

Os Homens do Mato The Men of the Bush

Untold Stories



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ABSTRACT

The Mozambican Civil War is remembered for its devastating effects, scarring the country's suffering people, yet only from the perspective of its victors, the government party Frelimo. The story of the rebel forces opposing them, Renamo, was silenced. With the focus on Renamo, readers gain an insight into terror warfare, the use of child soldiers, political discourses, post-war integration efforts, and the dynamics of external involvement. This thesis encompasses an anthropological analysis of relevant themes expressed in the culture of guerilla warfare, through those who did not reap the benefits of victory. Additionally, a more personal perception has been revealed of those fighting for Renamo, who have now been given a means to express their stories. With gaining a new perspective on a war that had harmed so many people, we reach an understanding that war and terror is multi-faceted, dynamic in the different actors at play, and, essentially, brutal in its catastrophic qualities for the gain of power.

Key words: Renamo, civil war, terror warfare, child soldiers

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INTRODUCTION

Winston Churchill once said, “history is written by the victors.” This holds true in the case of the Mozambican Civil War. It was won by its leading political party Frelimo, who conquered the war in a bloody battle and led the country to what it is today. Consequently, those who lost were forgotten. Renamo were the guerilla forces who opposed Frelimo and all that they stood for; having created a group of anti-Frelimo fighters, with the additional support of external forces, Renamo was able to outlast a 16-year civil war. It has been deemed one of the most vicious wars of the African continent, with atrocities committed on both sides, including mass killings, rape, and pillaging as a common tool for terror warfare. Nevertheless, one man’s story is not made more relevant if it ends with the title of “victor.” My research has aimed to give those who have not been heard a voice and a means to express it.

This thesis represents the Mozambican Civil War specifically through the lens of Renamo. Anthropological theories have been used in concordance to the relevant themes acquired when speaking to Renamo-representative individuals who were all involved in the war, but expressed different domains of it; the soldier; the politician; the external force. Furthermore, particular attention has been paid to the use of child soldiers in the war, as they have had to reconstruct their lives in reentering civil society, and therefore play a prominent factor in post-war developments. Through this work, readers may gain an insight into a different perspective of the civil war: one that does not end in victory. Rather, in bloodshed, deprivation, and an attempt to regain what was lost from so many years of rebellion.

CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE ISSUE

Historical Background

The Mozambican Civil War began in 1977, two years after the war of independence against its Portuguese colonizers. This was won by the dominant political party, Frelimo: The Mozambican Liberation Front (Nordstrom, 1995). Consequently, in the transfer of power from the Portuguese to the Mozambicans, Frelimo took complete control over the country's territory. Contrastingly, the liberation movement that sought to unify the people of Mozambique only furthered division within the country.

The policies instituted by Frelimo were not fully agreed upon by the people (Funada-Classsen, 2013). The liberation struggle was followed by independence, but also resulted in economic problems, internal division, and an anti-Frelimo network (Funada-Classsen, 2013). There was minimal development during the colonial years which led to few human resources and able personnel to develop the country when they gained their independence. Additionally, Frelimo did not receive sufficient assistance from like-minded Marxist-Leninist states.

Before independence, 90% of Portuguese citizens were responsible for a prominent amount of economic activities in the country. Therefore, large developmental issues stemmed from the colonists' forced departure which cumulatively caused the economic situation to deteriorate altogether. The Mozambican economy was heavily reliant on South African and Rhodesian support; their lack thereof after independence meant that Frelimo had to "sacrifice its economic stability in order to realize its political objectives" (Funada-Classsen, 2013, p.386).

The morale of the Mozambican population diminished due to the worsening economy and Frelimo's lack of political experience, as they were struggling to unite a disparate people for nation-building. Additionally, Frelimo's attempt at a Marxist government failed, whereby they developed an autocratic style of nation management (Slattery, 2003). Anti-Frelimo networks emerged and formed Renamo in 1976, the armed rebel group entitled The Mozambican National Resistance (Funada-Classsen, 2013). Their establishment was aided by external forces, predominantly the pro-apartheid governments of Rhodesia and South Africa, as a retaliation to the assistance that Frelimo was offering to their respective resistance fighters (Nordstrom, 1995).

The Rhodesian government initially aided in the establishment of Renamo, primarily to operate against anti-Rhodesian guerillas based in Mozambique, as well as those providing assistance to their existence. They therefore set up a guerilla unit of Mozambicans in Southern Rhodesia and deployed it to Mozambique to destabilize the Frelimo government (Funada-

Classen, 2013). However, in this time, Rhodesia gained independence from its white government and became Zimbabwe. The previous Rhodesian rebel forces took power, led by later president of Zimbabwe and leader of the political party ZANU, Robert Mugabe. As the Rhodesian rebels were aiding Frelimo, support was ceased for Renamo. As a result, South Africa's apartheid government emerged to support Renamo, developing them into an insurgent group that opposed Frelimo. This would benefit the white minority South African rule by subduing their own rebel movement, the ANC, who also supported Frelimo. After significant logistical and military support given by the South African Special Forces, the 1984 Nkomati Accord led the apartheid government to also cease aiding Renamo in an attempt to better relations with the Mozambican government, Frelimo (Msabaha, 1987).

Once established, Renamo set up its headquarters in Milange, a town near the border of Zambezia. They began to expand control over the country, obtaining food and arms through stealing and pillaging, until arriving at the southern regions of Mozambique (Funada-Classen, 2013). Renamo employed the use of terror warfare that entailed targeting the civilian population for food, shelter, soldiers, and social infrastructure. Casualties of the war resulted in 600,000 to one million deaths, with 50,000-200,000 being killed predominantly by rebels (Hultman, 2009). Furthermore, 200,000 children were orphaned, nearly one quarter of the population was displaced from their homes, and over 90% of the country was living in poverty (Nordstrom, 1998). The toll of war was devastating.

In 1992, Renamo transformed into an established political party after peace negotiations. The party was led by Afonso Dhlakama, whose political goals were centered on democratic rule and a western-style economy. They focused on reforming public administration, returning to traditional authority structures, strengthening the economy, and attracting foreign investments. However, Renamo had less popular support than Frelimo since their use of guerilla tactics made them vicious. Even though Renamo was motivated by internal political ideology, their external support forged additional aims to also destabilizing the country. This war should be viewed in the light of a global power brokerage, not limited solely to an African context. It was an ideological war between the socialist east and the democratic west, in which Frelimo and Renamo were the respective proxies fighting on the frontline. Additionally, both political parties were fighting for their own ideology to gain power of the country. All in all, by engulfing a dual-motivational structure, this war was catastrophic.

The human rights violations committed during the war "have been recognized as being among the worst in the world" (Nordstrom, 1995, p.133). The war had left the country in ruins when a peace treaty was signed in 1992, after intense negotiations. The first democratic

multiparty elections were held in October 1994 for a coalition government in which Frelimo won the majority vote, and has remained in power thereafter with Renamo having little say in parliament (Slattery, 2003).

Theoretical Framework

The Use of Terror Warfare

The Mozambican Civil War employed terror as its primary warfare tactic. Political oppositions attempted to gain power by dominating the population through sheer brutality. Casualties were a prime factor enduring rape, torture, and the forced violence between loved ones. With the deaths of approximately one million people, most of whom were civilians and half being children, terror warfare was deemed effective. However, it is a strategy predestined for failure, because in the midst of chaos, people are able to resist through creative means (Nordstrom, 1998).

War does not manifest through opposing political institutions that represent different ideologies, rather it “comes into existence when violence is employed” (Nordstrom, 1998, p. 103). This violence becomes expressed in war as a cultural system that is embedded in the constructs of daily lives of people (Nordstrom, 1998). Thus, the use of terror warfare is harming humans and humanity, rather than expressing ideological tensions. Terror as a cultural construct is based on the assumption that the severe harming of individuals will horrify populations into political compliance (Nordstrom, 1998). Its power lies in the threat it poses to not only individual lives, but the normalcy of humanity itself. This is accomplished through the elimination of the boundaries that constitute the cultural normalcy of an area; attacking its people through torture and murder, destroying its community structures, and draining all its resources of food for survival. Hence, this form of warfare is the destruction of everything that people constitute as their world, rather than simply attacking the actors within it. Essentially, its strategy is “not to control people through fear of force, but through the horror of [the situation]” (Nordstrom, 1998, p.108). Due to the use of terror warfare in Mozambique, the country has often been called the “killing fields of Africa” (Frelick, 1989).

Military strategies were highly destructive through their engagement of terror tactics rather than nation-building. In Mozambique, two opposing political ideologies were at force: Renamo’s pro-apartheid support based on democratic rule, and Frelimo’s Cold-War beliefs. Support for both parties was ensured through armaments, food, and resources supplied by

external forces. Scholars argue that this was not a war of political opposition, but rather one of destabilization, which is why such brutal warfare could be sustained.

Another effective goal of terror warfare is to reproduce the hegemony of violence in the subtleties of everyday life (Nordstrom, 1998). Perpetrators enact this by using ordinary physical spaces to produce terror; the hanging of victims in a town square, for example. This method personalizes attacks in warfare by enacting them in the private sphere of the people, which transforms their normal surroundings into weapons of torture. This ultimately produces pure fear and destroys the bonds that hold societies together. Places that were normally associated with safety and the ordinary production of daily tasks are changed from menial places to that of inhumane reminders. This consequently attaches people to the productions of violence and their subsequent effects, that last long after wars have ended (Herman, 1992). In this sense, terror warfare undermines “the fundamental ontological security of an entire society” (Nordstrom, 1998, p.109).

Violence as a disruption of the self

In understanding how a war can dehumanize its constituents, the elements that make someone human must first be addressed. In Mozambique, what defines the boundaries of personhood are community-based structures. The family is a focal point, in which the notions of ancestry allow for its continued infinity. Shared goals, tradition of rituals, values of friendship and collectivity give the people a “tangible substance to their sense of world... made apparent through the individual.” (Nordstrom, 1998, p.134). As such, the self and all that it holds true creates the world it lives in, and acts within its constructed boundaries accordingly.

Scholars E.A. Ruch and K.C. Anyanwa describe African ideology as centered on the premise that the world and the self are connected (ibid, 1984). This is viewed culturally in that “self-experience is not separated from the experiencing self... The self animates the world so that the soul, spirit, or mind of the self is also of that world” (Ruch & Anyanwa, 1984, p.86-87). Principally, what happens to the world, happens to the self, and vice versa.

When violence is introduced into the domain of the self, it disrupts the boundaries through which the world, society, and ultimately, identity is created. Essentially, the infliction of violence distorts the boundaries of the world through what its constructions deem important; culture and the symbols used to embody it. In the case of Mozambique, it is violence’s distortion of what constitutes family and community. “Family is a historical continuum, and home is the place where it unfolds” (ibid, 1998, p.135) and so if these boundaries are breached, then the definitions of family are also changed. Tradition can no longer guide those affected,

nor is there any comfort in the “contingency of tomorrow” (Nordstrom, 1998, p.135), therefore transporting the disturbed into a liminal space. If that which makes us human is taken away, then the “world is no longer human” (Nordstrom, 1998, p.135).

When violence reaches this level of severity, the notions of self and one’s identity are consequently disrupted as well. In this sense, the best way to destroy a people is to attack their reality, because to destroy the world is to destroy the self (Taussig, 1993). This degree of violence is used in terror warfare. Identity is a strategic target of war as well as the locus of political will. “If political will is a dynamic attribute of one’s self and identity, killing a ‘body’ will not necessarily kill the dynamic front of political will” (Nordstrom, 1998, p.136). Therefore, terror warfare focuses less on killing the physical body than it does on horrifying populations. Murder, torture, sexual abuse, and community destruction become the prime weapons in the employment of terror warfare.

Ultimately, terror warfare fails to control populations because people resist it and re-create worlds that have been enmeshed in violence (Ruch & Anyanwa, 1984). The behavioral counteractions to oppressing violence are used through symbols of the culture (Nordstrom, 1998, p.145). Pierre Bourdieu (1977) and John Camaroff (1991) explained how the hegemonic ideals in cultures of violence can be dangerously reproduced, and ultimately, undermine resistance and resolution (Korbin, 2003). Therefore, creative means need to eliminate a culture of violence before it destroys all selves and constructed worlds. Moreover, Bourdieu’s notions of habitus regarding the cultural expression of social belonging is implicated in the “unrecognizable, socially recognized violence” of symbolic violence (Moshenska, 2015, p.5). Once acknowledged, people are able to challenge the normalization of war and the culture of violence through their own creative means derived from cultural symbols inherent to their society. Through such assertion of personal agency, resistance to political violence emerges. Violence is a fluid culture, thus through the enactment of creative re-structuring of a world distorted by violence, conflict-resolution can be achieved on a local level that will permeate to that of a political one (ibid, 1998, p.106).

Liminality and War

Arnold Van Gennep’s notion of *rites de passage* encompasses the course of someone’s life that is marked by transitional moments, enacted through ritual (Turner, 1977). These moments of transition are of importance to the individual and community as they explicate one change of state to that of another. Gennep describes *rites de passage* as a tripartite structure which includes the following stages: separation, limen, and aggregation. This is the processual

construction in which the first and last stage “detach ritual subjects from their old places in society and return them, inwardly transformed and outwardly changed, to new places” (Turner, 1987, p.4). The middle phase, that which encompasses liminality, is a threshold in which the individual undergoes a transformative process of ritual, relinquishing any form of former identity, to encompass a new one. Such rites of passage that use ritual to change one’s place, state, or social position is effective in times of war in which the regular man must become a soldier and commit atrocious acts, that would otherwise not be possible.

The power emanating from rites of passage enables people to express the liminalities of war; to remove them from their everyday lives and encompass a soldier’s required duties. In the case of the Mozambican Civil War, there were two such rites of passage. The first was removing members from society and turning them into soldiers whereby they could commit violent acts against their own people. Secondly, soldiers had to be reintegrated back into the same communities that they had previously destroyed. Therefore, removal from the war and entering a liminal stage of reintegration was necessary. Cultural symbols and rituals were used as weapons in allowing people to enter the relevant spheres of liminality in the war. To remove members of society from their lives was to remove them from the boundaries that constituted the realities of what made them human. In the case of Mozambique, it was severing them from their families, communities, and homes. Ironically, it was through such use of symbols that the very same individuals who committed atrocities in the liminality of war could then be re-integrated back into the re-constructed world of post-war. A prominent symbol was the practice of traditional healing by the *curandeiro*¹ who used rituals to remove people’s notions of war, and the actions perpetrated thereof, from individual identities. This was achieved through the concordance of community members who had to symbolically accept these individuals back (Granjo, 2007).

Children in war

When fighting occurs, it takes place internally; in the home, the community, in the streets and fields. Therefore, the categories that separate civilians from combatants become dangerously blurred, and that poses a large threat to the youth that occupy such spaces (Boyden, 2004). Additionally, terror warfare often involves the use of children as victims or as perpetrators, since this form of civilian targeting becomes a direct attack on the fundamental security of a people overall (Nordstrom, 1997, p.108). Characteristically, because children are “more agile, impressionable and expendable than adults... [they] are actively recruited by many military units” (Boyden, 2004, p.xii). Furthermore, a child can reproduce violent adult

behavior with no moral restrictions as they are easily malleable through indoctrination (Korbin, 2003).

Child soldiers are not only present on the frontlines, they also provide secondary support through means of intelligence gathering, maintenance and repair of armaments, and aiding commanders in menial tasks. These quasi-military roles further blur the categories of a soldier, and what degree children are to blame for violent acts committed (Boyden, 2004). In this, children are either active agents of violence or are a part of military support teams, therefore either way being viewed as legitimate objects of attack.

Both fighting forces in the Mozambican Civil War employed child soldiers. Almost half of all combatants were younger than eighteen at the time of recruitment, and all bore arms (Schafer, 2004). The concept of what constitutes a child is malleable in regard to space and time. In this context, children in the war were not regarded as reflective of vulnerability and innocence. These children had been recruited young, around the age of twelve, taken away from their families to live with military groups, and possibly sent away to be trained in either former Rhodesia or South Africa. Approximately just 3% of Renamo child soldiers “had been able to visit their families during the war” (Boyden, 2004, p.90). They were therefore not regarded as children, but viewed as legitimate perpetrators of violence (Boyden, 2004).

Due to their culture, child soldiers were most affected by being taken away from their families and communities. However, this suffering was tactically used by military forces in binding children to their political parties. These children wanted a sense of belonging like that which they previously had with their family. Therefore, through military forces encompassing the notions of hierarchy and patriarchal ideology in their leadership, the children were bound to follow them as this gave them a feeling of belonging in a time of disruption. Military personnel employed the conceptions of family to “meet the young recruits’ psychological need for a substitute family during the war period” (Boyden, 2004, p.87). This fundamentally grew internal support and group unity. However, the success of reintegration in later years was also affected for these ex-child soldiers, as they deemed their ideas of patriarchal imagery more important than their experiences of violence or lost childhoods. The configurationist approach can be applied to this context, which describes how children absorb the culture they “are born into by the simple experience of living it” (Korbin, 2003, p.438). Children exposed to violent cultures will endorse violent characteristics of behavior that, Mead explained, would be prevalent in later expressions of violence in adult years (Korbin, 2003). Therefore, learned violence would take prevalence in their memories of war.

Memory as a weapon

Memories are what constitute our experienced lives. They are what motivate us, but also the reason that we endorse measures to protect ourselves from their harmful effects. Therefore, what may often happen is the chosen silence in expression of memories, especially enacted in a culture of violence where vocalization may bring forth more tension.

In post-war situations, the use of silence may yield separate outcomes. Firstly, official silence can be considered disrespectful to the victims of war as well as discounting those accountable for human rights violations. On the other hand, it may be a fundamental key in achieving peace in societies that are already deeply divided due to their suffering pasts from ideological tensions (Igreja, 2008). In Mozambique, silence has been engulfed on a local level. Its people seldom speak of their experiences of war, their suffering, and their pain. The most prominent of undisclosed information is to which side people fought for, as the atrocities committed by both Renamo and Frelimo are still fresh in people's memories. Therefore, these memories have been subjected to that of the undiscussed.

It has been argued that the silence present on a local level has given power to the political sphere. The political elite have taken the silenced people's memories and used them as a weapon to keep tensions between Renamo and Frelimo alight. Using these memories as a weapon, and essentially privatizing silence to their own uses, has been effective in maintaining the political separation several years after the war has ended.

METHODOLOGY

My position as a researcher

Having conducted ethnographic research in Mozambique with actors who were personally involved in the brutalities of war, it was evident that my position as a researcher played a role. Their willingness to share information with me and possible biases and restrictions to what they felt they could not verbalize was affected by who I was and what I represented. Therefore, my background matters.

I am a twenty-one-year-old Caucasian female, with parents of European descent; having been raised in Mozambique, I consider myself Mozambican. I am a Portuguese speaker, the official language of Mozambique, and have grown up in a Mozambican cultural context. Additionally, I have established a network that made my research possible. I grew up in the country's capital city, Maputo, where Frelimo claims the majority vote. I noticed that in the country's largest city, I could not find one single book describing the war from a Renamo perspective, or giving a voice to its actors. This reiterated the significance of my research. Most importantly, having grown up in a war-torn culture that is still affected by the remnants of conflict; developmentally; economically; emotionally, I have gained an innate understanding of the effects of war. This has given me motivation in allowing those stories that may have never been told to have a voice.

This research is therefore a compilation of my own participant observation of those affected by war, and secondary literature-based research of relevant theories pertaining to the effects of war on a population, and in particular, the use of child-soldiers. Finally, and perhaps the most significant section of my research, is a collection of five stories of people who were active agents in the civil war and whose narratives represent the different domains of Renamo activity. I have attempted, to the best of my capabilities, to express their narratives objectively, so that their personal stories were not lost and have remained as true to them as possible.

Field research and analysis of data

In part, a contextual analysis and anthropological theory was assembled from secondary resources that have been incorporated into my findings. The second medium through which I gathered my results was through interviews with individuals who represented different domains of the war. The manner in which I present my primary sources are through a life history section, in which each chapter expresses a different perspective of the war and an individual's respective experiences. This emic perspective entailed interviews using semi-

structured open-ended questions to guide participants, but not limit any of their information-sharing. The themes emerged from these ethnographic first-hand accounts are discussed in my analysis.

Participant identities

Each participant represented a different perspective of the war, yet they all participated in Renamo's army. Participants 1 and 3 were Bandido and Marcelino, who requested that they remain anonymous as they were both Renamo child soldiers during the war. They preferred that their identities be concealed as they shared very personal, and they believed, punishable information. Therefore, their real names have not been used in this paper. Participant 2 was Raul Domingos, a political agent of Renamo during the Civil War. He was second in charge under the leader of the rebel group, conducted several military operations, fought in battle, and was the Renamo representative for the Rome Peace Accord during peace negotiations post-war. He was willing to share his identity based on the premise that he has previously provided his opinions regarding the Renamo opposition to Frelimo². Participants' 4 and 5 were Gregory Ashton and Douw Steyn, who represented South Africa's foreign involvement in the war. Both individuals were part of the South African Special Forces and had on-the-ground first-hand contact with training Renamo soldiers. Neither requested anonymity; Greg has spoken openly about his opinion; Douw, a published author, has written about his experiences in the army and was also willing to share his first-hand experiences with me.

Demographics of participants

Participants 1, 2, and 3 are Mozambicans, and participants 4 and 5 are South African. All participants are male and are in their late forties. The reason I spoke with only males was not because there were no females engaged during the war. Rather, this was purely to keep specificity to boys as girls were dispersed in different areas of war. Males were ever-present, thus making them a constant locus for analysis. I conducted face-to-face interviews with participants 1, 2, and 3, and a skype interview with participant 4 since I was no longer in Mozambique when I gained access to the interviewee. Finally, I was in contact with participant 5 over email as we discussed his experiences through photographs that he took while in Mozambique during the war. The duration of each interview, disregarding that of participant 5, was approximately an hour and a half long. Transcriptions of participants 1 and 3 interviews were translated from Portuguese into English. Transcriptions of participants 2, 4, and 5 interviews were directly written in English.

Ethical aspects

All participants expressed their verbal consent to be tape recorded, interviewed, and have their information shared in this thesis. Their verbal consent is on tape and can be obtained through the recorded interviews. All participants have received copies of my research and authorized the information I used regarding their experiences. Additionally, there were instances in which participants required that they speak off-record to divulge certain information; all details shared off-record were not recorded, transcribed, nor used in any manner within this paper.

LIFE
HISTORIES

Chapter One

A child soldier: “You cannot see the bullets but when you hear the sound, you know they’re close”

Our Initial meeting

Bandido first caught my attention when he called his employer one day to say that he would not be able to make it to work as he was on a mission to kill. Shocked, his employer inquired as to why, in which Bandido responded with, “It’s not a big deal: my wife has cheated on me with another man, and now I have to go and kill him. And so I would like to inform you that I’m taking the day off. But don’t worry, I’ll be back tomorrow.” Now jokingly telling me this story, his employer firstly informed Bandido that this was no longer possible, now that the war was over,” to which Bandido reluctantly agreed and came to work instead. Apart from the evident patriarchal ideology and nonchalant discourse of such violence, what struck me was Bandido’s apparent skewed moral compass, and desensitization to ethical judgement.

I first met Bandido after he agreed to share his narrative with me on the premise that it was “now [his] time to tell [his] story.” Many child soldiers have not had their say, and so I provided an opportunity for them to do so; those who haven’t been heard. I was expecting a menacing character, but was greeted by a gentle-mannered individual. How could this man have ever held a weapon; killed a man; killed many men? We sat comfortably next to each other amidst the faint sounds of children’s laughter reverberating from the school grounds behind us. We had placed ourselves on a bench outside and Bandido was wearing a suit. His formality accompanying the blazing January heat of Mozambique with our chosen meeting place consisting of a simple bench and complete seclusion from the rest of the world, was accredited to his evident nervousness regarding the information he was about to share with me, and the necessary trust thereof. Upon introducing myself to him, I effectively appeased his concerns by explaining that I was here to learn his story, and provide for its recognition through my work. There was no hidden agenda other than wanting to share his life’s experiences. He calmed, removed his jacket, and we began.

Still, I was in disbelief that this gentle man, who giggled at my note taking of the interview, could be the same man who was not only taken as a child to fight for the guerilla forces of Renamo, but managed to escape, only to be recaptured by Frelimo forces, and lived to tell the tale. Whether this man had any sense of agency in his exposure to violence is questionable on the grounds that child soldiers were forced into conscription. What determined their fate may have been skill, will power, or simply luck. What determined the following soldier’s life story, not even he knows. But one thing is for sure: he’s a survivor.

I was gracefully introduced to Bandido’s notions of what he deemed important through my initial question about his age, to which he replied “forty-one.” He then looked at me, and after a pause, continued, “But these forty-one years is a lie. That is not my real age... I had to make myself younger during the war to ensure that I could return to school later. I was actually born in 1973,” – making him forty-four. Even though Bandido did not have much moral dilemma to the possible killing of his wife’s lover, he held other values extremely high. It appeared that Bandido trusted me and was therefore open to speaking the truth. This was discredited in wartime – your closest friend could be the one to stab and kill you if ordered to do so – as he pointed out. I smiled, and he proceeded to tell me his story.

Their arrival

It all began when Bandido’s uncle was captured by Renamo soldiers in Gorongosa (Sofala Province) where they all lived, and was taken to a training camp in Zimbabwe. There, he was given a team of Renamo soldiers to take back to his province, and train them himself.

“We lived in the bush, and my uncle came home with that group... we were afraid of those men.”

Bandido described the illuminating ‘redness’ of these men: their red clothing; the red powder they used; their un-brushed hair; the almost primality of their appearance is what he feared most. Upon arrival, Bandido’s uncle informed the village that ‘these’ men are “like all of you. You must not be afraid of them. They are not here to treat you badly.” The population was told that these men were going to be living in a base near the village; they would all be together³.

The village agreed purely based on their trust in Bandido’s uncle, who was now a commanding officer, but more so, he was a member of the community. In such community-based structures, trust and loyalty is essential. They remained at their base for two months, would walk around with guns, and converse with the local population. “We would all greet each other - They were people of respect and so we would also show them respect.” “We would bring them food. Whatever food that was made, we would share it with them... This was before all the confusion.” “This was their arrival... This was before I fought for Renamo.”

Taken as a child: the game

One day, Bandido was home with his mother when his uncle, the brother of his mother, came for a visit and asked Bandido’s mother, “for [her] little boys.” Bandido and his brother, who were ten and twelve years old at the time respectively, were handed over as his mother could not refuse. She bid them off by granting her brother full permission to “play” with them at his disposal.

Many boys were taken from the village to their base in the bush where they were told that they had been “saved” by the commander, and that they were going to play a “game” from here on. “We didn’t know that the game was to begin training us to use a weapon,” Bandido then smiled and repeated melodically, “we are going to play a game, we are going to play a game.”

Bandido enthusiastically conveyed different activities, focusing on one in which they were separated into two teams; one team were the persecutors who had to run after the other team who were instructed to flea in the bush, and catch them by hitting them with stones. They would switch roles, and get to pick out their own rocks for the hunt. Bandido giggled, “Meanwhile, the guerillas were fighting just outside and we had no clue.” Bandido, in reflecting on his memories, said that the reason for the game “was to gain experience in how to run away in the bush... and so we did this for two months, always playing the game.”

The Renamo soldiers had enough resources in the village and therefore never had to venture out in search of supplies, keeping them hidden from the Frelimo base not 30 kilometers away in the Morombene district. This kept their location uncompromised. One day though, “the men of Frelimo found out that there were men living in the bush with weapons; they came swiftly.” Instead of going directly to the base, Frelimo soldiers went to the village.

Bandido and the boys were periodically allowed to sleep at home; he was in the village at his grandmother’s house the night Frelimo attacked. Bandido’s eyes lit up as he began imitating the sounds of gunshots. “They started shooting, we didn’t know anything... no one teaches you what to do when people are shooting... you cannot see the bullets but when you hear the sound, you know that they’re getting close to you.” He ended with another giggle and more gunshot imitation. Some played dead pinned to the floor, others ran into the bush as per the game, “each on his own.”

In the morning, they slowly returned to the village. The Renamo soldiers were informed of the incident and came swiftly. While walking to his grandmother’s house,

Bandido saw “two dead people who had fallen in the streets. That person who died, we didn’t know, he looked like he was sleeping, so I just walked past.” Upon arriving at his grandmother’s house, Bandido found his aunt wounded but did not understand the severity of the situation. His aunt was shot while in the shower the evening before. She was alive, but the bullet was still inside her and she was screaming. Bandido’s uncle - the Renamo commanding officer of the village - came to the house with his men and took Bandido’s aunt back to the base. She was treated there using traditional medicine, “we don’t know if whether they took off her leg, or if she died.”

The commander gathered the village and asked them two questions: what was the malice they had done that caused these men of Frelimo to attack them, and what could they do in retaliation? Both questions were answered with “it’s you who know what to do. We don’t have power to do it.” The commander assured the village that they would “let them also know that we are here... To repay what they did to us.” – his threat clearly visible. A small group of Renamo soldiers left at night and returned the next morning with Frelimo captives. The population gathered around this procession, when the commander exclaimed, “Some of those men who committed a massacre were identified and are here... the others ran away, some died. But here, we’ve brought four men... [and] we are not going to stop with them.” Bandido then told me with no emotion, “Those men were killed.”

The commander warned the people that Frelimo would come back, and so training had to begin. He spoke to the boys of the village, “If we stay as we are, we will die in one way or another. Come train. We will teach you how to use a gun, and each one of you will get your own.” Bandido and the boys agreed, “We played with those men, with each other, we were a group.”

The training

When asked about why Renamo took boys who were so young, Bandido explained: “The men of the bush, they don’t look for the age of the boy... they looked at his smartness; if he had good visibility; if he was physically able to fight.”

Some of the boys were taken to South Africa to be trained. They were led by “*um branco* [a white man]” who showed them how to use a gun, arm and disarm it, and how to pull a trigger. Bandido was part of this group, and upon returning to the village, they trained other soldiers.

Frelimo was now a direct threat, which meant that Bandido and the boys were no longer allowed to leave the base. “And so, we spent all our time with those men of the bush. Always.” As expected, Frelimo came for them. “We were ready. We knew how to run and hide, but we also knew how to fight... we killed most of them easily.” The rest fled.

The Renamo base began installing watch shifts for the boys around the base. Bandido told me it was like playing another game, “We were given ten bullets because we were kids.” They were taught that with those ten bullets, they had to kill the enemy, because otherwise they would run out of ammunition quickly and be killed for sure. “We [hid] in the trees,” explained Bandido, “always watching... If we saw something strange, we had to shoot.” Their hiding spots were their “shelter” and keeping the base safe was their “mission.” They were told it was their zone; Bandido and all the other young soldiers “were the sons of that *zona*⁴.”

Bandido’s escape

By 1984, the war was at full throttle; Bandido, now an eleven-year-old Renamo soldier. Bandido’s father had heard the news of his sons taken by the rebel forces under the command of his brother-in-law, and uncle to his sons. Living in the south of the country, in

Maniça, Bandido's father had managed to send a letter to his brother-in-law stating that he would travel to Morrumbene to claim his family. The perilous journey was not spoken of, but one night Bandido's father had arrived to his family's joy of his unexpected presence.

The commander was hesitant to grant Bandido's father permission to take his family back with him; going south to Maniça meant entering Frelimo territory. Bandido's uncle explained that where they were going, "there was no control... that [he] could not help. There's a war happening, a big war, and it was possible that [they] all would die." He suggested that Bandido and his family go to the north of the country; Beira or Chimoio, as it was Renamo territory and there would be no threat there. However, Bandido's father was already working for a company in Maniça and would not deviate from his plan. The commander reluctantly agreed.

During the week of Bandido's father staying in the village, many Renamo soldiers circulated the premises. "Even if he didn't know them; they knew that he was the brother in law of my uncle their *commandante*⁵. So they came to show respect." However, one soldier pointed a knife at Bandido's father and threatened him, "if you weren't the brother in law of our *comondante*, you would die with this weapon." Bandido quickly informed his uncle of the treason. After being summoned, the commander questioned the rogue soldier of his actions and then stated that threatening Bandido's father was a direct attack on his own "brothers of the bush." The soldier did not defend himself. He was therefore tied to a tree and left there. Bandido still does not know whether that soldier lived or died.

The journey to the south of the country was long and dangerous. Bandido and his family were accompanied by two Renamo soldiers for protection. At the boundary of Frelimo territory, a checkpoint was soon to come. This would be a deciding moment whether Bandido and his brother would survive or not. The commander had explained to Bandido's father that when they arrived at the checkpoint, they were to lie about the boys' age – and since they did not have official identification documents, it would be possible. This was imperative as "either they let [them] pass, or they kill [them]." Bandido's father managed to convince the Frelimo soldiers; saying that Bandido and his brother had been born in 1976 and 1975, thus making them just too young to be believable child soldiers. The Frelimo men were vigilant of young boys as they were the easiest to slip through the control. They were also the most easily indoctrinated of all soldiers, making them the most dangerous. "If you told your age, and you were *too* old – you were capable of using a weapon... that's where the complication started... If you were not lucky, you were dead." Bandido's father managed to convince the Frelimo soldiers that Bandido was eight years old; too young to be a soldier. However, Frelimo was apparently unaware that Renamo had already been recruiting boys by that stage.

The whole family succeeded in passing the checkpoint. The last part of the perilous trek was to avoid getting caught by Frelimo military convoys which were scouting travel paths. "They attacked a lot, they killed a lot... It took a week for us to go from Inhambane to Maputo in the south. The roads were bad; there were attacks; we slept in the bush; it was confusion." Nevertheless, Bandido made it safely to the south, and began his journey to a normal life, after having been a Renamo soldier for two years.

Intoxication as an aid to violence

Bandido explained to me how he would normally be afraid of such situations; like crossing through the Frelimo checkpoint with his family; standing on guard at the Renamo base; or killing many people. But, he also said that "the drugs helped." I had to ask. He explained how the Renamo soldiers fed them the equivalent of marijuana every morning by putting it into the boys' tea.

"We were drugged without even knowing... You became in a way of not knowing – everything you did was normal for you. You had no fears. Everything was possible to do... It

was so that you didn't think about the things that you were doing, because they were bad. To not think of the bad... When you drank the tea, ei⁶, you will see another world... To destroy something costs nothing, you don't think about what you're doing. It is all normal."

Upon hearing about Bandido's state of mind during his periods of intoxication, I assumed they were more likely exposed to a much harder hallucinogenic substance.

"It is easier to kill someone when you are drugged... you kill while you're laughing. There we didn't know anything of them giving us drugs, while here in Maputo it was already an order to take drugs. You were told to do it. You had to smoke it to not be afraid."

I asked Bandido if Frelimo also fed drugs to their soldiers and he assured me that they not only used it, but forced it on their soldiers of all ages. They had given it to the entire military.

First attempt at reintegration

Before the war, Bandido was in school under the old Portuguese system where he learned to read and write. There was no time to go to school during the war, and so it was only after he arrived in Maputo⁷ that he could resume his studies. Even though Bandido said that he had no educational integration problems, he also clarified how he had "left the others there... some stayed permanently in the war, they stayed until they were old. The boys who I grew up with in my area are men of Renamo. They were raised in it. Everything was a part of the war."

During secondary school, there was a Renamo raid to abduct possible soldiers. Only one boy was captured, "his name was Gito, and he was taken away... to be trained." Despite Bandido's efforts, even though he had managed to escape becoming reinstated as a Renamo child soldier, the Frelimo soldiers came later and took him under their own wing: a decision he had no choice in.

Fighting for Frelimo

Having already fought for Renamo, Bandido was mentally well-equipped to deal with having being taken, but was not keen whatsoever to be thrown into war yet again. Bandido made sure not to ever let the Frelimo men know that he had previously fought for Renamo as that would have led to his immediate execution. And so the training began once again, but this time Bandido resisted indoctrination.

Bandido said that the trainings of both parties differed tremendously. Frelimo taught you the basics of military, for the sole purpose to punish and beat people... "and so, [he] resisted." They instructed him on certain tasks, but Bandido had refused and simply carried them out in the best ways he knew how – from what Renamo taught him. He told me that he had learned better tactics with Renamo, and reiterated this by explaining that the Frelimo platoon he was assigned to were killed in a Renamo raid while on a mission; a mission that Bandido refused to join in. "They died there. I didn't go. But if I had gone, I would have died too." It was evident that Bandido did not feel as connected to Frelimo as to Renamo. "The majority of them were killed because of the type of instructions they were given." Bandido explained such defects in instruction, using artillery strategy as an example. In a fight, when the Frelimo men shot, "all they did was shoot in the air." They were meant to kill those who resisted capture, but due to wasted ammunition, this proved challenging.

Renamo soldiers were not trained in this manner. They were given few bullets, "sometimes five... to make sure that you kill the enemy. When you finish those bullets too early, you will die... so you cannot shoot in any manner." You shoot to kill. Frelimo men did not shoot like this, "No, they just shoot. Their bullets come down like rain."

Renamo soldiers had few resources; in constant hiding from Frelimo forces, ammunition that was either stolen during raids or sent in from South Africa, was not always easily accessible. Therefore, they were taught to save their bullets, or die.

Bandido no longer wanted to be a part of the war. He requested official permission from the commander to go back to school and finish his final exams. “They told me I could do what I wanted, but that I be ready to die when those Renamo men come from the bush and kill me. But they didn’t know that I had experience from there... they didn’t know.”

Ultimately, they let him return to school because they thought he “was a confusion and so they didn’t have a problem letting [him] go.” Unfortunately, Bandido had to stop his education a few years later in order to support his family. *“I always helped my dad. I stopped going to school. Whenever my siblings needed money for school, they asked me. When they were lacking something, they asked me. I always did this.”*

Those left behind

Bandido’s uncles were two of the many who were taken by the war. His uncle he grew up with, the commander, remained with his soldiers. His whereabouts are not known. Bandido’s other uncle, the brother of his father, was also left behind along with his entire family. “He suffered a lot... he and his wife actually ended up dying there too. Because of the war. He was assassinated.” When Bandido, his brother, his mother, and father all left to Maniça, the rest of the family remained in the north where the war was still rampant. Bandido’s uncle was chosen by the Catholic Church to live close to the capital of Inhanbane and work as a priest, bringing his wife and children with him. It was not safe there though, and their “only vice was that god would always protect them.” One evening, a group of Renamo soldiers came to the village. They were not the same soldiers who fought for Bandido’s other uncle, the general. Upon entering the village, the soldiers rounded up all the men from their houses.

“They ordered each man to stand with his wife, and hug each other. Each man hugged his wife. All in the same place. These men then came and took a wooden baton, and began beating each couple, one at a time, until they died. They killed all of them right there. Without even using a gun... They all died there. And so my cousin, who was three years old, was taken to the bush.”⁸

“It was confusion, and those men who killed my uncle were not part of the people who followed my other uncle, their deaths were not in the hands of my uncle... it was a massacre, you see. They massacred those people and my uncle. All the children were then taken to the base. They were trained there and stayed there until the end of the war, fighting for Renamo.”

A change in mindset - from then and now

Bandido made it clear that the resurgence of war would be disastrous.

“What I saw, others must not see because, it’s hard. It’s very ugly what I’ve been through. That must not happen again... Because it is hard to see a person having his body parts being cut off slowly, part by part, until he dies. Until he loses his life. It cannot happen again.”

Bandido did say though, there was one thing that worked better during the time of the war: respect. “Today, there is a lot of abuse in the respect of people... but in that time, it was not like this. There would never be any thief or alcoholic walking on the streets. They weren’t there. Everyone controlled one another.” In this regard, Bandido’s ideology of ‘respect’ was constructed from ideas of control within times of war.

“You see, if I ever insulted someone in any manner, it could be a military man or man of Renamo I don’t know. That night, I would die...but today this does not exist. A person walks how he wants, insults how he wants... There is no respect.”

Still, Bandido said that war was not the answer. Instead, there should be dialogue between people. “For example, I now prefer that if you hurt me, we have a conversation about it and its over... during the time of war it was not like this: no. if you hurt me, I would also have to hurt you.” It was the men of Renamo who taught Bandido this mindset; “Those men who first came to take us; they opened our vision; they taught us how to kill someone who hurt you.” He then said that it was because Frelimo had originally adopted this strategy, and so Renamo also had to teach the same ideas to their own men to be able to fight Frelimo. Bandido called it “the confusion between the tribes.” Perhaps because he was so young at the time and indoctrination was essentially effortless, Renamo would have had a significant influence on Bandido.

Bandido wanted to add a final note to the interview:

“I want to say the following: When two boys fight, like animals in the bush, the place in which they fight is the one that suffers. You understand. It’s like with us, in that time of war, it was the population that was suffering.”

Chapter two

The politician: “Renamo was fighting for freedom”

The following is a story of a man who played an imperative role in two spheres of the war: he was not only a soldier, but also a representative of the political dynamics at play. Raul Domingos was the second in charge under Renamo’s president Afonso Dhlakama and orchestrated guerilla warfare during the conflict. However, he also was the Renamo representative negotiator for the Rome Peace Accords which ended in the signing of a peace treaty in 1992, thus, bringing the war to an end.

Nevertheless, war is never as clear cut as literature expresses it to be and the following chapter entails the accounts of Domingos, in which we see the mesh of diplomacy and a fighter in his narrative. We gain an insight into the political realm that was Renamo during the war, whilst understanding the story of a man, whose accounts of historical events and political ideology show that he played an integral role in the conflict.

Having run his own political party for several years now, I had to schedule an official meeting with Domingos at his offices. Sitting in the waiting room, whilst attempting to simultaneously listen to the lull of a Mozambican radio playing in the background and go over my interview questions, I couldn’t help the daunting feeling that I was about to be given the opportunity to speak to one of the most prominent figures of the war. Walking into Domingos’ office, and shaking his hand profusely, I noticed a large map of the country stuck to his wall before seating myself across from him at his boardroom table. We began speaking; I soon calmed to his friendly disposition, and found myself swept away by his charismatic endeavors of life’s experiences. We concluded the interview with him taking me to the map that I first noticed and showing me his journeys through the country, encompassing the land that Renamo had taken control of during the war.

Renamo – a war to overthrow the government or a war of destabilization?

Literature has stated that the Mozambican Civil War was purely a war of destabilization, in that the white ruling parties of South Africa and Rhodesia used the war to disrupt the threats in their own countries of rebel forces. In this regard, the tensions between Frelimo and Renamo were used by external forces to fuel the fighting between them. However, Domingos tended to disagree. The fighting was more so a great difference in opinions of the political parties at play in how to rule the country, and not a war for the own benefit of foreign involvement.

“For us Mozambican guerillas, we were looking to overthrow the government but not as the main point. The main point was democracy, freedom, human rights, justice, and a multi-party state. Because when we had independence, Frelimo declared itself as the unique and legitimate representative of the people of Mozambique. So there was not allowed any other political party, or even association. Everybody was obliged to accept what Frelimo decided for the country. There was no freedom of speech, no freedom of opinion, no freedom of association, and no political parties.”

Domingos also explained how even the freedom of movement was restricted. Frelimo set up control posts in the country; the same controls that threatened Bandido’s survival whilst travelling with his family. This control “restricted the freedom of the people, and Renamo was fighting for that freedom.”

Domingos' role in the war

Domingos worked in a base called Rea Headquarters (RHQ) whereby he was in charge of coordinating “logistics and intelligence.” A system was used for monitoring the communication of enemy forces. Domingos had to collect all relevant information and send it to the main base to warn them of possible threats. Additionally, if he uncovered Frelimo missions over the radio system, he would plan operations to intercept the enemy by deploying Renamo troops to targeted areas. Domingos also controlled the “logistics” of the troops. When the South African military were dropping air supplies, he would enter Renamo-protected areas with troops to mark “dropping zones” where planes would deploy the supplies by parachute.

Even though Domingos held official positions as second in charge to the leader of Renamo, Afonso Dhlakama, when I asked him about his experience that resonated most with him, his tone became somber. “It was my first combat,” He began, “It was very hard and lasted eight hours.” The battle was known as ‘Sitatonga II,’ and it was an attempt to end Renamo for good. They were on a mountain, surrounded by several brigades, and led by Afonso Dhlakama himself. Frelimo forces were approaching from all corners; coming from the south from Mapai; the east from Beira; the north from Tete; and the west from Zimbabwe. It was also the first time that Frelimo used MIG17 combat planes from Russia, their ‘comrades’. The planes would fly overhead to “harass” the troops, but the actual bombing came from the Frelimo soldiers on the ground. Domingos’ eyes were alight as he described this momentous event, imitating the sounds from the reverberating squadron of planes above him.

“It was my first time, and it was very scary... but I was the president’s secretary at the time and so I felt inspired by him... and confident... so I followed him everywhere.... And when it became dark, we slowly packed our things and left.”

After having finished his story, Domingos had begun to loosen his political demeanor and tell me about how missions made him feel; how he feared too; and how, as the soldiers had their lives on the line on a daily basis, so did he.

One story entailed when Domingos was in the southern region of the country as chief of staff, coordinating all the operations of the area. One night, they were attacked by surprise with armored tanks. They all ran away from the base, but upon arriving at their meeting point, Domingos realized in horror that in their escape they had forgotten their most important item: a bag containing vital documents – “all the information of intelligence, all the maps with the indication of where we had our materials hidden in the whole southern region... And I was the head of that group.”

Domingos said that as the leader, he would prefer to “die fighting while getting it back than reporting that [he’d] lost the bag.” He assembled a group and they all returned to the base in search of the bag, but found the area empty. He knew that Frelimo had approached with tanks, but that tanks could only be effective from long distances. Therefore, they must have simply used them to break down the fencing around the base, after which their troops entered the premises. They must have fled quickly, since the tanks created a compromising position being so close to Renamo’s base with not enough infantry around them for protection. This is because the guerilla forces had RPG7 ammunition with the power to blow the wheels of the tanks, thus rendering them unusable.

When Domingos and his men found the bag, all its contents were thrown on the floor, after which he speculated that this was not an official military mission, and simply an attempt to procure weapons and money. This may have possibly been why Domingos did not pick up on their plans through his radio monitoring.

They acquired all the papers and returned to the rest of the troops.

“I was very relieved... Because it was something that either we die there or we get what we are looking for. Because for me, it’s almost the same. If I stay and report, they might decide to kill me and say that you sold information because it was relevant for the whole southern region. I said no, I have to fight for this... This is something that I remember always when I think about the war.”

Your soldiers

I wanted to understand the employment of Renamo soldiers through a position of power. Being an important decision-maker for several deployment missions of soldiers, Mr. Domingos was the perfect candidate to approach.

Upon being asked about the recruitment of soldiers, Domingos proclaimed, “Recruitment happened when the attacks happened.” We delved further into the subject and he explained to me that when his guerilla forces would attack a village and the troops of that village would run away, “all the people would then get captured and the young boys got recruited.”

I asked him why they predominantly used young boys as soldiers to which Domingos responded that they were the only ones “who had the necessary strength to fight.” He added that the older ones would live around the base and sometimes be used to collect intel for the Renamo men. But most important was that: *“The population was the main support of guerillas... without the population, the guerillas wouldn’t survive... information to know where you can get water was from the population, food supply was from the population, and other relevant info about the enemy was from the population. So the relationship between the guerilla and the population was so smooth, because otherwise the guerilla could disappear.”*

In regard to military training from a position of power, Domingos divulged the following:

“Sometimes the army doesn’t know what they are fighting for. The military is like a dog; you are trained to do what the master says for you to do... I was a senior officer. If you make a mistake and you come to me saying ‘sir I thought that this could be the right way to do things.’ My answer was: you can’t ‘think.’ You are not deployed to think. You are deployed to do missions, to execute missions. I am the senior officer, I am the one who can think. You do.”

He used this to tell me that’s how the military were trained – they were not used for “thinking.” It was for the politicians to decide, and the military to simply do.

“‘Go and bomb them!’... they bomb... ‘Go and destroy that bridge’... they go. They are not asking ‘why am I destroying this bridge?’ it’s your duty. You just do.”

The military was trained through that logic; they were not meant to think. They were however, allowed to think on how to execute an order: “if you have to climb a mountain, you are trained how to climb it.” Domingos claimed this is why reconciliation between militaries was so easy. It was because they “were brothers... what you know is the same of what I know.”

As a final note on this topic, and what I hoped to transition into him explaining about foreign involvement in the war, I asked Domingos about who was responsible for the training programs of Renamo’s soldiers. He explained that there was a department of specialist personnel that was in charge of training them. Some though, predominantly the trainers themselves, were trained by South Africans. Previously, when Renamo still had ties with Rhodesia, some trainers were also sent there. Essentially, these trainers would then come

back to Mozambique and train the Renamo soldiers from what they had learnt in either South Africa or Rhodesia, the same as what happened to Bandido's uncle.

Reasons for external support

Domingos joined Renamo on the 5th of May 1980, just after Renamo cut ties with Rhodesia because of their independence on the 18th of April. Soon after Domingos' admission, Renamo allied with the South African White government party in order to supply Renamo with logistical support.

Domingos stated that it was very important to mention that a lot of propaganda at the time said that "Renamo was the creation of Rhodesia and an instrument of [South African] apartheid." However, as far as Domingos was sure, Renamo was in fact the creation of a group of Mozambicans who had to flee from Mozambique to Rhodesia to seek support. The white minority ruling government party aided Renamo. This was due to the following dichotomy: The Rhodesian regime, who were racists, were fearful that after Mozambique had gained their independence they would be able to support Rhodesia's guerilla forces, ZANU⁹. This support could have severely weakened the Rhodesian white ruling government. Therefore, to defend themselves against ZANU, they decided to support Frelimo's opposition; Renamo, the guerillas. Domingos referred to these shared interests as their "common goals," in which Renamo wanted "freedom and democracy in Mozambique," and the Rhodesian whites wanted to defend themselves against the movement which was fighting for independence. For that reason, support was beneficial. He exaggerates the point that, "we were supported *by* them... but it doesn't mean that we were supporting them; the racists. We needed their support to fight for our freedom because there was no other country who could support us."

After Zimbabwe gained their independence, Renamo then received the support of South Africa's ruling apartheid government in 1979, also wanting to retaliate against Frelimo who supported South Africa's ANC rebel group. Domingos had the privilege of being part of the "first contact," along with the president of Renamo, Afonso Dhlakama, with the South African military wing. He was there as the president's secretary and confirmed to me that the reason for this contact was primarily for "logistical support." Of course, during this relationship they were given military training, but the main aim was definitely, "logistical support." However, this aid also came to an end when the South African apartheid government and the Mozambican government, Frelimo, signed the Nkomati Accord in 1984¹⁰.

South Africa abandoned us

When Frelimo signed the Nkomati Accord, the South African politicians gave the instruction to their military to send Renamo men back to Mozambique. Renamo was given two options. The first was a proposal to accept amnesty and end the war. If refused, the other option was to be exiled from South Africa. This meant that Afonso Dhlakama and Raul Domingos would be sent back as political exiles, as they were in South Africa at the time. Moreover, Renamo troops currently training in South Africa would be sent to work in the mines.

Domingos explained to me that this was a moment in which the "*essence of the struggle was reaffirmed... we said no amnesty, no exile, we are fighting for freedom, we want democracy, we want a multi-party system, we want a market economy, we want justice, and we want respect for human rights... this is what we are fighting for so all of us accept to die by fighting for this cause.*"

In response to Renamo's stance, the South African government decided to "drop them," by deploying Renamo members back to Mozambique. However, there was still a war going on and so the Renamo men would have to be flown into the country and parachuted over a remote location. Domingos was one of these men.

He told me, with a heavy head, that whenever he talked about the war, this was something that made him very emotional. The South African military had to train them in parachute jumping. Domingos and his men were given four parachute jumps to practice. The fifth jump "was in the night in the bush," where they were dropped back into Mozambique.

These men were not well trained by any means.

"They trained us just to throw us away, like animals, tossed in the bush, if you die or you survive it's by yourselves because you rejected amnesty and you rejected exile so care for yourself... There were three planes; two planes of guerilla material and some weapons: ammunitions; explosives; bombs. I was in the third plane with 65 other paratroops... We were dropped here in Maputo province, with one company waiting for us in the field. We were dropped there, spent all night collecting materials, and hiding. When the day came, there were [Frelimo] armored cars and tanks, hunting us in the bush – it was a very, very difficult situation. But we survived."

Casa Banana – the end of Renamo?

Casa Banana was the main base where commander and chief Afonso Dhlakama was stationed, housing vital information written by the president's secretary at the time.

Therefore, after the planned attack by Frelimo forces and subsequent capturing of Casa Banana, it held precedence as being the expected end of Renamo¹¹. Domingos, who was working at Rea Headquarters at the time said, "People used to say that they had cut the 'coluna vertebral' – the spinal column, and now all they needed to do was cut the throat." Essentially meaning that the central pillar of Renamo had been broken down and all that remained was eliminating its leaders and representatives of the party.

"This was not true, because, as with the guerilla following Mao Tse-tung, you can never end the guerilla when they have the support of the people... and we had support."

Domingos reiterated that Frelimo had captured their main headquarters and some material, but it only affected short-term operations. Interestingly, due to the taking over of Casa Banana, Renamo had decided to change their entire strategic position. As a way to pull Frelimo forces out from the central Casa Banana position, Renamo troops were deployed to the north and south of the country. Domingos was in the south at the time, and was instructed to go even further south to Zitundo, whilst the troops in the north went all the way to Pemba and Mueda (see appendix A for schematic drawn by Domingos of the preceding strategy). The war continued.

Domingos fought for Renamo until 1989, when the first contacts had been made between both parties. He said that the war had lasted so long because Frelimo never expected Renamo to continue fighting, but when the "guerilla has the support of the people, there is no way you can finish them." They survived all those years from 1984 until 1990, after which peace talks and negotiations began.

After the war: the 1992 Rome Peace Accord¹²

Raul Domingos began his nostalgic narrative. He was chosen out 25,000 soldiers and officials to lead the peace delegation in Rome, as the official representative for Renamo. This was a huge privilege; he was 33 years old at the time, and there were others who had spent

many more years fighting in the war than him, but Afonso Dhlakama chose Domingos. He assumed it was due to the stance he took while Renamo officials were having internal negotiations on what the next course of action would be. Domingos was a general in the military wing, among others. He also mentioned that by the end of the war, 80% of the country was under Renamo control; the head of the district, the central regions of the country, and even down south around the capital city, Maputo (which was Frelimo territory), was under their power. Essentially, Renamo had all the rural areas, while Frelimo had the main cities and villages. He recalled how even the American Embassy at the time decided that officials were no longer allowed to travel more than nine kilometers outside of the city because it would be too dangerous for them as Renamo were operating in the surrounding areas. There was a Renamo group called the “urban guerillas,” who were specifically deployed around the outskirts of the city to undergo “operations,” how Domingos liked to refer to their missions. Therefore, everybody was confined to the city. He stated that’s why, by the end of the war, Frelimo accepted negotiations.

There were two major positions regarding negotiations. The first was the “hard line” decision. Due to these demographics, there were some generals among the Renamo military wing who wanted to make a “hard line” decision and “squeeze the capital city” even more, taking it over completely. This group said that there was no point in attempting negotiations with “the Marxists;” referring to the Frelimo party. The other position held by Renamo generals was termed “the moderate line” decision. They said that if Renamo was to attack the capital city, it would end in a “*circulo visioso*,” – a vicious circle. This meant that if they attacked, forcing Frelimo into the bush, they would then have to employ guerilla tactics to fight Renamo. After many years, they would be squeezed out by Frelimo again and the circle would continue. Thus, a never-ending war. Therefore, the right choice was to end the war through negotiation. Raul Domingos was defending the moderate line position, even though there were people against it. However, the president supported it, and sent Domingos to commence with negotiations in Rome.

Domingos explained the official bureaucratic aspects of the negotiations that took place in Italy. One event, though very unconventional, Domingos described to me as a key feature that aided in the negotiations for the country. On one of the mediator’s visits to Domingos’ hotel room, Domingos told him that he would like to talk with Guebuza, the Frelimo representative, “just the two of them, as Mozambicans... out of the media, and out of the official negotiation room.”

The respected mediator congratulated Domingos on this decision, stating that it was very courageous of him, “I don’t think that Guebuza will refuse because refusing that proposal means being weak. So as far as I know, Guebuza will accept.”

Domingos reiterated to me that, till today, he does not know where he got that inspiration from, because “looking back, that was almost suicide!” This fear was because, from Mozambique, Dhlakama could have thought, “*Ei!* What agreement did you make with Guebuza?!”

“That could have finished me because you know, guerilla is something where you live or die. Sometimes there are really hard decisions. But I didn’t care. I thought: I want to talk with Guebuza, personally... and give him my message.”

The Sant’ Egidio community, who were leading the negotiations, gained permission from the Vatican to use a place where the pope would go for his mediations; “a very inspiring place called *Roca de Papa*.” It was used for the entire delegation. Inside, there was a room organized for just Domingos and Guebuza. They were to sit down and eat lunch while indulging in what they wanted to discuss, “But, believe me, we had no lunch... it was tense, very tense,” Domingos said sternly.

Domingos' message to Guebuza was the following:

"Look, Guebuza. You and me, we have a very, very big responsibility. We have Mozambique in our hands, and it depends on me and you to come to an agreement. You must understand my points and I must understand your points. If we have to take information back to our leaders, we must be as correct as possible to pass the information. To get the correct answer and correct instructions. If we do not inform correctly, if we do not understand each other correctly, we will pass wrong information, we will have wrong decisions. So it depends on us to be serious. If we succeed, it's good for Mozambique; it's good for the people of Mozambique; it's good for our parties; and it will be very good for us personally as individuals. So let's do our best to get a peace agreement."

Domingos passed his message, and Guebuza responded with:

"I fully agree with you, and this will not end here – these talks, this relationship. When we get the peace agreement, we will be together in a parliament where the most important political decisions of the country will be taken. So we still need these kinds of talks. The most important decisions will not be taken in a plenary session; it will be taken out in our corridor talks like these we are having now. So I believe what you are proposing, what you are saying, and I believe this will happen in the near future."

Both agreed that it would not be the first and last time. During the rest of the official negotiations, Domingos and Guebuza conversed away from the mediators, and out of the media. Domingos explained to me that the problem with the media was that once a decision was made, it was very hard to go back on said decision as it would be seen as a sign of weakness of the political party in a public sphere. Therefore, they would sometimes have to stick to a decision so that the public would perceive them as being "strong and correct in their positions."

Hence, being out of the limelight of mediators and media, Domingos and Guebuza were able to discuss, as Mozambicans, how they were going to save their people and for the best possible solutions for the country. In this way, it was much easier to "change [their] positions and be flexible" to one another. Domingos told me how, together, they tried to understand what their fears were, how the other political party thought about the problems of the country, and tried to view this paradigm through "the eyes of the other side." They agreed upon everything they had discussed. It took some time, but the talks came to an end after two and a half years, and the peace agreement was signed. Contrary to their efforts, joint rule did not ensue, with Frelimo winning the majority of the vote in the country's first democratic elections, and have remained in power ever since¹³.

Domingos attributes this to his conversations with Guebuza during the peace accords. *"Guebuza was the one who started going back, jeopardizing all the efforts that we had done, and we have this situation which we have now."*

Domingos felt that it was predominantly due to Frelimo not wanting to stick to the terms discussed; that in fact Guebuza was forced to sign the agreement while in Rome. Perhaps the real reason as to why he signed the peace agreement was to give Frelimo a break from war, to rebuild their strength, and continue as a one-party state. Domingos explained how Frelimo would never accept that there could be another party leading the country. They thought they were unique. When in 1975 Mozambique gained its independence, Frelimo proclaimed themselves "*o unico e legitimo representate do povo mocambicano*" – meaning, "the only and legitimate representative of the people of Mozambique." There was no room for another political party; they used to call this mindset "the DNA of Frelimo."

Therefore, Domingos explained, it was difficult for Frelimo to understand that the country did not *belong* to them; it belonged to the people of Mozambique.

“To rule this country you must be Frelimo, if you are not Frelimo you are the second category of citizen. That is why we still have problems today.”

Reintegration back into civil society

After the Peace Accord, the ONUMOZ operation ended and demobilization had occurred, the Renamo soldiers were split up¹⁴. Approximately half were to become soldiers of the new government army. The other half attempted to reintegrate back into civil society, which proved extremely challenging. “That was something that was not well done – one of the problems we have today is that the military integration to civil society was not well done.”

Domingos suggested that it was not because the ONUMOZ operation had ended, but that there was no follow-up team on reintegration efforts. “The reintegration was very, very sad.” Domingos explained how each military man received one bucket with maize to plant, some materials for agriculture, and a cheque to receive monthly payments for eighteen months. “But after eighteen months, life still goes on.”

They would supply people with some vocational trainings to be one of the following: a carpenter, an electrician, or a mechanic. After six months of training, you would receive a kit of instruments to work, but there would be nothing to do. Domingos continued exasperated, “For somebody who stayed ten years in the bush fighting, and in six months you train him to be an electrician. How do you think he can work as an electrician by himself, to be self-employed?”

He continued to tell me that most of these ex-soldiers would simply sell their tools, and by the next month they would be starving.

“It was not well done and not worth thinking about... this operation was not a success.”

What was the biggest threat: the politicians or the people?

When I asked Domingos whether the soldiers who had to join the government army, comprising both Renamo and Frelimo men, faced difficulties, he said no.

“Among the soldiers, there is a spirit of a soldier which is the same as players of a football game or a boxing match; you finish boxing, you shake hands, you are good friends, and there is no difficulty. They look at each other like good friends... But the problem was with the politicians.”

Domingos went on to tell me that the tensions did not lie between the soldiers, but rather it was upheld by the politicians. He used the example of a ceremony he attended to commemorate the deaths of the Mozambicans who were previously bombed by Zimbabwean forces¹⁵. The Ceremony of the Veterans of the Zimbabwean War took place in Maniça, where the bombing had taken place. At the time, Domingos was a member of parliament and leader of the Renamo parliamentary group, whilst Joaquim Chissano was the president of the Republic of Mozambique, and Frelimo member.

Domingos describes the scene: President Chissano and Robert Mugabe; the president of Zimbabwe, were seated on the highest plank of the VIP stage. The other planks sat the senior officers including Domingos, Armando Guebuza, and Zimbabwean generals.

After the official ceremony, and conversations began to flow, Domingos was confronted with Rex Nhongo, one of the high generals of the Zimbabwean army who led guerilla forces during the Zimbabwean Bush War. Domingos already knew who Nhongo was, because during the war, he had heard his name used on the monitoring system during military operations.

The Zimbabwean army general approached Domingos and said, “Ei! You are Raul Domingos! If I could get you a time ago I could have killed you!” To which Domingos replied with, “I could have done the same to you!”

This brief conversation ended with a laugh and embrace.

“The military is not the problem. The problem is in the politicians... it was very funny – we talked about funny things. It was all okay because the war had finished... it was over.”

This also exemplified that Domingos was able to switch the spheres that he represented: from politician to soldier.

Chapter three

Marcelino: “I’ve lost many years”

Mr. Marcelino is forty-six years old, and a man who has explored many avenues in his life; having fought in the civil war as a child, survived, and managed to reintegrate back into civil society. This was not a common occurrence for soldiers, and we gain a little insight through Marcelino’s story as to why, and how he made it out.

I met Marcelino in a small café bustling with people. We sat at a table in the corner of the room in the hopes to gain some privacy from wondering ears, as well as for his own comfort in digressing about his life stories. However, as soon as he began speaking, the world around us gradually faded away as we entered a realm of the undiscussed; this was the first time Marcelino was sharing his story, a notion that many Renamo soldiers have not had the privilege of expressing.

His capture

Marcelino was a twelve-year-old boy studying in primary school in the Macura district of Zambezia. His family had sent him there to live with his older sisters to gain an education, and it was only during the holidays that Marcelino was able to travel back home to Niassa. One such Christmas holiday in 1986, Marcelino resisted the urge to go back to school and pleaded with his family that he not return. He explained to his parents that the war was already in full throttle in Zambezia, and that he did not feel safe. However, Marcelino’s parents assumed that a twelve-year-old boy was much too young to partake in the war as a soldier, and was therefore not in any threat of being taken by the Renamo men; an assumption that cost Marcelino his youth, and almost his life. Consequently, Marcelino returned to his sisters’ house to continue his schooling in a Roman Catholic Church boarding school run by priests. Not one day had passed being back, and they were attacked.

It was four in the morning, and around forty-five Renamo soldiers entered on foot, carrying weapons. They first took all the priests, and within what felt like five minutes to Marcelino, they gathered all the eighty students asleep on the school grounds; students whose ages ranged from twelve to seventeen years old. “All the students were taken; no one was left behind.” The Renamo men were on a mission to gather as many boys as possible; not to kill anyone, “Because they needed all of [them].”

Whilst being led on foot, Marcelino recalled that suddenly they were all being chased. Frelimo men had found the Renamo troop and were hunting them down. They all ran. After eight hours of trekking, the boys were taken to a house to hide and rest, but “were [also] locked in that house.” The young boys were informed that “The person who tried to leave here during the night: wait to be killed.” They respectfully stayed put; they did not play outside and ate the food that was given to them within the confines of the rooms. During the night, all eighty children slept in that small house and at four the next morning, they set out once again and walked for another three days.

Finally, Marcelino and the boys arrived at a small base, known as “*a base setorial*.”¹⁶ This was a preliminary zone you stayed in before you could enter the main base, in which the commanders would screen the boys, speak to them, and give them lessons in politics. After which, they would always return to their own base, leaving the boys at the “*base setorial*.” They remained there for fifteen days; learning about “the politics of their country.” One night, a colleague of Marcelino ran away, and the rest of the boys were immediately evacuated and taken to the main base called “*Estado Maior*.” Their rash decision was so that their positions would not be compromised if the runners found refuge with Frelimo soldiers. “*Estado Maior*” was located in Morombala, which they could only reach on foot through mountainous regions. The further they trekked into the bush, the more admired Marcelino

became of the men leading them; “It was bush, just bush... how did they know where to go, where to take us?”

Along the route, they would stop to eat, advance during the day, and sleep in the bush at night. Sometimes, they would arrive at bases situated in near proximity of villages taken over by Renamo. Upon arrival, the village populations were ordered to cook “big meals” for them; “it gave [them] morale; it gave [Marcelino] morale.” He described to me that “they cooked right there for us. We danced all night until the morning. And they danced as well to make sure we didn’t run away.”

While on the journey, with the boys positioned one in front of the other to make sure that no one stopped walking from fatigue, two Makonde friends of Marcelino’s escaped. “They left their luggage and ran... and there everything was ruined.” The Renamo soldiers leading the boys brought them to a house. They took out a gun and placed its bullets on the bed saying, “Now, we are going to kill all of you.” This was the moment that Marcelino felt the most, he told me.

The soldiers decidedly refrained from killing them, nor did they seek the boys who ran away. After twenty-five days of walking, they finally arrived at the “*Estado Maior*” base. It was the day after Samora Machel died that they entered the base, placing them in October. Marcelino remained there for three months.

His training: “a proper democracy”

Every day, all they did was learn “the politics of the country.” When I asked Marcelino what this entailed, he explained how “they taught about communism and democracy. We want democracy and Frelimo wants communism... We want to put a proper democracy into Mozambique... we learnt this for three months... every day.” Those who resisted Renamo, who did not want to follow them, were killed immediately. This was the fate of Jehovah Witnesses travelling with Marcelino, who did not want to “praise Renamo,” and were shot effectively. Marcelino survived and remained in the base for five years.

Upon being asked if foreigners were ever present to help conduct the guerilla trainings, Marcelino told me that there were foreigners in “*Estado Maior*,” but that they never aided in trainings. Some came from South Africa and some from unknown locations.

“They came to see the base, how it was doing. And they did some other things that we didn’t know what about... They stayed and talked with our officers and commanders. And the next day they would go with helicopters... They sometimes stayed one week; sometimes two weeks; they sometimes left and went to the frontline. To go and see what was happening there. And then they would leave.”

I asked Marcelino if they had ever received supplies from the South Africans, to which he responded by explaining that the weaponry they received was from raids, attacks, and patrols. “*Whenever we managed to get weaponry from attacking a location for example... we were never just given weaponry.*”

After five years, Marcelino was sent to a base that was led by Afonso Dhlakama’s brother; Ilias Dhlakama. There, he “walked with Dhlakama” as the first line of defense. Later, Marcelino was promoted and sent off to another base near the border of Malawi. It was merged into the population of a nearby village, in which they carried no armaments. “Many Frelimo helicopters would come looking for us with bombs but they never found us.” He was allocated there because Ilias Dhlakama noticed his intelligence and sent him to be trained in military communications and counter-intelligence. Dhlakama informed the head of radio to

“take [Marcelino], and learn what we look for and what we do.” The counter-intelligence unit would enter Frelimo’s frequency channels on the radio, and take as much information as they could. They would attempt to find out where Frelimo soldiers were moving from point to point; and where they were going to attack, in what specific areas. Marcelino explained how they did not have informants who would go and find out this information, it was *them* who found it out. He mimicked what sounded like Morse code, saying that he could decipher an entire document with just those sounds. Raul Domingos had overseen the same radio monitoring system in the south of the country.

Bloodshed

Whilst working, Marcelino and his team targeted an offensive: a group of Frelimo men left from Maputo in the south of the country, and were headed for Marcelino’s base in Mongola, near the Malawi border.

“That group was controlled for completely... We listened to their radios, we knew where they were going. [and] they had not been attacked yet [by Renamo forces along route].” The counter-intelligence unit found out that the Frelimo soldiers had decided to attack a base the next day; close to where Marcelino was situated.

Due to listening in on all Frelimo-related activities, The Renamo soldiers had time to prepare for this attack already weeks before. They removed everything from the base; “weapons, women, and children... the only things left were cement houses.” The Renamo soldiers stood ready and waiting for the attack; “And then it began.” Marcelino mimicked elated sounds of bombs and bullets being shot in all directions; his hand gestures and equivalent sound imitations were vivid in imagery. And then he spoke, “There were many dead, from their side but also our side.”

There was a group from another base who had joined Marcelino’s troop to fight against the Frelimo attack. The commander controlling the other group was “*Commandante Dike*.” He led his men into the battle, but was shot. His soldiers stood around him attempting to protect him but only to be sprayed with bullets. Marcelino explained to me that “we could never leave a commanding general behind and bleeding,” so they went back for him. He was laying in the water whilst his men were dying; “people getting killed all around him.” Marcelino was with the group who went back for *Commandante Dike*; they shot their way through Frelimo soldiers until they reached him, and carried him back to the base. I asked Marcelino where they took the commander to patch him up, whether there had been a hospital to take him to. He told me that they “didn’t take him to any hospital, they fixed him in the bush... in Mozambique, we can fix these kinds of things.” He looked at me then and said, “it sounds like a game... a game, but its reality.”

He resumed his story.

Before acquiring traditional means of recovery, there was a priest of the Church of God who they took the commander to initially. “They took care of him the whole night until the sun came up in the morning because he was ripped up completely.” But he was bleeding profusely, and it did not look like he was going to survive. “They tried everything to tie him up, to do anything... he had already said his goodbyes.”

All of the commander’s men had said their goodbyes to him, too.

Commandante Dike instructed that all his wives and children be given to the head of the Church of God, who was a white man. He asked that the “*chef*,” meaning ‘boss’, takes care of them, as he “was on his way.” However, instead of agreeing to fulfil the wishes of a dying man, the “*chef*” told him, “don’t worry about it. Tomorrow you will see what will happen.” “Believe it or not, the next day the *commandante* was still alive and all stitched up with white skin all over his chest. It was a miracle,” Marcelino exclaimed with exasperated features. “It was a miracle... all we did was say that we would not move as long as his blood was

flowing.” Marcelino implied that perhaps the survival of the commander was due to his men bringing him back and not leaving his side; loyalty.

The end of the war and OXFAM

Marcelino and other operators working in Mongola were later sent to a base in Niassa, to create a sector for counter-intelligence operations. The war ended while Marcelino was conducting his work there. As soon as there was peace, Marcelino wanted to leave the base and return to his studies that he had left years ago now. Before departing, he was faced with tensions from his fellow soldiers who asked him “what if Frelimo comes back,” to which he responded with, “It has been written that there is now peace. Let me go.” Marcelino began his journey to the district of Guamba, where he found an American director from OXFAM¹⁷. Marcelino informed the director that he was a Renamo soldier, but that he had left his base, to which the director responded, that “it was all okay.” He offered for Marcelino to join him on his mission getting provisions to Macane. Marcelino agreed and they both loaded a plane with food, clothing, and supplies.

Macane was a Frelimo zone, which meant that upon Marcelino’s arrival, they aimed to pulverize him. However, it was their commanding officer who told him not to worry, “that these boys didn’t know what they wanted... and that instead of beating Marcelino up, they should go and try on some of the clothes that he had brought them.” The war was over and there was no more need for conflict.

After OXFAM had delivered several supplies, and traveled back and forth to the different regions, ONUMOZ arrived. They began by registering each person; what district they were from and which political party they belonged to. Many people lied to the registrars, giving them incorrect information regarding “where they were actually from or what jobs they held.” This was in case of the slight chance that the war would reignite, and all these individuals’ identities were not compromised. For example, when official elections were held after the war and peace treaty, Frelimo came into power. Marcelino’s counter-intelligence group all stayed in the bush, hiding; “this was the order... to wait.” This sentiment has continued over the years, upholding constant tensions between both parties, that the possibility for conflict could strike at any moment. Marcelino, on the other hand, left even with the order to remain. “I said I will no longer manage in the bush. I wanted to go back to my family... I had to come here to Maputo to start living my life.”

Reintegrating into civil society

I asked Marcelino if it was hard reintegrating back into the real world again. After a long pause, he told me it was. After he left the base and returned to his family, he was already an adult, and therefore it was expected of him to have a family of his own. With this responsibility also ensured the need for a house, and the monetary resources that came with it.

Marcelino immediately took initiative and contacted a friend living in Maputo, the capital city, who managed to get him an interview for a security company. The next day, he travelled from Niassa to the south of the country and, upon arrival, went straight to the interview.

Marcelino felt the need to inform the director that he was from Renamo, to which he responded with, “that’s not a problem – go inside and start training.”

This security company was particularly interesting, because the director employed both ex-Renamo and ex-Frelimo soldiers to work under the same company for the security and protection of people. This proved to work extremely well, by stripping these men of their old identities and creating a new one in which people’s backgrounds played no role whatsoever. The true challenges of this merged group of individuals was their moral compass; having to formally work in an environment where violence is sometimes required, to what degree these

ex-soldiers felt was enough violence to implement on those who did not abide by the law was an issue in which they needed to re-adjust what was acceptable behavior in normal society.

Even though Marcelino had the initiative to re-enter society by getting work, taking courses in English, and re-gaining some of his lost education, he still faced massive competition to those who were not involved in the war and who therefore succeeded monetarily to a higher degree. This left Marcelino in poverty.

“I trained, and I worked, but I still have nothing to give my children... When the world falls, they will have nothing... How am I going to tell them: I am your father, I fought for certain a cause that was for democracy in Mozambique.”

Marcelino explained how many of his ex-colleagues in the war did not come out as well as himself. Many fell into poverty, and many went insane. I asked him why they became insane to which he responded with:

“When we were there, for you to be promoted, a child of twelve can become a captain. You get promoted if you kill a lot... if you can enter a mission and not look who is in front of you, but just shoot, you become a general... standing in front of all your men, they are following you. You have the responsibility to shoot. You don't need to be able to read, or write, or have had an education – no! you need to be crazy, and you need to be willing to do crazy things.”

“It's a trauma,” He explained. A friend of Marcelino's was working in the secret services of the state; “you kill a lot of people from this position... and its from these traumas that people become unstable.”

Marcelino's salvation was getting on that plane and coming down to Maputo to start a life. Many remained in the bush; “they did not have it in them anymore.”

“This is the story of my life, I hope that people can gain from my experiences... I've lost many years. I am trying to recuperate them but I'm not managing.”

Chapter four

The External Support: *“You never mentioned Renamo, you never said their names: they were the little green men”*

After reading countless literature on ‘external involvement’ in the civil war, and listening to several depictions brought forward by Mozambicans, it was time to infiltrate this ‘other,’ and expose a personal side to such a force. Greg agreed to speak with me, and allowed me the greatest opportunity in understanding some of the inner workings of a formal military force in the field. We arranged a Skype interview, as he lives in South Africa, and, both drinking a cup of tea whilst discussing his recent holidays to Mozambique, we began to divulge into his memories of the war, and his participation in it as a different man, with a different role, years ago.

Greg was initially introduced to Renamo and the role that external forces endorsed before South Africa even began supporting the rebel forces. Prior to his responsibility in Mozambique, Greg was part of 5-Recece¹⁸ in the South African Special Forces (SAS) working in Rhodesia on military operations throughout 1978. This was the period in which Rhodesia provided support to Renamo. As such, Greg would witness unknown men entering Rhodesian bases, not wearing Rhodesian uniform. He described this as part of the “unconventional war,” seeing as most actors involved were “aware that other things were happening, but they weren’t fully aware of what was going on.” Greg knew that Renamo had always been around and were active; involved in the conflict against Frelimo. To what extent though, Greg did not know. Toward the end of 1980, Rhodesia gained its independence and Zimbabwe was established. This meant that South Africa withdrew, and Greg returned home, only to find out that his knowledge of Renamo was soon to sky-rocket.

Phalaborwa and the “Little Green Men”

Toward the end of 1981, Greg was given instruction to travel to Phalaborwa, a town near the eastern border of the Kruger National Park, with the mission to train incoming personnel. He was transferred from 1-Rekki to 5-Rekki, another SAS platoon. Travelling from Durban to Phalaborwa, and then going further into the bush to a base camp called Natabe Ranch, Greg had still to be told who he would be training, and for what purpose. Upon arriving at the base, or what looked like the remnants of a base – comprising of “two tents, a bit of a kitchen, and no running water” – Greg and his partner were to await their trainees’ arrival.

After two days, a senior from chief of staff of intelligence, who handled intelligence work and operative groups in the military from 5-Rekki, arrived with their briefing.

Greg was informed that they were going to receive individuals whom they called “The little green men.”

“You never mentioned Renamo, you never said their names: they were the little green men... they didn’t want ‘Renamo’ to get out, for security reasons they didn’t want people to know... and so, we talked about the little green men.”

Ten boys arrived in a truck the following day, their ages ranging from 16-22, and only capable of minimal possible communication between themselves and Greg: English and Portuguese exchanged on a basic level. The South African’s mission comprised of training these men and orientating them in how to operate in the bush. They were trained in military tactics: trekking in dense bush and learning to aid in air support. This was because Renamo needed provisions in their battle against Frelimo – for the apparent reason that “Frelimo were the big baddies being the carriers of the communist ideology.” This support entailed supplies being sent from South Africa which were air dropped into Mozambican Renamo territory,

because the South African government not only supported Renamo on ground-training, but also in supplies of food, ammunitions, amenities, and medical supplies. Therefore, the “little green men” had to become adept at efficient supply retrieval.

Their training lasted six weeks, and Greg assumed that his work with these men was over. He was wrong. Rather, Greg was given instructions that another group would be arriving soon; he remained at Natabe Ranch for three months. After this time, Greg was further instructed that he would then be going to Mozambique to spend time with the men he had trained in South Africa.

The trek to Gorongosa and local support

The Gorongosa park crosses from Mozambique into South Africa, consisting of a large mountain within its premises, that held a main Renamo base during the war. Soldiers on the mountain would have a large field of fire on the enemy down below, therefore making it an effective stronghold.

Greg and his “little green men” were dropped in the middle of the night by parachute approximately a two-day walk away from Gorongosa itself. The reason for this was to ensure the Renamo base’s location not be compromised by possible Frelimo surveillance. On route to the mountain, Greg and his group passed through several villages. He explained how, when working with dissident or resistance groups, the way “that they work, they have to obviously rely on the local population to support them.” However, it was also “a bit of a catch-22 situation because the local population were on the knife’s edge.” He was regarding the issue that Frelimo forces may have been in control of several areas, with additional support for the local populations – however many people didn’t necessarily support them as they followed the resistance. This often resulted in “the targets getting shot and killed... [Greg] saw this in many places.”

The route that Greg followed was scattered with Renamo supported villages, and so food was supplied along the way. They would walk on the footpaths, not in military formation – just in a single file while carrying all the equipment on their heads¹⁹ that they would need to survive in the bush. They walked for 30 kilometers a day; 60 kilometers in total, and as they got closer to the Gorongosa camp, Greg began to notice more of an armed presence. These individuals were young, and the reason for their positioning formed part of an early warning system to Renamo soldiers further on. They were agile and could disappear into the bush easily, therefore making them effective means of identifying possible threats to the larger bases.

The base that Greg was assigned to was in a remote area specifically located at least ten kilometers from any other base, and was the last outpost before the Gorongosa mountain (and primary base location). The remote area was dense in bush, there was no residing population in the vicinity so resources were scarce, and there was a fair amount of game threatening their survival²⁰. Upon arriving at the base, Greg described it to be very different from our Western concepts of military strongholds; here you slept in the bush and “if you were lucky, you got a grass shelter.”

Afonso Dhlakama was stationed there, and Greg met him while he was still a senior officer at that stage. There were other officers present, who were older, and more experienced military strategists, but Dhlakama was “well-spoken and well-presented,” making him the representative communicator to incoming foreigners. Greg explained how his arrival was treated with perplexity. The guerillas assumed that the South Africans were present to simply render moral support. Greg informed them, to their surprise, that they were also a training force. Apart from agreeing to be trained, the Renamo forces claimed that they did not have enough ammunition for said practices. The South Africans assured them that supplies would

be arriving shortly. Greg was a 2-stripe corporal at the time and was puzzled at the initial hesitancy expressed by the guerillas accepting their help.

"Little be known to us... you are aware that things are happening but you are not privy to all the communication that's going on."

Nevertheless, training began. The initial aim was to reinforce what Greg and his partners had taught the initial soldiers previously in Natabe Ranch. Challenges were primarily based on the premise that the limited educational level of the men, most of them having never gone to school, and their lack in language proficiency, meant that often communication was limited amongst soldiers and trainers. However, they persisted.

Putting into practice: "The Gunston 500"

It was time to challenge the soldiers in their first test. There would be a supply aircraft flying into the country in a few days and the drop zone was in a remote area that Greg and the soldiers had to get to before the plane's arrival. The obscenely difficult trek would entail travelling 45 kilometers a day – this journey being entitled "The Gunston 500."

Gunston's were a brand of cigarettes in South Africa that connoted a "very macho-type image" to those who smoked them. This was used in deriving the name of Durban's surfing championships: "The Gunston 500." Henceforth, Greg and his men found it quite fitting that any activity requiring incredulous physical effort would be called "The Gunston 500."

When the South African military normally came in by aircraft at night with supplies, two ground-men would hold flashing beacons to signal the planes in. The guerillas did not do it in this way – "they built bonfires... and when I say bonfires – imagine the size of your bedroom... ten of them... and one kilometer apart from each other." Greg described the image from the air as "driving down this major super highway lined with bonfires on either side." These were the same types of dropping zones that Domingos would orchestrate. "You never drop supplies anywhere close to where you want to go – you drop them 60-80 kilometers away" so that the enemy does not know the base' location. Depending on the situation, either the supplies would be dropped and taken away by the ground-men, or, as an alternative option, a large hole would be dug up prior to the drop time to hide the supplies and retrieve them later. The latter was when there was either not enough time to effectively move all of the supplies, or if the enemy was in close proximity. In such cases, large items could be covered; "I mean big things – land rovers got covered up and buried in the ground... You say where's the vehicle? No, you're standing on it."

The transport planes; Hercules C160s, would drop the stock, the ground-men would quickly move them, and the fires would then be put out effectively. Within 4-5 hours, everything would be gone. Therefore, if Frelimo came into the area, they may have found the remnants of fires revealing a drop-off zone, but the guerillas would have been long-gone by then.

The trek to the drop-off zone was one in which supplies would have to be retrieved and removed quickly. Having just traveled with the men over a 30-kilometer distance to the base, Greg and the group were going to have to push themselves even more to reach 45 kilometers in a day. They left at four in the morning and reached the drop-off zone at nine in the evening, whereby close to midnight the supplies came in. Two planes flew overhead containing 30 tons of food, ammunition and other amenities. They had access to "US and United Nations type of foods" including freeze-dried vegetables, maize, and rice. Additionally, they were given a porridge called "Pronutro." However, the problem with feeding this to malnourished individuals, as Greg explained to me having experienced this previously while working with UNITA in Zimbabwe, one will most likely get "the trots."

Even though the porridge had high nutritional value, your body was just not able to take it in, and you would be subdued to mass excretion every half hour or so.

A heavy load of ammunition also arrived with the supply: “mostly small-arms ammunition for AKA’s, PK’s, and RPG’s. Weight-wise, this would be a heavy load to carry back, but it was balanced out by a partial amount of the food supplies being given to the local populations as the rebels were supported by them, keeping allegiances strong.

The soldiers would address Greg as “*tenente*” - meaning lieutenant – they didn’t understand “lance corporal” but used one defining title. They viewed Greg and his men as “respected soldiers,” assuming they had to have been experienced since they were sent in as trainers. Hence, a “batman” was assigned to each of the trainers – a young boy in charge of looking after their ascribed person. This included bringing them food and water in the base, but also carrying their equipment whilst on the Gunston trek. There were carriers and porters accompanying the group on their mission, and Greg recalls that his batman had preferred to carry his backpack on his head. The only problem arose when they were attacked by the enemy, walking into an ambush, and Greg’s batman would run off into the bush, disappearing with all his ammunition. Nevertheless, most of the time, the batman would arrive back to the base, with the backpack, a few days later.

It took the group three days to return to the base. Greg had arrived in two days, but the supplies were drafting in slowly. The soldiers were exhausted, and training took a while to re-commence. Additionally, the soldiers seemed in no rush to begin, expressing their preferences for “*amanha*” – tomorrow.

Their training

Initially, the boys who Greg and his partners were training were older. It took about a week or two for the commanding officers to reduce their weariness of foreign presence after seeing the positive drastic differences in their soldiers’ skills. Over time, younger boys began watching the trainings; the “hangers on... you would have an audience, you know, guys sitting on the sideline.” Due to the South Africans being “very aggressive in terms of training,” soldiers struggled. Being malnourished and not used to working such long hours, normally after half a morning’s training, “these guys were finished.” Greg and his men on the other hand, were “tougher than hardened soldiers.” Dealing with live ammunition proved additionally challenging, due to “lack of [previous] training... The times that we nearly got shot let me tell you... they were reckless.”

The success of training was one aspect, but bringing these young soldiers into battle situations brought different outcomes. Greg would teach the boys a tactic called “fire and movement,” in which two soldiers would pair up and essentially cover each other while proceeding forward toward the enemy. Another tactic was the “double-tap,” that ensured the effective execution of an enemy. You shoot twice on the target; the second shot is a follow-up making sure you have eradicated the threat. If, however, the first shot is off-target then the second shot usually hits it. Therefore, two shots are always fired.

The soldiers were instructed not to fire blindly or use their automatic settings, with the types of rifles the soldiers were using – “with two bursts of fire all the ammunition would be finished.” Nevertheless, in battle situations, the soldiers would disregard any previous advice. Instead, they would get low to the ground, hold their guns sideways and above their heads, turn on automatic, and squeeze the trigger. “It’s like in the gangster movies where the guy holds the pistol above his head when he shoots... But, in this case, they were holding AK’s.”

However, Greg explained to me that a major tactic in beating the enemy was that “the side that makes the most noise in battle wins.” They went into a battle – approximately 60-80 of them going in for a base attack which housed approximately 3,000 people. They were all sleeping though when Greg and the soldiers open-fired on them, hence making “a lot of

noise.” They had more armaments, “but we made more noise and the guys ran away. Not because we killed more of them – they just ran away.”

Exposure to child soldiers

Greg’s first contact with child soldiers came on his two-day walk to Gorongosa which was “an eye-opening experience” - young children from the ages of eight upward were scattered along route. These children were often part of the villages that Greg would pass through, and with nothing else to do in such remote areas, they often volunteered or coopted into joining the war efforts of the guerillas. The older boys of sixteen years, would be the ones carrying AKA’s, but this was closer to Gorongosa. The youngest ones didn’t carry much, most of them didn’t even have shoes.

Getting closer to Gorongosa, and an increasing armed presence, the soldiers also seemed to look younger. “Now you started seeing more guys in military gear. Guys with webbing, a little more ammunition that they’re carrying... right down to the age of 12. Greg said the issue was that determining the boys’ ages was difficult as most of them were malnourished – this being common amongst child soldiers in impoverished areas. Therefore, they were predominantly quite small regardless of their ages.

Most of the boys may have been carrying a rifle. If they were lucky they would also be wearing boots. Commonly though, most of the boys would wear “*manyatalas*”; sandals made of car tires.

“So they make those and wear them. But you know it’s not soldier gear so they don’t want to wear them. You would find a youngster wearing a pair of boots that are two sizes too big for him but he’d rather wear them because he looks like a soldier... And he’ll walk in those things. No socks or anything like that, but he’ll walk. Because that’s what he wants to be.”

When asked whether he thought these young boys strived to be a part of the military, Greg responded with “It’s aspirational.” The boys would see commanding officers wearing boots and so they longed to look like them as they were revered. Before leaving his mission in Mozambique, Greg handed one of his boots over to a soldier; a gift never to be forgotten.

During the trainings, more “hangers on” would sit on the periphery and watch Greg work. Once trust was forged between Greg and the soldiers, they began to bring in younger boys for Greg to train as well. However, these boys were malnourished, “skin and bone,” and so physical tasks were too strenuous for them. “You find that they want to do the exercises but they can’t.” Therefore, there were not many young boys trained by Greg.

However, several of the young boys were not child soldiers, but what Greg previously mentioned as “runners, or batmen,” who undertook a lot of the taxing duties as secondary supports. They were responsible for looking after the South African trainers or Renamo commanders, who often had squadrons of these boys; “five or six of them running around... eight year olds.” They would cook, run errands, clean guns, and supply ammunition – “That was part of their training to undergo.”

Greg assumed that “They were being groomed as they got older.” Many of them were carrying wooden rifles when Greg arrived at the base; they would only be allowed to obtain real guns later after their training. “It’s like earning your stripes – once you get a rifle, you don’t always necessarily get the best, but as you gain more experience, then you get something better.” Greg explained how you could see that the older boys had better clothing, better boots, and better equipment. Essentially, their rewards meant getting closer and closer to a military position.

Upon being asked if he ever witnessed the child soldiers being fed drug-induced substances, Greg told me that he hadn't; "If they were, I didn't see it." He did agree that it was possible but told me to take notice that if they were "drugged up, then [they'd be] useless to man or beast." If they were drugged, it would be extremely difficult to perform menial tasks, seeing as the "more junior you are in any organization, the more menial tasks you have to do." With this said, Greg was referring specifically to the young boys he was exposed to whilst working with Renamo; the "runners."

If the boys were drugged up however, Greg assumes it would have been in the early stages of their introduction into guerilla warfare, based on the notion that "The best customer is an addict." Hence, giving young soldiers hallucinogenic properties, for example, whilst in battle, would make it an experience very different to that of reality; an effective form of indoctrination, Greg commented.

Forced conscription

Greg expressed that there was a dichotomy between the motivations of child soldiers. On the one hand, there was a definite lack of agency in joining the rebel forces. "You often saw a lot of the boys crying... because they missed home." Their families were not with them and so they ended up seeking refuge by sleeping all together in their hut at night.

To an extent, Greg believed that the young soldiers were "game-pressed" into joining the guerillas, meaning forced to become a soldier by possibly being kidnapped from their homes. This occurred especially in areas where there was a particular shortage of soldiers and the guerillas didn't have enough recruits. "They would say we need you, you're going with us, and they would be taken away."

The other side of the spectrum involved the young boys who voluntarily joined the soldiers. This happened for different reasons: seeking vengeance for lost family members, nationalistic agendas, boredom.

"It's nice at the time, but when it gets tough and your parents aren't there you want to go home. It's not pleasant – when you have to work in unfamiliar circumstances, when there's no food, when you have to move in the middle of the night because Frelimo is coming. Nobody in their right mind wants to do that."

He agreed that there was forced conscription of child soldiers, which would have been a natural occurrence in the hopes to "bolster their numbers." Contrastingly, there would have been a natural attrition process in which people ran away to avoid military conscription, people dying in combat or through illness, or, with time, groups may have split up to fight in different areas. Therefore, they would have constantly needed to "feed that military machine and you need people to do that."

A medic's humanitarian experience

Not only was Greg training the soldiers, he was also the primary operational medic on site for the guerillas. Greg "dealt with a lot of things;" apart from having delivered three babies in the bush, he also treated ailments from tropical diseases, illnesses, and gunshot wounds, to spider and snake bites. He also claimed that you begin to deal with a lot more than just the soldiers. There were often family units that emerged at the base, not intentionally, but still a common occurrence. Greg found himself treating several members of these small families. Examples of these materialized family structures would entail a soldier bringing his wife into the base as she was a good cook. However, she could not leave her baby behind and so would bring it with her as well. Hence, through this line of work, Greg often saw another element of the war, "the more humane side which entailed a lot of suffering." Greg would see the wife of one of the soldiers as someone who had to leave her

home and family behind, and hold her baby on her back while cooking for the men of the base. Greg appreciated that he could treat ailments, but he also found “it quite taxing.”

“You deal with guys who got sick, or they’ve been injured and unless you go to a hospital with proper medical care, they are not going to survive... And that’s the difficult part of it. And you know they looking at you with these eyes, and they thinking you’re a doctor, and yes you’re a very well-trained medic. I had a lot of exposure in training... but you can’t actually save them in a case like that, and that’s the sad part.”

There were some interesting aspects that arose from Greg working as a medic. He was sure that there was a significant amount of sexual activity between the adolescent boys in the base. Greg treated several cases of syphilis contracted by males aged around 14 years. However, even when confronted with their sexual behaviors, every single boy would deny any possibility of said acts, even though at night they slept in a small hut together.

Forging a relationship

In terms of the relationships developed, Greg laughed at my description of how literature has viewed foreign involvement in the creation of Renamo being purely for the destabilization of their own rebel forces, and told me that I made him sound like “an imperial colonialist coming in.”

Apart from motivational differences, he explained to me that there was definitely a relationship developed between himself and the soldiers he trained with during his time in Mozambique. The one perspective did entail a separation caused by their differences in culture, as well as the racial dynamic at play, especially being sent in by an apartheid government. Consequently, even though there was unity amongst them, the Renamo soldiers still viewed Greg and his men as separate.

However, “As a soldier, you go through tough and difficult times... You share a common experience. And a bond develops.” Through the other perspective, they were respected for the knowledge and experience they had as skilled soldiers, which they were in relation to the young boys of Renamo. Greg and his men, even though young themselves, already had battle experience that some of the guerillas would never have. For that reason, their presence was appreciated.

“We spent time with them in their initial training, and then follow up training – we went into the bush together for supplies. And to train them to take them forward. We were fairly close. You shared your food, your water. It’s part of what you’re doing... you’re there for a common cause... It’s a different kind of relationship.”

Chapter five

A visionary depiction

Douw Steyn was part of the South African Defense Force (SADF) as a 1-Reconnaissance Commando. When I gained contact with him and asked about his time working in Mozambique training recruits, Douw preferred to *show me* what it was like, rather than tell me. This entailed sharing personal photographs that were either taken by himself or others under his command whilst working in the Gorongosa mountains between 1980-1981. When Douw agreed to help me in my research, he had to first retrieve his photographs depicting his time with Renamo, from a protected source. My anticipation built that the day I was to see the pictures approached. When I opened my laptop one morning, email after email was sent in, each containing a valuable photograph and his descriptions pertaining to them. Therefore, I have decided to dedicate an entire chapter to his contribution as these are original photographs taken during the war. Never before seen, and deserving of its authenticity, showing the inner workings of Renamo as a resistance movement.

Image 1: depicts a speech given by a political commissar. This was a regular form of educating the young soldiers in Renamo ideologies. Douw informed me that he was the white soldier in the left corner of the photograph



Image 2: shows the preparation taking place for a group of young soldiers to march with heavy equipment. This is similar to Greg's descriptions of the long treks through the bush in which soldiers had to carry everything with them as there were no supplies in the dense rural areas.



Image 3: Douw takes a picture of two young boys training in fighting. Such childlike sparring was evident in Bandido's experiences when he was told to throw stones at his friends in the hopes to learn the skills of warfare.



Image 4: The training begins. One of the aspects was the South African's support for military training. This pictures shows children training with firearms.



Image 5: A young boy learning how to use an anti-tank rocket-propelled grenade launcher: RPG7



Image 6: Weapon handling of heavy artillery



Image 7: an effective fighting force means unity and order. This image shows children being trained to march in unison and in an orderly fashion, whilst adhering to the commands of the generals.



Image 8: logistic support of the South African government – supplies flown in. These young soldiers have just received firearms and food in a remote base location.



Image 9: Parachutes have landed on the parade grounds resupplying the base with food and ammunition while the children have been sent to retrieve them. Douw notes here the crosses that have been shaved on the boys' heads. This was to identify them as captured Renamo soldiers and to ensure that they would not be able to run away and hide themselves away in local populations.



Image 10: Child soldiers on parade through the base. Aspiring to become a soldier means aspiring to be successful in war.



Image 11: Being groomed for war. These children have reached the ranks high enough to receive their own guns.



The following two images struck me the most.

Image 12: Child soldiers being given the order to go to war.



Image 13: The photographs the soldiers were looking at were taken from Douw's disposable camera. He realized at this moment, that this was the first time that these boys, who had been fighting and surviving in the bush, had in fact seen themselves.



ANALYSIS

The dichotomy in the use of violence

The use of violence disrupts the self and subsequently identity. This tactic was employed by Renamo guerillas to destabilize the world of their victims, and used as a weapon in forging allegiances to their rebel group. This dichotomy was based on the premise that the world creates the self, and vice versa, in that what happens to the world also happens to the individual. In this way, the destruction of either of these domains would negatively affect the other. The self in Mozambique is constituted by culturally constructed community-based structures in which family is the focal point. Renamo disrupted these constructed boundaries by attacking the people's natural resources, pillaging their villages, and separating families from one another, either through death or forced conscription. Additionally, they used the same method of using culturally constructed worlds to gain support in the war. Raul Domingos explained that for the guerillas to survive, they needed the support of the population. As such, Renamo offered aid to villages in return for a sense of community obligation. Indeed, according to Greg, a partial amount of the supplies they received would go to locally supported villages.

Even though Renamo took children away from their families, through fulfilling cultural needs by allowing the children a sense of identity and the embodiment of family, they were successfully able to reconstruct their boundaries of reality in creating a sense of belonging to a new family. This newly constructed family was Renamo and the guerilla forces. This was expressed in Bandido's recollection when all the young boys who were taken by soldiers were told that they "were the sons of that zona... [they] were a group."

Furthermore, by supporting populations amid violence, and reconstructing new notions of family and belonging to particular groups, this system reified the necessary allegiance of two domains: between the soldiers, and from the local people to the rebel group. We see examples from the soldiers' loyalty when Bandido first informed the Renamo commander about the threat against his father rather than seeking advice from his father himself. This was especially evident in Marcelino's story of how *Commandante Dike* was dying in battle, their only choice being to go back and rescue him. In regard to the allegiance formed from the populations, one such example entails Bandido's uncle, who was initially forcefully captured by Renamo forces to become a commander. By taking a trusted member of the community and turning him into a representative figure for that rebel group, resulted in a higher compliance level among the people. Whereupon Marcelino was taken in order to become a soldier, whilst stopping to rest along route in local villages, they were fed and embraced by the people; "they cooked... we danced all night until morning. And they danced as well to make sure we didn't

run away.” This once again exemplifies the effectiveness of the reconstructed world that embodied the same cultural notions of what people deemed important: family and community, which in turn were used as a tool in guerilla warfare.

The use of terror tactics

The fundamental aim in the employment of terror tactics is to brutalize a population to gain power. Consequently, mass civilian and children casualties are inevitable. Violence enacted through these means are an attack on people and their daily life constructs. As such, they are an attack on humanity itself, and prove an effective means of destruction. In this vein, the purpose of hurting people is the subsequent harm imposed on the fighting political forces whom they support.

The Mozambican Civil War not only executed this form of warfare, but also involved external sources. In the case of Renamo, support came from Rhodesia and then South Africa. With additional support, there was a two-fold motivation at play: Renamo’s opposing political ideology to Frelimo, and additionally the external need to destabilize the latter for the security of external governments. The employment of terror tactics through additional support and motivation lead to a devastating war.

An effective means of disruption was enacting killings in public spaces. This resulted in established fear amongst those witnessing violence, as well as forging an association of suffering with those public spaces. When Bandido spoke of Frelimo’s first attack on their group, it was the village that they plundered, and not the base. This was a direct attack on civilians. These were the same Frelimo men, who, when captured by Bandido’s uncle, were then killed in the village for the whole population to witness. The use of public spaces for the perpetuation of violence was most prominent in Bandido’s story of his father’s brother and his wife, as well as all other couples of the village, being beaten to death by Renamo soldiers. This tactic of warfare is by far the most devastating; harming the innocent and causing community destruction. The reproduction of violence in the everyday life of public spaces in the private sphere of the home fundamentally undermines the security of a society.

Hultman argues that through such mass violence, Renamo was coercing civilian populations into compliance. Additionally, this strategy was to cause enough damage to populations that supported Frelimo in the hopes to pressure the government into entering negotiations. This form of government destabilization was deemed “the power to hurt” (Hultman, 2009, p.821). Bandido exemplified this by saying, “when two boys fight, like animals in the bush, the place in which they fight is the one that suffers... for us it was the

population that was suffering.” Importantly, harming people into political compliance will also effectively threaten their humanity and constructed lives.

The liminality of war

Apart from the devastating effects that war leaves behind, it is compartmental to some degree, not for the suffering that will be remembered, but rather enactments within the time frame of war itself are bounded by that period. What constitutes as allowed during wartime would never be permissible outside of that domain, therefore making the acts that occurred acceptable only because they are associated with that time. Domingos likened it to the rules of a game when he described that “among soldiers, there is the spirit of a soldier which is the same as players of a football game or boxing match; you finish boxing, you shake hands, you are good friends, and there is no difficulty.” Additionally, there were no punishments for war crimes post-civil war; Domingos oversaw several guerilla operations during the war, and years later he rejoined civil society, running for his own political party with no repercussions. Soldiers who committed atrocities whilst fighting, were later able to return to school and establish families. Marcelino traveled with a director of OXFAM straight after the war to deliver clothes to Frelimo villages. Once confronted with government soldiers, who only a short time ago would have been his prime enemies, they willfully received the supplies handed over by Marcelino. This exemplifies the notion that when war is over, so is your role within it.

The reason for this is the liminal nature of war; what happens during the war remains in that period. However, there must be a processual component to allow for such compartmentalization to occur. Life has transitional moments marked by rituals in society in which an individual undergoes a change of state in identity. As Van Gennep mentions, this involves a tripartite structure in which the limen stage is where the ritual process of change takes place. The threshold of liminality occurred in two separate domains of this war.

The means to become a soldier

The first transitional process involves becoming a soldier. Creating child soldiers was unique in that children have been deemed more impressionable than adults, therefore more easily indoctrinated, making them dangerous weapons in guerilla warfare. Young boys were forcefully separated from their stable cultural constructs of family and community, like how Bandido and Marcelino were taken from their homes. These boys had to have their former identities stripped of them so that they could enter a threshold for change to take place. Assuming liminality, as Marcelino explained, was dehumanizing. They were made to sleep

together and eat together, as such there was no differentiating them as individuals. This was effective in acquiring a new identity for all the boys, beginning as the same *tabula rasa*, and thus representing a single unit. Additionally, removing one's identity and individuality allows for a displacement of responsibility when committing violent acts. This subsequently results in perpetrators of violence encompassing a diminished moral compass; yet another admired quality for fighters. Domingos exemplified this concept when he said, "sometimes the army doesn't know what they are fighting for. The military is like a dog; you are trained to do what the master says for you to do... you are not deployed to think. You are deployed to do."

The liminal stage encompassed acquiring the means to become a soldier, in which the ritual element was obtaining the ability to kill through the processes of training and indoctrination. Indoctrination was a powerful tool in this domain whereby "political lessons" were administered to the boys, reiterating who their enemy was. Marcelino explained how "they [were] taught about communism and democracy. We want democracy and Frelimo wants communism... [they] learnt this for three months. Everyday." Greg echoed this when he described Frelimo as "the big baddies being carriers of the communist ideology." Furthermore, those who refused to take part in re-education were executed immediately. As the Jehovah Witnesses accompanying Marcelino's group discovered, there was no tolerance for individual rebellion. Apart from indoctrination through political discourse, there was also the element of the boys' forced consumption of drugs without their awareness. Bandido said that under the influence, "you had no fears... it is easier to kill someone when you are drugged... you kill while you are laughing." Greg explained how administering drugs to the young made indoctrination effective as "the best customer is an addict" – in this case, an addict to kill.

In the transformation to become a soldier, the boys were exposed to the advantages of hierarchy. Initially, they wore tire-embroidered "*manyatalas*" for shoes, and as they rose to the ranks of a soldier by acquiring the ability to kill, they were given better shoes and military clothing. The same concerned weaponry; young boys were first using wooden rifles, as Greg pointed out. As they got older they received real guns, which were later improved based on the notion that they would use them effectively against the enemy. All these manipulative methods were aspirations for the boys; they admired those who had reached the ranks of successful killers and longed to be a soldier.

The effective means of becoming a soldier was also embedded in the boys' trainings, seen from Douw's experiences (in images 10 and 11), in which the boys were paraded in front of a crowd for having joined the ranks of soldiers. Additionally, when Greg was employed to train the rising soldiers, he never mentioned them as Renamo nor as individuals, only referring

to them as “the little green men,” “batmen” or “hangers on.” This not only desensitized relations between Greg and the soldiers, but by removing their identities he also exemplified that the sole purpose of external involvement was for training. Furthermore, Douw’s images (7 and 9) of the boys learning to march in unison and having crosses shaved onto their heads showed depersonalization of individuals, which made them one unit with no personal responsibility in their abilities to kill.

Finally, the act of killing was the ritual process that allowed for a boy to become a soldier. Marcelino explained that to be promoted to a commander at age 12, and respected as such, one’s only requirement was to be an avid killer. “You don’t need to be able to read, or write, or have had an education – no! you need to be crazy, and you need to be willing to do crazy things.” Once a killer, these boys were integrated into the life of the guerillas where they would carry out their soldierly duties without question, hesitation, or moral dilemma.

The means to reintegrate back into civil society

The second domain through which the liminality of war was enacted was the final reintegration of soldiers into civil society post-war. Their separation stage was taking them away from their communities; the same as the first domain of liminality previously explained. The liminal stage encompassed changing into a soldier as well as acting out one’s acquired functions. This role was reinforced by the individual no longer holding the same values to his previously constructed boundaries of humanity. In this stage, the boys had turned into perpetrators of violence capable of harming those held dearest in their previous identity. The final stage of aggregation is what held the most prominent role in this domain; the (attempted) reintegration of these soldiers back into society. It must be noted that, whilst these soldiers were in war, society as they knew it previously, no longer existed. Nordstrom (1995) says that in cultures where violence has disrupted humanity, and therefore, the bodies abiding by their constructs of humanity, people will re-create these damaged societies through cultural symbols. These would be the same recreated societies that the soldiers fighting in the war would now have to integrate into. The most predominant cultural symbols used for those attempting to regain their lives was the power of traditional healing through *curandeiros*, and channeling their integration through what the culture deemed important; family support as a motivational tool. The details of the aforementioned integrative methods will be discussed in a later section.

The Use of Children

The use of children in the Mozambican Civil War added yet another unique element to the war. The malleability of what constitutes a 'child' was a prominent factor in manipulating the employment of child soldiers. During the war, these children endorsed not only quasi-military roles in which they were groomed to become soldiers, but also became direct perpetrators of violence, killing mass amounts of people due to their underdeveloped, and therefore easily indoctrinated, moral codes. On the other hand, outside the sphere of war, the same children were able to return to school and try to lead normal lives. The reason for this was the degree to which these children could abide by the re-created structures of normality around them.

The use of children in war was centered on the notion that they were the most capable of the Mozambican population. Domingos explained that "recruitment happened when the attacks happened," implying that they used forced conscription only to increase their numbers, and that they picked the young ones because they "had the necessary strength to fight." Bandido reiterated that "the men of the bush, they don't look for the age of the boy... rather his physical ability to fight."

The degree to which the young boys had their own agency in joining the war was contradictory. For the most part, forced conscription was the norm. Bandido was helplessly taken from his mother, yet was told that he had been saved by the Renamo men. Similarly, Marcelino was stolen from his school along with all the other children, and admired the soldiers who took him. Even with forced conscription came effective indoctrination of these boys. The guerillas were able to replace their notions of family and reconstruct them to feel that they belonged to a new stronghold, that of Renamo. This led to a high level of allegiance among the soldiers. Additionally, they were taught to aspire to become a soldier by receiving rewards; from wearing *manyatalas* to boots; from using wooden rifles to AKs; and from being a mere batman to a general. Greg elaborated on this when he said, "it's like earning your stripes," and that if "it's not soldier gear... they don't want to wear them. You would find a youngster wearing a pair of boots that are two sizes too big for him but he'd rather wear them because he looks like a soldier... that's what he wants to be." This aspirational motivation was the fuel for many of these underage boys, wherein forced conscription and indoctrination was, as Greg described, necessary to "feed the military machine."

In becoming a soldier, the boys were groomed through using weaponry, exposure to violence, and fully endorsing the newly created boundaries of what constituted reality in war. This essentially allowed them to become active agents in the perpetuation of violence, which

had obvious effects in their later lives. Margaret Mead (1964) put forward the notion that children who absorb violent cultures around them will adopt violent characteristics and express them in adult years. A powerful example of such a notion resides in Bandido's longing to kill his wife's lover, with a disregard of moral implications. It must be noted that several ex-child soldiers' have skewed moral compasses, but they hold certain values much higher. Even though Bandido was fine with missing work to contemplate murder, he did not lie to me about his age however. The age that he had to lie about for years during the war in the hopes of his survival, he was now able to share truthfully with me. To a degree, this has to do with his ability to compartmentalize the time of war. On the other hand, psychological pathologies are a present threat that have permeated individuals' lives from the effects of war.

Reintegration

The creative restructuring of their world and self

Traditional healers were a focal point for cultural creativity. They developed treatments to aid people in alleviating the harmful effects that brutal violence had bestowed upon them. This was accomplished through the conception that those who had actively participated in committing violent acts had been embodied by an evil spirit of ancestral powers, thus making them malicious beings. Through ritual means, these spirits were symbolically removed to convince the soldiers that they could no longer commit atrocities because the evil embodying them was no longer present. It also served to assure the local populations that these individuals no longer posed a threat to their survival, harmony, and re-constructed worlds. This method would essentially "take the war out of the community, the violence out of the people, and the instability and terror out of the culture" (Nordstrom, 1995, p.145). Hence, the *curandeiro's* prescribed medicine to these people was creative acts, exemplifying the performativity of culture. In this sense, *curandeiros* reproduced culture through cultural construction in which culture conveyed knowledge through interpersonal interactions of those affected (Granjo, 2007). Examples of ritual utility are as follows: Bandido's aunt who was shot in the shower was taken to be treated through traditional means; when Marcelino's *Commandante* Dike was wounded, they "didn't take him to any hospital, they fixed him in the bush... in Mozambique, we can fix these kinds of things." Even though these were medical means employed during the war, traditional medicine was of importance and more saliently an un-questioned practice.

The other manner in which people attempted to reintegrate through the creative restructuring of the world around them was by channeling their cultural constructs: family and the continuity of its power. After the war, several people attempted to return to school, get

work, and build their families. In this sense, what led to the success of their reintegration was how well they managed to achieve these aspects.

The success of reintegration

The degree to which people can let go of the hardships of wartime, to an extent, depends on their success of reintegration. Some were able to compartmentalize the war, and perhaps this is due in part to the unconscious understanding of the liminality of war; that what had to be done during those years, and living a normal life after, were mutually exclusive.

Unlike how Greg and those professionally trained in military warfare were better equipped at dealing with the atrocities of war, the Mozambicans severely struggled in their integration into civil society. According to Domingos, the soldiers who left the war and were sent to join the government army seemed to integrate to a much higher degree. It can be argued that they were moving from one clearly structured manner of living that endorsed specific hierarchies, behaviors, and responsibilities to that of another evidently structured domain. Therefore, there was no need to involve independent decisions to succeed as a soldier as there was a definite world with rules to live by. On the other hand, those that attempted to rejoin normal society encountered several challenges.

Marcelino and Bandido returned, and to an extent were successful. However, even though Bandido resumed school and Marcelino found work soon after leaving the bush, they would never gain a level of education in comparison to those who were not involved in the war. Consequently, there is a threshold to acquire work that they could never be able to surpass. In this sense, these ex-Renamo soldiers were robbed of their years of youth which will affect them for their entire adult lives. Coming back to normal society meant that these fighters had to reformulate their ways of thinking and acting amongst people who would never know what it felt like to “see a person having his body parts being cut off slowly, part by part, until he dies. Until he loses his life,” as described by Bandido. The ex-soldiers’ attempts to create families in the hopes that they could pass along their lineages if not monetary gains, also proved challenging in that to have a family meant, as a man abiding by patriarchal norms, support for that family was required. Living without a substantial income was yet another unforeseen challenge.

Some soldiers did not return to civil society. They remained in the bush with no hope of a future. It could therefore be argued that helplessness was, to an extent, part of the post-war mentality. However, apart from self-doubt in one’s ability to rejoin society, the years lost would have had a significant negative effect on the success of reintegration. In Marcelino’s words, “I

trained, and I worked, but I still have nothing to give my children... When the world falls, they will have nothing..." Interestingly, when I asked whether war should return, for it provided a soldier's acquired respect and the surety of one's position, as opposed to society's cutthroat exclusionary tendencies in gaining work, growing families, and ensuring survival, Bandido assured me that the resurgence of war would be disastrous. "What I saw, others must not see, because it's hard. It's very ugly what I've been through. That must not happen again." Many were traumatized from war. One such individual, who Marcelino knew from the war, had worked with the secret services of the state, meaning that he had to murder an exceptionally high number of people, according to Marcelino. I attempted to approach this man for my research, but because of his evident mental instability, I refrained from opening old wounds as it would prove much too heavy for him to endure. Although years after the war, his volatility was still as present as ever. Marcelino's own salvation was "getting out of the bush." Many remained there, waiting for the possible resurgence of war, never knowing that combat no longer constituted their identities.

Another prominent factor regarding the success of integration was to do with the aid provided to the soldiers. When fighting ceased and peace accords were to follow, non-governmental organizations flew into Mozambique: UNICEF, OXFAM, and ONUMOZ. Additionally, there were internal structures within the country also working with reintegration efforts; OIT: Organizacao Internacional do Trabalho (The International Organization of Work). Such organizations attempted to aid in food supplies, agricultural equipment, and vocational trainings whereby ex-soldiers could endorse subsistence farming methods in the hopes that they would be able to support themselves.

Domingos elaborated on the unsuccessful methods used by these organizations, "For somebody who stayed ten years in the bush fighting and in six months you train him to be an electrician. How do you think he can work as an electrician by himself, to be self-employed?" He implied that there was no long-term support from these NGOs, six months could not change a person in their manners of thinking, their behaviors, and their perceptions of what is important. That is why several ex-soldiers who had been given equipment for agricultural farming simply sold their materials instead. As a soldier, instant gratification was what they lived for; kill those men and you will be instantly promoted; beat those boys and you'll be given boots; fight for Renamo and win the war. Therefore, to rip these boys out of the war and attempt to reintegrate them back into a society where delayed gratification is the desired outcome (i.e. long-term vocational training, subsistence farming), it was evident that reintegration would be challenging.

Memory as a weapon

Both ex-child soldiers shared a common request from me: to ensure that their stories be given a voice. The main reason in speaking to the former child soldiers of Renamo was that their voices had not been heard; in large part due to their membership in the guerilla forces opposing the governmental political party of Frelimo. This, therefore, has resulted in an absence of Renamo experiences of the war, as well as a disregard for individual sufferings of those having fought for the rebel group. Bandido agreed to speak with me on the premise that it was “now time to tell [his] story.” Additionally, Marcelino conveyed that “this is the story of [his] life... [he hoped] that people can gain from [his] experiences.”

The small way that I could aid these men who represented the publicly silenced was to assure them that “*a sua história foi escrita*,” ‘your story has been written.’ Whether their stories reach readers of this thesis, or larger audiences, their aim was not that of recognition. Rather, it was the opportunity to vocalize their experiences and be heard.

The issue at hand, as Igreja (2008) points out, is that silence in the public sphere has been used as a weapon in the political sphere to uphold tensions between opposing political parties. Domingos explained that the tensions “did not lie with the soldiers, but were upheld by the politicians.” He provided an interesting example of this dichotomy in his own experience, as he represented both spheres: having fought as a soldier, as well as having been a political representative of Renamo. Because he was active in the political sphere, he had the power to discuss tensions left by war, which he conveyed through a comic discourse when describing his confrontation with Rex Nhongo, a Zimbabwean general who he monitored through radio intelligence during the war. Mr. Nhongo said to Domingos that “if I could get you a time ago I could have killed you!” Domingos responded with “I could have done the same to you,” and both laughed in their embrace. Domingos explained to me that “[they] talked about funny things. It was all okay because the war had finished.” The fact that Domingos could share this with a previous enemy not only meant that they had both compartmentalized the time of war, but that they both had the political power to be able to express previous tensions. The same power was evident when Domingos described to me the betrayal of Guebuza after the latter disregarded the conversation shared between the two during the peace talks in Rome about their hopes for the joint prosperity of the people of Mozambique. This was possible, as Igreja mentions, since the silenced memories of suffering people have been used as a political weapon in upholding political tensions, whereas the people who endured the suffering during the war were resigned to silence. As Domingos was too a soldier who had experienced the war, I asked

him about reintegration efforts for the soldiers. He responded with “it was not well done and not worth thinking about,” thus exemplifying the silencing of the people.

The Dimensions of External Involvement

There were two evident domains through which external involvement held precedence: in expressing the lack of transparency during the war, and the emphasis of the ‘other.’

When Greg explained the dynamics of the war, he referred to the lack of transparency between the different groups involved as “the unconventional war” in that there was only specific knowledge that each group had for their purposes; “you are aware that things are happening but you are not privy to all the communication that’s going on.” Examples of such include when Greg noticed Renamo men in Rhodesia before South Africa had begun aiding them, or that upon arrival at the base in Mozambique, the Renamo soldiers were not aware that Greg was sent to train them. This was further reiterated through Bandido’s statement that child soldiers, “didn’t know anything.” They were given orders and followed them accordingly. The evident lack of transparency exemplified the confusion between several dynamics at play during the war, and how their interactions were representative of the primality of guerilla warfare.

Renamo used their internal ideologies of democracy as the motivational force for their soldiers. This was, to an extent, due to the contrasting motivational input from external forces in their hopes to destabilize Frelimo. Therefore, it was made necessary to differentiate these external actors as the ‘other’ from the Mozambican guerillas, so that internal motivation would remain strong. When Bandido described his venture to South Africa, his training was conducted by a “white man.” Additionally, Greg was regularly referred to as “*tenente*,” disregarding what his actual position held, but that he represented a means of experienced logistical support rather than an individual. Furthermore, Domingos explained how “we needed *their* support to fight for *our* freedom.” This separated external involvement so that the people would understand that they were fighting for a difference in internal ideologies, and not for the purpose of external needs to destabilize the country. Domingos also emphasized the fact that they “were not supporting the racists,” but simply receiving a means of logistical support. This was further reiterated when Marcelino claimed how they “were never just given weaponry” from the South Africans. Rather it was through their perseverance on raids and attacks that they managed to acquire such armaments.

However, it must be noted that even with this separating of the ‘other,’ as Greg mentioned, a connection was still forged between him and the guerillas. Training was

conducted in a machine-like setting, but personal contact will always breach any form of depersonalization. “You shared your food, your water. It’s part of what you’re doing... you’re there for a common cause... it’s a different kind of relationship.” Furthermore, as a medic, Greg gained a more personal perspective on the humanitarian side of war and individual suffering.

Military Tactic

There is sheer excitement in the primality of guerilla warfare. However, in regard to the employment of official military tactics in training, Greg pointed out that the soldiers were “reckless.” Even though they were taught techniques including “the double-tap” and “fire-and-movement,” in a battle situation, they would disregard everything they had previously learned. This shows the lack of military structure in rebel groups. However, Bandido reiterated that “training is never the same to real life, that you don’t actually know what to do when they’re shooting at you.”

Having fought for both Renamo and Frelimo, Bandido was able to compare the differences in military tactics. When Renamo soldiers were given guns, they only had 10 bullets to kill their enemies, otherwise they themselves would be exterminated. This showed the lack in resources of the guerillas fighters, and their employment of this ideology into their trainings. Contrastingly, Frelimo forces were not in hiding and therefore, had no limitations in obtaining resources. Bandido noticed this in their shooting styles as “they’re bullets came down like rain.”

Bandido furthered his comparison when he spoke about the “confusion between the tribes” in that the violence adopted by Renamo was only as a response to Frelimo having originally endorsed such tactics. This also exemplifies the success of indoctrination that Renamo enabled through their soldiers, seeing as Renamo was well-known of committing violent atrocities in their use of terror warfare tactics. Furthermore, Domingos explained how Frelimo had no choice other than to accept negotiations since Renamo evidently had the power to take over the whole country. However, Domingos stated that Guebuza had betrayed him to keep Frelimo’s stronghold appearance against Renamo in the media, refraining from implementing the common ideals for the country they had discussed. “Guebuza was the one... jeopardizing all the efforts that we had done, and we have this situation which we have now.” He ended by stating that the country did not belong to Frelimo, it belonged to the people of the country. This portrayed Renamo to have a higher sense of power, justifying that their motivation as a rebel

group, and then political party, was not conducted through selfish means, opposed to that of Frelimo.

DISCUSSION

The relevance of this research is two-fold. Firstly, there have been significant negative lasting effects of the war, and for former child soldiers in particular. Secondly, through my research, we can gain a deeper insight into some individuals who were part of the war, and who have expressed their own experiences – thus giving them a voice.

Effects of the war

Approximately one million people were killed because of the war, of which 60% were estimated to be children (Erickson, 2009). Over 600,000 children could not gain an education due to the destruction of 2,500 primary schools, constituting 50% of all Mozambican primary schools at the time (Aird, 2001). Both Frelimo and Renamo forcibly conscripted children to become child soldiers (Efraime, 2012). However, Renamo continued to recruit them at an increasing rate throughout the war, transforming them into active perpetrators of violence (Cohn, 1994).

Indoctrination was evident in forced drug use on the children which later led to several addictions in adult years (Quiroga, 2009). Additionally, sexually transmitted diseases became a lasting effect of the war among child soldiers, with an estimated 985,000 HIV positive people aged 15-19 in 1996 (Baden, 1997).

Further effects include the mental states of ex-child soldiers, whereby many have expressed their cynicism toward future goals, a lack of appropriate responses in dealing with conflicts, as well as their capacities to make morally correct decisions (Efraime, 2012). Research has found that boys who spent a significant amount of time in a Renamo base camp, disregarding whether they were involved in violent behavior, were more prone to have a higher skewed moral compass (Cohn, 1994). This may have been due to the mere constant exposure to violence that affected these young boys.

Another highly prominent aspect was the demobilization efforts that took place from 1993-1994. Over 900,000 Frelimo and Renamo soldiers were demobilized, but even though a significant number of soldiers were children, neither side admitted to the recruitment of child soldiers. As a result, they were not officially considered agents in need of integrative aid due to being perpetrators of violence, and thus not included in the formal demobilization process

(Aird, 2001). Due to the lack of transparency in the use of child soldiers during the war, those affected who were not considered old enough to fight, were not treated as people in need of integrative help post-war. Therefore, ex-child soldiers had to return to civil society with virtually no official aid, which has led to substantial societal and individual psychological effects. Crime and violence within the country has consequently been extremely high, and perpetuated by a majority of ex-child soldiers (Aird, 2001). Despite the significant negative effects of the success of reintegration, there were a few NGOs, such as *Rebuilding Hope* and *Propaz*, founded in 1995 and 1996, who have attempted to aid in the psychological well-being of those affected, as well as supply them with vocational training (Aird, 2001). However, these programs were limited to specific areas of the country, mostly in the cities. There, they only approached a very small group of former child soldiers, as most remained in the rural areas to the north of the country (Stohl, 2001).

My contribution to the cause

Even though I spoke to relatively few people who were involved in the war, I nonetheless gained an understanding of the different roles played during the 16-year struggle: the soldiers, politicians, and external forces. Through these insights, I have understood that there is still much need for research in this field, which I will be continuing at a later stage, that may aid in the understanding of this brutal war. Furthermore, and in my opinion most importantly, I have given a voice to people who have never spoken about their individual experiences; who were not regarded as important due to their connection with Renamo, and thus were an enemy at one time to the government. Through my research, I managed to provide a means through which their untold stories have breached the confines of institutionalized silence.

CONCLUSION

War is devastating in the resultant suffering of a people. When children are employed as soldiers and their worlds are reconstructed to become active perpetrators of violence and harm, this not only corrupts the innocence of childhood, but also disturbs community-based structures in which family is the glue that allows for the continuity of a society.

However, those affected are not controlled by these experiences. As Nordstrom states, in societies where violence has reconstructed people's boundaries of reality, they are able to re-create viable worlds and rebuild war-torn identities (1997). To an extent, soldiers could separate and compartmentalize the time of war. Where their experiences seeped through, however, was through their humanity. Yes, by very effective means soldiers could become great perpetrators of violence, but they were still human. This humanity was what demonstrated the repercussions of war in individuals; in their psychological well-being, notions of community, and the degree to which their moral compasses had been compromised.

Additionally, even with institutionalized silences, the scars of war surfaced and were channeled in different ways. The manner in which those effected expressed this was through domains, such as tendencies toward violence in adult years, as well as identifying themselves apart from the "other"; individualizing themselves to external forces who will never understand their struggle.

These children were molded and transformed into soldiers, forced to commit atrocities to their own people, and even to their families. After the war, they had to somehow re-commit themselves to that of a normal life in society. The degree to which this was successful is negligent, but the extent to which we can seek to understand the different domains in which these individuals suffering will last, is endless.

NOTES

1: “*curandeiro*” is the translation for traditional healer/witch doctor. They are culturally very important to the Mozambican community for their ritual properties.

2: Raul Domingos has been approached by scholars, journalists, and reporters regarding his stance on the ever-changing political situation in Mozambique. A part of this entails why he thinks the country is faced with severe instability at different times in history regarding Frelimo’s downfalls. Some examples can be found in the following references:

- Hultman, L. (2009)
- Slattery, B. (2003)

3: Renamo guerilla warfare would often involve immersing into the population so as to not compromise their base locations, whilst using the available resources.

4: “*zona*,” Portuguese translation of “zone.”

5: “*commandante*,” Portuguese translation of “commander.”

6: “*ei*,” a Portuguese colloquial expression used to exaggerate expression situations. Similar to English expressions of, “gosh,” or “wow”

7: Maputo is the country’s capital city, in the district of Maniça

8: This was often used as a terror tactic to employ child soldiers; by destroying their support structure, indoctrination would be easier with no home to run to. These men who killed the parents of the village, took all their children. They were part of a different jurisdiction than the one that Bandido’s uncle was in charge of, which therefore also exemplifies the lack of communication, transparency and unity Renamo exuded through its soldiers, consequently expressing the disparity within the same political group.

9: The rebel forces, called ZANU, were led by later president of independent Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe

10: The Nkomati Accord was an agreement that the Republic of South Africa would no longer provide support to Renamo, and Frelimo would therefore cease support to the ANC. Consequently, there came a fissure of ties for Renamo

11: The Casa Banana attack holds precedence because it was the expected end of Renamo by Frelimo forces. It was initiated in 1985 under Samora Machel, who died soon after in 1986. While Domingos was stationed at Rea Headquarters, the main base was Casa Banana where the commander and chief Afonso Dikhama was stationed. After the Nkomati Accord, there was a large scale operation launched against Renamo with the support of the Zimbabwean troops, in which they attacked Casa Banana; the heart of Renamo bases. The attack, called Operation Zero (Emerson, 2014. Pg.144), comprised of a lot of materials being captured, along with vital information that was written by the secretary of the president at the time.

12: The Community of Sant’ Egidio engaged in international mediation in the service of communities, and were the driving forces that established peace talks between Renamo and Frelimo (Vines, 1996). After both parties agreed to participate, the first official meetings began

in 1990 and consisted of twelve rounds of peace talks in Rome before the General Peace Accord was signed on 4 October 1992 (Vines, 1996). Apart from Dhlakama and Samora Machel's having the final verdicts, Raul Domingos was the representative of Renamo who took part in the negotiations held in Rome. Armando Guebuza was the Frelimo representative in Rome, who also later became the president of the country in 2005.

13: The first democratic elections were held in Mozambique in 1994 with Frelimo winning 44% of the votes and Renamo 33%. Frelimo has persisted as the ruling political party of the country, holding the majority in government with Renamo remaining its primary opponent (Slattery, 2003).

14: The government of Mozambique approached the United Nations to aid them in a "peace-keeping operation," taking the country "from armed conflict to democratic and peaceful elections" (Boutros-Ghali, 1995. Pg. 23). The ONUMOZ operation approached different spheres affected by the war: the political, military, electoral and humanitarian domains (Boutros-Ghali, 1995).

15: This had occurred when Zimbabwe signed an agreement with the government of Mozambique; Frelimo, named the "Zimbabwe-Mozambique Defense Agreement" in 1981. This document essentially meant that Zimbabwe would fight Renamo forces from its border to "guard their own economic lifeline" seeing as Renamo was becoming a threat to that notion having allied with South African forces (Vines, 1996. Pg.61).

16: "*a base setorial*" is the Portuguese translation for "the sectoral base." This was the 'control base,' according to Marcelino; the preliminary in which the children were screened after which they could go to the main base.

17: OXFAM is an international confederation comprising of several organizations with the common goal of reducing poverty in the world. They were particularly involved in Mozambique after the civil war in providing direct humanitarian aid to those in rural areas (Moore, 2003).

18: "5-Recci" (read: *Rekki*) is an abbreviation for the '5 Reconnaissance Commando,' a unit of the South African Special Forces.

19: It is a cultural norm to carry bags, boxes, or heavy materials on one's head in the rural areas of Mozambique, using a folded cloth in-between the item and person's head, for comfort and support.

20: The Portuguese used the Gorongosa park as a hunting ground during the colonial years.

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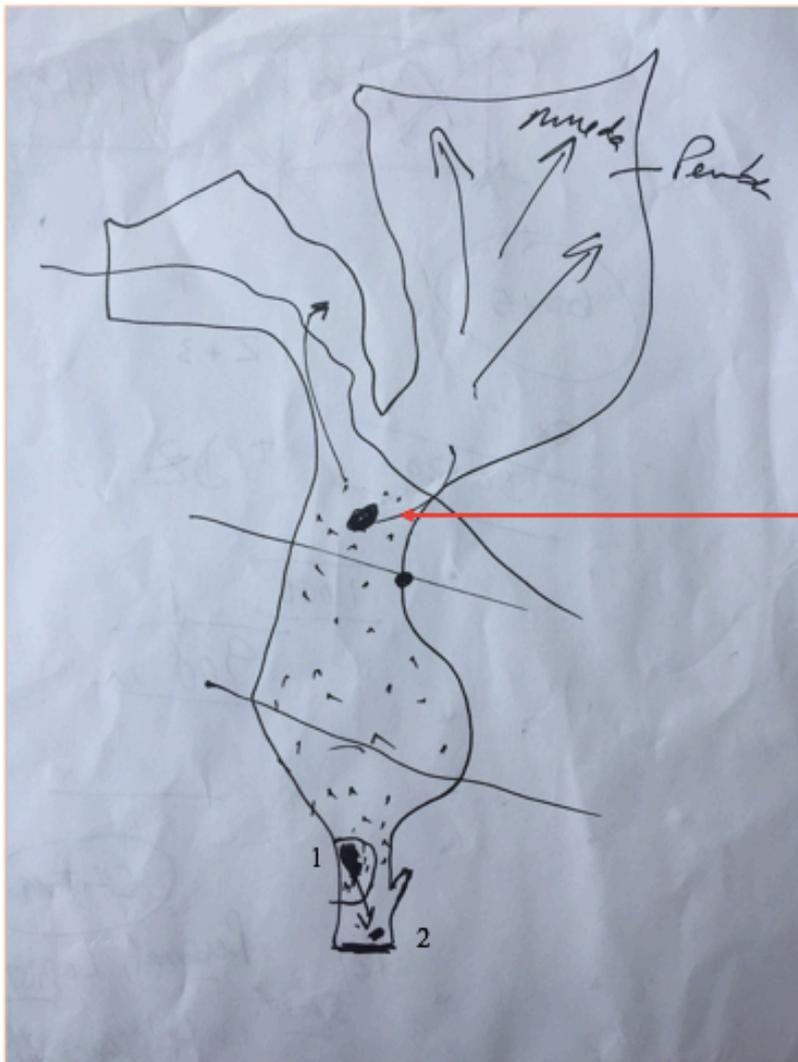
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Visual sources

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APPENDIX

Appendix A showing a schematic drawn by Raul Domingos during our interview, showing the Renamo military tactics engaged after the attack of Casa Banana.



Several soldiers who were in the Casa Banana region were sent north to areas around Mueda and Pemba

Casa Banana stationed at black dot

Domingos and his group were sent even more down south from point 1 to point 2