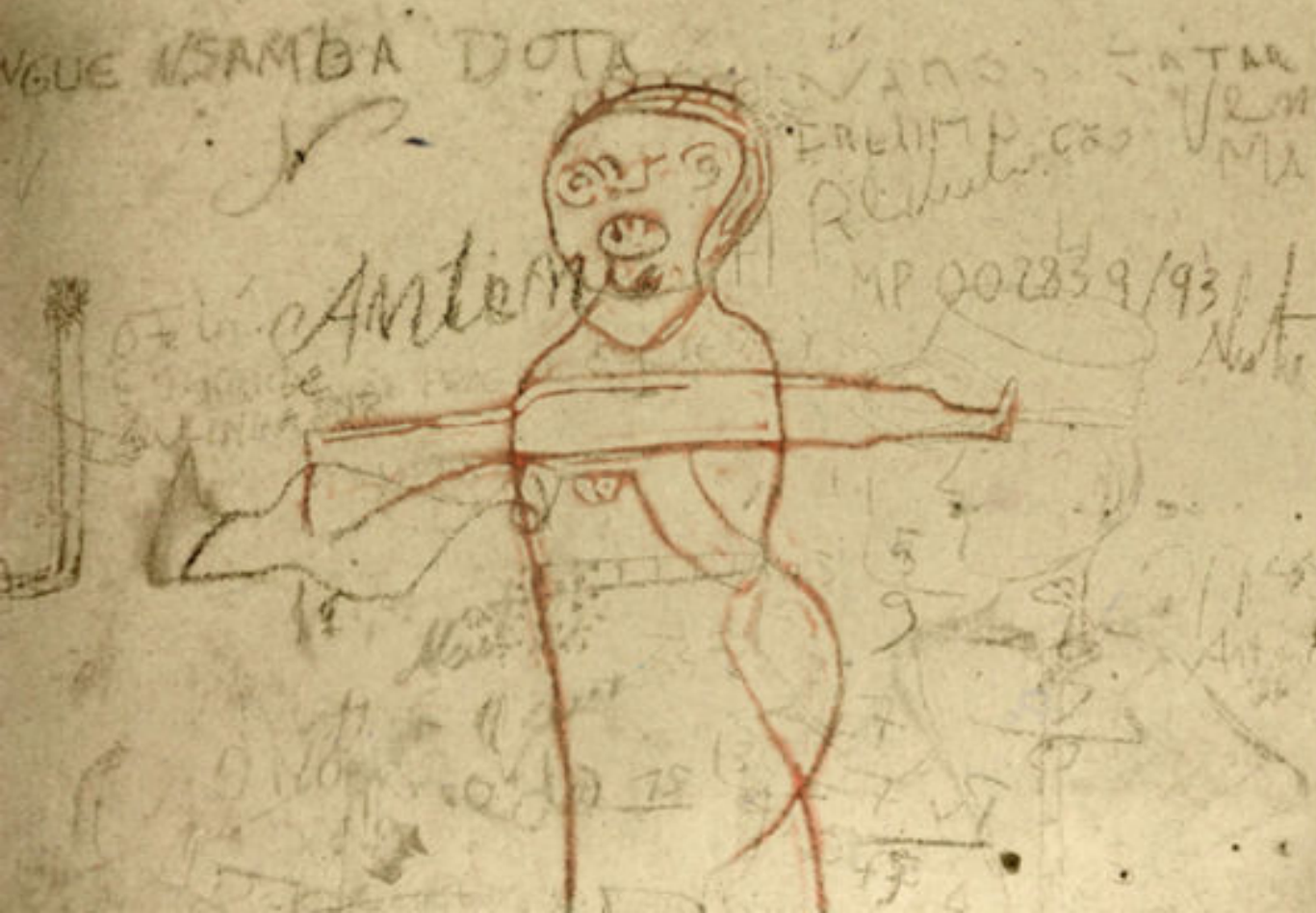


FORMER GUERRILLAS IN MOZAMBIQUE

NIKKIE WIEGINK



Former Guerrillas in Mozambique

THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE

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FORMER GUERRILLAS IN MOZAMBIQUE

Nikkie Wiegink

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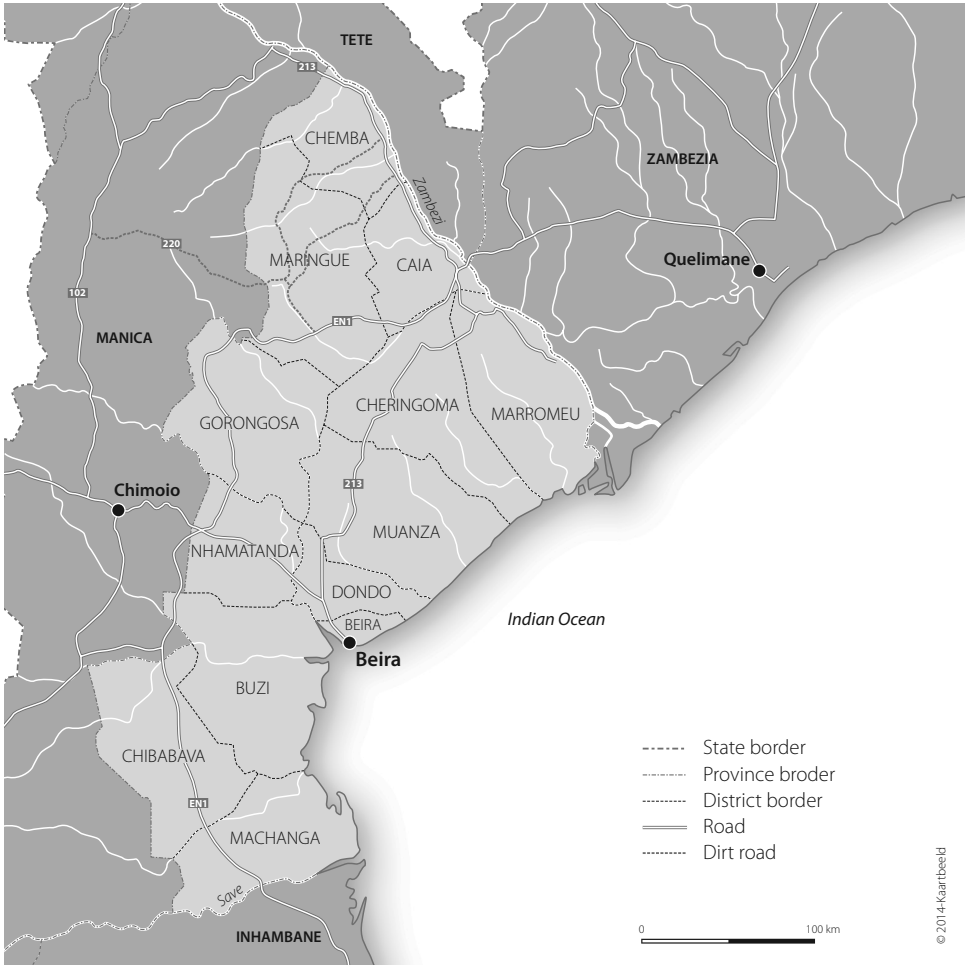
ADEMIMO	Association of Disabled Military and Paramilitary Veterans of Mozambique (Associação dos Deficientes Militares e Paramilitares de Moçambique)
AIC	African Independent/Indigenous/Initiated Church
AMODEG	Mozambican Association of the Demobilized of War (Associação Moçambicana dos Desmobilizados de Guerra)
ANC	African National Congress
DDR	disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration
DF	Female soldier (destacamento feminino)
FAM	Mozambican Armed Forces (Forças Armadas de Moçambique)
FIR	Rapid Intervention Force (Força de Intervenção Rápida)
FOMECC	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 Democrático de Moçambique)
ONUMOZ	UN Mission for Mozambique
PDD	Party for Peace, Democracy, and Development (Partido para a Paz Democracia e Desenvolvimento)
PIDE	International Police and Defense of the State (Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado)
Renamo	Mozambican National Resistance (Resistência Nacional de Moçambique)
SADF	South African Defense Forces

viii Abbreviations and Acronyms

STAE	Electoral Administration Technical Secretariat (Secretariado Técnico da Administração Eleitoral)
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army



Map 1. Mozambique. Copyright © 2014 Kaartbeeld.



Map 2. Sofala Province. Copyright © 2014 Kaartbeeld.



- Administrative border
- ==== Road
- Dirt road
- ~~~~~ River

0 10 km

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Map 3. Maringue District. Copyright © 2014 Kaartbeeld.

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 (Resistência 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 Marromeu, 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 as the movement’s base for a short while.

Adão’s family still lived in Marromeu, and I was therefore puzzled that his father’s house was 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 the 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 for 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 them 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 to secure 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, 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 and 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 ruptured, but also forged and maintained, *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 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 postwar. Fourth and finally, the example of Adão's wartime parents highlights combatants' ability to maneuver and innovate in constraining and unstable social environments.

Stories like Adão's made me rethink what is generally understood by the process of reintegration of former combatants. Such reintegration is seen as a crucial element of peace processes, based on the premise that when combatants' reintegration fails, they might see no other option than to pick up arms again (Berdal and Ucko 2009: 2; Humphrey and Weinstein 2007). Reintegration is often situated in the context of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs that have been a central element in most peace interventions deployed by international agencies such as the United Nations and the World Bank since the early nineties (Humphrey and Weinstein 2007; Muggah 2009: 8; Torjesen 2013). Despite increasing criticism from academics as well as practitioners who are questioning the effectiveness and feasibility of reintegration programs, reintegration continues to be the default for studying and dealing with former fighters of warring parties, especially on the African continent (McMullin 2013; Muggah 2009; Munive and Stepputat 2015).

This book starts from an uneasiness with the notion of "reintegration" and with the ways in which it has shaped the study of former combatants. The term is derived from humanitarian program language, in which it is largely defined as a social and economic process, which takes place at the community level (UN 2006). Reintegration is often rendered technical as it supposes the supporting and equipping of ex-combatants and recipient communities for successful acceptance in a peaceful society (Peters 2006: 3; Bolten 2012). Thereby, it assumes the return to a status quo in which "integration" is presupposed (Peters 2006), largely ignoring history and

politics (Duclos 2012: 8; Kriger 2003: 20) and implying that social and military contexts are two separate spheres, conceiving fighters as wholly separated from society. These assumptions have far-reaching implications for the study of (former) combatants' trajectories in general, which are often understood in relation to two recurring themes: a break with society and a break with the past. Their recruitment and incorporation into military life is regarded as a break with society, exemplified by abduction, integration into a military system, and the perpetration of violence against relatives, resulting in a breakdown 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. Not surprisingly, the combatants' return to their families and communities must 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: 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 reconstruction, reconciliation, return, reincorporation, and reintegration.

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 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 U.S. 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 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 shaped not only by war violence but also by “the pursuit of a complex and multi-dimensional agenda of social

struggles, interpersonal negotiations and life projects” (Lubkemann 2008: 13). The same holds true for social processes in the aftermath of war, which are often singularly framed by the need to deal with a violent past and by severing ties with the (former) armed group. 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 unexplored possibilities for reintegration.

This book analyzes ex-combatants’ life trajectories over the course of war and the postwar period through an anthropological inquiry into the social navigations of ex-Renamo combatants in Maringue, central Mozambique. This goal is achieved through an analysis of ex-combatants’ navigation of a range of changing social environments over time, involving relationships, networks, and practices, informed by cultural understandings of war, violence, justice, and what it means to be a good person, father, party member, and churchgoer.

Two main 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 book 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 book 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 civil and military life or victim and perpetrator, or in singular understandings of “home” and “community.” Thereby, reintegration becomes an open-ended process that stands in contrast to linear and taken-for-granted conceptions of before and after that have come to dominate peace studies (see also Igreja 2012: 421; Mueller-Hirth and Rios Oyola 2018).

The second aim is of a more analytical nature, namely, to highlight the role of time and timing in the study of former combatants. Because fieldwork was conducted over fifteen years after the end of the war in 1992 and—for the largest part—before the war that commenced in 2013, some aspects that seemed urgent in the immediate wake of the war (such as reintegration rituals) may have faded, and other aspects of former combatants’ navigation trajectories were more observable. The timing of the research allowed, for example, tracing veterans’ continued relationship to the (at the time) declining Renamo political party and understanding their

handling of relationships with (deceased) relatives, which were often profoundly changed by the war and continued to affect former combatants' lives. The long-term approach of this ethnography was therefore essential in coming to an understanding of former combatants' navigations in terms of ruptures and continuities and in teasing out some of the driving forces that shape people's "life projects." Exploring how these are pursued in changing environments in which war is one condition among many is essential for a postconflict research agenda that aims to understand postwar social reconstruction in general and reintegration in particular. With this book, I aim to show the added value of studying the trajectories of former combatants and war and peace processes in general and—or especially—when the UN peace missions and DDR programs are over and the international peacekeeping community has focused its gaze elsewhere (cf. Finnström 2005: 494).

Ex-Renamo Combatants in Mozambique and Maringue

The ex-combatants discussed in this book 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 not to disregard the fundamental role of the Rhodesian and South African military in supporting Renamo or to overlook the various ways in which internal wars are linked to shadow networks (Nordstrom 2000) but to underline that the war was fought within the boundaries of Mozambique and that most Renamo combatants and soldiers of the Mozambican Armed Forces were Mozambican, as this is a central starting point of the dynamics described in this book.

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, discipline, and bravery. I will use the terms "ex-combatants," "veterans," and "desmobilizados" alternately for stylistic variation.¹ 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 but also many other experiences and relationships, such as marriage, family bonds, interactions with spiritual beings, and friendship.

Mozambique is a pertinent and exciting place in which to research the life trajectories of former combatants. After a violent conflict during which an estimated one million people died and more than 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. 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, because until 2013, no large-scale acts of political violence had taken place since the peace accords were signed in 1992 (e.g., Cobban 2007; Graybill 2004: 1127; Weinstein 2002). The disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of more than 90,000 combatants from both Renamo and the Mozambican Armed Forces was 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). 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). These mechanisms involved, for example, the washing away of the evil spirits of war in the presence of former combatants’ families and a *nyanga* (a traditional healer-diviner). In an evaluation of the process of reintegration of desmobilizados in Mozambique, Alden (2002: 353) suggested that such mechanisms substantially aided in the “fading away” of “old soldiers” (see also Boothby 2006; Granjo 2007c). Yet since 2013, more than a decade after the publication of Alden’s study, violent confrontations and a renewed low-intensity war between Renamo combatants and the state’s defense forces show that the desmobilizados have not faded away. On the contrary, Renamo’s former combatants have become targets and protagonists of political violence, and their accommodation will be of vital importance for political stability in Mozambique.

Ethnographic fieldwork was carried out in Maringue, a rural district in Sofala Province. This district was selected because my initial research interest revolved around the question of how people who have experienced

atrocities 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 Renamo was responsible for most of the atrocities committed during the civil war (Finnegan 1992; Hultman 2009; Nordstrom 1997a).² In 2008, this led me to Maringue, where an estimated 3,000 ex-Renamo combatants settled after the war. The district was notorious for trouble (*confusão*) and widely known as a Renamo bastion, because in the mid-1980s the rebel movement established its main military base in the district's dense forests. When the peace accords were signed, Maringue became one of the forty-three assembly areas for combatants, accommodating numerous Renamo fighters. While waiting almost two years for their official demobilization, many combatants settled in the area that is now the main village. They became part of 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. Those who stayed in Maringue during the repressive Renamo occupation suffered famine, beatings, rape, and forced labor.

Although I understood 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, finding 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 own 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 collaboration of all kinds, the use of violence to resolve local conflicts, and so on demonstrate endless shades of gray. Ex-combatants and civilians who participated in this research recalled instances of fighting, violence, and rape, but they also told me about praying in local churches, organizing rituals for their ancestors, falling in love, 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 reincorporated into the midst of social life turned out to be a rather flawed angle from which to perceive these processes, as it presumed a break with society that did not exist, at least not in the terms by which it was generally conceptualized. 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 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.

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 the district's fame for political trouble that made it an interesting research location. The district's political disputes and frequent incidents of violence must be related to the presence of a Renamo military base in the district, complete with armed combatants and an unknown quantity of weapons; a Frelimo-led special police force, deployed as a reaction to Renamo's military base; and the militant character of both the local Renamo and Frelimo parties. These three factors have contributed to complex political divisions, which deeply influenced the social and political lives 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 book to undertake an in-depth analysis of poverty or livelihoods in Maringue, people's dire living circumstances and the underlying patterns of (political) exclusion were palpable. Visiting the homes of ex-combatants and other villagers, I could not but conclude that most of the people in Maringue lived below any imaginable poverty line. They struggled to grow food in their *machambas* (fields), most people I met had no more than four years of education (if any), and primary health care, though available in the administrative centers of the district, was for inhabitants of rural areas largely inaccessible owing to the physical effort of making long journeys on foot. The hardship in Maringue can be situated in a nationwide increase in inequality and a deepening urban-rural divide (Hanlon and Smart 2008) and in the inability to provide

effective poverty reduction despite the country's fast-growing economy (Castel-Branco 2014). In Maringue, Renamo veterans largely interpret this inequality as caused by political discrimination between the center and the periphery, the urban and the rural, and the government (Frelimo) and Renamo. In this context, old tensions frequently rise, and new frictions emerge.

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

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, 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 2004). However, as peacetime is not free of violence, neither is wartime defined only 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.”

There is an intrinsic relationship 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 war zones and postwar zones are often approached in popular imaginaries, as well as 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 about how massacres, torture, sexual abuse, and 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; Hinton 2005; Nordstrom 1997a; Nordstrom and Robben 1995: 4; Robben and Suárez-Orozco 2000; Scheper-Hughes 1992; 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 approach 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 about the reintegration of former combatants and the perspectives of implementing agencies in the field. There are at least two relevant implications of the "totalizing and sensationalizing effects" of "violent things" (Lubkemann 2008: 10) for the study of the combatant and his or her 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 period. 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. A former 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 peacetime 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, the “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. The emphasis on breaks also underlines 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 the studies of Hoffman and Lubkemann are mainly concerned with wartime processes, this book holds that framing war as a predominantly violent experience also shapes the analysis of postwar processes, particularly the analysis of how former combatants find their way as civilians. As mentioned previously, ex-combatants’ postwar social life is often seen as revolving around reentering society, dealing with the violent military past, and restoring what is broken. Applying a long-term focus, this book provides a different analysis of ex-combatants’ 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.

This implication leads 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, to understand postwar social life, I wish to call attention to that which war does not destroy, and I want to demonstrate that people look for order, allies, relationships, and dependencies in all circumstances.

I am interested in exploring an anthropological understanding of war and the postwar period as social conditions, which as Lubkemann (2008: 15) has argued 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” (emphasis in the original). These other factors and forces may include “social struggles and concerns, interpersonal negotiations, and culturally scripted life projects” (Lubkemann 2008: 14), and it is in such factors that continuities of wartime social relationships are often located. 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, Renamo desmobilizado, politician, community member, and so on. 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.

Reintegration into What? The Trouble with Community

The postwar trajectories of former combatants in Mozambique have been predominantly studied by focusing on healing and cleansing rituals “to wash off bad spirits” that were used to reincorporate combatants into their families and communities (e.g., Boothby and Thomson 2013; Gibbs 1994; Granjo 2007a, 2007c; Honwana 2005, 2006; Lundin 1998; Nordstrom 1997a: 145–146, but see Schafer 2007 for an exception).³ As mentioned, this has been regarded as one of the main reasons for Mozambique’s alleged successful transition from war to peace, but here my main concern is about

the consequences of such an approach for the depictions of former combatants, and by extension their reintegration processes. It is not my aim to deflate the importance of cleansing rituals in Mozambique. The Renamo veterans who participated in this study also experienced such rituals of return, which often marked reunion with their families, and as I will discuss in Chapter 4 these ritual moments contributed to the restoration of a certain social and spiritual balance. My goal is rather to highlight what is missed if we focus only on these rituals and the immediate postwar moment and to show how an anthropological approach to war and postwar social worlds and the tracing of former combatants' navigations over time may lead to different insights.

In this way, my aim is to address wider debates about reintegration and the current buzzword "community-based reintegration," which regards reintegration as a long-term social process and seeks to include local mechanisms for reintegration and reconciliation (Kaplan and Nussio 2012; Özerdem 2012; Stovel 2008). Community-based reintegration initiatives have been observed in various postconflict settings, including in Sudan, the Philippines, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Colombia, and are often regarded by both scholars and practitioners as a relatively problem-free and low-cost solution for effective reintegration (Kaplan and Nussio 2012: 2; Özerdem 2012). There is, however, limited understanding of how this should take place. Community-based reintegration has been 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 and thereby disregard the slippery character of the concept of community (Amit and Rapport 2002: 7, 13; Baumann 1996: 14; A. Cohen 2001 [1985]: 165). The same holds true for studies on community-based reintegration that have been specifically focused on African armed conflicts, drawing attention to the role of rituals and local notions of reconciliation that facilitate the incorporation of ex-soldiers (Akello, Richters, and Reis 2006; Babatunde 2014; Baines 2010; Borisova, Betancourt, and Willett 2013; Stovel 2008; Veale and Starvou 2003). The cleansing rituals in Mozambique were an early example and have come to be a point of reference for studies in, for example, Sierra Leone (Williamson 2006).

To arrive at a more problematized understanding of the relationships between the community and former combatants, and thus also of reintegration, I present five critical observations on the dominant position of “rituals of return” in scholarly work on former combatants. First, a focus on ritual moments limits the time frame of such rituals to the moment of return and reinforces the idea that an ex-combatant’s return to civil life involves a break with the past. This perspective obscures veterans’ ongoing relationships with people, spiritual beings, and institutions that were established during the armed conflict. Additionally, a focus on the moment of return fails to recognize the *ex post facto* interpretations of what successful reintegration means and the changing views on former combatants after the joys of reunion cease and (new) inequalities surface (Schafer 2007; Wiegink 2018, 2013a).

Second, a focus on the ritual moment that allows for reacceptance or reintegration risks conceiving 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 had been fought in another realm. In reality, the places combatants came from and return to have most likely been penetrated by violence and have changed over the years of war (Kriger 2003: 16; Peters 2006: 135; de Vries and Wiegink 2011). 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; spouses remarried; and 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.

Third, former combatants generally return to a community that is not politically neutral and that was 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 postwar context has its own potential for triggering conflict. As the trajectories of former Renamo combatants show, such conflicts may revolve around discontented spirits, the return of refugees, rising inequalities because of DDR funds, and political tensions concerning multiparty democracy and elections. Therefore, veterans do not necessarily or “naturally” return home, nor is “home” necessarily a harmonious or welcoming place.

Fourth, approaching the “recipient community” as a homogeneous whole located in the remote Mozambican bush overlooks former combatants’ participation in a variety of networks, such as religious institutions, veterans’ organizations, and political parties, which have links beyond the village or the family. Particularly the relationships between ex-combatants and their former armed groups and other wartime institutions have been little explored, as demobilization assumes a clear rupture of military bonds (but see Themnér 2012; Utas 2003; de Vries and Wiegink 2011). The exploration of participation in such networks over the course of time is essential for understanding former combatants’ trajectories in their political context in and outside of the community.

This idea is related to the fifth and final point of critique, which is that a strong focus on rituals of return and on a break with the past frames former combatants in apolitical and ahistorical terms (see also Scanlon and Nhalevilo 2011; Schafer 2007: 167–168; de Vries and Wiegink 2011).⁴ In the case of Renamo, such an analysis promotes a representation of combatants as victims of abduction and force, who were involuntarily involved in a belligerent movement, and whose violent behavior and experiences could be washed away. This representation does not allow for an analysis of combatants’ political convictions and motivations to be part of Renamo’s armed struggle. Subsequently, such a focus ignores veterans’ postwar political attachments, such as their postwar relationships with the Renamo party, and their political perceptions, which do not exist in isolation from national governing practices, citizenship negotiations, and processes of memory construction.

Through the exploration of former combatants’ trajectories, this book attempts to repoliticize former combatants and to situate reintegration processes in a social world of change, continuity, and conflict, involving a variety of networks, experiences, and power relations.

Former Combatants as Social Navigators

To capture former combatants' pursuits of social possibilities and life projects in shifting and volatile social environments throughout war and peace, I propose to regard former combatants as "social navigators." I draw on Henrik Vigh's (2006: 11; 2009) conceptualization of social navigation, which 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." This navigation takes place in a world containing a multitude of negotiations of power, networks, events, and relationships that change, overlap, and contradict within "fluctuating social structures" (Vigh 2006: 12–13). 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 perspective is helpful for thinking about ex-combatants' life trajectories throughout the war and the postwar periods since it facilitates an analysis of ex-combatants' movements, decisions, setbacks, and opportunities in relation to unpredictable and changing clusters of networks, relationships, and meanings. 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. Yet it also explicitly draws attention to the complexity and changeability of their social world, in the case of this study the so-called recipient community and wartime social life. Movement then is "squared," Vigh (2009: 434) argues, quoting Zygmunt Bauman (2001: 125) that it is "not just individuals who are on the move but also the finishing lines of the tracks they run on and the running tracks themselves."

Vigh (2006: 12–13) thus situates social navigation in "fluctuating social structures," which he refers to as social environments. The notion 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 place agents in a nontransparent 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 postwar. Additionally, the nontransparent and unstable characteristics of social environments reflect anxieties and dynamics of social struggles, involving violence and exclusion, as well as particular social dynamics relevant for the ex-combatants in Maringue, such as suspicions and accusations of witchcraft and interactions with avenging spirits.

In this study, “social environment” serves as an analytical tool with which to explore the nontransparent and changing clusters of networks, relationships, and meaning that ex-Renamo combatants navigate and whose character, dangers, and possibilities are assessed and reinterpreted (Vigh 2006: 12). This book is organized around five 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 that discuss ex-Renamo combatants’ relationships with the consanguineal family, marital relationships between men and women, and relationships with the spiritual world. The second cluster focuses on how ex-Renamo combatants move within social and political networks that are shaped by asymmetrical relationships. The social environments discussed in this cluster are former military networks and veterans’ relationships with the state. These social environments are by no means closed entities. For example, an ex-combatant’s relationships with the consanguineal family (Chapter 5) are intertwined with a veteran’s possibilities for marriage (Chapter 3) and with relationships with the spiritual world (Chapter 4). Furthermore, these social environments are largely governed by the same cultural understandings of family life that involve dynamics of dependency, obligations, and reciprocity.

This approach does not claim to be holistic; other social environments may be essential to understanding veterans’ social navigations.⁵ The choice to focus on the aforementioned social environments (and not on others) was empirically driven. These are clusters of what the ex-combatants showed me to be their most important networks and relationships. It is through the notion of social environment that I approach what others have called the “recipient community.” The reintegration process is thus understood as an ex-combatant’s navigations of these social environments.

Yet I propose to expand the notion of social navigation as I believe there is analytical space to gain by explicitly extending its temporality. Vigh’s (2009: 425) understanding of social navigation is of a very dense temporality, as he describes how the protagonists of his ethnography, young urban

men in the volatile, insecure, and violent context of Guinea-Bissau's capital, were constantly attuned to the “socially *immediate* and the socially *imagined*” (emphasis in the original). While this book also explores how former Renamo combatants handle immediate engagements, the main focus is on how such efforts unfolded over time and were not necessarily connected to immediate (violent) difficulties of participation in Renamo but were also shaped by other life goals and projects. The “social condition of war” (Lubkemann 2008) may become particularly apparent when following the *unfolding* of social navigation, providing insight into the ruptures and continuities of social relationships over the course of highly turbulent times. A focus on trajectories may thus take debates about the trajectories of (former) combatants beyond an emphasis on violence.

It is by presenting how former combatants find their way through a range of changing environments over time that the three main arguments of this book unfold: 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.

The Research

The focus on ex-combatants' life trajectories over time and within their social, cultural, and political context defined my methodological approach, which entailed mainly ethnographic fieldwork. Ethnographic methods that emphasize an understanding of social life from within allowed me 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).

The fieldwork was conducted over eighteen months, divided into shorter and longer periods in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2017. 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. While the main focus was on former combatants' life histories, this study also draws heavily on the informal conversations and open interviews with 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 Combatants. Conversations with noncombatants were invaluable for understanding the social, cultural, historical, and political contexts of Maringue and for thereby arriving at a more heterogeneous notion of "the community." Furthermore, these conversations gave me insight into noncombatants' perceptions of veterans and revealed that categorical distinctions between noncombatants and veterans were difficult to maintain.

I conducted more than two hundred open interviews, which were supplemented by countless informal conversations and 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 may have planned to conduct a semistructured interview with a *régulo* (highest traditional authority), but this could 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 tried 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, documents and archival data were collected for the analysis of media depictions 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, although these were for political reasons undifferentiated between Renamo and FAM soldiers (Pardoel

1994). Furthermore, I received video footage of ONUMOZ assembly areas, where combatants were stationed before 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) reports in daily newspapers and broadcasts that did not reach Maringue.

Ethnographic fieldwork is above all a relational endeavor, as it involves negotiation (Robben and Sluka 2007: 63) and is a “product of dialogue and intersubjective encounters” (Leibing and McLean 2007: 7) between the researcher and the research participants (see also Finnström 2008; Diphorn 2013). To further convey the nature of the research process, I present three sections that show central aspects of the dialogue and encounters between the research participants and myself. In these sections I grapple with a variety of themes: the researcher’s multiple identities, translation, research assistants, establishing rapport, political tension, limits, narratives, silence, and analysis of the research material.

Entries and Identities: The New Nun/Soldier in Town

In the encounters between researcher and research participants, who we are in terms of personality traits, background, gender, and emotions matters greatly in establishing rapport, gaining access to information, and, consequently, to the understanding of a “field” (Diphorn 2013; Madden 2010; Powdermaker 1966; Robben and Sluka 2007: 63). I believe that my being a young, white, European woman was an asset in gaining access and permission to conduct research in a politically sensitive place, Maringue, and on a politically sensitive topic, former combatants. I was often perceived as unthreatening and as an outsider, which suggested that I was impartial and apolitical. 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 a nun, as my first place of residence was the Catholic parish and at the time there were several foreign nuns living in Maringue who, like me, were without a husband and children. While I always presented myself otherwise, the 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 well-being, behavior that was 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. During an official meeting with ex-combatants, politicians, pastors, and the régulo, 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 in Holland you were a DF [*destacamento feminino*, female soldier], 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 contexts of Maringue (cf. Walker 2009). Being a female soldier was a more understandable "category" than being a female researcher, as there were many female veterans around. While I was not a soldier, my courage was well appreciated and gave me some credit with former combatants, probably influencing the extent to which they opened up during conversations.

On another occasion, in the beginning of the fieldwork, I was accused of spying, a quite common suspicion befalling anthropologists (see Sluka 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 by presenting the research in less politicized terms (see also Berreman 1963; Sluka 1995). I emphasized its scientific nature and the focus on history and culture.

But it was not only I, the researcher, who provoked reactions among potential research participants, which in turn influenced the data I gathered. 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 went alone to the homes of people I did not know, which probably would 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.

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 reached varying depth 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, whom I initially thought to be a former FAM soldier, with my research assistant Beatrice, the daughter of a prominent Frelimo member, was one of my more awkward blunders. 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 to establish a conversation, until Beatrice, also irritated by the awkward encounter, 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 who by then was accompanying me to most of my interviews with ex-Renamo combatants, Olivia seemed to have forgotten my earlier indiscretion, and we talked at length about her life as an ex-Renamo combatant.

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 talked to people from both Frelimo and Renamo (and later also from the Movimento Democrático de Moçambique, the Democratic Movement of Mozambique, MDM) and was always open about this fact, though I never revealed the names of those with whom I spoke. In the field, as in this book, I took several measures to protect people's identities by creating pseudonyms for most individuals who are 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 alongside them. However, I prefer to be too prudent than to cause unintentional harm to someone.

Additionally, the politically 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 political terror in 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 challenges different from those faced by Feldman, I had similar experiences (see Wiegink 2019b). 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 because it was commonly known that I talked to Renamo veterans. I never approached these individuals 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. The military base thus remains a blind spot in my description of Maringue. But just as with other kinds of secret information, I wonder to what extent a visit to the base would have enhanced my understanding of the everyday social practices of ex-combatants in Maringue.⁶ For most of them, the base was equally enigmatic.

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 own neighborhood and I found many more “sides” both in and out of Maringue town. Likewise, several Renamo veterans and politicians urged me to find the real history of Maringue, at least not the history presented in schoolbooks or 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 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 used 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. On the other hand, these life histories are analyzed as narratives, that is, as a meaningful way to deal with experiences, which meaning “changes over time, circumstance, and speaker, and is a cultural production” (Nordstrom 1997a: 21). One could add the role of the listener-ethnographer to this, as narratives are dialogic, emerging in a setting of human interaction (Bakhtin 1981, in Scheper-Hughes 1992: 23), and perhaps the ethnographer’s countertransference (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).

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).

But not all experiences can be verbalized (see also Klungel 2010: 130; Robben 1996: 161; Scarry 1985). One of these was sexual violence experienced by female veterans and other women in Maringue. Most of the

female veterans I met were unwilling to talk about sexual violence, for instance. This raised certain ethical and epistemological questions. What can we know about violent experiences? 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 (Wiegink 2019b). Rather, I let my research participants define the limits. Some people talked very candidly about atrocities that they had experienced or had perpetrated, while others reduced their years spent with Renamo to a few sentences, referring to recruitment and demobilization and largely skipping over their experiences of combat or violence. Other conversations resulted in meta-narratives about the war—why it started, what it was about, why they were fighting—or accounts of the experiences of others, which may have been a way for people to talk about themselves. Such metanarratives are not necessarily symbolically thin. They involved defining moments, *ex 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 afterward. 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.

Outline of the Book

The book is divided into three sections. The first part, "Setting the Stage," presents the historical context of Maringue and of the former Renamo rebels. Chapter 1, "War Stories," introduces the people who are the focus of this book: 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. These 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 2, "When Elephants Fight," provides a historical account of Maringue, with a focus on the collaborations between civilians and armed actors, which are characterized by collaboration and mobility. The chapter touches briefly on such interactions during colonial rule, Frelimo's liberation struggle, and Frelimo's postindependence rule. It then describes how Renamo occupied Maringue and delves into civilians' social and geographical navigation of the social environments of war. It is argued that different forms of collaboration with Renamo combatants blurred the lines between civilians and soldiers and between 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 book's second part, "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 notions of what it means to be a good father, daughter, son, husband, wife, and so on. Chapter 3, "Wartime Kin and Wartime Husbands," analyzes how ex-Renamo combatants negotiate the social environment of marriage, with strong attention to the dynamics of lobolo (bride price). Marriage is presented as one of the central life projects of ex-combatants, as it is closely interwoven with 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. A similar analysis from the perspective of female veterans focuses particularly on how sexual violence and notions of marriage shape reputations and influence marriage options. The chapter highlights the importance of analyzing social navigation toward life projects as processes that continue over the course of war and postwar.

Chapter 4, "Navigating the Supernatural World," describes the various relationships between veterans and spiritual beings during war and in the prewar and postwar periods. It argues that the much-researched community-based reintegration mechanisms, which in Mozambique

involved the cleansing of “bad spirits,” reveal only one aspect of ex-combatants’ relationships with spiritual beings. The chapter offers an in-depth analysis of other interactions with ancestral spirits and avenging spirits that are informed by cultural notions of well-being and morality. It shows how violence is legitimized by the spirit idiom as well as justice and punishment. Thereby, it challenges the romanticized idea that local transitional practices work naturally toward healing and reconciliation.

In Chapter 5, “Why Did the Soldiers Not Return 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.

The book’s third part, “Navigating Politics,” discusses ex-combatants’ navigation of two social environments that are each characterized by participation in social and political networks throughout the war and the postwar period. Chapter 6, “About Eating and Drinking,” focuses on ex-combatants’ social navigation of networks based on the former armed group, including fellow veterans and political parties. It describes how ex-combatants found comradeship (observed in drinking groups), social and physical security, and (future) economic opportunities in these networks, which were therefore vital for their postwar social trajectories. But the chapter also explains ex-combatants’ position of “waithood” and their frustrations with and marginalization from Renamo’s leaders. It argues that the legitimacy of Renamo’s leaders is partially explained by so-called big man dynamics, also providing insight on increased polarization, competition between political parties, and incidents of violence.

Chapter 7, “Only a Bit Mozambican,” analyzes veterans’ dual relationship with the state. It argues that ex-Renamo combatants envision the state as one of the main obstacles in their possibilities for a better life but that it is, at the same time, a central feature in their imagined possibilities for advancement. The chapter starts off with an analysis of the government’s attitudes and policies concerning war veterans, which are embedded in the historical interpretations of the ruling Frelimo elite, in which Renamo

veterans are represented as unworthy citizens. Subsequently, citizenship practices and understandings from the perspective of Renamo veterans are addressed, focusing on exclusion by state representatives and Mozambique's dominant historical narrative. This results in an understanding of the state as an exclusive caretaker that is expected to provide social and economic services to Renamo veterans. This reinforces the claim I made in Chapter 6 that Renamo veterans are waiting for Renamo to come to power and to reward them for their loyalty.

The final reflections bring the different parts of the book together and considers how the study of former Renamo combatants' trajectories takes debates on reintegration and war veterans further. These reflections are followed by a short epilogue in which I reflect on several implications of the book for understanding Mozambique's recent war, which started in October 2012 with the remobilization of a group of Renamo politicians and ex-combatants.

CHAPTER 1

War Stories

This chapter introduces the people who are the focus of this book, 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. First, I provide the necessary background information about Renamo, ex-Renamo combatants, and their experiences of war; and second, I examine 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) and that they describe Renamo's war conduct and objectives in moderate and often ideological terms. In veterans' accounts, wartime violence is portrayed in terms of legitimate and illegitimate violence, and experience of or participation in the latter is generally denied. At the same time, the stories underline forced recruitment and describe war in terms of "suffering." The former combatants' sense of victimhood consists of a combination of being forcibly recruited, the tough living conditions during the war, and the exclusion by the Mozambican state, dominated by Frelimo. It is such understandings that underpin veterans' social navigations of a series of environments that will be analyzed in the following chapters.

Terrorism in Mozambique?

In 1991, Alex Vines published *Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique*, 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; Schafer 2001, 2007), the book remains one of the few attempts to document Renamo’s military structure and life in a Renamo zone (but see Cahen 2018).

Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique was among the pile of books that I brought with me to Maringue, in the hope that, along with the interviews and conversations I conducted with former combatants, the book would help me to understand more about Renamo. Through one of my research participants, the book came into the possession of the Renamo party district delegate, Jaime Pereira; he immediately summoned me to Renamo’s party office. He could not read the book, as it was written in English, but the little he understood provoked some urgent questions. I hurried to the Renamo headquarters, a recently constructed hut located in a corner of a large sandy courtyard, marked by a flagpole flying Renamo’s partridge banner. There were six Renamo members present, all looking curiously from me to the book, which was lying on a wooden table. One of them, a former Renamo commander called Matateo, pointed at the title of the book, frowning, “I don’t like it that the book says ‘terrorism,’” he said. “That means that Renamo did not have political ideas! that we are armed bandits! But that is not true.” Trying to situate Vines’ study in wider scholarly debates about the nature of Renamo, I explained that Vines viewed Renamo as an organization that was founded and financed by outside forces in Rhodesia and South Africa. The Renamo members grumbled and were clearly appalled by these interpretations of Renamo’s *modus operandi* and objectives. Delegate Pereira took the lead in explaining to me their view on Renamo: “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.” Pereira was referring here to the abolition of the traditional structure of authorities, such as the chiefs, which 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 some of the peasantry supported Renamo. By referring to the abolishment of the *régulos*, Pereira 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, 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 (e.g., Alden 1995; Hanlon 1986, 1991; Magaia 1990; Newitt 1995; Roesch 1992; Vines 1991). These observers also generally emphasized the rebels' brutality, which was the image of Renamo favored and expressed by the Frelimo government. On the other hand, there were observers and analysts who emphasized the popular roots of the rebels and the support they enjoyed among the peasantry, mainly because of a process of estrangement between Frelimo and the rural population (e.g., Cahen 1993; Geffray 1990). Over time, more nuanced understandings of Renamo emerged that stressed both external and internal dynamics of the civil war as well as different levels of support for Renamo and its varying conduct across Mozambique, showing that across the country the war saw varying patterns of violence and support and different local interpretations (Bertelsen 2002; Emerson 2014; Finnegan 1992; Geffray 1990; Hultman 2009; Lubkemann 2005; Manning 2002).

The wide variety of interpretations and conflict dynamics led Lubkemann (2005: 492) to conclude that the war could best be characterized as "fragmented," by which he meant that "national 'civil wars' take on a large degree of local character" because of sociocultural and ethnic diversity and the political and military context (see also Morier-Genoud, Cahen, and do Rosário 2018).¹ 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 experiences and interpretations of the war. Nevertheless, there are several general points that most observers agree on and that provide the backdrop for Renamo's history.

A Brief History of Renamo

Renamo's origins are in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). The Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization was essential in transforming the anti-Frelimo opposition in Mozambique into a military organization (Emerson 2014: 35). Founded sometime in 1976 or 1977, Renamo initially had two main aims: to gather intelligence on the guerrillas of the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) in central Mozambique and to destabilize Mozambican politics and the economy (Finnegan 1992; Hall and Young 1997; Vines 1991: 15–17).² Under the leadership of André Matsangaissa, an ex-Frelimo commander who had been sent to a Frelimo government reeducation camp for theft, Renamo began with operations geared toward destruction and sabotage, conducting attacks on government prisons and reeducation camps in Mozambique (Emerson 2014: 46–48; Vines 1991: 16).³ At the end of 1979, Renamo comprised approximately 3,000 soldiers who had been recruited largely from individuals freed from Frelimo's reeducation camps (Emerson 2014: 51, 73). However, when Ian Smith's regime capitulated and ZANLA came to power in what was from then on called Zimbabwe, Rhodesian support for Renamo ceased (Emerson 2014: 69–72; 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) and became part of the apartheid regime's "total strategy" to destabilize its neighboring countries (Emerson 2014: 71–75; Minter 1989). SADF set up training camps in the Transvaal area of South Africa and transported large numbers of Renamo guerrillas into central Mozambique via helicopters. The movement was, at least before the Nkomati Accord, amply supplied by South Africa by air and sea, and it had a sophisticated communication system that contributed greatly to the success of Renamo's operations (Hultman 2009: 828; Minter 1989: 21; Vines 1991: 83). Under South African support, Renamo's operations expanded to the southern and northern regions of Mozambique (Hall and Young 1997: 128–131). Recruitment intensified, and by 1984 Renamo had grown into a rebel movement of approximately 12,000 combatants, divided into highly mobile military units that were active across the entire country (Emerson 2014: 107; Minter 1989: 21; Vines 1991: 1). The rebels used violence and force across Mozambique, but it seems that most of the violence against civilians and most of the massacres occurred in the southern regions, where Renamo enjoyed the least popular support (Finnegan 1992: 72; Vines 1991: 98; Weinstein 2007: 236).

In 1984, the South African and Mozambican governments signed the Nkomati Accord, a nonaggression 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 less substantially (Emerson 2014; Hall and Young 1997; Vines 1991: 24). 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 frontline states (Hanlon 1986; Minter 1994). However, it has also been argued that the fact that Renamo continued to exist in the post-Nkomati period demonstrates that the Renamo leadership was developing an agenda of its own (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. This became a fairly standard depiction in the media, in academia, and in the international community, yet Renamo's sophisticated military structure defied such portrayals of the rebel movement as a roving band of criminals (Emerson 2014; Hultman 2009; Minter 1989: 21). Renamo started as a military organization with no clear political agenda—at least from the perspective of the Southern Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organisation—and the rebels' military character became more sophisticated with South African support (Emerson 2014: 42). After 1980, Renamo's military organization reflected the South African model with a strict chain of command and a central leadership that made all strategic decisions (Emerson 2014; Hultman 2009: 827–828; Minter 1989; Vines 1991: 80–87).⁴ Taking such a perspective, Renamo's atrocities were not "mindless brutality" or "excesses" but can be regarded as 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 2009: 823).

Renamo's apparent military strength was also related to the dire state of the government's army, the Mozambican Armed Forces (FAM), 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 and 1987 did the Frelimo government accomplish several military successes, including the destruction of Renamo's central base

(Emerson 2014; Finnegan 1992; Hall and Young 1997).⁵ Nevertheless, Renamo could not be defeated. It consistently moved into areas with low settlement density where government presence was weak and where military advances were difficult for the FAM. Urban areas, including the outskirts of Maputo, were attacked and looted, but Renamo was never able to occupy one of the larger cities. Yet in the rural south, Renamo sometimes seemed omnipresent, using tactics of destruction, terror, and hit-and-run attacks. In the northern and central provinces, Renamo occupied large rural territories, and hundreds of thousands—possibly millions—of Mozambicans lived under some form of Renamo administration (Finnegan 1992: 61).

From Peace Negotiations to Demobilization

On 4 October 1992, Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama and Mozambique president Joaquim Chissano signed the General Peace Accords (GPA) in Rome. Peace negotiations had begun in 1988, initiated by representatives of Christian churches, who were the first to enter Maringue and meet with Dhlakama and his main generals to discuss peace negotiations (Emerson 2014: 200; Vines 1991: 120–121; Vines and Wilson 1995). But the willingness of both Renamo and the Frelimo government to negotiate increased with the end of the Cold War and the slow demise of the apartheid regime and was probably further accelerated by extended periods of drought and the consequential famine and cholera epidemics, which diminished Renamo's capability and willingness to fight (Hall and Young 1997: 204–205). Initially Frelimo's leadership was extremely reluctant to accept the "armed bandits" as a worthy partner in negotiations but was ultimately persuaded to negotiate by (increasingly important) Western donors to Mozambique.

The two main pillars of the peace accords were multiparty elections, in which Renamo was to participate as a political party, and an outline of the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) process of the combatants of both belligerents. These military issues were the toughest matter debated in the last phases of the peace negotiations, as the Renamo leadership 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 number of guards-in-arms or "presidential guards," some of whom remain stationed in Maringue and a few other places in Mozambique to this day.

Other than these few presidential guards, all troops of both Renamo and FAM were disarmed and demobilized by a special division of the UN Mission for Mozambique (ONUMOZ). Combatants were gathered in assembly areas, their weapons were collected, and individuals were registered. They then received a demobilization card, a demobilization kit, and a checkbook, which gave them access to a bimonthly allowance for eighteen months (Alden 2002). The desmobilizados and their dependents (e.g., wives and children) were offered free transport to a destination of their choice. The disarmament and demobilization process took almost two years and was shaped by distrust, competition, threats, and bribes, resulting in stagnation and delay (Alden 2002; Manning 2002). Several issues were at play for Renamo: there were concerns about safety, the leadership was not always in charge of the troops, and Renamo had certain legitimizing claims to live up to. The Renamo leadership was kept on board with large sums of money supplied unofficially by 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.”

In October 1994, approximately 63,000 government troops and 30,000 Renamo troops were demobilized (Alden 2002: 343). Since Renamo used no coherent registration system, it is difficult to establish the exact number of combatants. During the negotiations, Renamo claimed to have 80,000 combatants, but Renamo had a hard time presenting even 30,358 combatants for demobilization; many of these were suspected of being civilians pretending to be combatants.⁶ For the ex-combatants who participated in this research, demobilization was an insecure moment. Thenceforth, they embarked on different trajectories shaped by their past as combatants and oriented by their ideas about the future. An analysis of these trajectories forms the backbone of this book. However, we cannot understand the life course of Renamo veterans without some notion of what it meant to be a Renamo combatant.

Veterans' War Stories

In the following sections I will introduce three former Renamo combatants and present their narratives of military life in the rebel movement. The stories of these combatants—two men and one woman—illustrate the wide

variety of Renamo veterans' experience of combat and their fear, pride, suffering, boredom, and spiritual protection. I take a narrative approach to veterans' accounts because the data were collected not during or in the immediate aftermath of war but rather fifteen to eighteen years later. Narratives often tell us more about the present than the past (Antze and Lambek 1996: xii–xiii; Nazarea 2006: 325). Thus the stories presented here are not offered as historical evidence but rather represent former combatants' understanding and framing of the war at the time of research, which are all the more important if we want to grasp how former combatants and civilians construct their social worlds. Therefore, these narratives are politically colored and will be situated in the political and cultural context of Maringue.

Balthazar: “To Run into the Rain of Bullets”

At first glance, Balthazar, born in 1952, seemed an old man. He had gray hair, watery eyes, a slender figure, and broken brown teeth. However, his energetic and brisk walking pace, his dancing skills, and his good humor revealed a young and determined spirit, willing to work hard on the land and to take good care of his three wives and eight children. Balthazar was originally from Caia, and, like many other Renamo veterans, he said the war had brought him to Maringue. He was recruited in 1982 during a journey from Beira to Caia. His bus was stopped at a Renamo roadblock, and all forty male travelers 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 seems to have lasted three to eleven months and was predominantly focused on weapon handling (dismantling, shooting, and cleaning) and basic military tactics. After training, the recruits were given AKM assault rifles, and then, as Balthazar put it, they “entered the war.”

I asked Balthazar how he had felt during his early 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 must 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 marijuana, and drank alcohol and certain liquids prepared by a *nyanga* (healer-diviner in ChiSena, *curandeiro* in Portuguese). Drugs and alcohol were centrally distributed within Renamo, but combatants also sought out these things individually (see also Schafer 2007: 68). In search of protection, many former Renamo soldiers also mentioned maintaining or establishing relationships with ancestral spirits and consulting a *nyanga*, who cured and protected (“vaccinated”) combatants to make them bulletproof (see also Jentsch 2018). Many of my informants said that *nyangas* ask “terrible” things of their clients to make their magic happen. Balthazar recalled consulting a *nyanga*, who instructed him to sleep for a night in a cemetery, generally regarded as a polluted and dangerous place: “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 [makes a swishing motion at the sides of his head].” Balthazar believed this *droga*—sleeping in a cemetery—protected him throughout the war and contributed to his survival.

Over the years with Renamo, Balthazar worked his way up the ranks to become a commander of more than forty soldiers. He said that he was a “good commander. . . . I was known as *chefe* [boss] Zhená Zhená. 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.” He recalled a commander called Limpa Cabeça (cleans heads), 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 the example of Limpa Cabeça, 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 attacks on villages. Control of the population was a strategic priority for Renamo, as the rebels were 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:

Balthazar: 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 [our] 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.

NW: 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*, forced porter duty] people were never killed. Only those who were screaming.

The attacks on villages were Renamo’s most notorious war strategy (Finnegan 1992; Vines 1991). As Balthazar’s words show, these assaults were carefully planned and, as other accounts of former commanders revealed, they followed a similar pattern. First, information on the size and positions of government forces was gathered by Renamo soldiers disguised as civilians or was 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* (local support groups 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 were largely arbitrary.

After Renamo combatants took over a village, they generally destroyed and sacked state infrastructure, such as schools, health centers, and other government buildings, and evacuated some or all of the population by force. Many 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 his 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 for its own food, especially when they were on the move. 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 officially 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 the Renamo party would have given him something in return for his time as a combatant. Balthazar was, like most other former Renamo combatants I met in Maringue, a member of the Renamo party, and, as will be further explored in Chapter 6, he was waiting for his party to “give” him something as a reward for his service during the war.

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 many years of his life and that had not brought any rewards.⁷

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. After the war, Efrain was among a privileged few who were offered a place in Renamo’s political party structures. Around the time that I met

him, he was regularly traveling the more than 1,000 kilometers 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 often 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 his 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, as he was in fourth grade and was a promising student. 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.

It is estimated that 40 percent of Renamo recruits were younger than eighteen at recruitment, with 20 percent 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 of 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 to Zimbabwe or Malawi, which was a common trajectory into adulthood in central Mozambique, at least before the war. The (at the time) 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. Before that he worked as an assistant and a servant 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*, 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, sometime in the early 1980s, which he described in terms of competence and success. His words reflect a 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 focused attention on tasks that stretch one’s abilities to the maximum, which are, in the case of a soldier, executed under the conditions of danger. 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 with the 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, 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.” At this point, 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 reportedly Renamo had killed more than three hundred people during an attack in 1987, including people in hospital beds. “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.

NW: 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, its dependency on the population for political legitimacy, and the excesses of a few “crazy” commanders to explain violence against civilians during the war.

The above interview excerpts probably reveal little about the actual violence conducted during the war, yet they show 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 attend) in which Renamo’s first leader, André 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 confident and articulate explanations of Renamo’s roots and aims. Efrain, for example, was 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 against the Portuguese colonial government. In making this comparison, Efrain affirmed the legitimate character of both wars.

Efrain legitimized Renamo’s struggle further by framing the conflict as a “war of the spirits” (cf. Bertelsen 2016). Renamo commanders often

depicted 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” (Roesch 1992: 472). Efrain and many other Renamo veterans stressed how Matsangaissa 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 to appease the spirits. Matsangaissa was often referred to as “a man of spirits,” as he was thought to be protected by ferocious war spirits from the era of the Mwene Mutapa, who made “bullets fall from his chest like water.”⁸ As mentioned above, *nyangas* and prophets played a central role at Renamo’s military bases; they were consulted about military decisions, for instance, and they protected individual combatants but also secured entire bases.

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 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 than seeking approval from the population. But most important of all, Renamo’s “war of spirits” was in fact contested by spirit mediums; the Naparama movement in northern Mozambique, led by Manuel António, a spiritual medium and priest, is a famously successful example (Nordstrom 1997a; Roesch 1992: 478; Wilson 1992: 560–569). Yet in the narratives of Efrain and other ex-combatants, such contestations of Renamo’s spiritual legitimacy were not relevant. As spiritual beings are considered extremely powerful, Efrain’s conviction that Renamo was fighting with the spirits at its side was a powerful sensation and the key to Renamo’s military successes.

There is no doubt that Efrain’s framing of Renamo at the time of our conversation was highly influenced by his postwar career. 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 himself and his children. Over the years, he had become more pessimistic about the Renamo party, which was not “taking care” of its people, but like most Renamo veterans, he continued waiting for Renamo leadership to reward him properly. These feelings of discontent and the position of “wait-hood” will be further discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

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, by Minter (1989) and Schafer (2007), women are not taken into account, because their experiences were considered very different from those of men and because researchers foresaw difficulties in talking to female veterans about their experiences. 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 emphasize women as victims, civilians, and “abductees” (Roesch 1992: 464; Scanlon and Nhalevilo 2011: 110). This study offers a counterbalance to such analyses. In Chapter 3, I will pay special attention to female veterans’ narratives about their participation in Renamo and this affected their postwar social trajectories. The following account of Teresa, a former Renamo combatant, shows the specific issues that female combatants had to deal with, as well as how their experiences paralleled those of their male counterparts. I do not want to suggest that Teresa’s story is representative of all female Renamo combatants, as there is no such thing as a universal narrative of women’s experiences of war (Coulter 2009: 4–5; see also Nordstrom 2005; Utas 2005), nor of men’s, for that matter. Teresa’s narrative is thus a first among several diverse experiences and interpretations, which will be explored further on.

I met Teresa in Beira. She was dressed in an elegant matching capulana combination. 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,

because 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* [troop] 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?”

In our conversation, Teresa persistently referred to herself as a *desmobilizada*, indicating that she had been part of Renamo’s troops, and emphasized, as most female veterans did, that her position was “no different from the men. . . . We did the same things, also shooting,” Teresa said. By emphasizing 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, sexual abuse was for many a common aspect of their lives with Renamo. But rather than focusing on one aspect of female veteran’ lives, I want to draw attention to the variety of roles girls and women took on and narratives they 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, working on the land, 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. In these roles, women cannot be rendered as merely victims, nor as hyperagents. Rather, as anthropologists and political scientists such as Coulter (2009), McKay (2007), Nordstrom (2005), and Utas (2005) stressed, women in armed groups should be regarded as bounded agents maneuvering in limiting and dangerous environments.

To illustrate how female combatants navigated 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, which was a topic few female veterans were willing to talk about. When I asked Teresa about sexual violence “in the troops,” she said, somewhat aggressively, that this was “something you don’t talk about.” I remained silent for

a while, thinking about an appropriate question to make her feel at ease, but then she started to talk again: “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 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.

NW: 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] just fancy one [and take her]. Marriage was prohibited. Women, they suffered a lot.”

Women in Renamo’s ranks found themselves in insecure, volatile, and dangerous positions. Yet Teresa’s experience also reveals that regarding them as mere victims obscures their possibilities for social navigation, such as engaging in relationships with (preferably high-ranked) male combatants. While Teresa recalled that “marriage was prohibited,” many other Renamo combatants did describe the marital relationships they (sought to) established during their time with Renamo. Chapter 3 will address more profoundly the various relationships between men and women and the consequences of these relationships for female veterans.

Female fighters’ positions in Renamo were more vulnerable than the positions of their male counterparts. But Teresa also remembered the “suffering” during her time with Renamo in the same terms as Balthazar did. “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 droughts resulted in extreme famine. “The peace accord came because of famine,” she explained. “There were not even leaves. 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 [were diminishing] as well. It was tough.”⁹

Notwithstanding the suffering and harrowing scenes Teresa witnessed, her own position was fundamentally different at the end of the war. Teresa stayed with Renamo for more than 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 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. She was among the small group of women who was officially demobilized by the ONUMOZ mission.

* * *

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 their war stories may look like by focusing on three accounts that are quite different from one another. And even though these stories demonstrate that there is no “typical” veteran war story, there are five general themes and patterns that can be derived from them.

First, the 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 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. It is through such stories that former combatants presented themselves as “victims.”

Second, the presented narratives 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 experiences different from adults; they were often not deployed as fighters. Additionally, adult recruits such as Balthazar were more likely to rise quickly in Renamo's ranks. Such promotions 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 across social categories.

Third, my research participants presented a rather moderate image of Renamo. Their narratives were not free of violence, yet they did not refer to "brutal abductions" (Honwana 2006: 54) or "a cult of violence" (Wilson 1992), nor did they describe Renamo as a group of "armed bandits." Many of them claimed to have witnessed violence, such as civilians being killed, runaways executed, and girls and women raped. But none of them described their recruitment as "brutal," and they did not speak of having to commit atrocities against their relatives or members of their community, as has been described in other studies (see Honwana 2006: 54; Minter 1989: 5; Granjo 2007a: 140). 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. Most Renamo recruits who participated in this research were eager to make clear that their recruitment was forced. "There was no saying no," they said, or "willingly or not willingly you had to go." But as exemplified in Balthazar's narrative, several former combatants saw their recruitment as a job or as military service. As one former combatant put it, "It was obligatory, but it was the time of war—military service 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. Again, others told me they had joined Renamo on their own initiative or they had enrolled because their brothers had done so, and some said that the war provided opportunities, profit, or a way out of rural life. Armed groups in all contexts are an attraction to certain people; participation in war may be seen as exciting and as an opportunity to gain access to looted goods, food, power, and women (Finnegan 1992: 69–70). Renamo was no exception.

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 as the ritual practices they recalled, such as the vaccination by nyan-gas, were more a *confirmation* of the social order than a contestation. They described their military training as heavy and intense but not much different from how they had imagined “normal” military training. Efrain, for example, emphasized 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 with did not want to talk about the violent details of their recruitment and training. Additionally, my research took place between fifteen and twenty 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 than in the southern provinces.¹⁰ It follows that the accounts about wartime violence are contingent on the location within Mozambique as well as the timing of research.

A fourth and related 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 this topic and, when I asked, talked in general terms about “difficulties” and “sufferings.” 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]? No. 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 underscore 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. Caetano 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 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 would not face consequences for them. This is a discourse often heard among veterans and other people in hierarchical structures (Browning 1992; Hinton 2005), and it 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 embedded in the sociospiritual world. As will be analyzed in Chapter 4, former combatants, but also civilians, who had done something “wrong” during the war—usually killing an “innocent” civilian—were thought to suffer 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. Like 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 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.

It is often argued that the role of ideology as a motivational force for (guerrilla) warfare is overestimated in historical and sociological studies of civil war (Finley 2011: 10; Grossman 1995; Kalyvas 2006: 44–46; Murphy 2003; Nordstrom 1992: 256). According to Kalyvas (2006: 46), a person’s decision to join a rebellion is often nonideological, but *ex post facto* constructions are likely to focus on ideology, which 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 nonexistent 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 (Emerson 2014; Hultman 2009: 825). Nevertheless, it is highly unlikely that Renamo members were ideologically motivated at the time of their recruitment. A former Renamo commander, for example, said that at recruitment he and the fellow recruits “did not know what this thing they called war was.” Most Renamo veterans, especially those who remained in Maringue, familiarized themselves with the Renamo 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” and

from the ways in which Renamo evolved over the years after the war. Rather, these must be regarded as postwar constructions that 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; Geertz 1973: 193–233; Schafer 2007; 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.” This goes further than merely obscuring less legitimate motivations to join an armed movement, as the ideological element that my research participants attached to their war experiences may have made it “easier” for them to live in peace with their war pasts (see also Barber 2001; Muldoon and Wilson 2001; Kanagaratnam, Raudalen, and Asbjornsen 2005; Schok et al. 2007; West 2000) and may have even provided them with a political position in society, that of “fighters for democracy.” The implications of such dispositions will be further explored in Chapters 6 and 7, where I delve into former combatants' continued relationships with the former armed group and their relations vis-à-vis the Mozambican state.

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 relationships and shaped by former military rank and level of education. Higher-ranked and well-educated former combatants such as Efrain 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 owing to a strong political Renamo network and the “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 veterans.

Conclusion

“The study of the war in Mozambique has been, by and large, a study of Renamo,” conclude the historians Eric Morier-Genoud, Michel Cahen, and Domingos do Rosário (2018b: 2) in their introduction to an edited volume, which calls for the inclusion of different perspectives on the war “from within.” They note, as I did in the beginning of this chapter, that much research has been focused on the origins of Renamo’s focus, on Renamo’s societal base, and on the subversive support of Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. While they call for research focused on other actors, the authors also note that some aspects of Renamo have received less attention, notably the daily lives of fighters within Renamo (and within the FAM, for that matter) (Morier-Genoud, Cahen, and do Rosário 2018b: 5). This chapter contributes to filling this lacuna by providing an analysis of the narratives of Renamo’s former combatants in Maringue. Showing the multiplicity of former combatants’ war stories, their complex ways of weaving in ideology, suffering, and justifications for violence, defies simplistic understandings of what it means to be a fighter within an armed group. In the context of the debates about the war in Mozambique, the narratives of Efrain, Balthazar, and Teresa nuance persistent depictions of Renamo combatants as forcibly recruited, male, socialized in transgressing moral boundaries, and consequently in need of reeducation and reacceptance by their relatives and communities.

This chapter is the first step to (re)politicizing the trajectories of former Renamo combatants. My aim is to situate the narratives of the former combatants in their political and social contexts by providing insight into former combatants’ seemingly contradictory depictions of themselves as simultaneously “good soldiers” *and* victims. Depending on who was talking, the idea of being “good soldiers” was underlined by a combination of references to bravery, their respect for “the population,” professionalism in their “job,” “doing the same things as men,” Renamo’s spiritual backing, and its noble cause of democracy. The former combatants stressed a sense of victimhood by referring to feelings of loss (e.g., of educational opportunities, family life) and suffering, which included daily hardships, physical harm, and fear. These narratives of their past had immediate connections to the present, because by saying “we receive nothing” and “we are not respected,” the veterans made direct links between the losses they suffered

during the war and their current situations of hardship and marginalization. Such utterances were strategically employed in Renamo veterans' formulations of their expectations of the Renamo party and the state to take care of "their" veterans, which will be explored further in Chapters 6 and 7. Veterans' portrayals of themselves as "good soldiers" and as victims are crucial in analyzing how veterans interpret and legitimize their past participation in the war and how they position themselves in relation to their families, communities, the Renamo party, the state, and democracy in the present. I will return to these depictions in the following chapters. First, however, it is necessary to situate the Renamo veterans in the research location, Maringue district.

CHAPTER 2

When Elephants Fight

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 evocative image highlights 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, homogeneous, helpless entity caught up in the whirl 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 (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 and their navigations within the social condition of war, which are shaped not only by violence and force but also, and perhaps even more so, by other pursuits and relationships (cf. Lubkemann 2008).

This chapter presents a historical contextualization of local experiences of governance from colonial times to the time of fieldwork, with a focus on civil-military relationships in Maringue during the civil war and its aftermath. More specifically, it is a first step toward providing a more heterogeneous and complex understanding of what in DDR literature is referred to as 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 many people displayed reconciliatory understandings toward ex-Renamo combatants, who were generally

seen as people like any other. However, at the same time, the political and social fabric continued to be deeply divided along the lines of the Frelimo and Renamo political parties, resulting in tensions and occasionally violent incidents.

In this chapter I approach the social navigations of combatants and civilians through practices of *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” and involving actors who are “not positioned in equality or sameness, and [whose] collaboration does not produce a communal goal” (Tsing 2005: 246). 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 navigations of Maringuenses vis-à-vis armed actors, including 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 war zones, I provide a contextualized notion of collaboration as a set of practices that are historically and culturally shaped.¹ 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 anticolonial struggle (1964 to 1976), and in postindependence politics. The interactions between Renamo and “the population” reflected or specifically contradicted previous relationships with governance of colonial times and after independence. These wartime relationships shaped to a great extent the postwar politics and alliances in Maringue; they form the backdrop for understanding ex-combatants’ postwar social and political positions.

Collaboration in Colonial Times: The Story of Window Coffee

Window Coffee was a frail old man with a neatly trimmed gray beard and small, watery blue eyes. He claimed to have been born in 1914, which made him the oldest person I met in Maringue. Yet reported dates of birth were rarely correct because in Maringue elderly people especially confused years, decades, and even centuries, and Window seemed rather spry for a ninety-four-year-old man. All the same, during his lifetime he had lived under Portuguese colonial administrators, worked in Malawi and Southern Rhodesia, became a Frelimo *guerrilheiro* for a few years, witnessed the emergence of Renamo after Mozambique's independence, killed a FAM commander and consequently became a Renamo hero.

Window lived in Chionde, a small community a twenty-minute ride outside Maringue. I traveled 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 *contrato* (also referred to as *chibalo*), a six-month period of forced labor on the Portuguese-owned plantations in Vila Pery (Chimoio) and Buzi. From all districts in central Mozambique, including Maringue, young men were recruited as cheap forced labor. Window recalled this job with little fondness: "We worked for nothing. Sometimes they would give us 100 meticaís, 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 *contrato* as the ultimate symbol of the exploitation of the Portuguese colonial administration.

To avoid backbreaking labor on foreign-owned plantations, Window and thousands of other rural Mozambicans, especially men, migrated to Nyasaland (present-day Malawi) and Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe),

where salaries and working conditions were substantially better (Allina-Pisano 2003: 60; Isaacman 1996: 82; 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* in conflict resolution efforts.² Although a *thubo* is an honorable position within a community, under the Portuguese colonial administration being the assistant of the *régulo* also required one to participate in the mobilization of men for forced labor (see also Isaacman 1996: 12; Hall and Young 1997: 4–7; Jelínek 2004: 498). As in many other regions of sub-Saharan Africa, the Portuguese administration was central in the (re)construction of hierarchies of indigenous power, thereby developing a governance grid under chiefly authority that facilitated control, the collection of taxes, and the recruitment of forced labor (Obarrio 2010: 264). The *régulos* thus played a key role in the Portuguese system of indirect rule.

Window’s promotion to *thubo* happened sometime in the early 1970s, around the same time as Frelimo guerrillas, coming from the north, crossed the Zambezi River and entered the provinces of Manica and Sofala, expanding the anticolonial war.³ The arrival of Frelimo was a disquieting development for those who were collaborating with the Portuguese administration. These included the *régulos*, other “traditional authorities,” their assistants, *sipais* (members of local police), and *capricornos* (individuals who passed information to the Portuguese military about people supposedly supporting Frelimo). Frelimo regarded such people as *os comprometidos*, individuals compromised by past association with the colonial state (West and Kloeck-Jenson 1999: 456). 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 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.” In Maringue, the family settled close to a Frelimo base, and Window even became one of the local Frelimo party leaders (*secretário 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 the mobility within central Mozambique and across borders of people seeking 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 elders 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.⁴ The stories of glory and heroism match the national historical discourse that glorifies the anticolonial war (see Igreja 2008, and see Chapter 7), 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 guerrillas (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 torture or even execution by either Portuguese troops or the PIDE (Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado, International Police and Defense of the State), a Mozambican secret police force (Hall and Young 1997). 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 more than 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; Macamo 2016: 93).

Frelimo: From Ambitions to Repression

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, ravaged, and bankrupt. Nationalization policies had caused a massive exodus of the Portuguese, other whites, literate Mozambicans, and *mestiços*, draining the country of its skilled working class. Businesses were abandoned, infrastructure was destroyed, the commercial network collapsed, and many jobs disappeared overnight (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 its 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 for national unity, antitribalism, and economic prosperity. Before long, Frelimo’s economic and sociocultural 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; Obarrio 2010: 279; Vines 1991).

Frelimo’s leadership was dominated by an urban southern cosmopolitan elite that was considered out of touch with the rural reality. They regarded the peasantry as a kind of tabula rasa onto which the ideal modern society could be inscribed (Hall and Young 1997: 27–34; Geffray 1990). Frelimo’s leadership formulated a 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 that 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 and religious institutions in general (Hall and Young 1997: 54–60; Newitt 1995: 547–549). It furthered violent policies, such as the campaign *Operação Produção* (Operation Production), to oust from cities undesired elements, such as sex workers, traditional healers, the homeless, and the unemployed, who were sent to reeducation camps or “production centers,” often located in the northern province of Niassa (Bertelsen 2016; Macamo 2016). Additionally, Frelimo imposed an unpopular collective villagization program (*aldeias comunais*) and 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 to daily life (see, e.g., Alexander 1997; Geffray 1990; Lubkemann 2008; West and Kloeck-Jenson 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 Palame’s *secretário do bairro* (literally, neighborhood secretary), a postindependence position of governance and party administrator at the district level. 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 who, as Elias’s words reveal, simultaneously enjoyed strong local legitimacy as the “owners” of the land. Traditional authorities were, and still are, a central authoritative structure in Maringue (although not uncontested). 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 (e.g., rainmaking ceremonies), and the control of witchcraft (see also Jacobs 2010; West and Kloeck-Jenson 1999: 458–459). Their abolition was therefore deeply unsettling.

Yet Frelimo’s policies were not uniformly implemented across Mozambique (West and Kloeck-Jenson 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). This gave the local government representatives a certain liberty to mold policies, thereby knowingly and unknowingly diverting from government policies. In Palame, for example, traditional healers were the only source of healthcare, which made it impossible to prohibit their practices. Also, the *machamba de povo* was never established in Palame. Many inhabitants, including 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 abolition of religion and the punishments inflicted on “believers” (*crentes*) by Frelimo officials. Others resented the policy of *guia de marcha*, copied from the Portuguese colonial administration, which required people to carry a permit while traveling. The policy 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 most influential policy was the establishment of *aldeias comunais* (communal villages), following the Portuguese example of the *aldeamentos*. The forced relocation 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 efficient service delivery to Mozambicans 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; Borges-Coelho 1998; Finnegan 1992; Hall and Young 1997: 91).

The conduct of the FAM resembled the repressive practices of the Portuguese military in several ways. Aida, who was about sixty years old, lived

in Canxixe in the years after independence. She recalled government soldiers' 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. Commander Conchembe, from Tete, ruled in Canxixe. 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 (Fernanda is not her real name), 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, which 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 majority of 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 indiscriminate killing, which are often ascribed to Renamo, were also perpetrated by the FAM soldiers (see also Emerson 2014: 167–168; Finnegan 1992; Nordstrom 1997a).

The resented Frelimo policies mentioned above and the brutal conduct of government soldiers created fertile ground for the growth of Renamo support in Maringue and elsewhere in Mozambique (Englund 2002; Finnegan 1992; Hall and Young 1997: 91; Lubkemann 2005). But whereas Renamo's objective to expel Frelimo and end "communist oppression"

aroused sympathy among the peasantry, there is no direct correlation between discontent with Frelimo and Renamo support. As accounts from Palame show, the implementation of government policies and the state's military oppression were far less rigorous in peripheral areas (cf. Englund 2002; Lubkemann 2008). Yet it was precisely in these peripheral areas that Renamo initially gained the 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.

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 soldiers and local militias, of which 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 guerrillheiros 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 Denzja not only described the incident but enacted it, using gestures to show how the soldiers had held his sister 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.⁵ According to Pai Denzja, Renamo used such acts of violence to communicate to the

people that Renamo had arrived and had “opened the zone,” that is, “a way of saying ‘we are here, the war came here. Those who are not on our side will be killed.’”

Renamo’s violence has been described as “grotesque” (Nordstrom 1997a: 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 anticolonial 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.” The message of terror was thus directed against particular 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 and historical context.

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.⁶ 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,” the same words used about Palame by Elias, who described Renamo’s arrival as follows: “Everybody liked it very much. We stayed with Renamo and they began to implement the régulo, the *sapanda*. When a zone was liberated, Renamo 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, by this point Elias had become quite disillusioned with Frelimo, and to this day 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 the town of 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, like Silvano, talked about Renamo in noncritical terms.

These varying accounts reveal some of the differences in people’s interpretations of the war and of Renamo’s nature in Maringue. 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 anticolonial war. In contrast, Pai Denzja regarded Renamo as a destructive, evil force. These diverse depictions of Renamo are embedded in people’s experiences and 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. But these varying depictions were also shaped by postwar political affiliations, which I will address toward the end of this chapter.

Under Renamo Control

From 1985 onward, Maringue became a “Renamo control area,” in the words of Gersony (1988), or a “liberated zone,” in the words of Renamo veterans.⁷ It became the home of Renamo’s main military base, after its headquarters, nicknamed Casa Banana, located in the Gorongosa mountain area, was destroyed by a joint effort of the FAM and Zimbabwean forces on 28 August 1985 (Emerson 2014: 136–140). Maringue’s dense forests, 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 aggressively 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 a kind of administrative structure and provided a certain level of service delivery (Manning 2002: 78; Hultman 2009; Vines 1991). Vines (1991: 91) described these areas of Renamo control 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. The Renamo leaders I spoke to in Maringue regarded their wartime efforts to establish a *de facto* government as an exercise of state building to show the Mozambican people what they were capable of.

From 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 using force (Finnegan 1992; Weinstein 2007). All in all, Renamo became the most powerful player in town, which meant the Maringuenses had to position themselves in relation to Renamo's volatile and violent social and political order.

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 government forces. Yet the use of such a three-way analysis (civilians, Renamo, FAM) is somewhat deceptive for at least two reasons. First, it portrays the conflict as a clear-cut war between two identifiable belligerents. This portrayal obscures the fluctuating and various entanglements of armed actors with civilians involved in the conflict. Nordstrom

(1997a: 46–62), for example, identifies a range of actors involved in Mozambique’s civil war, including bandits, local militias, splinter groups, resistance movements, and civilian collaborators, to demonstrate how difficult it is to clearly distinguish 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. I do not mean that Maringue’s inhabitants were not able to distinguish armed combatants from civilians—on the contrary, this was a requirement for daily survival. What I mean by blurring is that the categories of a marked armed group, that is, Renamo, and a separate civilian population ceased to exist, as the district’s inhabitants became to various degrees part of Renamo’s regime, even applying its violent and oppressive practices.

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 1997a; Vines 1991: 100). Although 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). At the same time, there were 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 the active roles of people who sought relationships with powerful actors and the ways in which they made use of 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, degrees of collaboration (Kalyvas 2006: 45, 103), drawing attention to dynamic relationships that are shaped by “a combination of weak preferences and opportunism, both of which are subject to survival considerations” (Lubkemann 2005: 500).

Given the above, the inhabitants of Maringue should not be regarded as “the grass” beaten down 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 stress that the war lasted for more than 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 to visit family members, pay respect to ancestral spirits, and search for work or trade opportunities. There was, for example, a lively trade between Maringue and the refugee camps just across the border, which was a two-day walk. This involved ivory, Bibles (that went from Malawi to Maringue), and objects such as sewing machines that had become of little use in Maringue.

It is important to note that people's experiences during Renamo's occupation and their possibilities for successfully maintaining relationships with the rebels varied along the lines of age, gender, political preference, status, location, and role in the conflict. Children, young people, and women were more likely to be subjected to violence and had fewer opportunities to become part of Renamo's administrative structure. Older men of considerable status often occupied positions of authority, such as chiefs and pastors, and were in many cases incorporated into Renamo rule. Individuals with a few years of education were generally recruited into Renamo's system of service delivery. To assess the impact of these different forms of collaborations, I present three examples of how specific groups of Maringueses collaborated with Renamo.

One group of Maringueses took active part 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 ready-made 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, of which there were several in Maringue during the war. Renamo regarded these religious leaders as representatives of the rural population and tried to involve them in the implementation and, it seems, improvement of Renamo's regime. Pastor Samatere, a wartime pastor in Phango, Maringue, recalled that in 1987, he and other religious and traditional leaders were summoned to a meeting with the Renamo leadership. The Renamo leadership was concerned with the large number of people leaving the 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 *blocos* [middle men between Renamo and the population]. They regulated the *liga*, appointing people to work in shifts.

Pastor Samatere's words show that community leaders could mediate between the Renamo leadership and the population. He suggested that the pastors' accounts to the Renamo leadership changed Renamo's disciplinary conduct for the better. Yet at the same time, these pastors were part of Renamo's regime, 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 the colonial practice of using local authorities for the recruitment of forced labor. The *blocos* exemplify the many faces of Renamo and strengthen an analysis of Renamo not as a singular entity but rather as constituted by combatants—some violent and harassing, others benign—and by commanders, politicians, and local representatives, such as *régulos* and *blocos*, spies, and more.⁸

From 1984 onward, a second group increasingly participated in Renamo's structure of service delivery, namely, educated young people, who were trained as teachers, nurses, and politicians (Jelinek 2004: 501; Manning 2002: 79–80). Pai Evaristo was one of these nurses. In the early 1980s he had left Maringue in fear of recruitment. When he returned in 1989 to check on his family members, he was seized by Renamo combatants and sent to military training. But his fate changed when his commander found out that Evaristo had enjoyed four years of education in Beira. He was promptly sent to Casa Banana for three months to learn the basics of medicine. After completing his training, he provided rudimentary health care for civilians in Maringue, and he continued to do so informally during my fieldwork.

However, most relationships with Renamo fell into a third category, that of “passive collaboration,” as people contributed (voluntarily or, more often, involuntarily) to the Renamo military and administrative structure. Inhabitants were forced to contribute food either to combatants passing by their houses or to civilian authorities such as the blocos. Several Maringuenses recalled that initially the supply of food was not a large problem, but over time it became a heavy burden, particularly after severe drought in 1990 and 1991, when civilians and combatants literally starved. The Red Cross distributed humanitarian aid throughout the region, but this aid was often stolen from civilians by hungry combatants.

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.⁹ The *liga* was for many Maringuenses the defining experience of war. Aida, whom I introduced above, had been recruited for *liga* several times. “We had to walk in the night, carrying,” she said. “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 [liberation war], 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, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008). 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.

The provision of food to Renamo and service in the *liga* were largely forced and violence experiences. Nonetheless, Maringuenses often recalled these practices in terms of “work.” Given that the colonial administration and later the Frelimo government had also imposed forced labor of various kinds on the population, Renamo’s methods were probably not regarded as novel or surprisingly violent experiences. Yet Renamo’s rule differed from that of the colonial government and Frelimo in the degree of intimacy that developed between the local population and the rebels over the course of Renamo’s occupation.

“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 the rebels recruited his fourteen-year-old son and many other youngsters from Palame who then fought with Renamo for many years. For the régulo, this gave Renamo a rather familial 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, several families had one son living in Beira during the war who 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 1) but also with the fact that that military recruitment by either Renamo or the FAM was close to inevitable for young men in the 1980s.

The familial character of Renamo was further strengthened by marriages between Renamo combatants and girls and women from Maringue. As mentioned in Chapter 1, 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 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 in-laws as well. Thus, while for some people in Maringue interactions with Renamo were fleeting, limited to those occasions when combatants came to one’s

house to ask for food, for many people relationships were of a very personal and lasting nature: Renamo combatants were frequently sons, sons-in-law, daughters, neighbors, and so on.

The relationships between Maringuenses and Renamo combatants were thus shaped not only by fear, force, and violence but also by ambiguity and intimacy. This is not a unique situation as military occupations, particularly over extended periods of time, are often characterized by a spectrum of collaborations, which feature intimate relationships of many kinds (Kalyvas 2006; Mochmann, Lee, and Stelzl-Marx 2009). In postwar Sri Lanka, Argenti-Pillen (2003: 199) observed that the ambiguity of the categories of victim and perpetrator, civilian and soldier, may facilitate coexistence among people who have found themselves on different sides of an armed conflict (see also Maček 2005). Similarly, in Maringue civilians' ambiguous and intimate understandings of veterans and varying degrees of collaboration over a period of more than a decade contributed to a situation that discouraged any simplistic condemnation or framing of Renamo combatants.

Renamo's wartime social and political order—or “rebel governance” (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015)—resulted in a range of relationships, antagonisms, and expectations that were based in the war but not necessarily in wartime violence and that shaped party politics and governance of the district in the postwar period, as well as the accommodation of former combatants.

“Those Who Lived with Renamo Had the Idea of the Guerrilheiro”

At the end of the war, the village of Maringue had basically disappeared. The area was deserted and overgrown with high grass and bushes, 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 near Renamo bases. 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. But after the signing of the GPA in 1992, the village was slowly being reformed. The first to settle in the area were Renamo combatants awaiting demobilization. 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 the town there were fertile fields in abundance.

Nevertheless, rebuilding Maringue physically and socially was a process marked by numerous conflicts and insecurities. In subsequent chapters I will give ample attention to intrafamilial, spiritual, and other kinds of social conflicts that played a role in the postwar period. 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.

One of the agreements in the GPA was that Renamo would participate in general democratic elections as a political party. Supported by a UN Trust Fund, which provided approximately \$17 million, Renamo had to transform itself from a military group into a national political party (Carbone 2005: 46; Vines 2013: 381). This was a great challenge as Renamo had a weakly developed administrative and political wing and had fairly few well-educated members who could be nominated as candidates for parliament (Manning 2002: 188). On the eve of the 1994 elections, Renamo's position was unsure, and it was not unusual for analysts to point out that "Renamo's prospects are . . . bleak given its infamous reputation for brutality during the civil war" (Simpson 1993: 336). Yet the former rebels surprised friend and foe by winning an average of 36 percent of the vote in the presidential and parliamentary elections.

Contrary to depictions of Renamo as a group of armed bandits or as proxies of Southern Rhodesia and later South Africa, the 1994 electoral results revealed that the rebels had enjoyed a certain degree of support, especially in rural areas in central and northern Mozambique (Manning 2002: 170–171). In Maringue, Renamo received more than 70 percent of the votes in the first multiparty democratic elections in 1994, and the party went on to gain most of the votes in the national elections in 1999 and 2004.¹⁰ While this success was initially attributed to Renamo's intimidation of voters (Jelínek 2004: 503), Renamo's victories in areas that were not under Renamo occupation suggests there were also other reasons for voting Renamo (Cahen 1998; Manning 1998).

When I asked Pai Denzja about the political situation after 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; rather, I understand his words as referring to a complex entanglement of control, loyalty,

and expectations in the context of patronage systems, including ideas about exclusion—for example, many Maringueses assumed that the Frelimo government would treat Renamo-controlled areas with suspicion and hostility. As I showed above, those inhabitants who remained in Maringue throughout the war were in one way or another bound to Renamo. 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).

Postwar support for Renamo was further influenced by the fact that Renamo, for a while, remained the biggest “boss” in town. In the GPA 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, though 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, which was formed by an unknown number of armed men who had to guarantee the security of the party’s leadership.

Between 1994 and 1996, the Frelimo party tried several times to establish an office in Maringue, but as one of the Frelimo party officials of that time recalled, on at least one occasion Frelimo party members were chased out by Renamo combatants who set fire to their tents. But from 1997 onward, 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 the Rapid Intervention Force (*Força de Intervenção Rápida*, FIR), a special police force. The presence of the FIR officers counterbalanced Renamo’s military dominance in the district. Starting in 1997, the Frelimo party gained greater support, especially among civil servants but also among Maringueses. These included people such as Pai Denzja, who said he and many other returning refugees 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.

“The Kingdom of Trouble”

In contemporary Maringue, political affiliation remains closely related to one’s wartime experiences. People were rarely explicit about their political affiliations, and most would probably not describe themselves as being with Frelimo, Renamo, or the Mozambican Movement for Democracy (Movimento Democrático de Moçambique, MDM), a new political party that rose to prominence in 2009. For this reason, it took me awhile to discover that political affiliation was one of the most 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 Renamo combatant). Such categorizations were also profoundly linked to places that were considered to be territories belonging to either Renamo or Frelimo. The area called Macoco, where a Renamo military base had been located during the war, for example, was generally considered to be “Renamo.” As places were related to a particular authority, a *régulo*, a *sapanda*, or a *nfumo*, often the affiliation of these authority figures also marked a particular area.

These partisan categorizations, which were at once political and social, were often based on collaborations during the war but were at the same time intertwined with personal and family histories. 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. Fathers and sons could be on different sides. For example, Window Coffee and his son, Lino, whom I introduced earlier, belonged to opposing political parties. Thus having different political affiliations did not necessarily cause schisms in families, and people who were associated with different political parties interacted with each other on a daily basis. Nevertheless,

there were situations and relationships in which knowledge about someone's political affiliation was critical and could even be a matter of life and death.

In one of the first newspaper articles I read about Maringue, the district was described as “The Kingdom of Trouble” (*o reino da confusão*), mainly referring to the presence of the Renamo military base and several violent incidents that had occurred in 2003. Indeed, Maringue often seemed a district unlike most in Mozambique, as the presence of a Renamo military base, a permanently stationed riot police force, a strong Renamo party, and a militant Frelimo party shaped political, and sometimes personal, conflicts in a more tense and violent way.

Renamo's military base, referred to as simply “the base” (*a base*), was a recurring topic in conversations about politics in Maringue. Although the base was a sensitive issue and often talked about in covert terms, it was also a source of excitement, speculation, and fear. Most people knew exactly who “worked” at the base, as all of them were living in or near the Maringue village with their families. When they were off duty, the *homens da Renamo* (men of Renamo) also worked their agricultural fields, shopped at the market, and drank in the village bars. Most Maringuenses did not fear these men but considered them as fellow inhabitants of the district. But the specifics, such as how many weapons and how many active combatants Renamo maintained, remained uncertain. Estimates of the number of Renamo soldiers present at the base varied from 180 (estimation by a FIR commander) to 500 (estimation by a Renamo commander) to 50 (Jelínek 2004). The base also stored a certain amount of weaponry, but little is known about the quantity and quality of these weapons (Littlejohn 2016).

There were a few instances during fieldwork 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 of the municipal elections, armed Renamo soldiers 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 severely beaten. This was reason enough for the FIR to unpack their weaponry, and eventually FIR officers and Renamo combatants faced off across the small river that runs through Maringue town. Shops closed, people avoided the market, and the village became a ghost town. People reacted to the incident in very different ways. Some were excited about the “action.” My friend Tomás, a former Renamo commander, was deeply disappointed that I had just missed this

incident: “You could have taken pictures and have interviewed them!” he exclaimed. The incident left other people in Maringue terrified, however. The sight of armed men in uniform walking around the village brought back troubling memories of the war.

Marco, 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 arrived home the day of the near confrontation and, on entering his hut in the dark, had gone to put his motor-bike 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 Marco eventually convinced her to stay. At the time of fieldwork, no Mozambican in Maputo would have considered a renewed armed conflict between Frelimo and Renamo to be a realistic possibility, but 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 before the 2009 elections, both the Frelimo party and the Renamo party used violence and threats against their opponents’ supporters or the wavering electorate. The Frelimo campaign was accompanied by a *grupo de choque* (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 Maria, 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.” Maria 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, Alberto, a former FAM soldier, sighed 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 roofs (i.e., as opposed to wattle-and-daub walls and thatched roofs, the most common dwelling design in these parts).¹¹ 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 made him reconsider his plans to build 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, *takataka-takataka*, I will leave everything, and I will go to Zimbabwe or Malawi.” Returning to Malawi was not what seemed to worry 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 had been 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 district. This shows how development and, more specifically, the allocation of projects were regarded as highly politicized processes.

This view was not unique to Maringue, as the politicization of development and violence during electoral campaigns was and continues to be a nationwide pattern. The presence of Renamo men-in-arms and the FIR seemed to set political actors on edge, however, and raised the likelihood and fear of the use of violence. In this context, violence and threats were shaped not only by the tensions between Renamo and Frelimo but also, and perhaps even more so, by personal and local dynamics. For example, it mattered greatly *who* was occupying a particular position of power.

Between fieldwork periods in 2008 and 2009, André, a former Renamo combatant, became Frelimo's first secretary, the highest position of the Frelimo party in the district. Many Renamo members, but also less politically engaged people, regarded André'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 must hit his friends. And by doing that he makes Frelimo dirty." Under André's leadership between 2008 and 2010, Maringue's Frelimo party was generally said to have become more militant and aggressive.

Yet 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. This included the hut of Felix and his family, which was also 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 himself believed that the burning of his hut was not politically motivated. He suspected that a rival carpenter, with whom he had had a dispute, had set the hut on fire and barricaded the door. Violent incidents were thus not singularly interpreted in terms of the conflict between Renamo and Frelimo and were not simply labeled as "electoral violence"; rather, these incidents were experienced and interpreted in a specific political, social, and cultural context.

Conclusion

In the introduction of this book I expressed my uneasiness with the terms "reintegration" and "recipient community" as key concepts for describing ex-combatants' trajectories after war. Both notions somehow presuppose a return to a status quo, implying that social life and military life are two separate spheres and that social life is something one (the combatant) can "return" to. This chapter provided a depiction of the dynamics of civil war in Maringue, showing the analytical collapse of these different spheres. Rather, war and its aftermath are best understood as social conditions (Lubkemann 2008), as worlds "in motion" (Vigh 2006) that are shaped by violence and danger but also by new forms of economic, political, social, and institutional capital generated by the war and postwar dynamics

(Armitage, 2017; Bourdieu, 2002; Kalyvas, Shapiro, and Masoud 2008; Tilly 1992; Wood, 2008). This chapter traced some of these generative aspects by focusing on the dynamics of collaboration and rebel governance and how these played out over the course of war and its aftermath.

Renamo's wartime rule in Maringue is probably best characterized as a negotiated and networked form of authority (see also Hoffmann and Verweijen 2018: 5) that influenced multiple facets of the lives of the district's inhabitants and continued to do so when the war was over. Renamo's presence in Maringue shaped interactions with traditional and religious authorities, and it influenced people's ability to travel, their economic opportunities, their agricultural practices, and—in some cases—their family relations. The analysis provided in this chapter offers thereby a localized analysis of how Renamo was able to gain popular support in a certain area and shows that this support was never complete and that it involved a great deal of negotiation. These factors also mean that Renamo occupation was experienced and remembered in a variety of ways, depending on a person's gender, age, position in the family and the community, religion, political position, and so on. For some people the civil war period was a highly dangerous time characterized by force and suffering; for others Renamo's presence brought certain opportunities for social or economic mobility. For most people, such experiences with and positions toward Renamo probably changed over the course of the war. The complex intertwining of Renamo with the inhabitants of Maringue did not end with the signing of the peace agreements in 1992. As Renamo became a political party, these relationships also transformed and were shaped by new kinds of conflicts caused by the return of displaced people and the competitive dynamics of multiparty democratic elections, to name just two examples. These conflicts were heightened by the particular militarized situation in Maringue, which reminded people regularly of Renamo's status as an armed political party—a fact that elsewhere in Mozambique was, at least before 2013, often forgotten. Combined with a militant Frelimo party and the presence of the special police officers of the FIR, this created a tense political climate in which people found themselves willingly and unwillingly in antagonist political camps.

Academic work on rebel governance centers largely on the wartime political orders that are created by groups not armed by the state (Arjona 2014; Hoffmann and Verweijen 2018; Weinstein 2009), yet less attention has been paid to what remains of rebel governance when the war is over

and how civilians continue or cease to relate to their (former) rebel rulers. A long(er)-term perspective on rebel governance may extend debates on the legacies of such forms of authority, which is particularly relevant when tracing the trajectories of former combatants in relation to the communities to which they “return.” In this chapter I have provided the complex contours of this community that forms the backdrop of former combatants’ trajectories and navigations to be explored in the following chapters.

CHAPTER 3

Wartime Kin and Wartime Husbands

When I asked former combatants what they regretted most about their period as Renamo fighters, they often answered that the war kept them from establishing a family. Balthazar, whom I introduced in Chapter 1, said, for example, “I could have married five women if it were not for the war.” (He had three wives and eight children.) But while the war delayed or complicated possibilities for marriage, it did not stop most combatants from seeking a spouse. Data drawn from a survey conducted by ONUMOZ revealed that at the time of demobilization, 51 percent considered themselves to be married, whereas at recruitment the majority was unmarried (Pardoel 1994: 22). My research with former Renamo combatants shows that in the last years of the war and the time between the peace accords and official demobilization (1992 to 1994), many combatants found a spouse or, in the case of many male combatants, several (see also Schafer 2007: 91). Marriage and establishing a family are perhaps the most important life projects for people in central Mozambique. Marriage may be seen as a significant “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, all the more because marriage ties into understandings of what it means to be a “real man” and a “good woman” and a good daughter and a good son.

This chapter is the first of three in Part II, Family Affairs, each probing ex-combatants’ social navigations of family relationships. While very much interrelated, each chapter presents a distinct social environment, which I use to approach kin relations from a particular angle and show how these relations altered and continued during the war and profoundly shaped ex-combatants’ life trajectories. Chapter 4 concentrates on relationships with

spiritual beings. Chapter 5 describes veterans' social navigation of relationships with consanguineal family members and related settlement decisions. The present chapter focuses on marriages and gender relations. I focus explicitly on female and male veterans' perspectives on relationships with the opposite sex and on how their different power positions shape their possibilities for navigating the environment of marriage.

War is a powerful bodily experience (Sylvester 2011: 1), which makes it a highly gendered experience as well (Cockburn and Zarkov 2002; Enloe 2002; Nagel 2003; Nordstrom 2005). War makes readily apparent how power relations are experienced through the body (Nagel 2003; Nordstrom 2005) and often reinforces certain understandings of femininity and masculinity (Enloe 2002). Stereotyped images of the female victim and refugee and the male combatant and perpetrator resonate with warzone realities of women being disproportionately 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 allows for an analysis of militarization and war as possible times of change and experimentation in gender understandings and roles (Enloe 2000; Moran 2010).

Both male and female Renamo combatants found themselves in unusual, constraining, and often dangerous circumstances in relation to the opposite sex. Their trajectories reveal the reinforcement of gender roles and the ubiquity of violence against women but also show the possibilities for innovation in and contestation of marriage practices and understandings. Yet, as this chapter will show, male combatants had more "freedom" or "authorizability" (Lubkemann 2008) to establish innovations in marriage practices than did their female counterparts. Male combatants' innovative navigations were generally more readily accepted by their families and communities and were longer lasting than those of female combatants. Tactics such as "girlfriending," presenting themselves as militaries, and settling away from their families demonstrate female combatants' (limited) room for maneuver, but such navigations were vulnerable to change and fleeting. 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, which are also deeply entangled with cultural understandings of womanhood and marriage, in particular the system of lobolo (bride price).

Modeling Marriage in Maringue

The model residential unit in Maringue consists of a husband, a wife or multiple wives, and their children, often including the sons' spouses and their children. In rural zones, 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. Every family provides for 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 a woman after marriage resides with her husband and his family, she remains a member of her father's lineage line. 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 residence), but eventually they may build their own homestead in the same community or a nearby zone (virilocal residence). In the event of divorce or the death of the husband, the children stay with his family. By tradition, a widow marries one of her brothers-in-law; however, this practice has in recent decades greatly diminished.

By law, polygyny—having several wives—is prohibited in Mozambique, though this applies only to legally registered marriages, which are rare in the countryside. In Maringue, polygyny is the rule rather than the exception. Having multiple wives is a matter of prestige, but it is also seen as a necessity for a productive household, as women generally cultivate the land and perform demanding domestic tasks, such as fetching water and cooking.¹ Economic constraints or religious restrictions are reasons for men not to marry more than one wife.

Marriage in rural and urban areas in central Mozambique ideally is 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).² There are several ways to interpret this practice: one could regard the payment of lobolo as an exchange for the rights to the sexual and domestic labor of the woman and to the children of the marriage, who are incorporated into the man's lineage of descent (see Chapman 2002: 117), or see lobolo as a contract establishing ties between

two families (Agadjanian 2001: 294). Traditionally, young men and women had little to say about who they were going to marry, as their elders mainly did the matching and negotiating. 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 decline may be related to labor migration, which has increased young men's access to cash and their ability to pay 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 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 lobolo varies and often includes cash. In rural areas it may start at approximately 100 euros but can also involve goats, capulanas (typical cloths), traditional drinks, beer, other alcoholic drinks, and the construction of a hut, among other things. Lobolo is regarded as significant income for the woman's family. However, its size depends greatly on the woman's virginity and her reputation; therefore the virginity of girls is well protected.³ Further on 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 as 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, especially not bearing sons, are highly problematic and may lead the husband to delay payments of lobolo or else call for a divorce and demand for (a part of) lobolo to be returned. 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 have diminished and changed 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 rather a process tied to wider kin relations and shaped by religion, a gendered division of labor, education, politics, and violence.

Between Sexual Violence and Marriage

Based on an analysis of the sexual abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of girls and young women in wartime and postwar Mozambique, Carolyn Nordstrom (1997b: 1) argues that “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 lie beneath such abuses (see also Olujic 1998; Sideris 2000). In this section and the next, 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 (Coulter 2009: 134; Das 2008; Olujic 1998; Sideris 2003: 714). It is the social perceptions of sexual violence that profoundly influence the lives of Mozambican women in general and of female ex-combatants in particular.

To uncover these social perceptions, I begin with the description of an apparent case of sexual violence that unfolded at the house of David, a student living in Maringue town, who had invited me to visit his family in Nhagombe, a *povoação* (populated rural zone) in northern Maringue. David was the son of Sebastião, the *nfumo* (traditional authority) of Nhagombe. Sebastião had been the first person to settle in this area in 1992, which made him the leader of those who have come to live in Nhagombe since then. He had three wives, of whom David's mother, Sara, was the eldest. When I asked David how many brothers and sisters he had, he answered that he had more than twenty, but he could not give the exact number.

When I woke up the first morning of my stay with David's family, there was a group of visitors in the courtyard sitting under the big tree. David 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 David's parents, Sebastião and Sara; David's fourteen-year-old sister Beatriz; and four male members of a neighboring family. One of the men from the other family was alleged to have made Beatriz pregnant but was not willing to admit this. Initially, the various parties were talking calmly, but as the conversation continued, I noted Beatriz's parents becoming increasingly angry as the accused man continued to deny his part in her pregnancy. Beatriz herself did not say much. Finally, Sebastião, infuriated, stood up and walked away from the meeting. Passing by the hut from where David 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 rode 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 of Canxixe, before the other family could "give money" to bribe the police officers. Up to this point my understanding of the situation was that the family was dealing with a criminal offense, namely rape. "What will be done? How can this be resolved? Rape is a serious thing," I wondered out loud. David 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 lobolo and the marriage was ensured. I asked David what his sister thought about this solution. "She will have to leave school," he replied, which was not an answer to my question, but this was the consequence that David himself disliked the most. I never got a chance to talk to Beatriz.

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 episode demonstrated that the parents of Beatriz felt angry, but they were more worried about Beatriz's pregnancy and lost virginity than about whether 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 Beatriz's child into his ancestral lineage. The best solution at hand was to marry off Beatriz to her suitor, who possibly raped her.

As we will also see in the next section, rape seems to be subject to several degrees of morality. There are cases in which rape is considered an offense, 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 crime. Consequently, recognizing the importance of virginity and lobolo is crucial for understanding the impact of sexual violence on the position of female combatants in their families and their navigation of the environment of marriage.

The Morality of Wartime Rape: A Perpetrator's Perspective

The use of rape and sexual abuse of women by male combatants to terrorize and humiliate was integral to the civil war in Mozambique (Nordstrom 1997b). It is beyond the scope of this book to assess whether rape was “a weapon of war,” that is, whether it was a planned and targeted policy (Buss 2009). What is known is that Renamo combatants were infamous for structural raping of women when they attacked a village, for the abduction of girls who were used as sex slaves, and for sexual torture (Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008; Nordstrom 1997a, 1997b). Unquestionably, Frelimo combatants raped women as well, though there is less documented evidence for this (do Rosário 2018: 56–57; Gersony 1988: 36–37; Igreja 2007: 150–151).⁴ Generally, studies of sexual violence during Mozambique's civil war focus on women's experience (see, e.g., Igreja, Kleijn, and Richters 2006: 150; Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008; Nordstrom 1997b; Scanlon and Nhalevilo 2011; Sideris 2003, 2000), which leaves the perspectives of male combatants on rape and relationships with women largely overlooked. This section tries to fill this gap, by exploring the “perpetrator's perspective” and distinguishing the central themes in the recollections of male former Renamo combatants.

In my conversations with Renamo politicians, such as my research assistant Adão, they generally stressed that sexual violence against women was limited to incidental acts by a few “crazy” combatants. Adão and many others said that the Renamo leadership prohibited sexual relationships between combatants and local women and even disciplined those who harassed female members of the population. At the same time, many stories of rank-and-file ex-combatants reveal 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 serve as 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). From their stories it can be concluded that this was not an incidental practice but rather was seen as an indulgence of war (see also Finnegan 1992) and that Renamo's ability to discipline its combatants was flawed and most likely differed from one area (and one commander) to the next.

The perpetration of rape and sexual violence by combatants is attributed to a variety of dynamics typical of war and militarism. A fighter's sense of having a "right" to women, for example, has been observed in many other military contexts (Coulter 2009; Neitzel and Welzer 2011; Utas 2005). High levels of sexual violence in civil wars have also been attributed to a lack of discipline (Weinstein 2007), the objectification of women in "enemy territories" (Neitzel and Welzer 2011: 223–225), the "hypermasculine" character of military organizations (Ben-Ari 1998: 111–117; Schafer 2007; Utas 2005), and "a denigration of the women-as-sex" (Utas 2005: 418). Such dynamics unquestionably shaped Renamo combatants' perpetrations of sexual violence, but they do not automatically create a "soldier-rapist." As Adão's position showed, an individual's disposition also shapes moral interpretations of sexual violence, suggesting that a variety of masculinities may exist in the same militarized context (Connell 2002: 35). Understandings of masculinity not only are 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 I mentioned earlier, a form of violence that "highlights preexisting sociocultural dynamics" (Olujic 1998: 31).

For ex-Renamo combatants, military discipline was not the only moral framework prohibiting sexual violence. Whether 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 1, reveal that combatants differentiated between several categories of women, which guided their moral interpretations of rape. When I asked Efrain 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, okay. 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.” These remarks do not contradict one another as much as they may appear to for at least two reasons. First, 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, Efrain’s account shows that taking “someone’s wife” is a crime, but in the second comment it becomes clear that “recruiting” girls to satisfy male combatants was regarded as a necessary measure and a straightforward solution to keep combatants from taking another man’s woman. For the Renamo leadership, the issue was thus not whether the sex was forced but whether a woman already “belonged” to someone else. 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, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 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 Beatriz, which I described earlier. The central issue for the parents was not rape per se but the loss of 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 although in the case of Beatriz the issue of force was not regarded as relevant, the act was not without consequences, as Beatriz's suitor/rapist was socially pressured 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 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 an informal conversation I had with Miguel, a Renamo combatant. He and some friends were sipping gin while we were sitting on a mat in the shadow of a hut and chatting. When the conversation dried up, I picked up a schoolbook that had been left on the ground. 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!" "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:

NW: And these women, didn't they get pregnant?

Miguel: They did.

NW: 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 Catandica. There is one in Inhaminga and two in Beira. I know them all.

NW: 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 show that combatants engaged in relationships with women from a village or a town, who were often referred to as *namoradas* (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. As Miguel's words illustrate, his partaking in Renamo meant in his view 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 within wedlock. While Miguel knew of these children, they 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, some of these leading to marriage. These will be discussed in the next section.

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 the laments of 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. Biologywise problems needed resolving." Here, Adão was not only speaking about physical necessities; 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 one 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: 138–139; 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 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 lower-ranked soldiers (see also Schafer 2007), though higher-ranked soldiers were often allowed to have girlfriends or wives. As mentioned, such restrictions were often ignored and seemed to have loosened toward the end of the war. Second, initiating a lobolo process may not have been easy for soldiers whose roles demanded high mobility throughout the country. Since lobolo is a lengthy process involving not just the prospective husband and wife but also their families, marriage was possible only for combatants who were stationed more or less permanently or at least were periodically in a certain place. The presence of Renamo's main base in Maringue meant that there were large numbers of combatants present all the time. It is therefore not surprising that in Maringue many combatants found a spouse. A third impediment was the combatant's inability to contact his kin, who ideally should be involved in lobolo negotiations and payment. This is related to a fourth obstacle: combatants' inability to pay for lobolo due to their lack of income and other financial resources (although some individuals had access to loot).

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 sadly 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 and unmarried. He met his 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 had lunch 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 [*enamorar-se*]. But as I'm not from here, I

had to arrange an owner [*um dono*, a person from the area] 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.

NW: 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 [with 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.

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 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 necessary; he arranged liquor and constructed a hut for his parents-in-law, complying with what was agreed on 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 Mopeia in Zambezia Province.⁵

Caetano’s tale is similar to Adão’s experience, described in the introduction. Adão once introduced me to his “wartime father,” who had been part of the “population,” that is, noncombatant people living in Maringue. Adão 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 is 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: 116–117). 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 lengths to legitimize their wartime marriages for themselves, their wives, their in-laws, 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. 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."

One could situate the autonomy that Adão and other veterans displayed vis-à-vis their patrikin in larger historical dynamics such as the growing independence of young male labor migrants in the realm of marriage (Lubkemann 2008; Morrell 1998; Schafer 2007: 114). But Adão's sense of autonomy was shaped perhaps even more by his participation in the war and his seven-year absence from his family. Furthermore, Adão's position as a "big man" in the Renamo community of Maringue and Marromeu, and the "authorizability" (Lubkemann 2008: 316) of his innovation, may also have contributed to his family's acceptance of his deviating settlement decision. Adão's alternative or innovative discourse on marriage practices was authorized, to borrow Feierman's (1990) terms, not only because of the authority of the individual, but also because of the extent to which the propositional content made sense to social agents (Lubkemann 2008: 316). 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 the hegemonic status of these central strands of social discourse (i.e., the practice of lobolo, authority of elders), leaving those uncontested (Lubkemann 2008: 317). It follows that these marriages were not surrogates for "normal" marriages but rather were crucial steps in male combatants' trajectories toward manhood.

Women in War: Violence, Girlfriending, and Marriage

In Chapter 1, I made an explicit effort to depict the plurality of roles, narratives, and navigation strategies of female fighters. I also demonstrated the limited value of analyzing the female experience of war merely through the lens of sexual violence, which risks presenting women as victims, devoid of agency, moral conscience, economic potential, or political awareness (Coulter 2009; Nordstom 1997b: 36; Utas 2005).⁶ 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. Talking about 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 silence, negations, or references to other people’s experiences, since I wanted to allow them to set the limits of conversations about sexual violence. Sexual violence, 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.

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 alcoholic beverages depended almost solely on a Renamo-associated clientele. 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 militarism 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 from 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 to 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 verbalizing her experiences. Indeed, she talked almost without 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.

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."

All female veterans I interviewed said they were "together" with or "married" to one or several male combatants during the war (see also Bunker 2018: 198–199). Some stressed that they were forced into such unions; others claimed they had a degree of agency in choosing and using these relationships. In Chapter 1, I presented Teresa, who also said that her life in Renamo became easier when she had a "friend," the higher placed the better, to protect her from harassment by other men. 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 and combatants were stationed for long periods of time, relationships with men often resembled marriages in terms of the involved practices and the 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.⁷ Similarly to what 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 to survive.

These wartime relationships were highly unstable, however. Teresa said, "sometimes they were corrupted," by which she meant that male combatants would often "share" their women. She also said she could not refuse a higher-ranked combatant. 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) and Liberia (Utas 2005). Utas (2005) calls female fighters' tactical relationships with men for protection and material benefits "girlfriending." Utas (2005: 407) also calls such navigations "tactical agency" (Honwana 2006; see also Coulter 2009), which draws attention to women's ability to make short-term decisions in constraining, unstable, and dangerous contexts.⁸ Such understandings of women's agency in war argue against an image of victimhood and highlight the relational and bounded character of agency (Utas 2005: 407). These women employed "a weapon of the weak," to use Shaw's (2002: 19) term, by which she describes 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). To avoid understating the power of the weak, we should not, as Korf, Engeler, and Hagmann (2010: 388) warn, 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.” Given that female Renamo recruits participated in the movement for an average of eight years, their status and power positions within the rebel structure often changed profoundly from the moment of their recruitment, at which they felt vulnerable and were often subject to sexual violence, to their later roles as wives, mothers, and combatants. Such changes were shaped by and reflected in their relationships with male combatants, for example, lasting and “full” marriages between male and female combatants. 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.

The narrative agency by which women presented themselves as “fierce fighters” and militares may add another layer to these relationships of power. By excluding sexual violence from their narratives, women like Sara 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. The women’s narratives are therefore as much a product of their postwar trajectories as they are references to actual war experiences. Moreover, they are key for understanding how female veterans imagined and pursued postwar social trajectories, especially those related to marriage.

“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, their navigation of the social environment of marriage was in many ways even 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. The participation in Renamo, whether voluntary or not, strongly influenced postwar social dynamics in women’s 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 the variety of experience of female ex-combatants after the war; nevertheless, three principal trajectories may be distinguished: women returned to their families, or stayed in Maringue, often with their wartime husbands, or returned 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 did not have access to ONUMOZ's free transportation), changes in the structures of their families, 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 (her mother had died), she replied, "What kind of daughter would I be?" 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 gave birth to the child of her since-deceased husband. 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, since female ex-rebels were thought to have had "many men," to be "promiscuous," "difficult," "from the bush" (meaning "wild"), and "not wanting to obey a man." So, she decided to stay alone, in Maringue, with her five children (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 *biscatos* (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 getting access to land for cultivation. Furthermore, female-headed households, though increasingly common, often incur suspicions of witchcraft and prostitution.⁹

Dona Ana frequented the Assembleia de Deus Africana (African Assembly of God) church, which provided her with a network of assistance and protection, as did her ties to “Renamo networks,” which I will detail further in Chapter 6. My main argument here, however, is that female veterans in their navigation of the environment of marriage had less room to maneuver and for innovation than their male counterparts. This also held 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. She found that her mother had died in her absence and that the new wives of her father regarded her with envy and as merely “another mouth to feed.” She thus decided to leave her family and returned to Maringue, where she reunited 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 to become 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 trajectories of 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 illustrate not only how sexual violence is a physical act but also how such experiences may profoundly shape women’s lives long after the event (see also Coulter 2009:134; Olujic 1998; 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 how they imagine themselves as daughters and possible wives. These are examples of the layers of violence that work throughout a person’s life trajectory, “making the concept ‘over’ meaningless” (Nordstrom 1997a: 116).

The vulnerabilities of female Renamo veterans I have sketched so far may not reflect experiences of desmobilizadas across Mozambique. As I will detail further in Chapter 5, Maringue was for many Renamo veterans, male and female, a last resort, where they could turn to when they felt unwanted elsewhere. 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 prerecruitment husbands; in many cases these relatives chose to accept what had occurred during the war, perhaps aided by cleansing rituals, which will be discussed in the next chapter. To balance my argument, I end this chapter with two cases of women who followed somewhat different trajectories than the ones I have discussed previously. The first concerns the account of a former female combatant who married a male Renamo 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. I met her through Adão, who knew her from the war years in Maringue. Adão told me that his children would always play with Monica's daughter 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.

NW: But Adão told me that his children and your daughter played together?

Monica: I did make a child, but not with a husband. It was like a lapse, a coincidence.

...

NW: 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.

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. Monica's words echo those of Miguel, who also regarded his wartime children as nonexistent.¹⁰ 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.

For the second alternative trajectory, I want to share a little more of the life history of Teresa, the "fearless" Renamo fighter I introduced before. Teresa also married a former combatant, an ex-Frelimo soldier. His family was outraged that he had married an "*analfabeta*" (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?'" 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 woman is too strong for civilian men," she claimed. In other words, a civilian man could not "handle" her. Anita, a former FAM combatant who also married a former soldier, raised a similar point: "Nobody can tell me what to do. And nobody can hit me; I was trained! My husband knows; there is respect." These women presented an alternative discourse to trajectories shaped by vulnerability, in which they took pride in their past as militaries but also in their present status of being "strong" (see also Katto 2014).

I heard such empowering narratives only from women I met in Beira and Maputo, most of them active members of veterans' organizations who had undergone empowerment and self-esteem training that have become a mainstay of nongovernmental organization (NGO) reintegration programs. These women followed very different trajectories from those of the female ex-combatants in Maringue. The latter framed their life paths 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 are 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).

Conclusion

Tracing the navigation of the environment of marriage over time uncovers how and when such relationships were established as well as broken or

sustained throughout war and the postwar period. Such a *longue durée* perspective reveals how marriage is a central “life project” that defines settlement patterns, kin relations, and economic possibilities, to name but a few aspects. Because my fieldwork was conducted about fifteen years after the war had ended, the passage of time allowed former combatants to reflect on these relationships and how they had unfolded over time and for them to interpret their own navigations. Caetano and Adão, for instance, considered their marriages successful and thought of themselves as relatively fortunate in terms of their family lives, despite their precarious economic condition. Yet others, such as Balthazar, felt they had lost opportunities during the war, such as the possibility for establishing a big(ger) family. As I showed in the final section of this chapter, female veterans’ reflections on their navigations in relation to marriage were also multivocal. While Dona Ana was generally pessimistic about her relationships with men and how these had turned out, Teresa’s reflections on her relationship with her husband revealed a sense of empowerment through marriage to a former FAM commander. For both men and women, such considerations were highly dependent on one’s social and economic position at the time of interview, but nearly all former combatants also directly related their marital status (successful, empowered, abandoned, marginalized, or otherwise) to their experiences as fighters within Renamo and the relationships they were able and unable to establish during that time.

Combined, the navigations of both female and male veterans reveal a complex patchwork of ruptured, maintained, established, and changed relationships with girlfriends, spouses, relatives, and fellow combatants. This collage of relationships is further explored in the next chapter, where I delve into relationships between former combatants and their relatives, which are in Maringue best understood in tandem with the world of spirits and other supernatural beings.

CHAPTER 4

Navigating the Supernatural World

In August 2007, I visited JustaPaz, one of the few NGOs working on conflict transformation in Mozambique. In its office in Matola, a satellite city of Maputo, I had a conversation with Francisco Assix, a project manager, about the aftermath of war atrocities in Mozambique. According to Assix, “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 must be cleansed. And after that, someone cannot be called a killer anymore.” He restated what also various ethnographic studies have shown, namely, that 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 were regarded as one of the main reasons for the country’s alleged successful transition from war to peace, and they formed the main point of entry for the analysis of the reintegration processes of former combatants in Mozambique (e.g., Boothby 2006; Cobban 2007; Graybill 2004).

The attention to purification rituals in Mozambique marked, as Stovel (2008:306) noted, the start of a wider trend in academia and peacebuilding practice, to focus on “traditional” or “local” conciliatory rituals and expressions that facilitate the reincorporation of former fighters (see also Baines 2010; Theidon 2007; Veale and Stavrou 2003; Williamson 2006). Moreover, the importance of the spiritual world in postviolence social reconstruction has been observed in postwar contexts in Sri Lanka (Perera 2001), Vietnam (Kwon 2006), Uganda (Baines 2010), and several other African countries (Meier, Igreja, and Steinforth 2013). While contextually different, these

studies reveal the prominence of the spiritual world in shaping how suffering is experienced, interpreted, and dealt with.

Local rituals of (re)acceptance and purification may provide hopeful, bottom-up (and cheap) practices for international NGOs and agencies interested in supporting peace processes. However, there are several challenges in the study and representation of such practices, as these may end up defining the peace process merely by ritual moments, and as I argued at the start of this book, a focus on ritual risks providing a rather apolitical and simplistic picture of the actors involved and the issues at stake (see also Schafer 2007; Stovel 2009), and may disregard the role of the (often considered failed) state. More so, a strong focus on traditional understandings and practices may also risk romanticizing the “traditional repository” for peace as inclusive, harmonious, and working toward reconciliation instead of retribution (Richmond 2009: 153; Wiegink 2018).

In this chapter and the next, I delve into how former combatants have navigated the “sociospiritual world” (Lubkemann 2008) and analyze the ambivalent position of spiritual beings in former combatants’ histories of violence, healing, and kinship relations. It is my aim to demonstrate not only the importance of the protective and restorative understandings and practices in relation to the sociospiritual world but also that this world is open to various interpretations and practices, which are not necessarily inclusive or harmonious. In the next chapter I explore the problematic dynamics of witchcraft that former combatants encountered on homecoming. In this chapter I delve into relationships with spiritual beings, exploring their potential within processes of cleansing and healing, as well as their roles as witnesses of illegitimate violence (cf. Igreja 2003; 2007) and as 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.

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 and sorcerers or witches with effective powers over the material world (see also Bertelsen 2016; Granjo 2007b; Lubkemann 2008: 69; West 2005). People interact with

this supernatural world through spirit possessions, but interactions also take place in dreams, through ceremonies, and in everyday interpretations of illness, bad luck, and death. 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). This “spirit idiom” is crucial in understanding ex-combatants’ social navigations of the socio-spiritual 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 Maringuenes, 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 *antepassados* 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 family or individually. 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.

Wilson, a former Renamo combatant, told me, for example, that the spirit of his grandfather guided him through the war. In 1976, before the civil war had started, his grandfather appeared in a dream to tell Wilson that he would go to war but that he would return unharmed. Reflecting on this dream, Wilson 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, Wilson 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 the other side. I asked Wilson 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!’” For Wilson and many other combatants, 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 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 combatants' attempts to maintain connections with their former lives. Further on I provide an example of the more ambivalent character of these spirits.

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 animals or natural places (e.g., rivers, mountains), "bad spirits" that can be sent by a witch, and spirits of the dead, especially of those who died a premature or violent death. This latter category is of interest here, as it consists of avenging spirits, including the spirits of civilians killed during the war, that haunt the living and seek 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 about 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 sometime in the distant or recent past.¹ A second, often interrelated, scenario involved the spirits of labor migrants who were robbed and murdered on their way back from Zimbabwe. 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 Elvira, a *nyanga*, 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." Other *nyangas* and pastors of Pentecostal churches, who are also consulted for healing, referred to the spirits of the dead soldiers as *mfukwa* or *magamba*, regarded as evil spirits who "want to see blood." Some said that *magamba* spirits had been warriors during the reigns of Mwene Mutapa, Ngungunyane, and Makonde and had fought the Portuguese. Still others said that *magamba* spirits were the spirits of 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.” There is thus far from a conclusive typology. 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, in Mutarara, a nearby district in Tete Province, was an all-encompassing category for avenging spirits (Marlin 2001: 181), while in Gorongosa, magamba was a postwar phenomenon related to war violence and that especially “fell into” women (Igreja 2007; Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008).² In Maringue, magamba were known before the war and were related to labor migration to Zimbabwe.

Avenging spirits were generally referred to as “bad spirits,” causing death, sickness, and misfortune, but at the same time they were considered tremendous forces of protection and healing, exemplified in Renamo leader Matsangaissa’s spiritual protection by ferocious war spirits from the era of the Mwene Mutapa, who made “bullets fall from his chest like water,” and, more recently, Dhlakama’s ability to become a partridge (Renamo’s symbol), thereby escaping several recent assassination attempts (Bertelsen 2016).³ This shows the “double semantic” (Meier, Igreja, and Steinforth 2013: 27) of the spiritual idiom and its related practices, as “the power of ‘spiritual’ entities remains paramount in both the causation of trauma and in community-based approaches to healing” (Honwana 1996: 1). To understand how relationships with spiritual beings fit “within the wider system of meaning” (Lambek 1981: 60) 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.

“*Mae*, I’m Here Now”: Affliction and Healing

In central Mozambique, the health of one’s mind and body requires 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 or by the interventions of discontented ancestral spirits or a type of malevolent spirit. Indeed, similar to and very much intertwined with witchcraft, spiritual

agency is a highly important interpretive model for making sense of illness, misfortune, and death, as well as of past deeds.

This is well illustrated by an affliction that befell Tomás, a former Renamo commander who often assisted me on visits to other high-ranked former combatants. One day in November 2008 we were planning to visit a former Renamo general. When I met Tomás 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 *maluco* (crazy) during the night. He 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 (a vow that 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 Tomás 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: “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. Fidelfina [Tomás’ wife] tried to calm me down with water but had to tie me up with a cloth. She went to get Marco [a friend] and he succeeded in dressing me. He took me to a *profeta* [a medium from the Zionist church] of the [Renamo military] base. This one worked with a *gamba*; during the war there were many of these.” The *profeta* explained to Tomás that his mother wanted her son to perform a *nsembe* (a ceremony for the ancestors). Tomás 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 [Tomás 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* [a traditional alcoholic drink]. I could not have done this before, because Daniel [Tomás’s 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 Tomás made several trips to Mutarara, where his father lived, but neither he nor his brothers performed a ceremony for their mother's death. Tomás justified this by pointing out that his youngest brother was never 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 (Tomás) but the close relatives as well (in this case children from the same "belly"). This suggests that his mother's anger was not merely Tomás's problem but could also affect his brothers, as they were in the same relationship to their mother and had equally neglected her.

Tomás's story shows that relationships with ancestral spirits were in many ways crucial for one's health and one's relationships with other family members. It also reveals the several stages of the spiritual afflictions, which is first the experience of certain, largely inexplicable, symptoms, in Tomás's case nightmares and becoming "crazy." Then, seeking the assistance of a healer, in this case a profeta of a Zionist church, although people in Maringue typically may also consult a nyanga or a pastor of the Pentecostal church.⁴ Nyangas, profetas, and pastors may have very different understandings of the nature of these spirits and of healing practices. For a nyanga or a profeta, spirits are ambiguous entities, as they may cause harm but can also be worked with in healing processes. Tomás visited, for example, a profeta who worked with a gamba spirit from the war. In the discourse of the pastors of 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, and traditional practices such as consulting a nyanga and ancestor worship are rejected (see also Pfeiffer 2002: 190).⁵

Diagnosis by the nyanga, profeta, or pastor is a third step in the process. This may be done in a wide variety of ways. The nyangas I met in Maringue demonstrated multiple methods for diagnosing their patients. Some worked with the roots of plants, or they read bones, ivory artifacts, or stones that 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 (see also Bertelsen 2016: 180–181). Most nyangas (and profetas), however, worked with one or several spirits, who would "fall" into the nyanga and provide insight about and solutions for health problems. The spirit consultation is

a moment when multiple narratives can be constructed, as the interpretation of spirit possessions and spirit interactions is polysemic. I was once present during a healing session for a young woman who was unable to conceive children; through the *nyanga*, the spirit determined that previous *nyangas* had erroneously identified her former husband as causing the affliction. This spirit explained that the infertility was caused by the spirits of an aunt from the patient's father's side who had died childless.

The last stage of healing is the treatment, which in the case of Tomás's deceased mother was the performance of a *nsembe*. Tomás's case also illustrates the importance of the presence of family members during the consult and treatment. Whereas Tomás was afflicted by the spirit, the responsibility for the neglect of his mother's spirit rested also with other relatives. When the spirit affliction is not resolved properly, the spirit might "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).

Tomás's ordeal formed a process in which the continuation and restoration of certain relations with both the dead and the living were changed by physical absence due to the war. Similarly, many former combatants spoke of performing ceremonies for the ancestors, to thank them for a safe return and, as Adão phrased it, "to let them know a member of the family had returned." 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 travel or migration (e.g., labor migration to Zimbabwe) and to thank the ancestors after a safe return (cf. Honwana 1996: 3). Those ex-combatants who mentioned taking part in ceremonies for the ancestors said 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 Fevereiro, a leader of the Catholic Church, when I asked him about rituals held for ex-combatants returning after the war. He emphasized the social and psychological value of such moments, which underscore a person's place within a family.

Other veterans recalled that on their homecoming, rituals were performed for those who had died in their absence. These rituals could involve *kupitakufa* (*kufa* means death or to die), which cleanses the pollution of death from the people in proximity to the deceased. This cleansing process traditionally consists of a series of ceremonies over several days, including

sexual intercourse by the closest relatives of the deceased. If *kupitakufa* were not conducted, it is said that no person will come to drink water in the house because the water is polluted, and the relatives of the members of the household are believed to get sick and possibly die.⁶ In contemporary Maringue this ritual is becoming 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.

Ex-combatants' struggles with their health and their efforts to get certain rituals done reveal a far more complex picture of former combatants' relationships with spiritual beings and (other) family members than the cleansing rituals appear to do. These relationships are not mainly about dealing with war violence or the "spirit of war" but circle around family relationships and corresponding obligations and expectations that were not necessarily severed by the war but often were influenced in dramatic ways. Tomás's story, for example, is a social drama of a child who was taken from home by Renamo and who never saw his mother again because she died during the war. The histories of the spirit and the afflicted individual are interlinked by a tragedy that unfolded in the past and that gives meaning to both the spirit's anger and the patient's affliction. Simultaneously, this tragedy cannot be understood outside the larger historical, social, political, and economic context, as in this case it bears witness to the suffering of child recruitment and the long-lasting civil war in general. This way, spirit afflictions provide a lens for looking at mass violence, disruption, war, and social suffering (see also Honwana 2003, 2002; Igreja 2007, 2003; Kwon 2006; Marlin 2001; Perera 2001). The much-reported purification rituals after the war must also be regarded in this context of cultural understandings of health and family, absence, and social pollution.

Washing Away the "Idea of the Bush"

Ronaldo could not remember the year in which he was recruited. It must have been sometime in the late 1980s, when he and five others were taken by Renamo combatants to the nearest rebel military base in Cheringoma. "It was forced," Ronaldo recalled, but then he said, "it was a time of war, it was military life, it was always forced." Similar to many other former Renamo combatants I interviewed, he recalled the war in terms of "suffering." He lost his eldest son in a Renamo attack and was himself shot twice

in the legs during an ambush by Frelimo soldiers, after which his fellow Renamo fighters left him for dead. “I thought I was going to die,” Ronaldo said, “but thanks to the spirit [that was with me] I survived.” As was true for other Renamo combatants, he had approached a nyanga during the war, who provided him with a protective spirit. It was this spirit that needed to be “taken out” when the war was over. Ronaldo spent the first portion of his demobilization allowance, provided by ONUMOZ, to pay for a nyanga, who organized a cleansing ceremony. In the presence of his wife and son, Ronaldo was cleansed by sitting, covered by a cloth, over a steaming pot of water and roots. He said that he decided to conduct this ceremony “because the spirit that was working with me [during the war] was aggressive. After the war I decided to take this spirit out [*tirar esse espírito*] because I needed a civil spirit.” Ronaldo was referring to the spirit that was given to him by the nyanga to protect him during the war and noted that while the spirit saved his life and gave him strength, in peacetime he needed a different kind of spirit and a less aggressive attitude.

Many of the ex-combatants I met in Maringue underwent cleansing rituals after the war ended. When I asked them to explain the reasons behind these rituals, they spoke of “washing away the idea of the bush [o mato]” or “the blood of war.” Like Ronaldo, they mentioned the use of steam from a pan containing certain roots and plants, and 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, a common technique used by nyangas to protect people from spirits and witchcraft. In the southern region of Mozambique, cleansing practices involved the burning of war clothes in a small hut from which the former combatant had to jump out (Honwana 2006), the simulation of a fight, and internal and external “washing” by, for example, goat blood and traditional medicine (Granjo 2007b). Thus the ways in which these ceremonies were performed varied across the country and probably depended on the specialty of individual nyangas.

Certainly not all former Renamo combatants experienced such ceremonies. Some Christian veterans said their church forbade such practices; others performed traditional ceremonies anyway (cf. Pfeiffer 2006). Some former combatants, such as my research assistant Adão, expressed a suspicion toward tradition and labeled these ceremonies as “backward.”⁷ Still others experienced spirit exorcisms during prayer sessions in Zionist or Pentecostal churches (see also Honwana 2006: 110). But as Ronaldo said,

“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 him. “A person can become crazy,” Ronaldo answered. Others similarly said that without cleansing, ex-combatants may become “confused,” “start drinking and killing people as they used to,” or “have bad dreams.”

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). Ronaldo stressed the importance of the presence of his wife and son at the ceremony, as “they were obligated to see if the spirit of war in fact left or not.” 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” 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 combatant’s family, including, if possible family from afar, and neighbors.⁸ This requirement resonates with what Honwana (2005: 92) calls “social pollution,” meaning that the combatants’ contact with death and bloodshed affects not only the individual but also the social body. Cleansing is thereby 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 had been 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 can 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, which arises from contact with death and blood and also is generally associated with sex. Such things 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 the pollution of death is graver, and so contact with death needs to be followed by the performance of purification rituals. It makes sense, then, that the necessity to conduct such purification rites was felt not only by combatants but also by others affected by war violence, as the latter could have also “picked up bad things” (Schafer 2007:107).

These cleansing rituals have been described as “sparks of creativity for peace,” showing people’s resilience and capability for peace when facing a culture of violence (Nordstrom 1997a:198). Yet considering 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” (Stovel 2008: 306), such purification rituals should also be related to longer histories of suffering and precolonial warfare (see also Ferme 2001; Shaw 2002). The purification practices observed after the war in Mozambique strongly resembled rituals performed when people returned from prison or the mines in South Africa, places that, similar to war, are perceived as “bad” and “polluted” (Honwana 2006; Granjo 2007: 141–143). Seen this way, these rituals are best understood as existing rites performed in a new context, although one can question the extent to which war constituted a *new* context for people in central Mozambique, considering that the liberation war and the civil war together spanned more than three decades.

Moreover, such cleansing practices should be considered in the wider “sociospiritual world” (Lubkemann 2008) that shapes and is shaped by cultural understandings of family, health, absence, and social pollution and therefore are fundamentally related to providing a sense of social order through practices of purification, cleansing, protection, and healing (see also Honwana 1996: 1; Meier, Igreja, and Steinforth 2013). But stories such as Ronaldo’s also testify to the ambivalent character of spiritual beings, as he considered “his” spirit to be a protective force during the war but an aggressive force postwar. This shows again the “double semantic” of the spiritual idiom, which is further explored in the next section, where I discuss avenging spirits who cause serious health issues but can also become healing companions.

The Avenging Dead: Memories and Moralities

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, and which cause illness, misfortune, and death. As described earlier, 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. The multiple narratives around such spiritual afflictions provide insight into understandings of justice and retribution for committed atrocities.

The “spirit idiom” has a strong moral dimension. Spirit talk is permeated with understandings 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. Analyzing the interpretations and practices in relation to avenging spirits provides a framework for understanding what are seen as “bad” deaths and, moreover, how the perpetrators of illegitimate violence are punished.⁹ 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 Adão 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 [with money and goods gained through migrant labor] and were ambushed by lazy bandits. These spirits come back to hunt these bandits.

NW: 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.

Adão: *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.

Many people echoed Adão’s phrase “war is war,” which was often followed by “in war people die.” Death was expected in war. The death of a combatant 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, combatants who died in battle were generally not expected to return or linger as spirits. Francisco, a pastor of a Pentecostal church,

expressed a similar view, and he offered some clues to 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.” “Bad death” during war is thus the death of a “simple person,” as Francisco put it. Civilians (but also combatants) who died in extraordinarily 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 rather that an act of violence or the treatment of the dead body was unjust. To explore the impact of such spiritual afflictions, I present the story of a woman called Rebecca, who recovered from her spirit affliction caused by an avenging spirit she had picked up during the war. Then I present the case of Fazbem and his mysterious illness, attributed by most people to an act of “bad violence” during the war.

“You Took Me to Make Me a Cooking Fire”: Spirits Narrating the War

Rebecca was a small, frail woman in her forties. 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 considered herself a former combatant and 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 told 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 você* [damn you]! You took me to make me a cooking fire!"

NW: 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 João.

NW: How did he die?

Rebecca: He died because of the war. I was almost a guerrilheira in those days; I was not afraid. That day that I took the head, there was no other way to make a fire. And I did not expect to live longer.

NW: 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.

João, 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, as his skull had been used by Rebecca to make a cooking fire, probably during a liga mission.¹⁰ 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, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 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 reveal wrongs committed not only 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, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008: 359–360; Igreja 2003).

The postwar spirit possessions and the related healing processes can be regarded as embodied storytelling, which offers possibilities for breaking the silence about the war and perhaps may even have generated reconciliation (Englund 1998; Honwana 2003; Igreja 2007; Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008: 366; Marlin 2001). It may be argued that by reenacting 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 shows, the story of the spirit (Igreja 2007; Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 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, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters (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, sexual violence, and people being killed and tortured. Igreja (2007, 2003; see also Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008) describes how postwar *magamba* possession in Gorongosa became a stage for voicing violent incidents that happened during the war. 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 (Argenti-Pillen 2003; Baines 2010; Perera 2001), in this case women who suffered (sexual) violence. Yet spirit possessions are not only about "breaking silences" and "counter discourses"; they also play a role in the construction and reconstruction of shared memories of historic events and larger social patterns (e.g., migrant labor), 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." Narratives of spirits

such as Rebecca's may thus be perceived as neither true accounts of factual misdeeds nor mythical stories. Rather these are best approached as multi-layered and gendered narratives that convey a "multidimensional and collective truth" (Igreja 2007: 337).

Rebecca's narrative also involves several moral understandings about death and violence. João, the soldier, died a normal death, but what happened to (parts of) his body afterward (being used to make a cooking fire) was not normal. Rebecca's talk of "crime" suggests that there are certain interpretations of justice and retribution involved in her spiritual afflictions. In her case, and other magamba-like possessions of women, there was—at least tentatively—a solution for healing. However, I also observed another pattern of spirit affliction concerning male combatants who were regarded as having done "bad things" during the war and whose affliction was regarded as incurable. People's narratives about such afflictions seemed to deviate from "normal" spirit afflictions in their emphasis on retribution and 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 povoação in the north of Maringue district. His "royal blood" probably added to his fame.¹¹ Fazbem was a man in his late thirties, but he was only the size of a child. He was just over one meter tall and his arms and legs were a quarter 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.

Fazbem was a great conversationalist 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. 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. . . . But there is no cure.” At times Fazbem was in pain. He drank alcoholic beverages and smoked marijuana 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 mysterious illness within a few weeks after my arrival. It would come up during casual conversations over dinner at the Catholic parish, during interviews with elders, and in small talk in the street. Fazbem and his life story were well known in Maringue, although everyone, including Fazbem, related a slightly different version of the origin of his mysterious illness.

Most interpretations of Fazbem’s illness were predicated on the idea that during his time as a soldier, he had done something “bad”—specifically, that he had killed a civilian. I spoke with two community leaders of the Catholic Church from the northern zonas of Maringue (Palame and Merione). The two men, Fevereiro and Pedro, started to talk animatedly about Fazbem. Fevereiro seemed very impressed by what had happened to the former Renamo commander. “Ah, Fazbem, the son of the régulo. Xii. 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.” Fevereiro 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 combatant: “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 regarded as legitimate violence. However, as he elaborated, “you cannot kill a person of the house,” a civilian. So, 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, though not just anyone. Fevereiro 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 3, taking a married woman was regarded as a very serious offense both within Renamo and among the population. Murdering the husband, moreover, was regarded as extraordinary and illegitimate violence. Though Fevereiro and Pedro did not say it in so many 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.

Tomás, 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. Tomás 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 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." Tomás also related Fazbem's illness to the killing of a civilian and noted that the victim uttered a warning of Fazbem's postwar troubles, adding to the credibility that Fazbem was indeed tormented by the spirit of his victim.

There were alternative explanations for Fazbem's illness, however. Nyanga and former Renamo soldier Wilson, whom I also 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]." 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 to kill one's child or have sex with one's mother. If a client fails to follow the order of the nyanga, he or she may go mad or something terrible will happen. Fazbem's strange illness, Wilson thought, was the consequence of such disobedience.

Fazbem himself had yet another interpretation of his illness. During our second conversation, 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 [*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 narrator’s own 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 deviate slightly from most narratives of spirit possession in that they involve a spirit that haunts the individual veterans (never one of their relatives), and there is no prospect of recovery. Tomás was able to appease the spirit of his mother and 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, was irreversibly transformed into a small man and neither biomedicine nor *nyangas* seem able to stop his torment. And he was not the only one, as I heard several other stories of veterans being paralyzed or rendered permanently impotent, which were afflictions that people often related to atrocities committed against civilians. The permanence of such afflictions

is telling, perhaps because the crimes that were committed were, as Rebecca put it, “too big” and “too serious.”

Conclusion

In the wake of massive atrocities, religious or cosmological expressions and practices may provide a tremendous resource for healing or transitional justice for both the individual and the collective. Particularly in a context where there has been no official transitional justice process or any nationwide attempt at truth finding about the civil war, it is tempting to regard traditional or local solutions that work toward justice and peaceful coexistence as “alternative” solutions (Boothby 2006; Cobban 2007; Graybill 2004). Such approaches to postwar practices are, as I have stressed in the introduction of this book, often rather ahistorical and apolitical and thereby provide only partial insight into the trajectories of former combatants. And all too often, such practices and ideas end up being portrayed in reified, romanticized, and one-dimensional ways (Richmond 2009). In this chapter I presented the reintegration rituals of former combatants in Mozambique (and elsewhere) as an example of such romanticizing, and I aimed to provide a “thicker” description of the various intersections of war, healing, the sociospiritual world, and kin relations. At least three essential observations emerge from this analysis.

First, former combatants’ navigations of the sociospiritual world are subject to a multiplicity of interpretations, which may vary not only individually but also between social markers, such as religion, politics, and gender. The stories of Rebecca and Ronaldo, for example, showed their dissimilar possibilities for healing. Their prospects were different because of their personal histories but also because of their different roles during the war—as a forced porter and a soldier—and the different ways in which spirits may afflict women and men. It may thus be erroneous to assume that local notions and practices of peace are inherently inclusive and equally accessible even within the same community (Lubkemann 2008). The various narratives about Fazbem’s mysterious disease demonstrated that within basically the same locality there may be different interpretations of healing and suffering in relation to the spiritual world. Interesting questions for further research would be how such interpretations may change over the course of time (cf. Igreja 2012) and how some become dominant over others.

Second, by presenting the multiple interpretations of Fazbem's illness, as well as the continuous suffering of Rebecca, this chapter challenges the romanticized ideas that "local" peace practices work "naturally" toward healing and reconciliation and that such practices are restorative rather than retributive in nature. Both cases were characterized by continuous suffering interpreted (at least by some) in terms of justice and punishment. Such understandings of justice and punishment are therefore to be understood as culturally grounded concepts and are therefore not easily framed in terms of transitional justice, human rights, or peacebuilding (cf. Kwon 2006: 5).

Third, this chapter further testifies to the value of long-term or multi-temporal fieldwork, long after wars are over. The stories presented in this chapter show how the intimate connections between war dynamics, people's health, and their relationships with (deceased) relatives and others continue to evolve over time. Conducting fieldwork more than fifteen years after the war ended was essential for understanding former combatants' processes of postwar accommodation in terms different from studies conducted in the immediate aftermath of conflict, which, for example, depicted the transition from military to civilian life as a momentary rite passage in the wake of war. The open-endedness of "local" healing processes stands in contrast to linear conceptions of "before and after" that dominate peace studies (Igreja 2012: 421), and it is by following people's lives over the course of time that this can be made palpable. I will continue with this idea in the next chapter, in which I explore the sociospiritual world from the perspective of witchcraft and its role in former combatants' postwar settlement decisions.

CHAPTER 5

Why Did the Soldiers Not Return Home?

Fernando, a former Renamo combatant, worked as a tailor from the small veranda of his mud hut in the village of Maringue. He was originally from Dondo, a district also located in Sofala Province, about 250 kilometers south, but he 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 in Nhamacala, Maringue, where they awaited official demobilization by 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 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.¹ 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 concluded that, like Fernando, most former combatants I encountered were originally not from Maringue. Hence, they had not settled near their kin.² 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 or her village of origin and family as expected, “natural,” and conducive 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 programs.” Returning “home” is thus regarded as desirable for the ex-combatants, and “home” is rather uncritically seen as a hospitable place. In the Mozambican context, the assumption that former combatants would return home was strengthened by the practices of cleansing rituals, which have been discussed in the previous chapter. Yet on the other hand, there are several studies on Mozambique that underline the troubles ex-combatants face when returning to their places of origin, which may be due

to their “socialization with violence” (Honwana 2006: 49–50; Nilsson 1993; Roesch 1992: 472; Wilson 1992: 545), their intolerance of authority (Borges-Coelho 2002; Granjo 2008), and the atrocities committed during the war and in some cases against relatives (Granjo 2007a; Honwana 2006). These studies presume that the period with the rebel groups constituted a “break with society” and therefore, as discussed in the introduction, expect reintegration to involve a “break with the past.”

Yet the ex-combatants who participated in this research project spoke neither of welcoming homes nor of 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 framework for learning about complex and contradicting cultural understandings of family relations as well as for understanding ex-combatants’ social, economic, and political trajectories. In the previous chapter I probed such understandings by addressing kinship relationships relative to the spiritual world. Here I will further delve into the complexities 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 (Bertelsen 2009; Lubkemann 2008; Nielsen 2010; Raimundo 2009; West 2005) and elsewhere in Africa (Ashforth 2005; Geschiere 1997) but is often neglected in studies about the reintegration of former combatants. Scholars and practitioners of these reintegration processes often focus on war violence and possible trauma 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 of former combatants in their kin and community networks 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 was these particularities that created tensions and incited fears and suspicions of witchcraft.

Violent Ruptures?

Forced recruitment into non-state armed groups has received much popular and scholarly attention as a violent and cruel practice (Boothby and Knudsen 2000; Honwana 2006; Wessels 2006).³ Especially in African contexts, the stories of young combatants—children sometimes—often begin with how they were captured by an armed group (but also by government forces) that inflicted harm on 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 individual and family and between individual and community more generally, which disrupts the willingness of the new recruit to run away from the armed group (Honwana 2006: 61). It is such depictions of recruitment into armed forces that have shaped discussions about combatants' relations with their families and communities, which are largely framed in terms of a "break with society," including 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 there is no doubt that atrocities happened during Renamo's recruitment (Honwana 2006: 61; Nordstrom 1997a; Roesch 1996; Thompson 1999: 193), the accounts of ex-combatants in Maringue do not reflect such experiences. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, the recruitment tactics of Renamo, in particular, may have been more violent in the south than in northern and central parts of Mozambique and may have changed over time. Therefore, it is not surprising that studies that were conducted in the south, such as Honwana's (2006), depicted a more brutal image of Renamo and also provided a different analysis of the return of former combatants to their communities of origin. The accounts of the Renamo combatants I spoke to in Maringue draw attention to postwar social dynamics that were not predominantly informed 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 on how veterans recalled the postwar unfolding of kinship relationships.

By no means did these veterans enjoy 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 people who fought, fled, returned, stayed, were wounded, grew hungry, got sick, saw loved ones die and disappear, collaborated with armed actors, or lost their homes and, perhaps, 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 (Hammond 2004: 10–11; Hannerz 2002: 218; Malkki 1995a). The “home” 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, seems natural, as home is the place where one belongs. However, in contexts of war, home and homelands change profoundly, as was the case for former Renamo combatants. The former combatants themselves had changed as well, having spent considerable time away from home. As described in Chapter 1, the average length of a combatant’s participation in either Renamo or the FAM was eight to nine years (Borges-Coelho and Vines 1995: 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 homecoming experiences of ex-combatants like Fernando and to assess whether 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. 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 joy and relief but that these emotions were soon diminished by the daily reality of hardship in which most Mozambican families live. Becoming a productive family member is seen as an important phase in the social integration of ex-combatants (Nordstrom 1997a: 146; Sendabo 2004: 66; Igreja 2007), though one that is not unproblematic, as the words of Evaristo show.⁴ He speaks of the expectations of relatives that could not be met by the ex-combatant, who would become a burden to the family, resulting in a tense situation that led many veterans to look for "home" among other veterans. In what follows I delve into family members' expectations, which were at the center of creating a tense environment that is conducive to suspicion and fear of witchcraft.

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 Elisa called "hate within the family," or the assertion of a female Renamo veteran about her father's wives that they "did not want to see me well." 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 speculation 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. This prompts one to ask, “*Who* is causing me this misfortune?” This may be attributed to a discontented ancestor, a malevolent spirit, as I described in the previous chapter, or, as is the focus here, a *nfiti*.⁵

Wilson, a *nyanga* (traditional healer-diviner) and local leader of the Associação de Médicos Tradicionais de Moçambique (Association of Traditional Healers of Mozambique, AMETRAMO) 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 of 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. *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, speculation about the process of learning remains rather vague and is often quickly followed by “I don’t really know anything about this” or “you should ask a *curandeiro*.” Knowledge about witchcraft is dangerous, as one who knows too much can be suspected of being a witch oneself. While suspicions of witchcraft are myriad, direct accusations of being a witch are rare. In such cases, the accused and accusers bring the issue to a *nyanga*, who then sets out to determine the truth. 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*.

“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.⁶ Witchcraft, or, better said, the fear of witchcraft, can thus be regarded as a leveling force, opposing or interpreting new inequalities, relations of domination, and even development (Geschiere 1997: 5; Ashforth 2005; West 2005: 239–245; Raimundo 2009: 25–27). For example, people would avoid buying luxury items, as Francisco, a religious leader in Maringue, explained: “People here could have bread every day, but they won’t because they are afraid.” Bread is a luxury item in Maringue, something eaten only 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 jealousy among one’s neighbors, which is potentially dangerous.

Rosa, a former combatant in her late thirties, fled from her in-laws 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 [not anymore]. 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” [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.

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 dynamics 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). When certain obligations or expectations are not met, tensions and feelings of resentment surface, which may spark suspicions of witchcraft. Several scholars have argued 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). Lubkemann (2008), for instance, noted a connection between changing patterns of labor migration and a rise in *uloi* (witchcraft) activities in Machaze (a district of Manica Province, also located in central Mozambique). Due to the higher incomes 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) concluded that these social conflicts had an inevitable by-product: *uloi*.

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 affected and separated because of flight, migration, abduction, death, disease, or other factors. Furthermore, during and in the immediate aftermath of the war, Mozambique’s economy collapsed, and the majority of households faced deep economic hardship (Hanlon 1996; Nordstrom 1997a; 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.

“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. 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], *feiticos* [witchcraft]. *Brrr* [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 eighteen 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 sharing in the wealth, and a fear among ex-combatants of disappointing relatives. 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. As described in Chapter 2, 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 a 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 ax, a hoe, seeds, some clothing, and a bucket. Many ex-combatants spent their entire allowances on their relatives yet still 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."

Third, some ex-combatants left the war feeling superior to those who had not fought in the war or left 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 [*you 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 they, 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 wishes 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.

Feelings of superiority also derived from a sense of independence, which the war generated in ex-combatants in relation to their senior family members (Borges-Coelho 2002; Granjo 2008). 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). It seems that the war accelerated this process. The area in which older generations traditionally exercised the strongest control was marriage, but as I described in Chapter 4, most combatants had already married during the war in the absence of their senior kin. I have described how combatants reproduced the position of elders by establishing fictive kin relations in order to legitimize marital unions, yet I also showed how some ex-combatants were not willing to reconsider these marriages when they were not accepted by their family members. 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 a final source of family tension: wartime changes within the family that caused certain shifts in the position of the demobilized combatant in relation to his or her relatives. After having spent seven years with Renamo, Elisa returned to her district of origin in Alto Molocue, the northern part of 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 Elisa well. About her return to her village of origin, Elisa recalled the following: “They [her father’s 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.”

On returning to their families, many female former combatants found themselves in a difficult position. As I have described in Chapter 4, these

women had engaged in sexual and marital relationships (whether voluntarily or otherwise) with male combatants, many had children, and they were often regarded them as “damaged goods,” as they were thought to have “had many men” during their time with Renamo (see also Honwana 2006: 79). These women were often at a marriageable age, which would normally entail possibilities for lobolo (bride price), a major source of income for the woman’s family. But for them, the prospects for lobolo were not very favorable. Elisa’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 Elisa 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 Elisa thought it was better to leave. She returned to Maringue, where she attempted to reunite with her husband, another Renamo combatant with whom she had had 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, having disappeared or died. Antonio, a former combatant from the district of Caia, which neighbors 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 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 introduced 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) who 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. In many cases 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. 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 as "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.

Mobility: Managing the Threat of Witchcraft

For people in central Mozambique, witchcraft offers a framework for explaining misfortune or health problems. 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 fortune in life, people seek protection from witchcraft by calling on the powers of a *nyanga*. In cases of sudden death, disease, or misfortune, a *nyanga* may conclude that the source of the trouble is a *nfiti* who is working behind the scenes, interfering in a certain person's life. A *nyanga* may then offer a treatment to curtail the powers of the *nfiti*. *Nyngas* are also visited for general protection, even if there is no direct sign of malicious intent by others.⁷ 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 (see also 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. The relationships between a fear of witchcraft (or of being accused of witchcraft) and mobility has also been noted by Lubkemann (2008: 328), who described 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 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 it may be part of a former combatant’s strategy to escape the authority of senior relatives. But generally, 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.⁸

However, ex-combatants’ decisions to settle outside the village of origin did not lead inescapably 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 and his father discussed Fernando’s settlement options, and eventually his father suggested that he seek a place of residence elsewhere, from which he could visit Dondo. Similarly, many other ex-combatants maintained ties to their relatives by visiting them. Recall Pedro, who was afraid to return to Mutarara (Tete Province), 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. He also visited the area for family obligations, such as funerals or healing ceremonies. Pedro felt obliged to participate in such practices and made an effort to 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 did want to be buried close to his family home, provided that he had left enough

money to cover the costs of transporting his 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.

Conclusion

This chapter has deepened the complexities of what is often called the “recipient community” by problematizing the notion of “home.” Together with the previous two chapters, it demonstrated the various ways in which kinship relations were central to Renamo combatants’ social and spatial trajectories. While the war between Renamo and the Frelimo government provided the backdrop for such dynamics, each of these chapters shows 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, such as the demobilization allowance and the time spent away from home. 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 has painted a more complex picture of the veteran’s return, which involved changing family dynamics and shifting economic and social positions. The former Renamo combatants were not necessarily alienated from their relatives. On the contrary, as I showed in this chapter, the relationships between veterans and their relatives were of vital importance in shaping the former combatants’ postwar lives, although they did not always settle near family.

Combined, the chapters showed how ex-combatants and their relatives navigated the environment of kinship shaped by expectations, obligations, and absence, as well as cultural understandings of gender, adulthood, marriage, health, healing, and morality. Thereby I hope to have provided a layered understanding of what may lie behind concepts such as the “returning combatant” and the “recipient community.” These chapters

have problematized the depictions of Renamo desmobilizados as forced combatants who were cleansed of the spirits of war and smoothly reintegrated into their communities of origin. Such depictions not only simplify their social and cultural contexts; they also depict former combatants as rather apolitical actors, whose participation in war could be washed away (see also Schafer 2007). My goal in the next chapters is to resituate the former Renamo combatants in their political context, by focusing on their navigations of social environments that are largely shaped by the former armed group, political actors, and the political landscape of Maringue and Mozambique at large.

CHAPTER 6

About Eating and Drinking

In the view of the international postwar “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 structure¹ 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, and DDR generally, is considered unsuccessful if the opposite happens, that is, if ex-combatants stick together to chart their paths into civilian life. The fear is that their potential for organized violence remains, because groups of ex-combatants could easily be remobilized and rearmed through rearming. 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 networks.

This is the first of two chapters that explore ex-combatants’ navigations of social environments outside of family structures and that are intertwined with political dynamics. Chapter 7 focuses on veterans’ relations and encounters with the state, and this chapter explores ex-combatants’ participation in former military and political party networks. By showing that these relationships and networks continued throughout the war and the postwar period, I detail how 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. This does not mean that these “Renamo networks” and the relationships within them have remained the

same over the course of war and peace. On the contrary, in the postwar period these networks have also changed in their membership as well as the quality of the relationships. I describe former combatants' navigation of these networks as characterized by "waithood."² This term captures veterans' expectations and frustrations about relationships of dependency with Renamo's (local) leaders yet also draws out the importance of feelings of belonging, social protection, and loyalty that shape participation in Renamo networks.

The focus on veterans' relationships with members of the former armed group allows me to address two presumptions that underlie the design of DDR programs. The first is that armed factions function merely 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), this chapter will show that the DDR framework fails to recognize the role of "big man" 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, and, 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.

These ideas tie 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 myriad activities, such as in electoral campaigns (Christensen and Utas 2008; Kriger 2003), as disciplined workforces (Hoffman 2011, 2007), in illicit trade (Persson 2012; Reno 1998), in private security (Cock 2005; Diphooorn 2015; Frerks, Gompelman, and van Laar 2008; Singh 2008), and in violent action and renewed warfare (Debos 2008; Hoffman 2007; Themnér 2012). I thus contribute to this body of scholarship by analyzing the intertwining of ex-combatants' networks and political parties in Mozambique.

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 Partido para a Paz Democracia e Desenvolvimento (Party for Peace, Democracy, and Development, PDD), a marginal political party. 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.³ "It is like two parties [*festas*]," said João. "One party has grilled chicken, Coca-Cola, 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 they 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 commonly used to describe corruption and other misuse of state funds (cf. Bayard 1989; Bayard, Ellis, and Hibou 1999). This is exemplified in the often-heard expression *o cabrito come onde está amarrado*, meaning "the goat eats where he is tethered." But as the two politicians suggest above, political power is not only about "eating"; it is also about 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 dependence (see also Chabal and Daloz 1999). Corruption and the misuse of state funds are thus largely 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 analyzed using notions such as clientelism, patronage, big man dynamics, and (neo)patrimonialism, all of which, in one way or another, are intended to describe the interconnectedness of the formal and the informal (Ferguson 2006; Pitcher, Moran, and Johnston 2009; Utas 2012). How this reflects on ex-combatants' social navigations of former military networks I can partially explain by using the notions "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, including régulos and party leaders. 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 positions are not official or inherited 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, which allow them to distribute resources, thereby creating "loose social webs based on the ability to gather followers."⁴ 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, Moran, and Johnston 2009: 138–139). Utas' understanding of big man dynamics is particularly useful in describing the rise (and fall) of ex-combatants in big man 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 help 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 (cf. Hoffmann 2007: 651). 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.⁵ Furthermore, a mere focus on patron-client relations would not capture the importance of horizontal relationships and the shifting of power positions (Utas 2012).

I situate big men and their followers in networks, which I regard as "inter-connected groups of decentralized components with significant autonomy making room for competition within shared strategies" (Utas 2012: 8–9, following Duffield 2002: 154). Networks are unstable, changing, and adaptable, and they comprise individuals with very different reasons for participating in them (Utas 2012: 13–14). The postwar transformations of former military networks illustrate not only the salience of these ties but also their adaptability. As we will see, positions within these networks are not fixed, big men may lose their legitimacy, and followers may establish ties with other big men. Applying the concepts of the big man and network dynamics to the former Renamo military networks is useful as it allows for an analysis of ex-Renamo combatants who relate as followers and as big men, in a variety of unstable horizontal and vertical relationships, which are informally and formally situated in a political party structure and Maringue's political context at large. Additionally, these concepts draw attention to relationships of dependency, and corresponding expectations and frustrations.

However, there are also certain limitations to the big man paradigm for understanding the social workings of Renamo networks in Maringue (Wiegink 2015a). First of all, the work of Utas (2012) and others who have developed patronage or big man dynamics as a lens to look at social dynamics within (former) armed groups is mainly based on research conducted

in West Africa (see also Hoffman 2007; Murphy 2003; Reno 1998). The armed groups researched in these studies differ from Renamo in objectives, wider conflict context, funding, and time frame, to name just a few factors. Utas' focus on flexibility is largely based on warlord dynamics and shifting alliances in Liberia (and elsewhere) that do not reflect (post-) civil war dynamics in Mozambique. As I will show further on, feelings of belonging and affinity and the factor of time—most ex-combatants I interviewed had been “with Renamo” for more than thirty years—are additional elements that are imperative for understanding the continuation of Renamo networks. Moreover, a strong focus on relationships of dependency risks depicting (former) combatants as “rational utility maximizers,” thereby downplaying political motivations for being part of a (former) armed group (Baas 2012; Munive 2013: 587). Such a focus also obscures dynamics of belonging, cohesion, and loyalty, which are considered, especially in the analysis of soldiering in the “Global North”, as central social aspects of military life (Ben-Ari 1998; Finley 2011; Grassiani 2013). With these caveats in mind, the following sections present a layered analysis of Renamo networks, discussing subsequently veterans' relationships with other veterans, with former commanders, and with political party leaders.

The Colleagues of the Trenches

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.

These are the words of Olivia, a skinny woman with an aggressive way of talking, who I interviewed in Maringue. Olivia could not tell me how old she was when Renamo captured her. She grabbed her breasts and said, “*nkabe*” (ChiSena for “no” or “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, 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 previous chapters, 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 (Wiegink 2013a). They did not reside just anywhere, however, but chose a familiar place instead. In many cases, ex-combatants were acquainted with Maringue as they had been stationed in Renamo’s headquarters during the war. In the wake of war, the district also offered military security, access to fertile land, and assurance of remobilization, in case the armed conflict flared up again. However, most ex-combatants said that being in the company of fellow veterans had been their principal reason for settling in Maringue.

Coparticipation in war seems to generate a sense of belonging and comradeship among combatants (Ben-Ari 1998: 98–101; Finkel 2010; Finley 2011; Grossman 1995; Kalyvas 2006: 46).⁶ As Grossman (1995: 90) has noted, sharing highly stressful times and jointly risking your life in the pursuit of common goals (be they ideological or criminal) creates a particular connection between combatants that is, as a Vietnam veteran and ex-Rhodesian mercenary, stated: a hell of a lot stronger than [the bond between] man and wife” (in Grossman 1995: 90). What happens to this “strong bond” when the guns are put down? Evaristo, a former combatant and president of the veteran association ADEMIMO, theorized that former combatants appreciate the company of other former combatants because they feel comfortable talking to each other. He described his view as follows: “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?’” 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: someone understands your experiences without the need for you to explain them (Finley 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. Indeed, the sense of shared identity may be more attributable to shared fond recollections than the traumatic memories.

The ties of friendship between Renamo veterans were most clearly visible in their participation in drinking clubs. Over the years of fieldwork, I followed a group of veterans living in the neighborhood referred to as *a margem de Nhamapaza* (the bank of the Nhamapaza River), a relatively rural and poor area close to Maringue town. Each time I visited the margem I encountered the same group of ten to twelve former Renamo combatants in someone's courtyard, sitting in the shade of a tree and sharing *nipa* (an alcoholic beverage brewed from corn) or some other kind of home-brewed liquor. These gatherings rotated: one day the wife of Tacherwa would make *nipa*, the next week there was *pombe* (another alcoholic beverage brewed from corn) in the house of Savimbe, and so on. Sara, a former Renamo DF, 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. As scholars such as Finley (2011) and Schafer (2007: 109) have noted, excessive drinking is a common trait among veterans of many wars, whether to numb memories of war or to endure daily hardship. 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 say, "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 visited only 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. For the Renamo veterans, these drinking clubs were the principle manifestation of their ties of friendship, and 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 in Maringue town in general.

Furthermore, it can be argued that in groups of war colleagues, veterans found a social environment that in some ways resembled kin structures. The conceptualization by (former) soldiers of military structures in terms of kinship is 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 *irmãos* (brothers and sisters).⁷ Family references are thus readily applied, but what does this say about the content of these relationships?

As demonstrated in previous chapters, former Renamo combatants' kinship relations involve a range of complexities that cannot be matched in the relations within Renamo networks. The use of kinship terms in this context must thus be seen as a way to address certain elements that resembled kinship structures, such as dynamics of interdependency and reciprocity. On many occasions I observed how Renamo veterans offered each other assistance in building huts or harvesting crops and offered food or financial support in times of acute sickness, death, and urgent need. On one trip to the Nhamapaza margem, Adão and I visited the house of Tacherwa, a former Renamo combatant we had planned to interview. During the usual initial exchange of greetings, I noticed Tacherwa had been drinking. His eyes were red, and he seemed to doze off during the conversation. Adão and I 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 Adão. 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. Adão said he would send his wife by to give them "something." Adão was taking care of this family by keeping an eye on them, visiting them, and giving them goods. The chicken he was offered reflected a 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 and his wife 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. These relationships formed a social security network, through which, in the words of Olivia, ex-combatants could feel "taken care of."

Former Commanders as Gatekeepers

Former Renamo combatants also engaged in what can be regarded as vertical relationships with former commanders. Similar to what Themnér (2012: 208) observed in Sierra Leone, the positions of midlevel commanders in

veterans' networks in Maringue could be characterized as those of gatekeepers and intermediaries who are "jealously guarding access" to ex-combatants, as they "intuitively" sense that such access to ex-combatants may be an economic and political asset. Themnér (2012) describes these midlevel ex-commanders as brokers who occupy a position between rank-and-file ex-combatants and big(ger) men in political and military elite groups, for whom ex-combatants may serve as workers, as personal security guards, or as fighters in the event of renewed warfare.

During the first months of fieldwork in Maringue, I met several former commanders who exemplified this broker position. One of them was comandante Matateo, a former Renamo commander who 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, 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 comandante 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." They talked about him with respect, recalling his accomplishments in the war, but also with fear. After the war, Matateo continued to work at Renamo's military base as one of the "presidential guards" and also occupied a position within the local Renamo party structure.

"I'm the chefe of the former combatants," comandante Matateo said to me in our first meeting, acknowledging his gatekeeper position. "The Renamo delegate does not know of your work here. What are you doing? Does the administration know you're here?" Matateo's questioning made apparent his position as a broker between the veterans community, the Renamo party leadership, the local nfumo, and 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 had already obtained), Matateo said I could "walk around as I pleased" (*a vontade*) and talk to people in the margem, but he also suggested that he or someone of his choosing should accompany me on my visits to Renamo veterans' homes.

Themnér (2012: 209) argued that the loyalty of rank-and-file veterans toward former commanders is mainly based on their relationships

established during the war. Often commanders 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 demobilization 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 were referred to as *comandantes* (commanders) by my research participants, are not necessarily born of their prior military rank. *Comandante* Matateo was not the wartime commander of the Renamo veterans in the margem, nor did he necessarily hold the rank of commander in Renamo's wartime military hierarchy. He was called "*comandante*" largely because of 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 Defence 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 broker position was shaped even more by his postwar ties to the Renamo political party and military wing. Matateo was responsible for the "social issues of *desmobilizados*," including the registration of former Renamo combatants in Maringue. This was by some veterans regarded 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.

Another example of a broker was Tomás, also former commander who was also active at Renamo's military base at the time of fieldwork. Tomás said he could arrange for me to visit one of the Zionist churches, which were generally associated with Renamo and its military wing. "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." Tomás said he currently worked with Renamo's local intelligence section, gathering information about the daily comings and goings in Maringue. He was probably somewhat exaggerating his influence with the Zionist pastors, but there was no way of knowing as he had a 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 Tomás

up on his offer to introduce me to the Zionist pastors, but his remarks clearly demonstrate his position as a big man, albeit one whose power was built on fear rather than loyalty.

Tomás and Matateo are two different examples of former Renamo commanders occupying the position of big men, wielding control over rank-and-file veterans and others associated with Renamo. Their status as comandantes was based not only on their rank in the (former) military hierarchy but also on their positions in postwar networks of dependency. For the ex-combatants, relationships with such brokers were essential because they provided links to the Renamo party and its military wing, and possible access to expected material benefits.

“When We Win, It Will Be Our Turn to Eat”

Most of the former Renamo combatants I met in Maringue were members of the Renamo party, although some were more active than others. In 2008, the Renamo party office was no more than a broken-down car in a large empty courtyard surrounded by bush, revealing that even in Maringue, Renamo had trouble keeping its local party structures functioning (see Carbone 2005: 431).⁸ Nevertheless, the party’s 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.

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 politicians. For the rank-and-file veterans, participation in relationships of dependency yielded 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 politicians, had more opportunities to carve out positions 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 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. Being a politician, he can be regarded as a “node” or a broker, a position he attained because of his relatively high level of education when he was recruited. In addition to knowing many rank-and-file ex-combatants in Maringue with whom he maintained reciprocal relationships, he was in close contact with the district’s Renamo delegate and was even an acquaintance of Dhlakama. In the postwar period 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, 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 was a loyal and valuable supporter as his wide network of rank-and-file veterans was a great source of information about politics, violent incidents, and the general “ambience” in Maringue. Such information was often valuable to 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 man dynamics.

In contrast to higher-ranked Renamo members, like Adão, most ex-Renamo combatants were 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 were 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 3), a tall, thin man who always wore the same ragged clothes and smoked cigarettes rolled using paper from his children’s notebooks. On days when he had no money for tobacco, he smoked just the paper. About 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 lie like this, we live in poverty, in disgrace. . . . We want our party to win but we don't have luck." 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. These expectations, however, were not met because Renamo did not have the means to reward the veterans or chose to allocate resources in a different way.

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." Efrain's testimony illustrated two crucial aspects of the big man 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, it was expected 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; 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. 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 afterward, 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, he and his family fell into dire poverty and were forced to live on handouts from the Catholic parish.

Oscar recounted how 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 or that he would return to work for Renamo. In fact, he felt forgotten and bitter. The district Renamo leaders rarely visited and he never received any financial aid from the party. One afternoon in August 2009, with the 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,” Oscar explained, referring to the local branch of the MDM, the political party founded in March 2009 by Daviz Simango.⁹ “They are celebrating at Silvo’s house.” I had known Silvo as a person who leaned slightly toward Renamo, but like many people, especially Renamo supporters, he had joined the newly founded MDM. “So he [Silvo] 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.”

Ex-Renamo combatants often said they were “waiting,” were “waiting for some things,” or “had to have patience” when asked about their relation to the party. As noted, this was not only an issue for ex-combatants but a general expectation of Renamo supporters and, in particular, of people who lived and worked under Renamo rule during the war. The leadership was well aware of the expectations and the increasing frustration among its supporters, ex-combatants and noncombatants alike. On a visit to Maringue on 18 August 2009, Dhlakama pleaded for patience and perseverance. “It is like a woman in labor, she is suffering,” Dhlakama said during his

public speech in the center of Maringue town. “You, being Renamo, are suffering. But after labor the new mother is satisfied. She has a baby. Have patience!” Election time stirred up the hopes of some Renamo veterans and thus reinforced ties between the veterans and the party, but to most Renamo veterans it was apparent that, at the time of fieldwork, Renamo’s electoral prospects were bleak.

Since 1999, Renamo has been gradually less successful in every election. As several observers have concluded, over two postwar decades Renamo had proved incapable of forming a genuine opposition party (Manning 2010).¹⁰ Renamo representatives generally blamed their successive electoral losses on electoral fraud, leading them to boycott parliament and, more recently, the municipal elections held in November 2013. But the failure to become an effective political party has also been attributed to the role of Dhlakama, who has ruled Renamo for over three decades (Cahen 2015; Carbone 2005). In a recent article, Alex Vines (2013) described Dhlakama as a guerrilla leader, who ran the party as a military movement with a highly centralized and personalized leadership. Dhlakama is portrayed as unable to modernize and democratize Renamo and has marginalized several of its most skillful politicians, whom he regarded as potential threats (such as Daviz Simango). Vines (2013:390) presents Dhlakama as an example of poor elite-level reintegration, while he stresses that Renamo’s rank-and-file were successfully integrated.

While I tend to agree with Vines’s portrayal of Renamo’s leader, an understanding of Renamo as a “one-man show” obscures the relationships of dependency between Dhlakama and his followers, including the expectations and social tensions these relationships entail. As Carbone (2005) notes, one of the party’s weaknesses is that its funds hardly trickle down to the districts, which makes it difficult to keep local structures functioning and increasingly strains relationships of dependency between the leadership and veterans. 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.

“A Person Will Never Forget Who Feeds Him”: Switching Sides

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. As Chabal (2009: 140–142) has noted, multiparty democracy creates competition between the patronage networks of political parties, in which the ruling party often has far more leverage and resources than the opposition. Following the analogy proposed earlier, it can be argued that Frelimo is “eating” while Renamo is “waiting for its time to eat.” In the next chapter I will explore in more detail how the Frelimo and district government were in a position to distribute resources, such as pensions for *antigos combatentes* and the so-called seven million, a district development fund providing credit for income-generating projects and infamous for its corruption. For now, it suffices to state that Frelimo party leaders and government representatives had the power to allocate such resources and thus to reward supporters for their loyalty and thereby consolidate power positions. Former Renamo combatants were generally excluded from the aforementioned resources of the state, causing frustration, anger, and a sensation that Frelimo was “eating alone.”

It follows that Renamo and Frelimo do not exist in separate worlds. Renamo supporters, for instance, relate their marginal position to Frelimo. Frelimo, in turn, seems determined to “steal” Renamo supporters, especially those of higher ranks. The former Renamo combatants in Maringue spoke of their fellow veterans “being bought” by Frelimo. Some switched sides openly, but most “disappeared” with their families to set up a life elsewhere, probably with a significant sum of money.

One of the Renamo combatants who had switched sides was André, 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 André used to be a Renamo combatant and even a “presidential guard.” In one of our conversations, André explained that he had switched to Frelimo because he saw that Renamo would never win the elections. “They know how to make war, but not politics,” he said. He seemed pleased with his decision, which had proved highly beneficial for him. Between two of my fieldwork periods, he was elected first secretary of Frelimo, the party’s highest position in the district. After his election, André replaced all the existing Frelimo party officials with 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 2, André’s rise to the position of first secretary was accompanied by an increase in political violence in Maringue, as André had a more aggressive attitude toward

Renamo. It seemed that André needed to underscore the exclusionary character of switching parties, or at least that was how Adão and other Renamo veterans interpreted his aggressive attitude.

A second example of an individual who navigated between political parties is Tomás, an ex-Renamo commander whom I described earlier as a “broker.” Tomás’ navigations were less successful than André’s, 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). On his return to Maringue in 2008 he was employed in Renamo’s intelligence organization. Then in 2009 Tomás joined the emerging MDM and even became the movement’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 Tomás’s network also switched positions.

Tomás 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 salary did not materialize, Tomás and his followers grew more and more impatient. As a consequence, the MDM in Maringue was slowly disintegrating. This process was accelerated by propositions Tomás received from Maringue’s administrator, who had offered Tomás a permanent job. Tomás 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 Tomás 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,’” Tomás answered. “And a permanent job is hard to find. I have to decide quickly.” Tomás 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 Tomás a job, the administrator made, in my view, a political move intended to weaken MDM.

Eventually Tomás 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 houses to ask people which party they were going to vote for. In the eyes of Renamo members this was partially Tomás's doing. On election day, Tomás was pounced on by some of his former Renamo colleagues and heavily beaten. When I returned to Maringue a year later in 2010, Tomás 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." Tomás's 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.

The arrival of MDM laid bare the instability of networks shaped by big man dynamics, as individuals in high political positions changed sides. Tomás's navigations show the unstable character of these political networks and of the positions of big men and showed 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, 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-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, who was (relatively) old and sick, would "wait some more," while ex-combatants of (previously) higher rank, like André and Tomás,

were bolder 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-combatant 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.

Second, the scope for maneuvering between political parties was further diminished by the threat of violence. During the war, 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 the various networks associated with political parties. 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 off 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.¹¹ But what this case of violent revenge made even more apparent is Renamo's powerlessness, as it could not 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 violent incidents.

Third and finally, 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.

Conclusion

Over the course of 2012 and 2013, Renamo established and reactivated military bases in rural areas across central Mozambique, which included a

recruitment campaign and military training. The little information available from inside Renamo's armed wing indicates that the new combatants included new recruits, presidential guards, and Renamo desmobilizados from the civil war, who were often in their forties or even fifties (Pearce 2016). The continuation of the Renamo networks that I described in this chapter has thus, at least to a certain extent, facilitated this recruitment for renewed warfare. This would, it seems, confirm fears embedded in DDR policy that the continuation of ties between former combatants and their armed group is a potential danger. Yet the trajectories of former combatants in Maringue show a more complex picture: they reveal the *inevitability* of the continuation of ties with fellow Renamo veterans and the centrality of these Renamo networks in what, in DDR terms, could be referred to as a process of reintegration (Wiegink 2015b). Participation in such networks offered Renamo veterans social and physical security, a sense of belonging, and—for some—social and economic mobility. Former combatants' navigations of these networks are therefore crucial for comprehending their postwar social trajectories and for grasping their imaginations of possibilities for attaining a more tolerable life.

The importance of Renamo networks for former combatants was rooted in its multifaceted character, as it involved horizontal relationships of friendship with fellow veterans, marriages established during the war, clientele for economic activities, and patronage relationships with higher-placed (former) combatants and politicians. Some of these relationships started during the war and others were the outcomes of settlement decisions and other contingent factors that formed ex-combatants' postwar trajectories. On top of that, the identification of former combatant with Renamo was profoundly shaped by their expectations of a Renamo electoral victory, which would provide them with possibilities to "eat." It is here where instability and friction come in, as especially the vertical relationships in these networks are based on the credibility of leaders or "big men," who—at the time of fieldwork in 2008 and 2009—were increasingly losing legitimacy in the eyes of their followers as they were unable to cater for them. Furthermore, Renamo networks were also prone to competition between "patrons" or, more specifically, leaders of the various political parties, which also contributed to the instability of these networks.

The Renamo networks I observed in Maringue are thus in many ways related to the wider political landscape of the district and of Mozambique at large. Furthermore, the participation and meaning of these networks

cannot be understood without the consideration of larger patterns of political marginalization and exclusion. The next chapter therefore zooms out to consider the position of war veterans on the national level. This will form the backdrop for exploring former Renamo combatants' interactions, expectations, and conceptualizations of the state.

CHAPTER 7

“Only a Bit Mozambican”

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?!

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.

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 were introduced in earlier chapters, where I described their trajectories within Renamo and their dire living conditions. These quotes address 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 and explained how and why former Renamo combatants continued to participate in Renamo networks. In this chapter I explore ex-combatants' expectations of winning the elections and how this relates to their notion of the state.

Renamo veterans have a dual relationship with the state. On the one hand, they 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 development activities initiated by the state, such as the construction of a new hospital in Maringue. This chapter demonstrates how ex-Renamo combatants understand their hardship as a consequence of their marginal position in relation to the state, which makes them “only a bit Mozambican.” On the other hand, however, the chapter shows that the state is central in Renamo veterans’ imaginations of their navigational possibilities for a better life. 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’ understandings and expectations of the democratic state must be regarded largely in terms of exclusive caretaking, a conception that is shaped by the relationships of dependency and reciprocity discussed in the previous chapter, and that must also be understood in relation to the historical and political positions of veterans vis-à-vis the state in Mozambique.

Veterans and Citizenship

More than a decade ago, Chris 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.” Alden (2002) assumed that the demobilized combatants of Renamo and the government would become “like everyone else,” which is in fact the general aim of most reintegration programs around the world (McMullin 2013: 233). But as McMullin (2013: 5) notes in a critical discussion of reintegration processes of ex-combatants, being like everyone else in the Mozambican context (he draws on examples from Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Namibia as well) basically means “reintegrating former combatants back into poverty and socio-political marginalization that preceded and perhaps even provoked conflict.” More so, the “fading away” of soldiers advances an understanding of ex-combatants in apolitical terms, as fighters socialized into violent networks, who need resocializing into community life. As observed previously, in Mozambique this resocializing supposedly happened through cleansing rituals by which veterans become “people like the others” (Granjo 2007c).

Renamo’s remobilization in 2012 and earlier protests of former soldiers of the FAM (Wiegink 2013b) show that the old soldiers have far from faded

away. Rather, *desmobilizados* of the civil war have become an increasingly potent force in Mozambican politics and, like veterans elsewhere, are in the position to make specific claims on the state. Rather than being like everyone else, former combatants may become a particular type of citizen. This is not unique to Mozambique, as soldiering is often tied to concepts of citizenship, because 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 of the state and its monopoly on violence, as has been poignantly demonstrated by the recent armed conflict in Mozambique. But rather than emphasizing the violent agency of former (Renamo) combatants, I propose to focus on how war veterans experience and imagine the state and to regard uneven reintegration processes as a lens to explore questions of state formations and emerging forms of unequal citizenship (cf. Metsola 2006; Wiegink 2019a).

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, 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 not only consists of institutions and bodies that execute state functions; it is also imagined and socially constructed through everyday practices (Das and Poole 2004; Diphorn 2015; Kapferer and Bertelsen 2012: 2; Trouillot 2001: 131). 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 its inherent contradictions (Sharma and Gupta 2006: 19). How such contradictions affect people’s daily lives is best understood through the notion of citizenship.

Generally defined as “a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community” (Marshall 1983 [1950]: 253), citizenship has been understood by anthropologists as a construct that is the mediated outcome of political and collective projects (such as the nation-state) and the subjects’

efforts (Ong 1996: 737; Sørensen 2008: 425). Citizenship is inherently about inclusion and exclusion, and this boundary is drawn largely by the state (Benhabib 2002a; Wimmer 2002). However, who is a citizen and who is not isn't a matter of either-or but is better understood as "a spectrum of variable rights and denial of rights" (Stasiulis and Bakan 1997: 114). To describe the construction of former Renamo combatants' citizenship I employ Benhabib's (2002b: 454) three-way understanding of citizenship as comprising privileges of (1) political membership, (2) social rights and benefits, and (3) a collective identity (see also 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, ex-Renamo combatants 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).¹ This debate focuses on how in the absence of or in conjunction with the state, alternative systems of governance, justice, and citizenship have come to operate (Kyed 2014; Obarrio 2014). In Mozambique there is a bewildering number of justice and security providers of both state and nonstate origin, ranging from community police and traditional healers to chiefs, Christian pastors, and state administrators (Bertelsen 2009; Jacobs 2010; Kyed 2014).² In Maringue, I observed how people in search of security and justice would turn to chiefs, nyangas, the secretário do bairro, pastors, the priest, profetas, the district administrator, the political party leadership of Renamo and Frelimo, Renamo's presidential guards, or the police, or a combination of these actors. In such fields of forces, it might be appropriate to speak of "customary citizenship" (Obarrio 2014: 109) as a localized form of national belonging, blending in "traces from different political regimes, articulating elements of official law, custom, and kinship." This field of forces does not exist in the void created by a failed or frail state, but rather these are intertwined with the (district) government, the Frelimo political party, a system of traditional authorities, and veterans' imaginations of the

state. This creates citizens who steer to be included in certain networks but who are also often excluded from others. Former combatants’ navigations of these networks were particularly defined by partisan politics.

How and where boundaries of inclusion and exclusion are drawn is a process that is for a great part shaped by construction of the collective memory. Dorman, Hammett, and Nugent (2007: 13) have argued that in sub-Saharan Africa, collective memories of the past are often built around (colonial) oppression and an image of an “other” against which the positive in-group identity is defined. Such interpretations, as Metsola (2010: 590) points out, “are not merely a matter of national imaginary. They are highly significant to current socio-political relations, defining terms for inclusion and exclusion.” Ranger (2004: 223), for instance, has argued for Zimbabwe that while the glorification of liberation struggles celebrated the heroism of the war veteran, it also had a flip side, 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; Meneses 2015; Sumich 2013). Frelimo’s leadership aimed to create “national unity” and *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 willfully disregarded it, became *o inimigo interno* (the internal enemy) and were outside the moral bounds of the body politic” (see also Macamo 2016: 99; Meneses 2015).³ In contemporary Mozambique, in which Frelimo has control of the state apparatus and has largely placed it at the service of the party, the Frelimo leadership continues to be in a position to determine the borders of inclusion and exclusion in which the interpretations of past wars play a central role (Igreja 2008; Kyed and Buur 2006: 565). This is particularly the case in the governments’ take on war veterans.

Constructing Worthy and Unworthy Veterans

Former soldiers play a specific role within a state’s history construction. 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 (Buckley-Zistel 2006; Cohen 2001), or they may be something in between (Wiegink 2013b). Civil wars pose even more challenging questions about 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 the resources available and 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 the positioning of Renamo veterans as unworthy citizens as being shaped largely by the ruling Frelimo elite's historical narrative.

The Frelimo party 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 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 a silence concerning the civil war. As in other countries that were born of liberation struggles, such as Zimbabwe (Alexander, McGregor, and Ranger 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). This is exemplified in the liberation war's prominence in memorialization practices, such as holidays that mark the start of the liberation struggle and the naming of schools and roads after heroes of the liberation struggle, like Eduardo Mondlane, and socialist heroes like Vladimir Lenin and Mao Zedong. These are reminders of Frelimo's "victory" over the Portuguese colonization and part of what Kossler (2007: 362) calls "the glorification of history of the liberation warfare." 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).

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 reshaped in the present (Antze and Lambek 1996: xii–xiii; Nazarea 2006: 325; Robben 2012; Werbner 1998). In Mozambique there have been numerous examples of issues that have challenged the Frelimo “master narrative”; among these are suspicious deaths of various prominent Frelimo members who were critical of the party, such as Uria Simango (Igreja 2008: 554), increasing testimonies of the violence of Operação Produção and other postindependence policies (Macamo 2016; Igreja 2013), the rapid postwar accumulation of wealth by Frelimo leaders (Pitcher 2006), and the disregard of certain groups privileged during Frelimo’s socialist period (Guerra 2012). These examples do not include the crackdown on critical voices and Frelimo’s role in the recent armed conflict. Nevertheless, it is the Frelimo interpretation of Mozambique’s recent history that has largely determined which categories of former combatants have access to the resources of the state and which do not.

As I have argued elsewhere (Wiegink 2019a), three main categories of veterans may be distinguished in Mozambique’s state narrative: *antigos combatentes*, former FAM soldiers, and ex-Renamo combatants. Not all war veterans in Mozambique fit into these categories, such as the ex-militias that were never officially recognized and demobilized by ONUMOZ and the Mozambican soldiers who fought in the Portuguese army.⁴ Furthermore, these categorizations suggest an illusory homogeneity 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. 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’ ability to lay claims on the state. 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*. Therefore, it is necessary to discuss each of these categories briefly.

Antigos Combatentes: Heroes of the Liberation Struggle

It is not surprising that the veterans of the liberation struggle, called *antigos combatentes*, are regarded as national heroes and are rewarded as such (Wiegink 2019a). They are the most privileged veterans in Mozambique, as

they fought in the war that granted Frelimo the legitimacy to rule the country. The Frelimo ruling elite remains largely made up of *antigos combatentes*, who occupy the most important governing positions in the country, from the republic's presidency to the administrator of Maringue.

In Maringue, the *antigos combatentes* have received their pensions only since 2000. Their district association's leader at the time, José Ranqueni, explained that he and his colleagues receive a pension ranging from 3,370 to 5,120 meticaís (approximately 80 to 120 euros in 2008), depending on the individual's previous military rank. Given that the minimum wage in Mozambique at the time of fieldwork was approximately 1,800 meticaís, the pension represented a significant income. Ranqueni 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 combatentes* 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.

In Maringue, such benefits are widely regarded as being extremely generous. The *antigos combatentes* are seen as privileged citizens since they are "taken care of" by the government. The allocation of pensions and benefits to the veterans of the liberation war is regarded as a legitimate and just policy, as far as it benefits real *antigos combatentes*. 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. What is questioned, however, is how the funds for *antigos combatentes* were in some cases allocated to individuals allegedly close to the Frelimo party. Some of these individuals were former FAM soldiers, but others had no history of fighting. The lists of beneficiaries of these pensions and benefits was generally considered to be prone to fraud and offered possibilities for the Frelimo party leaders to reward their followers.⁵ Notwithstanding this criticism on the

distribution of these pensions, Renamo veterans regarded the *antigos combatentes* as an example of how war veterans were supposed to be treated.

The Forgotten Sons of the State

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). The character of the civil war and its consequences for the positions of former combatants were well summarized by Jose Ranqueni, who compared the civil war to the liberation struggle: “They [the government/Frelimo] 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.” Ranqueni differentiated between the anticolonial struggle and the civil war, saying that the latter was fought for less glorious causes. While *antigos combatentes* fought a glorious war “for the liberation of men and land,” Renamo and FAM veterans were involved in a conflict with a far more ambivalent character. The war ended not 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 the former FAM soldiers was shaped by dilemmas typical of the aftermath of civil war, whereby there are invariably (at least) two former armed groups that need to be dealt with. In such a context, a privileged 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). To avoid conflict and political preferences, and to underscore the “brotherly” aspect of the war, the ONUMOZ DDR program did not differentiate between ex-Renamo combatants and ex-FAM soldiers; they were all referred to as *desmobilizados*, demobilized people (Alden 2002; Schafer 2007: 123). But after ONUMOZ payments of demobilized soldiers ceased in 1996 and employment creation programs were concluded in mid-1997, the Frelimo government set the agenda for demobilized soldiers and followed a very different approach. 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 war veterans.

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. The pensions for government soldiers were stipulated in Decree 3/86, which was issued in 1986. The decree excluded Renamo from normal pensions, but Taju (1998: 95) noted that the same decree regulated the pensions of disabled soldiers who were handicapped during military service, which did include disabled ex-Renamo combatants. Yet the most problematic element of the decree for former FAM soldiers was that it set a prerequisite of a minimum of ten years of military service in order to receive a pension (Taju 1998:50). Most of them had served longer than the obligatory two years but less than the minimum ten years and consequently were not entitled to pensions (Wiegink 2013b).⁶

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 more than fourteen different associations that were trying to pressure the government to change legislation concerning veterans through negotiations and the threat of demonstrations and violence. Parallels can be drawn between the struggle of veterans in Mozambique and that of former combatants in neighboring Zimbabwe, where, as Alexander, McGregor, and Ranger (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, McGregor, and Ranger 2000; Kriger 2003), the former FAM soldiers fought a far more 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).

Over the years, there have been several changes in the legislation concerning veterans’ pensions. In 2010, the Ministry of the Combatants was founded, replacing the Ministry of Antigo Combatentes, which dealt with issues related solely to the veterans of the liberation war. One of the new ministry’s legislative changes was to grant war veterans the right to a “survival pension” of 600 meticaís (in 2013), which is considered a great victory for the veterans’ associations but also continues to be a debated issue as pensions are considered too low and are not reaching all desmobilizados.⁷ In response to the recent armed conflict, the Peace and National Reconciliation Fund was established in 2014 to assist desmobilizados da guerra (of the FAM and Renamo) and antigos combatentes in setting up “social and economic projects.” The fund targets 100,000 beneficiaries, who in theory can apply for funding for small and medium-size microcredit projects. But despite their inclusive character, these changes have almost exclusively benefited antigos combatentes and FAM veterans, as I demonstrate in the following section.

Renamo: “They Messed Up the Country”

In the Frelimo elite’s narrative of the civil war, Renamo is the main aggressor in the conflict. The former rebels are depicted either as *bandidos armados* (armed bandits) or as the puppets of foreign regimes aiming to destabilize Mozambique (Igreja 2008). This 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 was very clear: former Renamo combatants were not considered entitled to pensions, as the government did not want to reward those believed to be responsible for causing the civil war (Schafer 2007: 124). 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 leadership had made to its soldiers.⁸

However, in 2009 the Frelimo government’s stance toward Renamo veterans changed. In the run-up to the national elections that year, President Armando 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 Guebuza’s presidency there were some notable changes in policies concerning veterans of the civil war. One of these changes was, as I mentioned earlier, the founding of the Ministry of the Combatants in January 2010. The new ministry concerns issues of the liberation war *and* demobilized soldiers of the civil war, including both former Renamo and government forces.⁹ However, in an interview I conducted with Antonio Mendez, the ministry’s national director for the social insertion of demobilized combatants and the person in charge of what may be called “reintegration” on the national level, it became clear that former Renamo combatants were excluded from the ministry’s resources (i.e., pensions) on both administrative and moral grounds.

When I asked Mendez how pensions for Renamo veterans were calculated, he answered, in concurrence with recent legislative changes, that this figure depended on the number of years one spent in military service, as it did for 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 Mendez, 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 [combatants] 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 Mendez, the problem lay 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. As mentioned earlier, in the wake of war there was specific attention to 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, AMODEG), made sure that if a former FAM soldier were to become president of the association, a Renamo veteran would be vice president, and conversely (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 and negotiations with the government have focused primarily on issues affecting demobilized soldiers of the government forces. This was illustrated by a list of demands proposed by the *Foro Moçambicano para Ex-Combatentes* (Mozambican Forum for Ex-Combatants, FOMECE), in which more than fourteen veterans associations participated; the list included pensions for Renamo veterans, but as the director of one of the veterans associations explained, along with pensions for deserters, this was considered among the most controversial demands.

The controversy was, in my view, related not only to the bureaucratic issues mentioned above but also to the Frelimo government's images of Renamo as unworthy of receiving state funds. Mendez 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.” Mendez 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 civil servants' 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. 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 the national director of insertion. 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 (see also Broch-Due 2005: 14).

Experiencing and Understanding the State

In this section I will examine how Renamo veterans from Maringue experience the aforementioned categorizations of veterans in everyday life and how they interpret and imagine the state. What follows is a three-way analysis that loosely accords with Benhabib'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 of state-citizen relationships.

Exclusionary Encounters

Renamo veterans' most direct and frequent experience with state institutions was their encounters with the bureaucratic apparatus of Maringue's district government. To understand the nature of such encounters, it is first important to note that the current form of district government is largely experienced as an external structure that arrived after the war. As I described in Chapter 2, pre- and postindependence Maringue could be described as an area of limited statehood. During the civil war, the area came under the loose control of Renamo, which officially governed Maringue until 1997, offering limited social services such as health care and education. The government apparatus consolidated in Maringue from 1997 onward.

In Maringue, *a administração* (the administration) was the most common term for referring to the state, its political power, and Frelimo. The administration occupied one of Maringue's largest and best-maintained buildings, situated 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-ranked government official in the district. When President Guebuza visited the district in 2009, 300 meters of road in this square were asphalted. Together with the market place on the other side of town, this was the center of social activity in Maringue. In and around the administration I always ran into régulos, pastors, antigos combatentes, Frelimo politicians, and civil servants. It was the place where government meetings were 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 for a copy of his identity card, but this task had been complicated. Copies of identity cards are provided free of charge by the district government, as such copies are necessary for school registration and other government services. However, the civil servant at the administration's front desk had asked Adão to pay 100 meticaís (approximately \$4 at the time), 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.

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 introduced in the previous chapter and Renamo's district representative for ex-combatant 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. The application 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, which had been 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 because 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 a card was perceived as a daunting undertaking, as it required one to know people within the administration, which most Renamo veterans did not, or to bribe civil servants, which for most ex-combatants was financially impossible. Such exclusionary practices were experienced not only by Renamo veterans but also by Maringue's rural population at large. But for Renamo veterans these exclusionary encounters were largely interpreted as politically motivated and in terms of continuing animosities between Renamo and Frelimo.

The experiences of exclusion were felt not only in such daily encounters with the state but were, by some former combatants, also felt in relation to national politics and political discourse. This is exemplified by the words of Caetano, who I have introduced before. 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 goods, 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.

As Mozambique is one of the world’s poorest countries, discourse on the eradication of absolute poverty shape politics on both the national and local level. For people like Caetano, however, this discourse is 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 interested only in helping those who are members of the Frelimo party.¹⁰

There were three government resources that were used to consolidate support for the Frelimo party and are worth mentioning in more detail because they came up frequently in conversations with Renamo veterans. The first resource was the pensions for *antigos combatentes*, as discussed above. The second was jobs, usually odd jobs (*biscatos*), which were one of the few ways to earn cash in Maringue because permanent jobs for the predominantly unqualified Maringuenses were scarce. The administration and other government institutions were the main recruiter for such jobs in the district. It was generally believed that the Frelimo party approved the lists of people hired for a particular *biscato* and privileged those who were Frelimo members. The third resource that the district government and Frelimo were able to distribute was the so-called seven million.¹¹ 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 meticaís (approximately \$200,000) 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. However, this last part of the process has failed dramatically throughout the country, as evidenced by the fact that in 2008 less than 10 percent of the distributed credit was returned.¹² Renamo veterans considered it to be impossible to successfully apply for the District Development Fund. In fact, I did not hear of any ex-Renamo combatants who submitted a project proposal. The following remark made by Zacharias, a Renamo party representative 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].” 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 being excluded from these funds. Taken together, these stories suggest that funds were distributed along political lines, strengthening patronage ties between the local district government, the local wing of the Frelimo party, and Frelimo members in Maringue. Most Renamo veterans were well aware that they did not fall into this fortunate category and were 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. Caetano expressed his frustration as follows: "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 on the state's and 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 to trigger the consideration of "taking up a gun" again. This strengthens observations made in Chapter 6, where Renamo veterans were characterized as "waiting" and increasingly frustrated with Frelimo, the Renamo leadership, and "democracy" in general.

"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 that Frelimo misinterpreted "their war." Many ex-Renamo combatants 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's

book *Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique* (1991). As discussed in Chapter 1, the veterans were appalled by the book’s title; as one of them reflected, “that means that Renamo did not have political ideas! that we were armed bandits!” Renamo’s main representative in the district, the delegate 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 in Maputo] have reconsidered the ideas of Frelimo. All thanks to us.”

In Chapter 1, I explained how Renamo veterans often framed the war in terms of a “struggle for democracy.” I argued that such an interpretation of the war, whether *ex 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 the official telling of history in Mozambique. During another meeting with delegate 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 the dominant written history of Mozambique. “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.” Pereira was referring to the famous picture of Renamo’s leader, Afonso Dhlakama, and Mozambique’s President Joaquim Chissano shaking hands right after the General Peace Accords were signed in Rome in 1992; the photo features on the cover of a history textbook widely used in the country’s schools. In Pereira’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. In pointing this out, he suggested an alternative narrative about the war, which contradicts the dominant Frelimo narrative.

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). One example of this is the naming of a square in Beira after André Matsangaíssa during Renamo’s municipal rule. But as Igreja (2013) shows, Frelimo’s ruling elite has opposed such alternative propositions in its historical interpretations. 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).

So far, the government, as well as religious organizations, and civil society organizations such as Justapaz and 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 counterversion of the past that would destroy the image of Frelimo as the blameless victim of an aggressive Renamo.

There are concrete references to veterans' positions in Renamo's interpretation of the war as a struggle for democracy. An ex-Renamo combatant summarized Mozambique's recent history in one sentence: "Frelimo brought us independence and we brought democracy." Such a view equates Renamo's war with Frelimo's struggle against colonialism, giving both wars similar moral connotations. Additionally, these words equate 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 (also) 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 be 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 enjoy access only 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. These everyday exclusionary encounters with the state 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" (Sharma and Gupta 2006: 11–12).

Exclusive Caretaking: Imagining the State

In this third and final section I address how former Renamo combatants imagine the state and state-citizen relations in terms of *exclusive caretaking*. This imaginary of the state is shaped by the tension between the practices and representations of the state encountered in everyday life, a particular notion of “democracy,” and the experience of soldiering and of being a veteran.

For ex-Renamo combatants, “democracy” was profoundly linked to socioeconomic prosperity, albeit shaped by a patrimonial logic. As mentioned earlier, former Renamo combatants often said that their war was “about democracy,” which was also the answer Adriano gave me, when I asked him why he fought for Renamo in the war. I spoke to Adriano at his home, which was one of the most miserable homesteads I had visited. He and his family lived in a messy courtyard in two small huts that were on the verge of collapsing. The children looked skinny and unhealthy, and Adriano himself seemed to have a different infection each time I met with him. I asked him if he thought Renamo succeeded in bringing democracy. “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.” For Adriano, democracy meant “a good life,” one unlike his own. This echoes the account of Caetano, who like Adriano took pride in being part of Renamo’s “struggle for democracy” but who was rather disillusioned with what democracy had brought them. At the same time these Renamo veterans observed that “democracy” had brought prosperity for those who were considered the “winners” of democracy.

Former Renamo combatants regarded the state as a caretaker, which, as they observed, took care of the *antigos combatentes* in particular and other Frelimo members in general. 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 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 bimonthly allowance. In their eyes, ONUMOZ 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. Such an understanding of differentiated citizenship was derived from experience with how Frelimo privileged the *antigos combatentes* and (certain) members in Maringue, but it was also part of a broader historical understanding of exclusion, which included Frelimo’s privileging of the south of Mozambique and a historical awareness that there were certain groups of people that the Frelimo government had deemed unworthy of participating in society, such as the unemployed and the homeless, who were in the wake of independence sent to reeducation camps in the remote north of the country during *Operação Produção* (Hall and Young 1997). Furthermore, differentiated citizenship was also a central characteristic of the Portuguese colonial administration, which had privileged the *assimilados* (African subjects who reached a certain level of “civilization” in the eyes of the colonial administration), Mozambicans of mixed descent, and those with a certain level of education. These groups were considered citizens and lived under civil law, while the majority lived under state-enforced customary law (Bowen 2000: 69). This provides further context to Renamo veterans’ imaginations of state–citizen relations in terms of boundary drawing and differentiated citizenship.

References to exclusivity thus not only should be seen as a criticism of the workings of the state or of Frelimo’s one-party rule but are a fundamental feature of Renamo veterans’ imaginations of state–citizen relations and democracy. Building on observations made in Chapter 6, it can be argued that Renamo members expected exclusionary practices from their own party if it were to come to power, except then they would be the ones to benefit. For Caetano, Adão, and many others, democracy effectively meant a zero-sum game in which the winning party has five 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 certain resources and a particular kind of power (see also Macamo 2017: 205; Vigh 2006: 121). For Renamo veterans, “democracy” implied 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 actual government sheds light on ex-combatants’ frustrations with the state on the one hand and their hopes and expectations of the state on the other.

Conclusion

“Old soldiers” in Mozambique have not “faded away.” On the contrary, war veterans occupy particular political positions and articulate specific demands in relation to the state. This holds true for Renamo veterans, anti-gos combatantes, and former FAM soldiers, as it does for war veterans in many other contexts, such as veterans of the Vietnam war in the United States (Scott 2017; Holm 1996), former Dutchbat soldiers who were stationed with the UN peacekeeping mission in Srebrenica (Duijzings 2017; Van der Berg 2009), former junta military in Argentina (Robben 2018; Van Roekel 2016), and former FMLN combatants in El Salvador (Sprenkels 2018), to name just a few examples. War veterans may be privileged and receive benefits like jobs or pensions, they may be vilified as enemies, or they may be pitied and stigmatized as disabled or traumatized victims (Gerber 2012). Because of their role as participants in an armed group (be it a rebel movement or the military) former combatants in Mozambique and elsewhere often constitute a particular category of citizens in postwar contexts (Wiegink, Sprenkels, and Sørensen 2019). It follows that the categorizations of war veterans are multiple and contested and that they often shift as political contexts change (Thiranagama and Kelly 2009) long after the fighting has ended. How categories of war veterans are constructed, ascribed, and maintained over the course of time is a highly context-specific process, which would warrant further comparative explorations that go beyond the scope of this book (see Wiegink, Sprenkels, and Sørensen 2019). One of the main takeaways from a focus on Renamo war veterans shows that such categories do not exist in isolation from other categories of war veterans of opposing belligerent or previous wars within the same national context (Wiegink 2019a).

A second major takeaway from this chapter is that former combatants’ relationship with the state is fundamentally related to imaginations of what state-citizen relationships should entail. Implicit in ex-Renamo combatants’ accounts are certain specific “hopes for the state” (Jansen 2014) that were expressed in terms of “being taken care of.” The former combatants in

Maringue imagined the state as an exclusive caretaker, which allocates 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 receive rewards for their loyalty, as I described in Chapter 6. Such imaginations and hopes of what the state could mean for former combatants may also contribute to their increased sense of frustration with the Renamo party as well as with the Frelimo government. Therefore, the 2012 remobilization of Renamo and the ongoing armed conflict cannot be understood independently of Renamo veterans’ relations with the state, their memory politics, their experiences with exclusion, and their 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.

Conclusion

In October 2012, Renamo's leader, Afonso Dhlakama, left Maputo for "the bush." He reestablished one of Renamo's former bases in Satandjira, in the Gorongosa Mountains, and was joined by an unknown number of armed Renamo men. Over the course of 2013 and 2014 various clashes were reported between Renamo combatants and the national police and the army in Sofala Province, resulting in numerous casualties. Additionally, there have been frequent attacks on civilians traveling the EN1 (Mozambique's sole highway from north to south) that were generally attributed to Renamo combatants (Vines 2013: 386–388). In 2013, negotiations commenced with the Mozambican government, resulting in significant changes to electoral law, as well as a ceasefire that was signed in September 2014, allowing Renamo to participate in the national elections held on 15 October 2014. Renamo's "resumption to hostilities was a political masterstroke," an analyst commented (Allison 2014), as the party gained 37 percent of the parliamentary and presidential votes, compared with 16 percent in the 2009 elections.¹ Renamo did not accept the outcome of the elections, however, and the war in central Mozambique continued.

These troubling events can be situated in larger patterns of Mozambique's increasing disparities between rich and poor, growing political instability, and rising economic opportunities owing to, among other things, the extraction of coal and the upcoming exploration 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.² 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 doubt on the generally hailed process of

reintegrating ex-combatants in Mozambique (see, e.g., Vines 2013). Furthermore, these recent developments strengthen several of the arguments I have made about the continuation of wartime networks. But above all, they show that an understanding of “reintegration processes” from the perspective of former Renamo combatants is more relevant than ever.

By providing an analysis of the war and postwar social navigations of ex-Renamo combatants in central Mozambique, I have sought, among other things, to come to a more political and complex conceptualization of what it means to be a former combatant in a certain place and time. Throughout this book I have shown how Renamo veterans’ social and political navigations over the course of time were shaped not only by the perpetration of, and the need to deal with, violence but also, and perhaps predominantly, by envisioned and culturally scripted “life projects.” It follows that former combatants’ navigations were not necessarily characterized by a rigid break with their Renamo past but rather comprised a mixture of ruptures and continuities of relationships and networks, of which their Renamo networks were of central importance. In addition, I showed the “community” in which reintegration is supposed to happen to be an open, heterogeneous, and conflict-ridden context, embroiled in war and postwar conflicts and frictions, and simultaneously shaped by its specific local history.

In these final reflections, I take these observations as a starting point to reiterate how an anthropological inquiry into the life trajectories of former combatants can contribute to ongoing multidisciplinary debates about reintegration. I hope these considerations provide useful insights for anthropological audiences as well as a readership of practitioners active in the study, design, and implementation of DDR and reintegration programming. 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 addressed in the previous chapters about assumptions related to the reintegration concept, I hope to provide analytical tools for grasping *how* we can understand the social context in which former combatants’ trajectories unfold.

Rethinking Reintegration

This book was inspired by skepticism for the concept of “reintegration,” which is generally used to describe the return of ex-combatants to civilian life (see, e.g., Humphrey and Weinstein 2007; Knight and Özerdem 2004; UN 2006). From this perspective, the process of reintegration seems to imply that ex-combatants need to be supported and equipped to successfully reenter a peaceful society (Peters 2007). Furthermore, the concept presupposes a return to a prewar status quo, the so-called recipient community (Kriger 2003), implying that social and military life are two separate spheres. By debunking some of these assumptions about former combatants, their postwar trajectories, and the communities they return to, this study pursued how an anthropological perspective and ethnographic research can contribute to debates about former combatants and reintegration.

I see at least three ways in which the findings in this study may further debates about the trajectories of former combatants. First, the navigations of ex-combatants are best understood in relation to a mixture of ruptures and continuities of relationships and networks. In different ways, this study has shown that despite the constraining structure of the military organization of which they were a part, Renamo combatants sought to maintain and establish social relationships outside Renamo, which included interactions with spirits (Chapter 4) as well as marriages and fictive kin relationships (Chapter 3). 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 and their participation in networks based on Renamo’s military structure (Chapter 6). The social lives of Renamo are thus not easily captured by seemingly dichotomizing categories of war and peace, civil and military life, and victims and perpetrators or by singular understandings of “home” and “community.”

The reintegration process in Mozambique has been analyzed mainly in terms of a break with the violent past by means of “cleansing rituals.” Such traditional or local practices have in relation to Mozambique and elsewhere been presented as a fairly problem-free and low-cost means of ensuring reintegration (Kaplan and Nussio 2012; Özerdem 2012; Theidon 2007). I call 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—war) and a break with the past (being cleansed of evil spirits), thereby concentrating only on a particular moment in an ex-combatant's postwar trajectory. 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 possibilities for former combatants' reintegration. This is particularly evident in the postwar continuation of wartime military networks and relationships between veterans, former commanders, and Renamo party leaders. This study provides evidence of the potential utility of wartime networks in reintegration processes. As shown, these networks may offer a sense of belonging, protection, and economic opportunities for veterans and thereby play a fundamental role in ex-combatants' civilian lives (see also Finley 2011; Themnér 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, I found that the participation in such networks was characterized by asymmetrical relationships of mutual dependency between rank-and-file veterans and former commanders that are shaped by patronage or big man dynamics (e.g., Hoffman 2007; Themnér 2012; Utas 2012). The case of Renamo is an interesting contribution to these debates, as the party-cum-armed group had very few resources for feeding these patronage links. I found that loyalty and expectations were also key to understanding the situation of "waithood" by which many former combatants found themselves attached to Renamo.

The postwar participation of ex-combatants in networks and relationships tied to the former armed group casts a different light on the notion and practice of demobilization. In the international peace keeping industry, the continuation of wartime networks is often perceived as posing a threat to stability (Bøås and Bjørkhaug 2010; UN 2006; Utas 2012:19). The fear is that former combatants' potential for organized violence remains because groups of ex-combatants could easily be remobilized and rearmed (McMullin 2013: 1–2). Yet efforts to dissolve the command and control structure may thus be in vain. This does not mean I wish to downplay the violent threat that ex-combatants embody (see, e.g., Kingma 2016; Mashike 2004), but I want to stress that as such networks are not likely to disappear in the wake of an armed conflict, they may as well be treated as an asset for

reintegration. At the very least, such networks should be considered in analyses of ex-combatants' postwar trajectories and of postwar politics. It thus becomes essential to repoliticize the former combatants.

The second way in which an anthropological inquiry into the trajectories of former combatants may further debates about reintegration is through understanding the communities into which ex-combatants are supposed to reintegrate in terms of heterogeneity and conflict. All too often the "recipient community" (UN 2006) is presented as a static, bounded entity that either welcomes or rejects the returning former combatants. Moreover, studies about reintegration tend to focus 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 (de Vries and Wiegink 2011). This book advances a more complex and heterogeneous understanding of the context in which reintegration takes place. Maringue was not a place to which Renamo combatants "returned" but rather was a place where they had lived for a certain period of time and had interacted with the population in a variety of ways. Such interactions were characterized by violence and force, but they 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, regarding them in some cases as "their own." This contributed to the acceptance of ex-Renamo combatant as fellow Maringuenses, at least by some inhabitants of the district. In Chapter 2, I also described how in the wake of war, social life in Maringue was characterized by political divisions and conflicts owing 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 homogeneous, bounded, and harmonious entity is in such a context pointless.

The "recipient community" was further probed and problematized in chapters in Part II, Family Affairs, in which I described ex-Renamo combatants' experiences on their return to their families. Yet contrary to what most reintegration programs assume, 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 their homecoming as a process of coming to terms with war violence (e.g., Granjo 2007a: 140, 2007b: 391; Honwana 2006: 61; Nordstrom 1997a; Roesch 1996; Thompson 1999: 193). In contrast to these studies, the stories of former Renamo combatants presented in these pages showed that it was not necessarily the need to deal with war violence that caused 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 combatants 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 highlights the importance of *other* social struggles besides dealing with the combatant-as-perpetrator and other forms of violence, hardship, and fear that are not necessarily embedded in war violence.

Third, the anthropological study of former combatants' trajectories may warrant reflection on the role of time and timing in conducting research and in the analysis of the data. I commenced research in Maringue fifteen years after the war ended, and this resulted in observations about former combatants' trajectories that were significantly different from findings presented in studies done in the immediate aftermath. Using a life history approach, I was able to identify central social struggles and to trace how these social processes unfolded throughout people's lives up to that moment. This is reflected, for example, in Chapter 4, where I discuss former combatants' navigation of the "sociospiritual world" and how these interactions continue to shape the lives of ex-combatants in relation to health and relationships with relatives. This resulted in the formulation of an empirical and conceptual critique of the emphasis on purification rituals in reintegration studies of Mozambique. Moreover, the life history approach and timing of my research allowed for an in-depth analysis of the continuation of wartime networks with links to Renamo, as I explored in Chapter 6.

On a more abstract level, the temporal aspects of my research raise questions about the epistemological role of time—What can we know at what point in time? What can we take away from a study of former combatants two decades after war's end? This book has demonstrated that such a perspective allows for the observation of continuities as well as of breaks and can draw out the importance of other social and political struggles in

people's lives besides the need to deal with violence. This is a potent way in which ethnographic studies can contribute to debates about the reintegration of former combatants and the study of armed groups and their legacies in general. It is also an argument for conducting longitudinal or multitemporal research outside and after the implementation of DDR or other peacebuilding projects and to focus on people and processes after the peacekeeping industry has moved its gaze elsewhere. For my part, I hope to take this study further as a larger multitemporal project, taking into account the recent political troubles in Mozambique and continuing to following the trajectories of Adão, Dona Ana, Caetano, and many others who featured in this study.

Repoliticizing Combatants

Throughout this book I have attempted to write against an imaginary of the Renamo *desmobilizado* as a boy or young man (and thus usually not as a girl or young woman) who was forced into Renamo's military ranks, where he was obliged to transgress all kinds of moral boundaries. After the war, this *desmobilizado* was disarmed and demobilized and, on returning home, was ritually cleansed and incorporated into the community. Imagining former combatants' trajectories in such terms creates a sense of closure, a happy ending to the story, and a successful completion of a reintegration process. Such depictions are unsustainable in former combatants' social worlds characterized by conflicts, struggles, and a multiplicity of ruptured and continuing relationships. Moreover, such depictions have actual implications for policy as they depoliticize former combatants.

The conceptualization of the "forced Renamo combatant" who cannot be regarded a killer anymore must first of all be situated in Mozambique's political context. Depicting Renamo combatants as "forced," "cleansed," and "reintegrated" fitted, for example, neatly into the dominant (international) narrative about the aftermath of war in Mozambique, which has sustained the country's image as a success story of peace. This is a narrative that has recently—to the surprise of many international observers and donors—been unraveled by recurring armed conflict.³ In addition, such framings strip the (former) Renamo combatants of their political agency, as they disregard political motivations by implying that the combatants'

relations to Renamo were shaped only by violence and force. As I demonstrated in Chapter 7, such imaginaries about former Renamo combatants play a role in the allocation of state resources to former combatants, but they also have wider political consequences as these imaginaries further an interpretation of Renamo as a group of “armed bandits” with no real political support. Depictions of former combatants are thus not politically neutral and have prominent political implications in Mozambique, as they may delegitimize Renamo’s position as a political party, which strengthens the political agenda of the governing Frelimo party.

The depoliticization of former combatants is a wider tendency in debates and practices of reintegration. An important reason for this is that reintegration is largely regarded as a socioeconomic process. The widely accepted definition of reintegration proposed by the UN (2006) holds reintegration to be “essentially a social and economic process, with an open time frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level.” Community-based reintegration programs stress the importance of (self-) employment, the need for ex-combatants to become productive members of their communities, and for these recipient communities to benefit from these programs as well. As a consequence, reintegration programming proposes skill training, community-based income-generating projects, and community sensitization programs.⁴ It is through such assistance that ex-combatants are supposed to fit back into the community and become “like everyone else.” Based on an analysis of four reintegration programs in African countries, McMullin (2013: 5) points to the bitter irony that becoming “like everyone else” in a context such as Mozambique—that is, to erase the differences in income and status between former fighters and the communities in which they resettle—often means for ex-combatants that they will be “reintegrated back into poverty.” Such logic disregards grievances of exclusion and marginalization that may have been at the origins of why armed conflict commenced in the first place.

Equally preoccupying, in my view, is that a socioeconomic understanding of reintegration reduces the trajectories of former combatants to economic and social processes of community acceptance and income seeking, thereby disregarding any political engagement or motivation. Notwithstanding the situations of hardship of most former combatants and many of the communities they are living in, this downgrades (ex-)combatants to rational utility maximizers. Idle and unemployed, they are seen as dangerous and prone to crime or remobilization for armed conflict. Consequently,

livelihood projects and employment are regarded as the solutions to prevent violent conflict (McMullin 2013). The “greed-not-grievance” understandings of armed conflict that seem to underlie such understandings of former combatants have received strong critique (e.g., Demmers 2012; Richards 2001), yet in the context of reintegration planning and thinking, such understandings of war continue to produce stereotypical and simplistic understandings of former combatants (McMullin 2013: 23).

In this book I tried to repoliticize former Renamo combatants, and there may be two ways in which this effort has brought insights that can take debates about former combatants and “reintegration” beyond the Mozambican context. First of all, the repoliticizing of former combatants (and of reintegration) may begin with the study and conceptualization of armed groups. The analysis of postwar accommodation processes and of the continuation of wartime networks may, for example, benefit from the insight of recent scholarship on “rebel governance,” which has considered the nonmilitary and nonviolent aspects of nonstate armed groups such as governance patterns and service provision and the general organization of relations between civilians and combatants (Arjona, Kasfir, and Mampilly 2015; Mampilly 2011). While these studies offer mainly analyses of rebel administrative structures, they provide a starting point for understanding wartime social life as a political *and* a social condition. The observations I present about wartime everyday life in Maringue under Renamo occupation and the costs of this occupation in the postwar social and political landscape open up avenues for expanding the debate about rebel governance by addressing the consequences of such wartime orders for postwar social and political processes in general and for the trajectories of former combatants in particular.

Second, former combatants may be further repoliticized by addressing the social and political processes by which wartime networks continue after war. In Chapter 6, I situated my analysis of Renamo networks in relation to scholarship about the continuation of wartime networks based on (West) African cases that largely focus on changeable networks of patronage and big man dynamics (Debos 2011; Hoffmann 2007; Reno 1998; Themnér 2017; Utas 2012). These studies provide insight into former combatants’ politics by focusing on patronage and big man dynamics, depicting fluctuating, unstable, and violent networks, while I looked for ways to factor in loyalty and belonging as dynamics that sustain such networks over time. To further repoliticize former combatants, it may also be fruitful to situate

them in wider debates about war veterans and veterans' politics. Throughout this book I have used *former combatant* and *veteran* as synonyms, but this is not necessarily an evident use of terminology. In an analysis of four reintegration processes, McMullin (2013: 247) notes a resistance to seeing ex-combatants as veterans and argues that from the perspectives of those who fund and implement DDR programs, ex-combatants, especially in African contexts, are seen as "fundamentally distinct from veterans of wars fought by states in the west or north" (McMullin 2013: 14). It follows that reintegration is not regarded as long-term assistance, in the form of, for example, pensions, but rather as temporary intervention to neutralize a threat, embodied by unemployed male former combatants (McMullin 2013). While I largely agree with McMullin's analysis of the reintegration debate, when zooming in on Mozambique, the issue of "veteranship" becomes more complex. I described the construction, negotiation, and contestation of categories of veterans in Mozambique, showing the particular demands veterans may pose on the state and state-like institutions. This approach resonates with other studies on war veterans of liberation wars elsewhere in Zimbabwe (Kriger 2003) and Namibia (Metsola 2010), as well as other contexts in which armed groups took up governing roles. Interesting parallels can be drawn, for example, between veterans' politics in Mozambique and processes of accommodation of former combatants of the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) in El Salvador. In a longitudinal study on FMLN war veterans, Ralph Sprenkels (2018) showed the centrality of informal and formal veterans' networks in claiming benefits and resources from the state. As the FMLN rose to government in 2009, he reveals how these veterans' networks function in the context of an electoral democracy (Sprenkels 2018). The study of particular relationships between war veterans and states (or state-like institutions) provides a very different outlook on former combatants' trajectories than the implicit assumption that through a process of reintegration former combatants will become "like everyone else." It is such relationships that show how war, beyond its destruction and violence, is a transformative force that creates social, economic, and political orders (Wood 2008). War protagonists often come to take particular positions in such postwar orders.

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 book offers a different analysis of Mozambique's widely hailed transition from war to peace. If Mozambique ever could have been considered a success story (Cobban 2007; Graybill 2004: 1127; Weinstein 2002), then the roots of its success are to be found not merely in local reintegration rituals or people's creativity for peace (Nordstrom 1997a) but also, and perhaps even more so, in the blurring of the categories of combatant and civilian, victim and perpetrator. Throughout the book I have shown how ex-combatants and civilians engaged in a range of interactions with fellow Renamo combatants and Renamo's wartime administrative structure, how civilians and combatants established marital relationships and ties of fictive kinship, and how Renamo combatants navigated the "Renamo networks." 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. This analysis offers a more nuanced reading of local peace processes than one concerned solely with purification rituals conducted to incorporate ex-combatants into the community (see, e.g., Nordstrom 1997a; Granjo 2007a, 2007c), situating 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. 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 as to the combatants' motivations for picking up arms again.

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" were also characterized by frustration and waithood. 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 defection by veterans. Many Renamo veterans were waiting for the moment when Renamo would

win 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 recent 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. 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 7, 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 the 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 extractive industries including the possibilities for natural gas extraction have brought multinationals to the country, leading to a substantial increase in GDP.⁵ 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 former Renamo combatants' 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 tensions.

Epilogue

As I close in August 2018, a cease-fire has been in effect since 26 December 2016. Despite several incidents it seems that both the government and Renamo are committed to this silencing of the guns. It has allowed traffic to move freely again on the two main highways in central Mozambique, where before passing was recommended only by military escort, which suffered numerous attacks by Renamo combatants. The cease-fire also seemed to mark the end of a period of terror that was characterized by assassinations and kidnappings directed at representatives of political parties. Numerous assassinations took place across the country, and several mass graves were discovered in the provinces of Manica and Sofala. In October 2016, Jeremias Pondeca, one of the senior Renamo representatives partaking in the peace negotiations, was killed while strolling on the Costa del Sol beach in Maputo, and earlier that year José Jaime Macuane, a university professor and public commentator, had been abducted and shot in both legs.

This political-military crisis also greatly affected Maringue. In October 2013 government forces attacked Renamo's military base in the district. A combination of FIR and police forces went in with heavy weapons and chased out all Renamo combatants from the base.¹ According to the tales of Maringuenses, there were few casualties during the attack. The Renamo combatants had quickly recognized they were outnumbered and spread into the district's dense forests. The police forces, unable to capture even one Renamo combatant, turned their attack on rural residents in the area where Renamo was supposedly hiding. Allegedly, 430 houses were burned and an unknown number of people were killed indiscriminately. While the capture of Renamo's central base in Maringue was widely reported, there was no mention of the attacks on residents and the burning of houses in the aftermath of the base's capture in the media. Similar attacks by government armed forces in Tete Province have received more coverage because

of the refugee influx into Malawi.² Generally, however, there has been little comprehensive reporting on atrocities concerning the political-military conflict in central Mozambique.

In February 2017 I briefly visited Maringue and was able to interview several of my research participants and friends who have featured throughout this book. When I asked about the security situation, each of them commenced by recounting the events in October 2013. They told me that most of the residents of Maringue's main village and others located close to Renamo's central base fled at the start of the attack. They went to Macossa, Beira, and a refugee camp that was erected in Vanduzi (Manica Province). It seems that after two or three months the situation was considered calm and many returned to their homes. There was a larger FIR presence in the district now, which caused insecurity and, I was told, there were incidents of intimidation and sexual assault. Meanwhile Renamo had regrouped in reportedly five or six smaller bases, and as a consequence certain areas of the district became no-go areas for those not "with Frelimo." My friend, Pastor Francisco, known to be a Frelimo member, said he was unable to visit his church communities in these areas. "It would be asking for death," he said.

Conversely, Maringue town had become off-limits to prominent Renamo members. This became particularly clear when on my return to Mozambique in September 2016 I managed to get in touch with Adão again by phone. I learned that he had fled his home in Maringue town in January 2016 because he feared for his life. Police officers had come to his house one afternoon looking for him. He immediately packed some essentials and left his home for a small hut that he had constructed near his machambas approximately 12 kilometers from the main village. Later I understood that this machamba was located in a Renamo-controlled area, where, as I mentioned, Frelimo members and government officials could not set foot. Adão's absence took a toll on the family's food security because he was not able to look for *biscatos* (odd-jobs), which he would normally do to make ends meet. On top of that, central Mozambique was, like the rest of eastern Africa, experiencing an extended period of drought. Drought, coupled with political tensions, caused an acute shortage of food over the course of 2016. "You will find me very skinny," Adão said over the phone.

Adão was not the only one who had fled his home. Caetano and the Renamo delegate Pereira were also "staying away from home," as were

many other Renamo members in Maringue and elsewhere across the country. Reportedly some fled to the refugee camps in Malawi and Vanduzi, but it seemed that in Maringue, Renamo members opted to stay in the Renamo-controlled areas. This climate of terror was created by a series of kidnappings and assassinations throughout 2016 reportedly performed by death squads that targeted individuals associated with Renamo. In Maringue, two well-known Renamo members were killed. One of them was Zacharias, whom I introduced in Chapter 7. He was traveling to Beira, when the *chapa* was stopped by FIR officers in Nhamapaza, a village in Maringue district located at the EN1, the national road. Passengers in the minibus observed that Zacharias was ordered to get out of the vehicle, then beaten and taken away. His remains were found only months later. In Maringue, the pointed assassinations were regarded as a strategy of terror but also as a weakness of the government security forces, who were not able to beat Renamo in direct confrontations.

The climate of terror was relieved by the ceasefire brokered over Christmas 2016 through personal conversations between President Filipe Nyusi and Renamo's leader, Afonso Dhlakama. When I arrived in Maringue in February 2017, people were increasingly hopeful for peace as the Renamo members who had been away were returning to their houses. In fact, several days before my visit I spoke to Adão, who told me that he had orders from the "big one" himself (Dhlakama) to leave his hiding place. Two days later he was back home, and I met him there. He was happy and with high hopes for the peace process, but he was also on his guard and found it confrontational and sad to realize that his three-year-old son had lost his natural affinity for his father during Adão's absence. The return of Renamo members was considered a good sign by the Maringuenses I spoke to, including those with government ties. Pastor Francisco was preparing a visit to his church communities in the areas that had been off-limits for those "with Frelimo." "We see our neighbors walking at the market today, our neighbors who we have not seen in over a year," another pastor told me, and he thought this must mean something good for "the peace." But while many Renamo members and former Renamo combatants had returned to their homes, those who were members of the "presidential guards" had not. They were part of Renamo's armed wing and remained operative in Maringue's forests, awaiting the outcome of peace negotiations. Adão himself was also hopeful, but a week later I called him and he was back in the bush again, as it had been reported that two Renamo

members in Manica had been killed. Despite such incidents the ceasefire holds, but it is a fragile and insecure situation. The death of Renamo's leader, Afonso Dhlakama, on 3 May 2018 adds to these insecurities as it is yet unclear who will succeed him and what this will mean for the ongoing peace negotiations.

Whichever way Mozambique's political situation goes, the future will hold much debate and programming around the demilitarization of Renamo and the accommodation process of its former combatants. There are no easy solutions, and I hope that if readers take two things away from this book, these will be (1) that former combatants will not "fade away" and (2) that a multidimensional, context-sensitive, historical and political analysis of their trajectories will be essential for the times to come.

GLOSSARY

<i>aldeamento</i>	communal village constructed by the Portuguese colonial state
<i>aldeias comunais</i>	communal villages constructed by the post-independence Frelimo government
<i>antigo combatente</i>	veteran of Frelimo's anticolonial struggle
<i>bandidos armados</i>	armed bandits, a common reference to Renamo
<i>biscato</i>	irregular informal job
<i>bloco/bloque</i>	civilian middlemen between the population and Renamo, during Renamo occupation
<i>capulana</i>	cloth, generally worn by women around the waist
<i>caril</i>	curry, the vegetables, meat, and/or beans that accompany <i>xima</i>
<i>chapa</i>	micro-bus
<i>chibalo</i>	forced labor on Portuguese-owned plantations; also referred to as <i>contrato</i>
<i>colono</i>	colonizer, reference to Portuguese colonial administration
<i>contrato</i>	contract, used to refer to colonial-era forced labor on Portuguese-owned plantations; also referred to as <i>chibalo</i>
<i>curandeiro/a</i>	male/female traditional healer-diviner (Portuguese).
<i>desmobilizado/a</i>	demobilized person
<i>drogas</i>	drugs, substances used by witches
<i>feiticeiro/a</i>	male/female witch (Portuguese)
<i>feitiço</i>	witchcraft or occult forces used to harm someone (Portuguese)
<i>flechas</i>	arrows, referring to elite forces of the Portuguese army

<i>grupo especiais</i>	special groups, elite forces of the Portuguese army
<i>guia de marcha</i>	travel authorization
<i>irmã</i>	sister, nun
<i>liga</i>	forced porter duty under Renamo control, deriving from the verb <i>ligar</i> , to connect
<i>lobolo</i>	negotiations concerning bride price
<i>lojas do povo</i>	communal shops
<i>machamba</i>	plot of land for cultivation
<i>machambas do povo</i>	communal fields
<i>mana</i>	sister
<i>margem</i>	riverbank
<i>Maringuenses</i>	inhabitants of Maringue
<i>mato</i>	bush, i.e., that which is uncultivated or wild
<i>militar</i>	military; reference to an ex-combatant
<i>nfiti</i>	witch (Chisena)
<i>nfumo</i>	traditional authority of the lowest rank
<i>nipa</i>	homebrewed alcoholic drink, distilled from fermented corn or millet
<i>nyanga</i>	traditional healer-diviner (Chisena)
<i>profeta</i>	prophet; referring to healers of Zionist or African independent church
<i>pombe</i>	a home-brewed alcoholic drink made from corn
<i>régulo</i>	chief, highest traditional or Portuguese-appointed authority
<i>thubo</i>	assistant of the <i>régulo</i> , particularly in conflict resolution
<i>tropa</i>	troop; reference to an ex-combatant
<i>tulas</i> or <i>turas</i>	Frelimo fighters during the struggle for independence
<i>sapanda</i>	traditional authority of intermediary rank
<i>secretário de bairro</i>	secretary of the neighborhood, local Frelimo representative and a formal post-independence structure of governance
<i>sentada</i>	sitting session, reunion to resolve a conflict
<i>ufiti</i>	witchcraft or occult forces used to harm someone (Chisena)
<i>xima</i>	corn flour porridge

NOTES

Introduction

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

2. Statements about the responsibility for atrocities during the war are based on rough estimations and are highly influenced by framings of the war (Nordstrom 1997a: 48, Igreja, Dias-Lambrança, and Richters 2008). It is estimated that Renamo killed between 50,000 and 200,000 people (Hanlon 1991; Hultman 2009). But it also has been 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, Dias-Lambrança, and Richters 2008). The majority of people died probably from causes related to the war, such as hunger and disease.

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

4. 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, my study differs from Schafer’s in its geographic location, time frame, and inclusion of female veterans, as well as in its aim of describing ex-combatants’ continuing social relationships throughout war and peace.

5. Examples of other social environments that I do not explore in this book are church networks, which I will explore in a separate article, and 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.

6. Mahmud (2012) stresses that “secret knowledge” is often alluring for the ethnographer, but such information may be just as important—or even less so—as public knowledge for ethnographic interpretation.

Chapter 1

1. Ethnographic studies demonstrated that local interpretations of the war differed profoundly and that local (conflict) dynamics often surpassed national military objectives (Englund 2002; Finnegan 1992: 71; Lubkemann 2006). In Nampula, as Geffray’s (1990) study

showed, the war had a certain ethnic character, as support for either the government or Renamo was separated along the lines of two ethnic groups, the Erati and the Macuane, with a long history of conflict. In Gaza Province, Renamo was generally seen as a “Ndau project” (Roesch 1992), because the Ndau (a language group from central Mozambique, dominating the Renamo leadership) have been since the Nguni wars of the nineteenth century regarded as fierce warriors, whose spirits would return to haunt their killers. Lubkemmann (2005, 2008) observed that in Machaza, Manica Province, the war was shaped by local social conflicts and local actors that tried to engage the military powers in their own struggles within communities and families. See also Alexander (1997) and Bertelsen (2002) on Manica, and Wilson (1992) on Zambezia.

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

3. 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.

4. 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.

5. Zimbabwean forces (up to 20,000 troops) were mainly deployed in the Beira corridor and other areas of central Mozambique. Tanzanian forces were deployed in northern provinces of Mozambique. The role of these forces from neighboring counties in the civil war continues to be a relatively underresearched aspect of the conflict’s dynamics (Morier-Genoud, Cahen, and do Rosário 2018b).

6. This information was provided by Ton Pardoel, coordinator of the UNOMOZ disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration mission, whom I spoke with on 9 June 2011 in Veghel, the Netherlands.

7. The former Renamo combatants who were interviewed by Schafer (2007: 59) in Manica made similar references to work and framed fighting for Renamo as a job.

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

9. The term “leaves” 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 flour. Xima with caril is generally regarded as a dish eaten by the poor.

10. See Morier-Genoud (2018) for a nuanced take on why the civil war dynamics were different in Inhambane province.

Chapter 2

1. Here I follow Demmers' (2012: 29) criticism of Kalyvas's (2006) analysis of civil war violence from a rational model of human behavior involving control, collaboration, and either indiscriminate or selective violence.

2. I refer to *régulos*, *sapandas*, and *nfumos* as “traditional authorities,” because 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; see also Obarrio 2010). The term “community authorities” has other political connotations (Kyed and Buur 2006) and is not so commonly used.

3. 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).

4. 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.”

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

6. *Voz da Africa Livre* was a program broadcast from 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)

7. The Gersony report for the U.S. 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 regarding tax and control there was some support for Renamo, while in destruction areas Renamo was generally viewed with antagonism.

8. One informant referred to the *bloco 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 informers working for Renamo who controlled the population and were often compelled to do Renamo's “dirty work.”

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

10. Archive of elections in Mozambique of the Instituto de Estudos Sociais e Económicos (IESE), <http://www.iese.ac.mz/eleicoes-resultados/>, accessed 9 June 2019.

11. 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.

Chapter 3

1. I deliberately refer to these tasks as demanding because they are physically exhausting and time-consuming: collecting water requires transporting bottles weighing more than 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.

2. 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.

3. Especially in the zonas outside the main village of Maringue, girls were often “promised” to an adult man at a young age with marriage taking place after 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.

4. There is some evidence that men also suffered sexual violence during the war, but this is possibly an even bigger taboo than sexual violence against women (Igreja, Dias-Lambranca, and Richters 2008). As in many other war and postwar contexts, such violence is a blind spot in the history of the armed conflict (Sivakumaran 2007).

5. 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).

6. Based on fieldwork in Liberia and Sierra Leone, 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 money 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).

7. 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 a beverage. Many of her former colleagues had problems having children after the war, which Teresa also attributed to this particular drink.

8. 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 2005).

9. 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) and further shaped by the war, as widowhood, abandonment, and rejection leave women alone, often with children (Zimba 2010). The number of female-headed households has further increased because of the loss of young people to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, often leaving grandmothers to take care of little children, and because of 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. This ritual seems to be practiced less and less, as people take into consideration that HIV is transmitted sexually.

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

Chapter 4

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

2. 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 “strong, muscular person” or soldier.

3. <http://www.folhademaputo.co.mz/pt/noticias/nacional/dhlakama-transforma-se-em-ave-em-combate/>, accessed 17 March 2017.

4. Healing practices differ between Maringue's Pentecostal churches and the Zionist and Apostolic churches. In the former, pastors practice healing through prayer and fasting. In the latter, meanwhile, there is a specific person who deals with healing issues, referred to as a prophet (*profeta*). He or she (prophets are, like *nyangas*, 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 of all kinds of diseases. Prophets are therefore often seen as similar to *nyangas*.

5. 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 are now no longer viewed as a sin.

6. Similar cleansing rituals are conducted if a house or hut burns down (*kupitamoto*). Afterward, the husband and wife (wives) communicate to the neighbors that the ritual has been conducted by shaving their heads. While vividly present in the narratives of many people in Maringue, it seemed there were fewer people performing these rituals owing to religious considerations, the idea that these were “backward” traditions, and the danger of contracting HIV.

7. 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).

8. The rituals regarding the ancestors always involved other relatives, but not all ex-combatants conducted cleansing rituals with their family members in their home village,

usually because they were no longer in contact with their relatives. Several former combatants said that they performed the rituals in the presence of their newfound family.

9. 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.”

10. I could not establish whether Rebecca had been a Renamo combatant. Thus, I took her remarks as an example of the blurring of lines between civilians and combatants, as described in Chapter 2.

11. I have not used a pseudonym here because Fazbem was such a well-known individual in Maringue and his illness was so specific that many Maringuenes would immediately recognize him from the descriptions.

Chapter 5

1. Witchcraft and sorcery are often used as synonyms (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 inflict harm, which may be inherited or learned from other *nfiti*.

2. The data on the 92,881 demobilized soldiers gathered by the technical unit of ONU-MOZ suggest that most demobilized soldiers *did* return to their region of origin when the war ended, that is, 75 percent of the former combatants settled in the province where they originally came from (Pardoel 1994: 14–21). However, the ONUMOZ 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.

3. See, for example, the novel by Ismael Beah, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*; the book by David Eggers, *What Is the What*; and scenes from the movie *Blood Diamond* in which recruitment by rebels in Sierra Leone is marked by perpetrating violence toward relatives.

4. 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 December 2008, Maputo).

5. 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 *nyangas*) are known to “work with” certain spirits, such as *mfukwa* and *gamba* (Granjo 2007b; Igreja 2003).

6. Witchcraft, as Geschiere (1997: 5) argues, can 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*.

7. Nyangas have a more ambiguous role than solely protecting people from malicious forces and identifying a *nfiti*. These traditional healers are also suspected of helping people to practice witchcraft in order to accumulate wealth.

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

Chapter 6

1. “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.

2. The term “waithood” was coined by Dhillon and Yousef (2009) and recently picked up by Honwana (2012) to describe “waiting for adulthood.” I use “waithood” in a different context but equally aim to describe a position of actual or perceived suspension that prevents people from obtaining a (more) tolerable life.

3. Note that this conversation took place in 2008, before the rise of MDM.

4. Utas (2012) sees the term “big man” as gender neutral, reflecting the fact that women can also attain the status of big men.

5. Weingrod (1968) pointed out that in general anthropologists understood patronage not as related to the formal system of government or authority but rather as a social relationship, a lopsided friendship (e.g., Foster 1963; Weingrod 1968; Wolf 1966). Political scientists, meanwhile, have understood patronage as a feature of government, used by politicians to get votes during election time.

6. As Kalyvas (2006: 46), Grossman (1995), and Finkel (2010), among others, 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.”

7. Schafer (2007: 84) has noted that among the soldiers of FAM, 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.

8. 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. 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 ninety seats to having fifty-one (Think Africa Press, <http://thinkafricapress.com/mozambique/frelimo-renamo-brink>, accessed 13 August 2013), and has increased after the 2014 national elections, in which Renamo obtained eighty-nine seats.

9. MDM 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 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 MDM also seemed to have gained popularity among a younger generation of Frelimo members, who regarded Frelimo's party and state apparatus as inaccessible.

10. Mozambique News Reports and Clippings, 23 October 2013, <http://www.issafrika.org/iss-today/renamo-should-take-its-battle-to-the-polling-stations>, accessed 26 November 2013.

11. TVM News, 22 July 2009.

Chapter 7

1. 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: 367) has argued, Africans “are both citizens and subjects . . . sometimes they are more citizen than subject and sometimes more subject than citizen.”

2. As Kyed (2014) rightly notes, justice seeking is difficult to capture in rigid scenarios, as practices seem to differ throughout the country and even within districts, showing the mixing of institutions and porous nature of justice seeking. Jacobs (2010) shows, for example, that in Gorongosa town, people would discuss witchcraft cases at the police office, whereas Igreja (2012) showed that in a rural zone of the same district, witchcraft cases were dealt with at community courts.

3. The inimigo interno became a wide category of people with traits exemplified in Xiconhoca, a comical image of an unemployed, rude drunkard, exemplifying all antisocial and anti-Frelimo behavior (Buur 2010). In recent years, Xiconhoca has come to represent societal and political failure in general, as well as criticism of the Frelimo government. See, for example, “the Xiconhoca of the week,” a regular item in the newspaper *A Verdade*.

4. 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.

5. See Wiegink (2013b: 55–54) for an in-depth discussion of the politics of pensions in relation to former FAM soldiers, and see Munive and Jakobsen (2012) for an excellent analysis of the bureaucratic “making” and “unmaking” of ex-combatants and the importance of gatekeepers and registration lists in sustaining patronage relations through a DDR program.

6. Decree 3/86 also excluded those FAM soldiers who were recruited when younger than sixteen, since this was an illegal practice and was denied for a long time by the Frelimo government.

7. See the interview with the vice minister of combatants, Marcelino Lipholaice, in *O Pais*, 3 April 2013, <http://opais.sapo.mz/index.php/politica/63-politica/24817-vinte-mil-meti-cais-e-um-atropelo-a-lei.html>, accessed 13 March 2017.

8. *Noticias*, 11 April 1996, cited in Schafer (2007: 124).

9. Before the founding of the Ministry of the Combatants, issues regarding demobilized soldiers from the civil war were addressed at the Ministry of Women and Social Action.

10. Despite this professed blurring of the party and the state, the district government, represented largely by civil servants from outside the district, and the Frelimo party, consisting of “native” individuals, were two different structures in Maringue. 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 I leave these internal Frelimo dynamics out of the analysis.

11. The use of the District Development Fund for patronage practices is a nationwide 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 April 2013).

12. It has been documented that only 9.5 percent of these funds has been returned to the district governments (All Africa, 27 January 2011, 25 October 2010).

Conclusion

1. *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin 56, Elections Results*, 28 November 2014. Maputo: CIP and AWEPA.

2. “Dhlakama Says Renamo Generals Threatened to Kill Him.” Mozambique News Reports and Clippings, 14 April 2013.

3. Liesl Lauw-Vaudra. 2016. “Mozambique’s Success Story Under Threat.” <https://issafrica.org/iss-today/mozambiques-success-story-under-threat>, accessed 16 March 2017,

4. See, for example, the community-based reintegration program of UNDP for Darfur, Sudan (UNDP 2015), <https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/SDN/Page%201–8%20Darfur%20Community%20based%20Reintegration%20%20AWP%202015.pdf>, accessed 22 April 2017.

5. Mozambique saw an average GDP growth of 7.2 percent between 2000 and 2010. In 2013 and 2014, growth was expected to be around 8 percent (African Economic Outlook, <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/countries/southern-africa/mozambique/>, accessed 23 January 2014).

Epilogue

1. “FADM assaltam base central da RENAMO em Maringue” (*FADM assault central base of Renamo in Maringue*), *O Pais*, 30 October 2017, <http://opais.sapo.mz/index.php/politica/63-politica/27613-fadm-assaltam-base-central-da-renamo-em-maringue.html>, accessed 25 April 2017.

2. *Mozambique: Violence, Refugees, and the Luwani Camp*, December 2016, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/special-reports/mozambique-refugees-luwani-camp-in-malawi>, accessed 24 April 2017.

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