensverhalen en observaties van het dagelijks leven van voormalig Renamo strijders in Maringue, een district in de provincie Sofala in centraal Mozambique, geeft deze studie een rijker beeld van de trajecten van ex-strijders en kan daarmee huidige debatten over re-integratie verbreden en verfijnen. In plaats van te focussen op breekpunten benadrukt dit onderzoek continuïteit en beschrijft het de sociale relaties van (ex-)strijders aan de hand van het concept *social navigation* (sociale

navigatie). Dit leidt tot een analyse van de relaties die ex-strijders zijn aangegaan, hebben onderhouden en hebben verbroken in de onstabiele en soms gevaarlijke context van een gewapend conflict en de onzekere transitieperiode erna. Het proefschrift beschrijft hoe Renamo strijders tijdens de oorlog trouwden met andere strijders of burgers in bezette gebieden, hoe zij relaties onderhielden met de voorouder-geesten, participeerden in kerkgemeenschappen en vriendschaps- en patronagerelaties opbouwden met hun medestrijders, en hoe deze relaties hun naoorlogse sociale bestaan grotendeels hebben gevormd. Geconcludeerd kan worden dat de problemen die ex-strijders in hun burgerbestaan tegenkwamen niet noodzakelijk veroorzaakt werden door geweld of trauma, maar voornamelijk ontstonden door sociale conflicten, die bijvoorbeeld uitdrukking kregen in de angst voor hekserij. Met deze analyse geeft het proefschrift niet alleen een genuanceerder beeld van de (voormalig) strijder, het laat ook zien dat het leven in oorlogstijd niet alleen bestaat uit het vermijden, ervaren en verwerken van geweld, maar dat het ook, en misschien voornamelijk, gevormd wordt door de projecten die mensen in hun dagelijkse leven nastreven, zoals het stichten van een familie.

Om de complexiteit van het zogenoemde 're-integratie proces' te vangen, presenteert het proefschrift een innovatief analytisch kader dat het concept "sociale navigatie" combineert met een *cultural model approach*. Sociale navigatie is een rijk concept dat recentelijk vaak wordt gebruikt om de agency van actoren in situaties van oorlog, conflict en spanningen te analyseren. Door voormalig Renamo strijders als sociale navigatoren te zien, wordt belicht hoe zij zich bewegen in een beperkende, veranderlijke en soms gevaarlijke situatie van conflict en de transitie erna. De navigaties van voormalig strijders krijgen echter ook betekenis, vorm en richting in hun specifieke culturele context, die ik analyseer aan de hand van de *cultural model approach*. Deze benadering ziet cultuur als een reeks van mentale en sociale geconstrueerde modellen, die worden gevormd in een proces van 'structuratie', waarbij mentale representaties van modellen worden ge-externaliseerd en deze observeerbare sociale modellen worden geïnternaliseerd. In dit proces kunnen modellen worden versterkt of veranderd, waardoor er sociale verandering ontstaat. Actoren worden gezien als betekenis-gevers, die vanuit persoonlijke en gedeelde modellen betekenis geven aan hun sociale leven. Een analyse van sociale navigaties gecombineerd met een culturele model benadering leidt tot een beter begrip van de 'redenaties' achter de navigaties van voormalig strijders. Daarnaast geeft het, gecombineerd met de notie dat culturele kennis niet evenredig verdeeld is, inzicht in machtsrelaties. Gender, leeftijd, opleidingsniveau en voormalig militaire rang beïnvloedden bijvoorbeeld in hoeverre een ex-strijders de mogelijkheid had om een model (lichtelijk) aan te passen binnen een sociaal acceptabel kader.

De navigaties van ex-strijders zijn gesitueerd in verschillende sociale velden (*social environments*), welke clusters vormen van sociale relaties en netwerken, en die worden beïnvloed door bepaalde culturele modellen. Een voorbeeld hiervan is het 'huwelijksveld', beschreven in hoofdstuk 5, waarin de relaties van de (ex-)strijders met hun partners,

hun familieleden en de voormalig gewapende groep een rol spelen. Het hoofdstuk laat zien hoe (ex-)strijders zich het huwelijk voorstelden, welke rollen verschillende actoren daarin speelden, en hoe deze werden beïnvloed door culturele modellen van wat het betekent om een zoon, dochter, man of vrouw te zijn in centraal Mozambique. Het proefschrift beschrijft de navigaties van ex-strijders in zes sociale velden, die door de onderzoeksparticipanten in Maringue werden aangeduid als hun belangrijkste clusters van netwerken en sociale relaties.

Het proefschrift bestaat uit drie delen. In het eerste deel wordt de context neergezet, waarbij de focus ligt op de ervaringen van ex-strijders en de historische achtergrond van Maringue. Het tweede deel ("*Family Affairs*") bestaat uit de beschrijvingen van de navigaties van ex-strijders in drie sociale velden die gekarakteriseerd worden door familie relaties. Het derde deel ("*Navigating Politics*") bespreekt ex-strijders' navigaties in drie sociale velden waarbinnen politieke netwerken een grote rol spelen.

Hoofdstuk 2 (*War Stories: Experiences and Interpretations of Rebel Life*) geeft allereerst een korte historische inkijk in Renamo, een rebellen organisatie die in 1976-1977 een gewapende strijd begon tegen de Mozambikaanse overheid geleid door Frelimo, de guerrilla beweging die tegen de Portugese koloniale staat had gevochten. Beschrijvingen van Renamo zijn vaak politiek gekleurd. De rebellen worden enerzijds vaak neer gezet als een marionet van blanke regimes in Zuid-Rhodesië en Zuid-Afrika, anderzijds als een beweging die steun kreeg van de boerenbevolking, die zich benadeeld voelde door het beleid van Frelimo. Er is echter consensus over het feit dat Renamo is opgezet door de Zuid-Rhodesische veiligheidsdienst, dat het vervolgens ook gesteund werd door het Apartheid regime in Zuid-Afrika en dat het gebruik maakte van terreurgeweld tegen de bevolking van Mozambique.

Deze historische schets van Renamo vormt de context voor drie verhalen van voormalig Renamo strijders. Deze verhalen laten zien hoe de oorlogservaringen en interpretaties variëren afhankelijk van gender, militaire rang, leeftijd, persoonlijkheid en meer. Deze verhalen laten echter ook bepaalde patronen zien. De ex-strijders geven bijvoorbeeld een gematigd beeld van Renamo en distantiëren zij zich van het gebruik van geweld tegen onschuldige burgers, wat zij omschrijven als "slecht geweld." De ex-strijders beschrijven hun tijd bij Renamo als een "lijdensweg," maar hebben het dan niet alleen over het uitvoeren, aanschouwen en het ondergaan van geweld, maar vooral over de dagelijkse ongemakken van het rebellenbestaan, het feit dat ze pas laat konden beginnen met het stichten van een gezin en dat ze niet hebben kunnen studeren. Het hoofdstuk concludeert dat ex-Renamo strijders zichzelf in het algemeen beschrijven als "goede soldaten," maar tegelijkertijd ook als slachtoffers, die tegen hun wil hebben moeten vechten en die daar geen vergoeding voor hebben gekregen.

Hoofdstuk 3 (*When Elephants Fight: Politics and Collaboration*) zet het district Maringue in een sociaalhistorische kader. De focus ligt in het bijzonder op de interacties

tussen burgers en gewapende actoren, welke worden beschreven aan de hand van de concepten sociale navigatie en collaboratie. Het hoofdstuk beschrijft hoe de inwoners van Maringue zich in de koloniale tijd en na de onafhankelijkheid constant hebben moeten verhouden tot repressieve, vaak gewelddadige, machthebbers. Dit deden zij onder andere door op verschillende manieren met hen samen te werken. Een voorbeeld hiervan zijn de traditionele autoriteiten, *régulos* genoemd, die met de kolonisator samenwerkten in de gedwongen rekrutering van werkkrachten voor de plantages van de Portugezen. De belangrijkste focus van het hoofdstuk ligt echter op de samenwerkingsrelaties tussen inwoners van Maringue en Renamo strijders, nadat de rebellen in 1985 het district bezet hadden. Naast dat er sprake was van het gedwongen afstaan van voedselvoorraden en het participeren in de *liga* (het dragen van wapens of plunderwaar over grote afstanden), werden veel *Maringuenses* gerekruteerd als strijder, maar ook als lokale leider, verpleegkundige of onderwijzer. Ondanks dat Renamo strijders en inwoners van het district verschillende machtsposities hadden, konden deze collaboraties gunstig uitpakken voor beide partijen. Inwoners maakten dus deel uit van het vaak repressieve bewind van Renamo, waardoor de scheidslijnen tussen strijders en burgers vervaagden.

Een gevolg van deze samenwerkingsrelaties was dat Maringue na de oorlog een Renamo bastion bleef, met een sterke Renamo partij, een militaire basis en vele ex-strijders die zich in het district vestigden. Tegelijkertijd groeide de politieke spanning in het district, onder andere door de overheid, gedomineerd door Frelimo, die voet aan de grond wilde krijgen in Maringue en door de terugkeer van vluchtelingen. Zij die samen hadden gewerkt met de rebellen steunden vaak de Renamo partij, maar zij die Maringue ontvlucht waren, steunden over het algemeen Frelimo, de regeringspartij. Deze politieke polarisatie werd versterkt door de aanwezigheid van een Renamo militaire basis, een militante Frelimo partij en een speciale politie-eenheid. Deze factoren maakten Maringue tot een plek waar ten tijde van het onderzoek, zestien jaar na de oorlog, het politieke conflict tussen Renamo en Frelimo nog regelmatig op een gewelddadige manier tot uitdrukking kwam.

Hoofdstuk 4 (*Why Did the Soldiers Not Go Home? Family, Witchcraft and "Home"*) laat zien dat in tegenstelling tot de vaak gedane aanname dat voormalig strijders na de oorlog naar huis zouden gaan, dit niet eenduidig het geval is. In veel studies wordt het "thuis" van de voormalig strijders vaak beschreven of als een onproblematische plek waar de strijders welkom zijn, of als een plek waar de voormalig strijders worstelen met hun verleden als daders van geweld. In dit hoofdstuk laat ik zien dat deze vooronderstellingen wat betreft de Renamo veteranen in Maringue niet opgaan. De problemen die de ex-strijders tegenkwamen bij de terugkeer naar hun geboortedorp en de navigaties van familie relaties aldaar waren vooral gerelateerd aan de oorlog, maar *niet* per se aan oorlogsgeweld. Redenen van conflict waren bijvoorbeeld de demobilisatie-subsidie die de voormalig strijders ontvingen van het VN programma, hun lange afwezigheid van huis, en het feit dat zij waren teruggekeerd maar andere strijders niet. Deze factoren

creëerden ongelijkheid, jaloezie, verwachtingen en sociale spanning, die in centraal Mozambique al snel leiden tot de angst om slachtoffer te worden van hekserij. Voor de voormalig strijders in Maringue was deze angst vaak een reden om hun geboortedorp te verlaten en zich ergens anders te vestigen. Hiermee geeft het hoofdstuk een complexe en cultureel specifieke schets van de gemeenschappen waarnaar ex-strijders terugkeren, en laat het zien dat deze niet eenduidig beschreven kunnen worden als de "ontvangende gemeenschap."

Hoofdstuk 5 (*Wartime Husbands and Wartime Kin: Gender, Sexual Violence and Marriage*) richt zich op huwelijksrelaties van voormalig strijders. Allereerst laat het zien dat het huwelijk, besloten na onderhandeling over een bruidsprijs (*lobolo*), een centraal levensproject is voor mensen in centraal Mozambique, onder andere omdat het voor zowel mannen als vrouwen de transitie markeert van adolescentie naar volwassenheid. Het leven in een rebellen beweging bemoeilijkte *lobolo* onderhandelingen echter op verschillende wijzen. Toch kregen veel strijders het voor elkaar om tijdens de oorlog te trouwen. Mijn onderzoek laat echter zien dat er grote verschillen waren tussen de mogelijkheden van mannelijke en vrouwelijke ex-strijders om de relaties en onderhandelingen omtrent het huwelijk te kunnen navigeren.

Tijdens de oorlog was het voor mannelijke strijders niet ongewoon om korte, informele (al dan niet gedwongen) relaties te hebben met vrouwen. *Lobolo* regelen was lastiger, onder andere omdat de familie van de strijder er niet bij betrokken kon zijn. Sommige strijders losten dit probleem creatief op door fictieve familierelaties aan te gaan met mensen van de lokale bevolking. Zo konden zij trouwen "zoals het hoort." Voor vrouwelijke Renamo strijders waren seksuele relaties met mannelijke strijders vaak gedwongen en was het aangaan van langdurige relaties vaak een tactiek om bescherming te krijgen tegen andere mannen. Na de oorlog kregen veel vrouwelijke Renamo veteranen te maken met stigmatisering en werden zij niet geaccepteerd door hun familieleden, omdat ze gezien werden als oneerbare vrouwen, die maar weinig *lobolo* op zouden leveren. Dit waren vaak de redenen waarom vrouwelijke veteranen na de oorlog in Maringue bleven. Daar trouwden ze met een andere strijder, of ze bleven alleen, wat hen vaak in een kwetsbare sociaaleconomische positie bracht.

Dit hoofdstuk laat zien dat de strijders ook tijdens de oorlog op succesvolle en minder succesvolle wijzen bepaalde levensprojecten nastreefden en dat de relaties opgebouwd tijdens hun rebellenbestaan niet per se verbroken werden in vredestijd, maar juist hun burgerbestaan vorm gaven.

Hoofdstuk 6 (*Navigating the Invisible World: Healing, Memory and Morality*) focust op de relaties tussen Renamo veteranen en de geestenwereld. Het hoofdstuk laat allereerst zien dat de relaties tussen de levenden en de doden worden omgeven door culturele modellen van gezondheid, legitiem en niet-legitiem geweld en gerechtigheid. Dit wordt duidelijk in de bespreking van lokale re-integratie mechanismen, die meteen na de oorlog nagenoeg overal in Mozambique plaatsvonden. Zo ook in Maringue, waar

voormalig strijders rituelen ondergingen die de geesten of "het bloed van de oorlog" wegwasten, vaak onder begeleiding van een traditionele genezer of een pastor van een kerk. Dit was een belangrijk aspect van de hereniging met de familie van de ex-strijders, omdat problemen met geesten gezien worden als een probleem van de gehele familie. Deze rituelen hebben veel aandacht gekregen in studies over Mozambique, en worden ook wel gezien als een van de belangrijkste elementen van de succesvolle transitie van oorlog naar vrede in het land. Dit onderzoek laat echter zien dat de re-integratie van strijders een veel complexer proces is dan het uitvoeren van deze rituelen, en dat een al te sterke focus hierop een eenzijdig beeld geeft van de problemen waar ex-strijders in hun naoorlogse bestaan tegenaan liepen, én van hun relaties met de geestenwereld. Het hoofdstuk beschrijft vervolgens de verscheidenheid van interacties tussen veteranen en geesten, en laat zien hoe relaties met vooroudergeesten bescherming brachten tijdens de oorlog, maar ook ziekte en ongeluk, en hoe verschillende ex-strijders in Maringue achtervolgd werden door wraakzuchtige geesten van onschuldige burgers die door illegitiem geweld om het leven waren gekomen. Het hoofdstuk laat zien hoe relaties met geesten een grote rol speelden in de levenstrajecten van ex-strijders, die niet alleen tot uitdrukking kwam in de re-integratie rituelen, maar ook in de dagelijkse interpretaties van gezondheid en moraliteit.

Hoofdstuk 7 (*In the Hands of the Pastor: Christian Churches, Social Security and Politics*) bespreekt de participatie van Renamo veteranen in kerkgemeenschappen in Maringue. De bekering van de meeste Renamo veteranen was niet, zoals vele studies laten zien, een manier om het gewelddadige verleden de rug toe te keren of om sociaal geaccepteerd te worden, maar eerder een voortzetting van relaties, aangegaan tijdens de oorlog. Het hoofdstuk laat zien dat de participatie in kerkgemeenschappen de sociale en economische mogelijkheden van ex-strijders vergroot heeft, en dat hierin de relaties met de pastor centraal zijn. Het beargumenteert dat deze relaties gezien moeten worden als *patron-client* of *big man* dynamieken, waarbij de actoren zich in ongelijke machtsposities bevinden, maar tegelijkertijd afhankelijk van elkaar zijn. Aan de hand van twee casussen laat ik zien dat de relaties tussen veteranen en pastors sommige (met name vrouwelijke) ex-strijders toegang gaven tot essentieel sociaal en economisch kapitaal en dat het voor weer andere veteranen mogelijkheden bood voor sociale mobiliteit.

Hoofdstuk 8 *(About Eating and Drinking: Former Military Networks and Political Parties)* laat zien dat de demobilisatie van Renamo strijders in Maringue niet betekende dat de relaties tussen veteranen en de voormalig gewapende groep verbroken werden. Het hoofdstuk beschrijft de relaties tussen mede-veteranen en de relaties van ex-strijders met de Renamo partij leiders, aan de hand van de concepten *big man* en netwerk, die inzicht geven in het politieke systeem van Maringue dat grotendeels bepaald wordt door persoonlijk afhankelijkheidsrelaties. Deze netwerken zijn belangrijk voor de ex-strijders, omdat zij hen sociale en fysieke bescherming bieden, een gevoel geven van '*belonging*', en voor sommigen economische kansen opleveren. Het hoofdstuk laat zien dat

afhankelijkheidsrelaties tussen Renamo leiders (*big men*) en ex-strijders (volgers) een belangrijk deel vormen van deze netwerken, maar dat deze relaties tegelijkertijd onder spanning staan. Voor Renamo leiders is het namelijk haast onmogelijk de verwachtingen van hun volgers waar te maken, omdat zij als deel van een steeds kleiner wordende politieke partij weinig hulpbronnen hebben om te verdelen onder de veteranen. Daardoor verliezen ze legitimiteit in de ogen van de ex-strijders, die vaak gefrustreerd wachten op het moment dat zij kunnen 'eten', i.e. de vruchten kunnen plukken van hun loyaliteit aan de Renamo leiders. Andere, vaak hooggeplaatste Renamo veteranen, keerden Renamo de rug toe en sloten zich aan bij Frelimo, welke als regerende partij veel mogelijkheden heeft voor patronage. Het hoofdstuk beargumenteert dat de competitie tussen politieke partijen de polarisatie in Maringue versterkt en één van de oorzaken is van de frequente gewelddadige incidenten in het district.

In **hoofdstuk 9** (*"Only a Bit Mozambican": Citizenship and Exclusion*) staat de tweeledige relatie van ex-strijders met de staat centraal. Enerzijds zien Renamo veteranen de staat, gedomineerd door de regerende Frelimo elite, als een obstakel in hun mogelijkheden voor een beter leven. Anderzijds zien zij de staat als een mogelijke bron van economische hulp, in de vorm van bijvoorbeeld veteranen pensioenen. Het hoofdstuk analyseert hoe burgerschap wordt geconstrueerd in Mozambique en hoe relaties tussen burgers en de staat ervaren worden door de Renamo veteranen in Maringue. De regerende Frelimo elite ziet een voormalig Renamo strijders als de wilde en gevaarlijke "Ander," die de hulp van de staat onwaardig zijn, omdat zij in de historische interpretaties van Frelimo verantwoordelijk gehouden voor de burgeroorlog en voor het gebruik van excessief geweld.

Deze uitsluiting wordt sterk ervaren in de interacties tussen Renamo veteranen en lokale staatsinstituties en ambtenaren in Maringue. Renamo veteranen denken bijvoorbeeld dat ze geen aanspraak kunnen maken op staatfondsen (i.e. het district ontwikkelingsfonds) die toegankelijk zouden moeten zijn voor alle Mozambikanen. Daarnaast vinden zij dat de gangbare historische interpretaties van de burgeroorlog een te negatief beeld neerzetten van Renamo. In plaats van "gewapende bandieten," een veel gebruikte duiding van Renamo door Frelimo, omschreven veel Renamo veteranen in Maringue zichzelf als "strijders voor democratie" en vonden dat zij een beloning verdienden voor hun bijdrage aan de Mozambikaanse democratische staat. Ze vergeleken zichzelf met de veteranen van de onafhankelijkheidsstrijd, die als nationale helden werden gezien en een hoog pensioen van de overheid ontvingen. Het hoofdstuk concludeert dat Renamo strijders de staat zien als een "exclusieve verzorger," die sociale rechten en benefits toekent aan bepaalde (groepen) mensen, die uitverkoren worden door de politieke partij die aan de macht is. Dit versterkt het beeld van Renamo veteranen die wachten op hun "beurt om te eten" geschetst in hoofdstuk 8 en geeft daarmee nogmaals aan hoe belangrijk het netwerk van de voormalige gewapende groep voor strijders is.

Hoofdstuk 10, het laatste reflecterende hoofdstuk, brengt de drie belangrijkste argumenten van het proefschrift bij elkaar. Ten eerste beargumenteert het proefschrift dat de sociale navigaties van (voormalig) strijders niet alleen draaien om het geweld dat ze gepleegd of meegemaakt hebben, maar dat deze hoofdzakelijk gevormd worden door de levensprojecten (zoals het stichten van een gezin) die zij op cultureel specifieke wijzen nastreven. Ten tweede onderbouwt het proefschrift dat de levenstrajecten van voormalig strijders niet hoofdzakelijk worden gevormd door sociale breekpunten, maar ook door de continuïteit van sociale relaties die zijn aangegaan of behouden ten tijde van de oorlog. En ten derde, laat het proefschrift zien dat de gemeenschap waarin ex-strijders hun civiele bestaan opbouwen niet gezien moet worden als een statische, homogene entiteit, die de ex-soldaten afwijst of verwelkomt, maar als een open, heterogene en vaak verdeelde sociale en politieke context. Door meer te focussen op continuïteit dan op breuken en meer op sociale conflicten dan op geweld, laat dit proefschrift zien hoe etnografische studies bij kunnen dragen aan debatten over de re-integratie van voormalig strijders.

Het laatste hoofdstuk relateert ook aan recente gewapende confrontaties tussen ge-remobiliseerde Renamo strijders en het Mozambikaanse leger waarbij al zeker vijftig doden zijn gevallen en honderden gewonden. Dit proefschrift geeft inzicht in de mogelijke motivaties van voormalig Renamo strijders om de wapens weer op te pakken. Het laat zien hoe veteranen na de oorlog verbonden zijn gebleven met hun voormalig commandanten en de Renamo partij. Daarnaast geeft het inzicht in de verwachtingen en frustraties van ex-strijders in relatie tot hun Renamo leiders en de overheid. Hiermee draagt het proefschrift bij aan het begrijpen van het huidige conflict vanuit het perspectief van de Renamo veteranen.

RESUMO

Este estudo investiga os percursos de vida de ex-combatentes das forças do antigo movimento rebelde Renamo (*Resistência Nacional de Moçambique*) em Moçambique central. O processo no decorrer do qual os combatentes depõe as armas e constroem uma existência civil na sociedade é frequentemente indicado com o termo reintegração. Este processo, muitas vezes acompanhado de programas de desarmamento, desmobilização e reintegração (*Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*, DDR) é considerado um elemento essencial de processos de paz em zonas de conflito por todo o mundo, uma vez que se pensa frequentemente que, falhando a reintegração, os ex-combatentes voltarão a pegar nas armas. O presente estudo frisa a importância para processos de paz de uma transição bem conseguida do militar para a vida civil, mas conclui que a conceitualização corrente da reintegração traça uma imagem demasiado limitada dos (ex-) combatentes e da sua vida social durante e depois da guerra.

Frequentemente, as vidas de ex-combatentes são descritas com base em dois pontos de ruptura: o recrutamento por um grupo armado, por vezes marcado pelo uso de violência contra familiares, e o regresso para a sociedade, descrito amiúde como uma ruptura com o passado violento. A focagem forte nas rupturas sociais nos estudos sobre ex-combatentes resulta frequentemente numa descrição das suas transições da guerra para a paz em termos de reintegração, re-aceitação, regresso, *reconciliation* (reconciliação), reconstrução e reincorporação. No entanto, a descrição dos percursos dos ex-combatentes com base nestes pontos de ruptura, acentua o papel da violência, desconsiderando outros aspectos, sociais, da vida dos (ex-)combatentes e dando uma imagem simplista das comunidades para onde os combatentes voltam, como se estas não tivessem sido afectadas pela guerra. Os ex-combatentes são retratados como soldados e perpetradores de violência, ignorando-se outros papéis sociais como os de marido, filho, filha, co-membro de uma comunidade religiosa, e co-veterano. São papéis sociais que contribuíram para as vivências de guerra dos combatentes, determinando assim também, parcialmente e se calhar maioritariamente, as suas vidas pós-guerra.

Baseando-se nas vivências e nas observações da vida quotidiana de ex-combatentes da Renamo em Maringue, este estudo apresenta uma visão mais ampla dos percursos dos ex-combatentes. Em vez de focar nos pontos de ruptura, a investigação salienta a continuidade e descreve a vida social dos combatentes recorrendo ao conceito de *social navigation* (navegação social). Isto resulta numa análise das relações contraídas, mantidas e cortadas pelos ex-combatentes no contexto instável e por vezes perigoso

de conflito armado e do inseguro período de transição pós-guerra. Mostra como os combatentes da Renamo, durante a guerra, casavam, mantinham relações com espíritos de antepassados, participavam em comunidades religiosas, construíam laços com colega-combatentes, e como estes relacionamentos edificaram em grande parte a sua vida social pós-guerra. Assim, não apresenta tão só uma imagem mais matizada do (ex-) combatente, mas mostra igualmente que a vida em tempos de guerra não consiste apenas no evitar, experienciar e digerir da violência, mas que se compõe também, e se calhar maioritariamente, dos projetos que pessoas desejam concretizar na vida quotidiana (tais como fundar uma família). Daí se conclui que os problemas enfrentados pelos ex-combatentes na vida civil não resultam necessariamente da violência ou de traumas de guerra, mas foram causados sobretudo por conflitos sociais que se expressavam, por exemplo, em medo de bruxaria.

A fim de captar o processo em que os ex-combatentes começam a sua vida civil, esta dissertação apresenta um enquadramento analítico inovador que combina o conceito de "navegação social" com uma *cultural model approach* (abordagem a partir de modelos culturais). A navegação social é um conceito rico que, em tempos recentes, é usado frequentemente para descrever o comportamento de actores em situações de guerra, conflito e tensão. Interpretando os ex-combatentes da Renamo como navegadores sociais, vemos como se movimentam nos contextos limitadores, variáveis e, por vezes, perigosos. No entanto, as navegações dos ex-combatentes ganham significado, forma e direcção num determinado contexto cultural que é analisado mediante a *cultural model approach*. Esta abordagem vê a cultura como uma série de modelos construídos, tanto mentais como sociais, que se encontram interligados num processo de "estructuração" na qual os actores são influenciados por estes modelos, reproduzindo-os a seguir e, por vezes, modificando-os no decorrer do processo. Os actores são vistos como significadores que, a partir de modelos pessoais e partilhados, dão significado à sua vida social. Uma análise dos modelos culturais leva a um entendimento melhor dos "raciocínios" por trás das navegações sociais dos ex-combatentes. Estas navegações situam-se em campos sociais (*social environments*) distintos que formam *clusters* de relações e redes sociais, e para os quais existem determinados modelos culturais. Mediante uma descrição das navegações de ex-combatentes dentro de seis campos sociais, o debate atual sobre a reintegração de ex-combatentes é alargado, refinado e desafiado.

A presente tese consiste em três partes. A primeira parte delinha o contexto, focando por um lado as experiências dos ex-combatentes e por outro lado o quadro histórico de Maringue. A segunda parte ("*Family Affairs*" – Assuntos de Família) trata de três campos sociais caracterizados por relações familiares. Na terceira parte ("*Navigating Politics*" – Políticas de Navegação) são discutidos três campos sociais formados por redes sociais e políticas.

Capítulo 2 (*War Stories: Experiences and Interpretations of Rebel Life – Histórias de Guerra: Experiências e Interpretações da Vida Rebelde*) esboça os antecedentes dos ex-combatentes da Renamo em Maringue. Em primeiro lugar, apresenta uma vista histórica resumida da Renamo, uma organização de rebeldes que em 1976-1977 iniciou uma luta armada contra o governo moçambicano liderado pela Frelimo, o movimento guerrilheiro que tinha combatido o estado colonial português. As descrições da Renamo denotam muitas vezes uma certa tendência política: por um lado, os rebeldes são retratados como marionetas dos regimes brancos da Rodésia do Sul e África do Sul, por outro lado como um movimento ligado às queixas da população de lavradores que se considerava prejudicada pelas políticas da Frelimo. No entanto, existe consenso sobre o facto de a Renamo ter sido fundada pelas forças de segurança da Rodésia do Sul, que recebia apoio da África do Sul e que utilizava violência e terror contra o povo moçambicano.

O esboço histórico da Renamo serve de contexto para três histórias de ex-combatentes da Renamo. As histórias mostram a diversidade de experiências e interpretações da guerra e a maneira em que estas interpretações foram influenciadas por género, patente militar, idade, personalidade, e mais. Porém, as histórias denotam também determinados padrões. Por exemplo, os ex-combatentes dão uma imagem moderada da Renamo e distanciam-se do uso da força contra civis inocentes, o que descrevem como "violência má." Os ex-combatentes descrevem o seu tempo com a Renamo como um "calvário," no entanto não se referindo apenas ao uso, o presenciar e o experienciar de violência, mas sobretudo aos incómodos diários e à exaustão causados pela existência de rebeldes, o facto de só muito tarde terem podido fundar uma família e o facto de não terem tido oportunidade de estudar. O capítulo conclui que os ex-combatentes se descrevem, de modo geral, como "bons soldados," mas ao mesmo tempo como vítimas que vieram a ser combatentes contra a sua vontade e que não receberam qualquer recompensa por isso.

Capítulo 3 (*When Elephants Fight: Politics and Collaboration – Quando Elefantes Lutam: Política e Colaboração*) coloca Maringue, o local de investigação, num quadro histórico. Salientam-se sobretudo as interacções entre civis e actores armados, interacções essas que são descritas com base nos conceitos de navegação social e colaboração. O capítulo descreve a maneira como os habitantes de Maringue tiveram de relacionar-se, durante a época colonial e após a independência, com os detentores de poder opressores e, frequentemente, violentos. Faziam-no, entre outros, colaborando com eles de várias maneiras, como era o caso de, por exemplo, as autoridades tradicionais, chamadas *régulos*, que cooperavam com o colonizador no recrutamento forçado de mão de obra para as plantações.

Neste capítulo, o foco incide sobre a maneira como os habitantes de Maringue cooperavam com combatentes da Renamo, que dominavam o distrito desde 1985. De modo geral, os habitantes tinham de ceder uma parte dos seus estoques de víveres aos

rebeldes e eram também forçados a participar no transporte de armas e, sobretudo, de materiais saqueados sobre grande distâncias. Além disso, os *maringuenses* foram recrutados pela Renamo como combatentes, mas igualmente como líderes locais, enfermeiros e docentes. Embora os combatentes da Renamo e os habitantes do distrito tivessem estatutos diferentes, estas colaborações podiam resultar vantajosas para ambas as partes. Assim, habitantes faziam frequentemente parte do regime repressivo da Renamo, esbatendo-se as linhas divisórias entre combatentes e civis.

Uma das consequências destas relações de cooperação era que, depois da guerra, Maringue tenha ficado profundamente dividido politicamente. Os que tinham cooperado com os rebeldes, apoiavam sobretudo o partido da Renamo; os habitantes que tinham fugido de Maringue apoiavam frequentemente a Frelimo, o partido do governo. Tal situação, combinada com a presença de uma das últimas bases militares da Renamo, um partido da Frelimo militante, e uma unidade policial especial, resultou numa situação muito tensa no distrito. Deste modo, este capítulo traça os contornos do contexto político que formaram a vida pós-guerra dos ex-combatentes da Renamo em Maringue.

Capítulo 4 (*Why Did the Soldiers Not Go Home? Family, Witchcraft and "Home" – Por que os soldados não regressaram a casa? Família, Bruxaria e "Lar"*) mostra que, ao contrário da suposição frequente que os ex-combatentes quisessem regressar a casa após a guerra, isto não é sempre o caso. Muitos estudos caracterizam o "lar" dos ex-combatentes frequentemente como um local não problemático onde os combatentes são bem-vindos, ou então como um local onde os ex-combatentes lutam com o seu passado como perpetradores de violência, usada amiúde contra familiares ou membros da comunidade. Neste capítulo é mostrado que, em relação aos veteranos da Renamo em Maringue, ambas as suposições não valem. Os problemas encontrados pelos ex-combatentes no regresso à terra natal estavam sobretudo relacionados com a guerra, mas *não* necessariamente com a violência da guerra. Exemplos são os subsídios de desmobilização dos ex-combatentes, o facto de terem estado fora de casa durante muito tempo, e o facto de eles terem regressados mas outros não. Estes factores criavam desigualdades, invejas, expectativas e tensões sociais que no Moçambique central levam rapidamente ao medo de ficar vítima de bruxaria. Para os ex-combatentes de Maringue, este medo foi frequentemente uma razão para abandonar a terra natal e fixar-se noutra parte. Portanto, a violência não era necessariamente o aspecto mais problemático do regresso dos ex-combatentes da Renamo para as suas famílias, mas tratava-se de outros conflitos sociais. Assim, o capítulo proporciona um esboço complexo e culturalmente específico das comunidades para onde voltaram os ex-combatentes, e mostra que estas não podem ser caracterizadas univocamente como "comunidades receptoras."

Capítulo 5 (*Wartime Husbands and Wartime Kin: Gender, Sexual Violence and Marriage – Maridos e familiares em tempos de guerra: Género, Violência Sexual e Casamento*) debruça-se sobre as relações nupciais dos ex-combatentes. Em primeiro

lugar, mostra que o casamento, decidido mediante negociações sobre o preço da noiva (*lobolo*), é um projeto de vida central para as pessoas de Moçambique central, entre outras razões porque, tanto para homens como para mulheres, marca a transição de adolescente para adulto. Uma das queixas mais ouvidas dos ex-combatentes era justamente que, por causa da guerra, levaram um atraso no fundar de uma família. Porém, apesar de a participação na Renamo ter complicada as negociações de *lobolo*, muitos dos combatentes acabaram por conseguir casar durante a guerra.

Contudo, a investigação mostra que existem grandes diferenças entre homens e mulheres nas suas possibilidades de navegarem as relações e negociações relativas ao casamento. Para os combatentes masculinos era fácil manter relações curtas e informais com mulheres durante a guerra, forçadas ou não. Acertar *lobolo* era mais complicado, entre outras razões porque a família do combatente não podia estar envolvida. No entanto, este problema era resolvido de forma criativa ao contrair relações familiares fictícias com membros da população local. Desta maneira, os combatentes masculinos podiam casar "como deve ser." Para as combatentes femininas, as relações sexuais com combatentes masculinos eram frequentemente forçadas, e a contracção de relações de longa duração dentro da Renamo era uma táctica frequente para obter protecção de outros homens. Depois da guerra, muitas veteranas da Renamo sofreram de estigmatização e receavam não ser aceites pelos familiares por serem consideradas mulheres desonradas que renderiam pouco *lobolo*. Em Maringue, muitas destas mulheres mantinham relações com outros combatentes ou ficavam sós, o que lhes colocava muitas vezes numa situação socio-económica frágil.

Este capítulo mostra que os combatentes perseguiam também durante a guerra projetos de vida e que as relações que contraíram durante a existência de rebeldes não ficaram necessariamente cortadas em tempos de paz, dando pelo contrário forma a sua existência civil.

Capítulo 6 (*Navigating the Invisible World: Healing, Memory and Morality – Navegando o Mundo Invisível: Cura, Memória e Moralidade*) foca as relações entre os veteranos da Renamo e o mundo de espíritos. As navegações dos veteranos no mundo dos espíritos dão a perceber modelos culturais de saúde, violência legítima e ilegítima, e a punição de violência ilegítima. Em primeiro lugar, são discutidos os mecanismos locais de reintegração, que funcionaram imediatamente após a guerra por quase todo o Moçambique. Também em Maringue, onde os ex-combatentes foram sujeitos a rituais que lhes lavavam dos espíritos ou do sangue da guerra, acompanhados frequentemente por um curandeiro tradicional ou um pastor de uma igreja. Era um aspecto importante da reunificação com a família dos ex-combatentes, uma vez que os problemas com os espíritos eram vistos como problemas de toda a família. Estes rituais tiveram muita atenção em estudos sobre Moçambique, e são por vezes também vistos como elementos importantes de uma transição bem conseguida da guerra para a paz no país.

Não obstante, a tese mostra que a reintegração dos combatentes é um processo muito mais complexo do que a execução destes rituais, e que uma focagem demasiado forte neles resulta numa imagem unilateral dos problemas que os ex-combatentes tinham de enfrentar na sua vida pós-guerra e também das suas relações com o mundo dos espíritos. Este capítulo descreve a variedade de interacções entre veteranos e espíritos, mostrando como as relações com os espíritos dos antepassados traziam protecção durante a guerra, mas também doença e azar, e como vários ex-combatentes foram perseguidos por espíritos vingativos de civis inocentes que perderam a vida por causa de violência ilegítima.

Capítulo 7 (*In the Hands of the Pastor: Christian Churches, Social Security and Politics – Nas Mãos do Pastor: Igrejas Cristãs, Segurança Social e Política*) aborda a participação de veteranos da Renamo nas comunidades religiosas, que se ficou a dever em grande parte à guerra. Portanto, neste caso, a conversão ou a afiliação numa igreja não é, ao contrário do que muitos estudos mostram, uma maneira para virar as costas a um passado violento ou para ser socialmente aceite, mas antes a continuação de um relacionamento contraído durante a guerra. O capítulo mostra que a participação em comunidades eclesiásticas aumentava as possibilidades sociais e económicas dos ex-combatentes, e que nisto as relações de combatentes individuais com o seus pastores tinham um papel central. Argumenta que tais relações devem ser vistas como dinâmicas *patron-client* (patrão-cliente) ou *big man* (homem grande), onde os dois actores se encontram em posições desiguais mas, ao mesmo tempo, dependem ambos um do outro. Mediante de dois casos é mostrado que estas relações proporcionaram a alguns ex-combatentes (nomeadamente mulheres) acesso a capital essencial social e económico, e que para outros veteranos forneceram possibilidades para mobilidade social.

Capítulo 8 *(About Eating and Drinking: Former Military Networks and Political Parties – Sobre Comer e Beber: Antigas Redes Militares e Partidos Políticos)* observa as relações entre ex-combatentes da Renamo e o antigo grupo armado, consistindo de outros veteranos e líderes partidários da Renamo. Estas relações são analisadas através dos conceitos 'big man' e 'network' (rede), que dão a ver um sistema político que é determinado em grande parte por relações pessoais de dependência. As redes da Renamo consistem numa teia de relações horizontais e verticais que formam um elemento central na vida social dos ex-combatentes, uma vez que estas relações lhes proporcionam protecção social e física, dão uma sensação de pertencer ('*belonging*'), e oferecem oportunidades económicas para alguns.

O capítulo mostra que relações de dependência entre líderes da Renamo (*big men*) e ex-combatentes (seguidores) consubstanciam uma parte importante destas redes, mas que as mesmas relações se encontram simultaneamente debaixo de pressão. É que os líderes da Renamo têm dificuldade em concretizar as expectativas dos seus seguidores por terem poucas fontes de recursos para dividir entre os veteranos. Assim, perdem legitimidade nos olhos dos ex-combatentes, que esperam – muitas vezes com frustração

– pelo momento em que podem "comer", quer dizer, colher os frutos da sua lealdade à Renamo. Outros veteranos da Renamo, entre os quais bastantes altos patentes, virarem as costas à Renamo, juntando-se à Frelimo que, como partido do governo, tem muitas possibilidades de patronagem. O capítulo argumenta que a competição entre os partidos aumenta a polarização política, sendo uma das causas de incidentes violentes em Maringue.

No **Capítulo 9** (*"Only a Bit Mozambican": Citizenship and Exclusion – 'Só um pouco moçambicano': Cidadania e Exclusão*) a relação ambígua dos ex-combatentes com o estado ocupa o lugar central. Por um lado, os veteranos da Renamo vêm o estado, dominado pela Frelimo, como um obstáculo para as suas hipóteses de ter uma vida melhor. Por outro lado, vêm o estado como uma possível fonte de apoio económico, por exemplo, na forma de pensões para veteranos. O capítulo analisa como se constrói a cidadania em Moçambique e como os veteranos da Renamo em Maringue experienciam a relação entre cidadãos e estado. O estado, dominado por uma elite governante da Frelimo, vê os ex-combatentes da Renamo como o "Outro" selvagem, perigoso e indigno do apoio do estado, uma vez que, nas interpretações históricas da elite da Frelimo, são considerados como responsáveis pelo início da guerra civil e pelo uso de violência excessiva.

Esta exclusão era fortemente vivida nas interacções que veteranos da Renamo têm com as instituições estatais e os funcionários públicos em Maringue. Por exemplo, os veteranos da Renamo sentem que não têm acesso a fundos estatais (por exemplo, o fundo de desenvolvimento distrital) que deviam estar acessíveis para qualquer moçambicano. Para além disso, nos olhos de muitos veteranos da Renamo em Maringue, os ex-rebeldes estariam representados de forma errada na interpretação corrente da guerra civil. Muitos veteranos da Renamo descreviam-se a si próprios como "combatentes pela democracia" e consideravam que mereciam uma recompensa pelo contributo que deram para o estado democrático moçambicano. Comparavam-se com os veteranos da luta da independência que são vistos como heróis nacionais, recebendo uma pensão elevada. O capítulo conclui que os combatentes da Renamo vêm o estado como um "cuidador exclusivo," concedendo direitos e benefícios sociais a grupos (limitados) de pessoas, consoante o partido político que estiver no poder. Isto reforça a imagem dos combatentes que esperam pela sua vez para "comer," e sublinha a importância da rede do antigo grupo armado para os ex-combatentes.

Capítulo 10, o último capítulo, dedicado à reflexão, faz convergir os três argumentos mais importantes da tese. São estes, em primeiro lugar, que as navegações sociais dos (ex)combatentes não giram apenas à volta da violência que cometeram ou viveram, mas que são sobretudo formadas pelos projetos de vida (tal como fundar uma família) que tentam concretizar de um modo culturalmente específico. Em segundo lugar, que os percursos de vida dos ex-combatentes não se compõem apenas de pontos de ruptura sociais, mas também pela continuidade das relações sociais estabelecidas ou mantidas

durante a guerra. E, em terceiro lugar, que a comunidade onde os ex-combatentes constroem a sua existência civil não deve ser vista como uma entidade estática e homogénea que repele ou acolhe soldados, mas como um contexto social e político aberto, heterogéneo e frequentemente dividido. Focando mais na continuidade do que nas rupturas e mais nos conflitos sociais do que na violência, esta tese mostra como os estudos etnográficos podem contribuir para os debates sobre a reintegração de ex-combatentes.

O último capítulo refere ainda os confrontos armados recentes entre combatentes remobilizados da Renamo e o exército moçambicano que causaram já mais de cinquenta mortos e centenas de feridos. A tese apresenta as possíveis motivações de ex-combatentes da Renamo para voltar a pegar nas armas. Mostra como, depois da guerra, os veteranos continuaram ligados aos antigos comandantes e ao partido da Renamo, entre outras razões devido a relações de patronagem. Além disso, apresenta as esperanças e frustrações que os ex-combatentes sentem perante os seus líderes da Renamo e perante as instituições do estado. Deste modo, a tese contribui para o entendimento do conflito atual visto da perspectiva dos ex-combatentes da Renamo.

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