

7 Being Resettled: A Social History of the Mozambican War of Independence

7.1 How “Loyalty” Became a Viable Option

This chapter focuses on a process that affected the majority of people living in the war zones of the Mozambican War of Independence (1964–1974): their resettlement by Portuguese forces. As part of the Portuguese resettlement program in Mozambique, nearly one million people were relocated or “regrouped”¹ into strategic villages, the *aldeamentos*.² The Portuguese *aldeamentos* scheme did not limit itself to resettlement, however, but went hand in hand with a promise of modernization for those resettled.

The combination of forced resettlement and propagation of social advancement for the resettled has been a paradigmatic counter-insurgency approach since World War Two.³ It has been applied in conflicts such as the Mau-Mau-Insurgency in Kenya, the Algerian War of Independence or the Vietnam War.⁴ The Portuguese forces also used the same strategy in their other decolonization wars in Angola and Guinea-Bissau. The combination of resettlement and development certainly suited the zeitgeist of modernization theory, but it was also a response to the war strategies that the insurgents had adopted in these conflicts. They all followed the Maoist credo that the guerrilla must move among the population like a fish moves in water. In other words, the insurgents sought to do everything possible to maintain good relations with the population of the war zones in order to obtain their support in form of recruits, food, and information. The counterstrategy to this tactic was to deprive the fish of its water. While resettlement aimed to distance

1 It is often ignored that not all those living in *aldeamentos* had been relocated there. Rather, most *aldeamentos* were built around pre-existing villages.

2 Higher numbers circulating in part of the literature have no foundation in the sources. Given what has been said in the previous footnote, we must even assume that the number of those who had been effectively resettled was lower. For a reliable figure of the population of the *aldeamentos* in August 1973 (based on documents of the Portuguese Ministry of Defence), see: Amélia Neves de Souto, *Caetano e o ocaso do “Império”: Administração e guerra colonial em Moçambique durante o Marcelismo (1968–1974)* (Porto: Afrontamento, 2007), 231.

3 Moritz Feichtinger, “‘A Great Reformatory’: Social Planning and Strategic Resettlement in Late Colonial Kenya and Algeria, 1952–63,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 52, no. 1 (2017): 5; Andreas Stucki, *Aufstand und Zwangsumsiedlung: Die kubanischen Unabhängigkeitskriege 1868–1898* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2012), 371–372.

4 For an overview, see: Christian Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies: Mass Violence in the Twentieth-Century World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 177–234.

people from the enemy physically, modernization aimed to do so emotionally. Promising social and economic progress in the form of the creation of income opportunities and the construction of schools, hospitals, and wells, governments sought to “win people’s hearts and minds.” The Portuguese Governor of Niassa Province described this government policy in 1970 as follows:

There is no doubt that a war of the kind we have it in Niassa can only be won if we consider a well-directed promotion of rural progress for the population to be more important than the actual actions of the armed or militarized forces. This war is not about the conquest of territories, but essentially about the conquest of people.⁵

Despite its considerable dimensions, the Portuguese *aldeamentos* program has been examined only superficially. The existing literature is critical of it, with some scholars using Frelimo’s terminology of calling the *aldeamentos* “concentration camps.”⁶ There are two different lines of argumentation: the first considers the Portuguese propagation of social progress as a mere propaganda tool, directed more at the Western public than at the resettled themselves. It regards the program primarily as an instrument of military control that caused a tremendous amount of suffering to the resettled.⁷ The other line argues that the colonial government has not or only partially achieved its own goal of offering people the promised modernization. It claims that, as a result of this failure, the program even boomeranged for the state, as it alienated the population even further from it.⁸ Both lines of argumentation have in common that they come to their con-

5 AHM, GGM XX, cx. 2097: Nuno Egídio, “O Niassa: Relatório Anual de 1970” (Vila Cabral, February 28, 1971), 30.

6 For examples, see: Galli, *Peoples’ Spaces and State Spaces*, 36; Andreas Stucki, “Frequent Deaths: The Colonial Development of Concentration Camps Reconsidered, 1868–1974,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 20, no. 3 (2018): 322–323.

7 Isaacman and Isaacman, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution*, 100–102; Galli, *Peoples’ Spaces and State Spaces*, 36–37; Stucki, *Violence and Gender in Africa’s Iberian Colonies*, 88–91.

8 Brendan F. Jundanian, “Resettlement Programs: Counterinsurgency in Mozambique,” *Comparative Politics* 6, no. 4 (1974): 519–540; Henriksen, *Revolution and Counterrevolution*, 143–170; João Paulo Borges Coelho, “Protected Villages and Communal Villages in the Mozambican Province of Tete (1968–1982): A History of State Resettlement Policies, Development and War” (PhD thesis, University of Bradford, 1993), 160–282; John P. Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa: The Portuguese Way of War, 1961–1974* (Westport: Greenwood, 1997), 143–168; Stephen Lubkemann, *Culture in Chaos: An Anthropology of the Social Condition in War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 115–116; Ian F.W. Beckett, “The Portuguese Army: The Campaign in Mozambique, 1964–1974,” in *Armed Forces and Modern Counterinsurgency*, ed. Ian F.W. Beckett and John Pimlott (London: Croom Helm, 1985), 146–148; Castelo, “Colonatos e aldeamentos no Niassa.”

clusions using a surprisingly thin line of evidence.⁹ They have as a rule also neglected to listen to the voices of those resettled.¹⁰

The patterns that characterize research on the Portuguese resettlement program in Mozambique are consistent with the state of research on other cases of such programs. As in Mozambique, the resettled have usually been perceived either “as an object of government atrocities or as [a] problem of government control,”¹¹ but rarely as actors in their own right. Similarly, research on strategic resettlement in other conflicts has been highly critical of the success or even attempt of (colonial) governments to “win people’s hearts and minds.” Instead, many scholars have stressed the centrality of repression and coercion in spite of the propaganda to the contrary.¹²

In contrast to this, and to my initial surprise, my interviewee’s descriptions of their resettlement hardly revolved around elements of repression and coercion. Rather, most interviewees even showed understanding for their relocation and described the *aldeamento* as place where they found peace and about which they had little to complain. Symptomatic of this benign portrayal of resettlement is the testimony of one villager interviewed by MLM’s oral history project in 2007. Not even using the word resettlement, he said: “I fled from here to go to the government, and the government protected me and took care of me.”¹³

This chapter explains why people perceived their resettlement the way they did, and how “loyalty” to the colonial state became a viable option for many Nkholongueans during the war. The chapter will also reflect on the generalizability of the experiences of Nkholongueans and consider how the processes at work in

9 An exception is Borges Coelho, whose work was at the times however still marked by a slight partisan bias: Borges Coelho, “Protected Villages and Communal Villages.”

10 An important exception is the already mentioned work on the war in the Maúá district by Funada-Classen. However, she does not reflect her research in the context of the previous research on *aldeamentos* or resettlement. See: Funada-Classen, *The Origins of War in Mozambique*. Another exception is the book of the Isaacmans on the Cahora Bassa dam, which is, though, still markedly influenced by the nationalist liberation narrative and tends to interpret people’s experiences mainly through the prism of victimhood. See: Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development: Cahora Bassa and Its Legacies in Mozambique, 1965–2007* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2013), chap. 4.

11 Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies*, 179.

12 David French, *The British Way in Counter-Insurgency, 1945–1967* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 174–99; Stacey Hynd, “Small Warriors? Children and Youth in Colonial Insurgencies and Counterinsurgency, ca. 1945–1960,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 62, no. 4 (2020): 685. For an overview of this type of literature, see: Karl Hack, “‘Devils That Suck the Blood of the Malayan People’: The Case for Post-Revisionist Analysis of Counter-Insurgency Violence,” *War in History* 25, no. 2 (2018): n. 6.

13 MLM, 026: interview with S.F., transcript Chinyanja (Nkholongue, June 27, 2007), 5.

Nkholongue can connect to observations and findings by scholars from other settings. Recent studies by Daniel Branch and François-Xavier Hautreux have emphasized the importance of including the analysis of loyalism as part of the explanation of the wars in Kenya and Algeria.¹⁴ This importance is also evident in most other cases of counter-insurgency wars if one considers that the number of armed locals on the government side usually clearly exceeded the number of guerrillas.¹⁵ But, in general, we still know very little about this group, their attitudes and motives.

Against the convention of dividing groups of people into either nationalists or loyalists, this chapter will underline the critical importance of shifting political attitudes during the war, showing how Nkholongue’s inhabitants actively supported Frelimo at the beginning of the conflict, but ended up mostly helping the Portuguese war effort. Part of this change can be explained by the regional development of the war. Initially, the momentum was doubtlessly on Frelimo’s side. Rapid decolonization seemed within reach. However, these prospects turned upside down when the colonial state strengthened its (military) forces after the outbreak of the war and succeeded in significantly destabilizing and decimating Frelimo’s regional presence. Part of people’s shifting alliances can thus be explained by what has been referred to as “attentisme,” “fence-sitting,” or “free-riding” in relation to other conflicts.¹⁶ As Neil MacMaster put with regard to Algeria, “[w]hich side you ended up fighting on or supporting might have had little to do with the global po-

14 Daniel Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); David Anderson and Daniel Branch, “Allies at the End of Empire—Loyalists, Nationalists and the Cold War, 1945–76,” *The International History Review* 39, no. 1 (2017): 1–13. In relation to the lusophone cases, see the recent publications by Pedro Aires Oliveira and Fatima Rodrigues: Pedro Aires Oliveira, “Saved by the Civil War: African ‘Loyalists’ in the Portuguese Armed Forces and Angola’s Transition to Independence,” *The International History Review* 39, no. 1 (2017): 126–142; Fatima da Cruz Rodrigues, “Vidas deslocadas pelo colonialismo e pela guerra,” *Estudos Ibero-Americanos* 45, no. 2 (2019): 49–63.

15 Gerlach, *Extremely Violent Societies*, 194–95. Borges Coelho offers a statistic of “locally” recruited troops for the Portuguese wars in Mozambique, Angola, and Guinea-Bissau. He also points to the role of militias but does not include them in his count. See: João Paulo Borges Coelho, “African Troops in the Portuguese Colonial Army, 1961–1974: Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique,” *Portuguese Studies Review* 10, no. 1 (2002): 129–150.

16 Neil MacMaster, “The ‘Silent Native’: Attentisme, Being Compromised, and Banal Terror during the Algerian War of Independence, 1954–1962,” in *The French Colonial Mind, Vol. 2: Violence, Military Encounters, and Colonialism*, ed. Martin Thomas (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 283–303; Stathis N. Kalyvas and Matthew Adam Kocher, “How ‘Free’ Is Free Riding in Civil Wars? Violence, Insurgency, and the Collective Action Problem,” *World Politics* 59, no. 2 (2007): 177–216; Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 40, 226–234.

litical or ideological divisions (nationalism versus French colonialism), but more to do with accidents of time and place, what Hamoumou calls ‘local contingencies.’¹⁷ Local developments around Nkhlongue mirrored those observed by Daniel Branch for Kenya, where “[t]he loss of insurgent control triggered a move towards loyalism.”¹⁸

However, this chapter will argue that the shifting ideological alliances were to a certain degree also genuine. As Frelimo was able to win people for their political project at the beginning the war, Portuguese forces equally succeeded in convincing people that staying with the Portuguese Empire might be the better alternative. This chapter will show that the Portuguese state indeed made an effort to “win people’s hearts and minds” that locally materialized. Similar to what Stephan Malinowski and Moritz Feichtinger have done for the French war in Algeria, this chapter will highlight that the war against Mozambican Independence cannot be explained simply by the brutal actions of a reactionary and racist colonial state using the language of modernization and change as a mere propaganda tool.¹⁹ Taking up the discussion from Chapter 5, the following pages will highlight that, at least in the case examined here, the Portuguese colonial system proved more capable of reform than is commonly assumed. Thus, Portuguese forces were indeed eager to provide the resettled with acceptable living conditions. Schooling rates, for example, rose rapidly during the war. Furthermore, there was a marked change in the use of repression and violence in those years. While Portuguese forces systematically destroyed fields and food outside the *aldeamentos* throughout the war, they indeed started to avoid direct killings of people outside their control. In this regard, my findings connect to the observations of Karl Hack, who has called for the examination of the “lifecycles of particular types of violence” in relation to the British counter-insurgency campaign in Malaya.²⁰

In general, this chapter will emphasize the importance of chronology and context. In his research on resettlement in Kenya and Algeria, Moritz Feichtinger has shown that people’s differing assessments and interpretations of strategic resettlement “can be explained by the simple fact that they often refer to distinct phases”

17 MacMaster, “The ‘Silent Native,’” 295. Similar observations have been made by Stathis Kalyvas: Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 38–48.

18 Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau*, 116.

19 Moritz Feichtinger and Stephan Malinowski, “‘Eine Million Algerier lernen im 20. Jahrhundert zu leben’: Umsiedlungslager und Zwangsmodernisierung im Algerienkrieg 1954–1962,” *Journal of Modern European History* 8, no. 1 (2010): 107–135.

20 Hack, “‘Devils That Suck the Blood of the Malayan People.’”

of resettlement.²¹ My research points out that such divergent opinions also depend crucially on what people had experienced before their resettlement. Like other chapters before it, this one equally underscores the importance of not falling prey to what I call the Aboriginal Delusion (see Section 1.4) and to consider the disruptions that preceded the disruption. Crucial in this case is that the disruption of the resettlement was preceded by the disruption of the war experience.

With the analysis of the wartime experiences of the inhabitants of Nkhonlongue, this chapter also seeks to complicate our knowledge of the history of the war in Mozambique. Despite some more critical accounts, this remains largely framed by Frelimo’s liberation script. Frelimo is still seen widely as “the ideal movement of ‘people’s war’ and national liberation”²² and said to have enjoyed massive support among the peasants of northern Mozambique.²³ Recent research on the war has again largely focused on liberation fighters,²⁴ or then perpetuated the notion of Portugal as an imminently brutal and unreformable colonial power.²⁵ An important exception is Sayaka Funada-Classen’s study of the war events in the district of Maúá, in which she has argued how the war not only created unity but also disunity among the inhabitants of the war zones.²⁶ This chapter will show that

21 Moritz Feichtinger, “Villagization’: A People’s History of Strategic Resettlement and Violent Transformation. Kenya & Algeria, 1952–1962” (PhD thesis, Bern, Universität Bern, 2016), 137.

22 Terence O. Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerilla War in Zimbabwe: A Comparative Study* (London: James Currey, 1985), 6.

23 Bowen, *The State Against the Peasantry*, 213–14; Kajsa Johansson, “Peasant Collective Action against Disembedding Land: The Case of Niassa Province, Mozambique,” in *Social Movements Contesting Natural Resource Development*, ed. John F. Devlin (London: Routledge, 2019), 35. The narrative that Frelimo won the war because it was able to gain the support of the “local people” is still very popular. See for example: Joseph Hanlon, ed., “Mozambique News Reports & Clippings,” no. 492 (June 28, 2020), 1.

24 Katto, *Women’s Lived Landscapes of War and Liberation in Mozambique*; Liazzat Bonate, “Muslim Memories of the Liberation War in Cabo Delgado,” *Kronos* 39, no. 1 (2013): 230–56; Joel das Neves Tembe, ed., *História da Luta de Libertação Nacional*, vol. 1 (Maputo: Ministério dos Combatentes, 2014); Benigna Zimba, ed., *A mulher moçambicana na Luta de Libertação Nacional: Memórias do Destacamento Feminino* (Maputo: Centro de Pesquisa da História da Luta de Libertação Nacional, 2012).

25 Mustafah Dhada, *The Portuguese Massacre of Wiriyamu in Colonial Mozambique, 1964–2013* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016); Castelo, “Colonatos e aldeamentos no Niassa.”

26 Funada-Classen, *The Origins of War in Mozambique*. A similar argument has been made by Ana Margarida Santos for Cabo Delgado. See: Ana Margarida Santos, “The Past in the Present: Memories of the Liberation Struggle in Northern Mozambique,” 7° Congresso Ibérico de Estudos Africanos (Lisboa, 2010), accessed October 30, 2019, http://www.observatori.org/paises/pais_70/documentos/_Mozambique_The%20past%20in%20the%20present.pdf; Ana Margarida Santos, “Resistance and Collaboration: Conflicting Memories of the Liberation Struggle (1964–1974) in Northern Mozambique,” *Social Evolution & History* 13, no. 2 (2014): 151–175.

in regard to Niassa, the number of people living under the control of Frelimo in the so-called liberated areas was in fact tiny at the end of the war. This is a dynamic that has so far been barely recognized in any systematic manner, but which has very important implications for the history of Mozambican nationalism.

The chapter is divided into three parts. First, we will have a short look at Frelimo's memory politics. An understanding of these is important for a critical interpretation of any analysis of the war that draws on oral history. The main focus will be on the *dinheiro dos antigos combatentes* ('money of the former combatants'), a war pension that has been granted to former fighters. In a second part, we will look at the course of the war from the perspective of the inhabitants of Nkhlongue, analyze their resettlement to Metangula, and examine people's life in the *aldeamento*. In the last part, we will zoom out and reflect on how the wartime experiences of Nkhlongue's population can improve our analysis of similar wars in general and the Mozambican War of Independence in particular.

7.2 Buying History with Money: Frelimo's Fake Veterans

We have already discussed various challenges that need to be considered when conducting and interpreting interviews (see especially Section 1.3). However, the topic of the Mozambican War of Independence requires special attention. The main reason for this is the *dinheiro dos antigos combatentes*. The sudden increase in the number of recipients of this pension, which began in 1999, has so far been largely ignored by scholars.²⁷ My fieldwork experience has undoubtedly taught me how important this pension has become in relation to local (memory) politics.

The increase in the number of the recipients of the *dinheiro dos antigos combatentes* must be understood in the context of a major revival of the politics of memory by Frelimo since the late 1990s. In addition to the distribution of money to "veterans," these politics include the frequent holding of commemorative ceremonies, the installation of statues, the promotion of the publication of war memoirs and partisan historiography, and the naming of schools and streets after the struggle's heroes.²⁸ In 2000, the Mozambican government created a ministry responsible exclusively for the affairs of former combatants. Since its inception, this ministry has supported the dissemination of the history of the armed

²⁷ Wiegink has at least touched upon it. See: Nikkie Wiegink, *Former Guerrillas in Mozambique* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020), 171, 183–187.

²⁸ For a selection of such publications, see: Zimba, *A mulher moçambicana na Luta de Libertação Nacional*; Ana Bouene Mussanhane, ed., *Protagonistas da Luta de Libertação Nacional* (Maputo: Marimbique, 2012); Tembe, *História da Luta de Libertação Nacional*.

struggle through talks, lectures, television debates and radio transmissions.²⁹ The district of Lago, one of the two districts where the first shots of the armed struggle were fired, has played an important role in the government's efforts to use remembrance for political ends. Between 2008 and 2014, it hosted three major commemorations for fallen heroes of the armed struggle, all of which were attended by Mozambique's president. At these ceremonies, the government distributed heroic biographies of the commemorated among the population.³⁰

While all these efforts may have had some impact on people's "memory" and the way they think it is proper to talk about the war, there is little doubt that the most important effects have been caused by the *dinheiro dos antigos combatentes*. The first payments of this pension date back to 1986, when the Mozambican government established a law on pensions of the members of the Mozambican armed forces. This law declared all veterans of the armed struggle as members of the armed forces. Thereby, a veteran was not only one who had fought with a weapon in his or her hand, but also one who had provided logistical support.³¹ Initially, the number of recipients of pensions was relatively small. It began to rise around 1999, and especially after 2002 when the government passed the *Estatuto do Combatente* ("Statute of the Veteran").³² With this statute, the government introduced an additional one-time participation bonus for those who were recognized as war veterans. People were invited to hand in their story of war participation, on the basis

29 From 2012 to May 2014 alone the ministry supported the realization of 2,220 talks, 47 TV debates and 94 radio transmissions. See: "Combatentes homenageados," Notícias Online, May 21, 2014, accessed August 3, 2014, <http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz/index.php/politica/16120-combatentes-homenageados>.

30 For the ceremonies in Lago, see: "Moçambique lembrou-se de Kajika," *Faísca: O Jornal do Niassa*, no. 644 (June 14, 2014): 8–10; Assumail Raidone et al., *Vida e obra de Bernabé Adison Kajika (1938–1974)* (Lichinga: ARPAC, 2014); Assumail Raidone, Manuel Vene, and Laurindo Malimusse, *Vida e obra de Francisco Orlando Magumbwa* (Lichinga: ARPAC, 2013). For these ceremonies and booklets in general, see: Amélia Neves de Souto, "Memory and Identity in the History of Frelimo: Some Research Themes," *Kronos* 39, no. 1 (2013): 291–292.

31 "Decreto n.º 3/86 de 25 de Julho," *Boletim da República (I Série)*, no. 30, 3.º Suplemento (July 26, 1986): 82/14. See as well: Ângelo José Naiene and Arlindo Langa, "Atribuição de pensão aos antigos combatentes desmobilizados: O impacto na reintegração social no centro de produção dos antigos combatentes 25 de Setembro, em Umbeluzi, Distrito de Boane, Província de Maputo, no período 1986–2001" (PhD thesis, Maputo, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, 2002), accessed August 4, 2014, <http://www.saber.ac.mz/bitstream/10857/2172/1/Ap-025.pdf>.

32 "Lei N.º 3/2002, de 17 de Janeiro: Estatuto do Combatente da Luta de Libertação Nacional," *Boletim da República (I Série)*, no. 3, Suplemento (January 17, 2002). See as well: Conselho de Ministros, "Resolução n.º 37/2001: Política sobre os assuntos dos antigos combatentes e estratégia de sua implementação," *Boletim da República. Publicação Oficial da República de Moçambique*, no. 20 (May 22, 2001).

of which it was then decided whether or not they qualified for the bonus and pension.³³

I do not have any figures that would allow me to reconstruct the exact increase in the number of pensions. But some data can be used for illustration. In 2006, for example, the government admitted 14,153 new veterans and paid out 1,058 participation bonuses.³⁴ In 2013, almost 40 years after the end of the war, an astonishing 9,472 new participation bonuses were granted to war veterans.³⁵ While from 2014 to 2016, the number of officially registered veterans of the War of Independence rose from 76,160 to 95,743.³⁶

From a methodological perspective, the importance of these pensions cannot be underestimated. Around 2013, the participation bonus corresponded to a one-time payment of about 30,000 to 40,000 MZN (about 1,000 to 1,300 USD at the time), and the monthly pension payments to about 3,000 to 5,000 MZN (100 to 165 USD).³⁷ This was an enormous amount of money in a region where 80 percent of the households spent less than 1,000 MZN (33 USD) in one week, and 37 percent even less than 250 MZN (8 USD) according to figures from 2011.³⁸

In view of these high amounts, it is probably no surprise that the government's new policy raised the hopes of many, especially since some of Nkhlongue's former inhabitants had been recognized as war veterans.³⁹ One of my interviewees, who had fought for Frelimo in the 1960s but deserted from the movement during the war and had lived in Malawi ever since, returned to Nkhlongue solely to apply for the money.⁴⁰ The sudden appearance of the *dinheiro dos antigos combatentes*

33 PA, I087: interview with P1452 (♂, 1927) (Lichinga, September 10, 2013), min 01:08:43–01:17:01.

34 República de Moçambique, "Balanço do Plano Económico e Social 2006," 2007, 67, accessed April 20, 2019, <http://www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz/por/content/download/1767/14380/version/1/file/pes+2006+balan%25c3%25a7o+anual+2006.pdf>.

35 "Mais 33 mil combatentes vão beneficiar de pensões – Jornal Notícias," Notícias Online, January 2, 2014, accessed August 3, 2014, <http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz/index.php/politica/9366-mais-33-mil-combatentes-va-o-beneficiar-de-pensoes>.

36 "MICO regista perto de 166.800 combatentes," Notícias Online, June 14, 2014, accessed July 16, 2014, <http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz/index.php/politica/17594-mico-regista-perto-de-166-800-combatentes>; "PR sobre a fixação de pensões: reduz insatisfação do combatente," Notícias Online, March 14, 2016, accessed July 18, 2019, <https://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz/index.php/politica/51279-pr-sobre-a-fixacao-de-pensoes-reduz-insatisfacao-do-combatente>.

37 PA, I087: interview with P1452 (♂, 1927) (Lichinga, September 10, 2013), min 01:31:06–01:37:33; PA, I051: interview with P0481 (♀, 1942) (Nkhlongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:48:45–00:49:26. For similar numbers, see as well: Wiegink, *Former Guerrillas in Mozambique*, 184.

38 The numbers on spending are from: ORGUT, "Sub-Report, District of Lago: Year One, 2011," 18. 39 I interviewed three of them and know of one more who has already passed away.

40 In 2013, I met and interviewed him in Malango. But in 2016 he was already back in Malawi where I interviewed him again. PA, I038: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940) (Malango, August 15,

raised not only hopes but also envy. Many of those who began to receive the pension were considered fake veterans who received the money only because they had good relations with certain individuals in the government or because the government considered it important to win their political allegiance.⁴¹

The result of these politics of memory was that some interviewees clearly tended to exaggerate their support for Frelimo, while others tended to conceal their less “glorious” war roles. The latter group included those who had joined Frelimo at the beginning of the war but deserted from the nationalists later.⁴² It also included those who had joined the *Grupos Especiais* (GE), a Portuguese military unit composed of black volunteers.⁴³ One of them, for example, initially denied most firmly that he had ever fought for the Portuguese. It was only after a while that he angrily confirmed that he had indeed joined the GE. His anger, however, made it clear that he was not prepared to tell us more about it.⁴⁴ Another was more talkative. He even complained to me that those who had fought for the whites were not receiving any money, and he expressed his hope that maybe I could do something about it.⁴⁵

2013), min 00:45:29–00:46:36; PA, I132: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940), P1507 (♀, ~1930), P1508 (♀) (Ndegue (Salima), June 1, 2016).

41 For discussions surrounding the selection of true and fake veterans, see for example: PA, I094: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M'chepa, January 27, 2016), min 01:39:37–01:42:03; PA, I096: interview with P1216 (♂, 1957) (Malango, February 1, 2016), min 02:31:11–02:32:17; PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 02:53:36–02:55:12; PA, I123: interview with P1460 (♀), P1461 (♂, ~1935), P1462 (♂, ~1935) (Meluluca, April 25, 2016), min 02:41:41–02:42:52; PA, I125: interview with P1463 (♂, 1951) (Ngala, April 27, 2016), min 01:29:46–01:31:13; PA, I166: interview with P1479 (♀, ~1922), P1505 (♂, 1957) (Nampula, June 28, 2016), min 01:15:44–01:19:04; PA, I051: interview with P0481 (♀, 1942) (Nkholongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:47:17–00:50:44; PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 01:14:02–01:15:38.

42 PA, I056: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 00:40:40–00:47:20; PA, I038: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:21:09–00:25:08; PA, I158: interview with P0764 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, June 20, 2016), min 00:07:05–00:08:21, 00:37:52–00:38:23; PA, I065: interview with P0583 (♂, 1972) (Nkholongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:04:12–00:06:47.

43 For the GE and the “Africanization” of the troops in general, see: Souto, *Caetano e o Ocaso do Império*, 283–301; Borges Coelho, “African Troops in the Portuguese Colonial Army.”

44 PA, I041: interview with P0951 (♀, 1948), P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, August 16, 2013). See as well the interview with his ex-wife in which her current husband intervened asking whether it could not cause them troubles with the government when she told us about her ex-husband having fought for the GE: PA, I052: interview with (♀, 1940) (Nkholongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:21:35–00:24:24.

45 PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 01:17:50–01:21:42.

This clearly shows how people had their own expectations and ideas about what they could gain and/or fear from the interviews they gave me.⁴⁶ This also shows how carefully one must interpret oral testimonies on the Mozambican War of Independence. Two factors helped me to address these challenges in the case of my research. First, interviewing a large number of people from the same social setting enabled me to cross-check the information. Second, the longitudinal perspective of my study made it easier to identify biographical inconsistencies.

7.3 From Fighting for the Nationalist to Supporting the Portuguese War Effort

It has already been demonstrated in Chapter 5 that the region around Nkhlongue lay at the very periphery of the *Estado Novo*. It was in 1964, the year the war broke out, that the Portuguese Board of the Investigation of the Overseas Territories (*Junta de Investigações do Ultramar*) published a book with the telling title *The Unknown Niassa*.⁴⁷ This all changed with the onset of the decolonization wave in Africa. With the independence of neighboring Tanganyika, the Mozambican nationalists had received a suitable base for their goals. The Portuguese government, alarmed not only by the developments across the continent but also by the outbreak of the war in Angola in early 1961, was now quickly realizing that its tenuous presence in northern Mozambique could become a military liability.⁴⁸

Suddenly, the Portuguese government pushed the construction of the colonial infrastructure that had been so long missing. The lakeshore was for the first time professionally surveyed and mapped as part of a hydrographic mission already in the late 1950s.⁴⁹ In 1961, Portugal began with the construction of its first navy boat

⁴⁶ Also note in this respect the statement of one interviewee in MLM's oral history project. It shows that he was evidently most afraid that the government could not like what he had said. See: MLM, 026: interview with S.F., transcript Chinyanja (Nkhlongue, June 27, 2007).

⁴⁷ Santos, *O desconhecido Niassa*.

⁴⁸ AHD, MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0064/01681: Mário Costa, "Ocupação administrativa do Distrito do Niassa," May 22, 1961, 6; AHD, MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0521/01667: Mário Costa, "Relatório da Inspeção ao Distrito do Niassa, de 13 de Abril a 3 de Maio 1960" (Lourenço Marques, June 10, 1961), 15; ANTT, SCCIM N.º 1088 (folhas 37–39): N.º 238/B: Secretário-Adjunto da Defesa Nacional ao Comandante Chefe das Forças Armadas de Moçambique LM, (June 8, 1961).

⁴⁹ Interestingly, the Hydrographic Mission has retrospectively been identified by some of my interviewees as a sign of the coming war. See: PA, I045: interview with P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:00:00–00:02:12; PA, I109: interview with P1081 (♀, 1945) (Malango, April 6, 2016), min 00:09:40–00:11:10; PA, I052: interview with (♀, 1940) (Nkhlongue, August 26, 2013),

for the lake.⁵⁰ Airstrips were built all across Niassa. And in 1962, the Portuguese government opened the province's first secondary school in Vila Cabral.⁵¹

Due to its strategic location on the lake, Metangula returned to being an important center of the colonial state in the area. It was chosen as the location for the new navy base on the lake. Furthermore, in a reversal of the process of its administrative downgrading in the 1920s (see Section 5.2), it was now restored as the capital of Lago District.⁵² The population of Nkhlongue, situated just a stone's throw from the town, all of a sudden found itself again next to the central representation of the colonial state in the region.

The Anglican missionary John Paul, who was present at the inauguration of Metangula's navy base on October 1, 1963,⁵³ wrote in his memoirs that he had never before seen so many Portuguese on the lakeshore as on this occasion.⁵⁴ The first Portuguese commander of the base described the moment when the base's generators were switched on as follows:

It was shortly after midnight when all of a sudden the whole base was illuminated. Impossible to describe the sensation: it was like being on another planet, like being alone on a shining island surrounded by endless darkness... Despite the late hour, hundreds of people from the village of Chilombe in the bay ran here to see the miracle of the light! The generators were not switched off anymore. A new era had begun.⁵⁵

The new era was one of war. Lago District was one of Frelimo's first recruiting grounds. Shortly after the movement had been founded in Tanganyika in 1962, Frelimo began establishing its clandestine networks, especially in the social environ-

min 00:11:43–00:14:31; PA, I054: interview with P0554 (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:05:28–00:08:44. For the Hydrographic Mission in general, see: AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 066/MO: Alguns elementos relativos às lanchas e infraestruturas da Marinha Portuguesa no Lago Niassa (1957/1975) (Lisboa, 1988), 4–5; Instituto Hidrográfico, *Roteiro da costa portuguesa do Lago Niassa* (Lisboa, 1963); AHU, IPAD/MU/DGOPC/DSH/1749/13221: José A. B. Fernandes, "Reconhecimento hidrográfico da costa portuguesa do Lago Niassa" (Lourenço Marques, April 25, 1959).

⁵⁰ AHM, SNI, Secção B, cx. 606: Duarte C.P. Pelloso, "Adit.º à Nota-Confidencial nº 570/A/27, de 15/6/961" (Vila Cabral, August 9, 1961).

⁵¹ Paul, *Memoirs of a Revolution*, 94–95.

⁵² AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 066/MO: Alguns elementos relativos às lanchas e infraestruturas da Marinha Portuguesa no Lago Niassa (1957/1975) (Lisboa, 1988), 14. For the administrative upgrade, see: Portaria n.º 17 320, 21.12.1963, cited by: Alexandre Lobato, "Augusto Cardoso e o Lago Niassa," *Stydia. Revista Quadrimestral*, no. 19 (1966): 90–91.

⁵³ Lobato, "Augusto Cardoso e o Lago Niassa," 38.

⁵⁴ Paul, *Memoirs of a Revolution*, 87–88.

⁵⁵ It is "Chirombe" in the original. See: Sérgio Zilhão, "Depoimento de Comandante de Mar e Guerra Sérgio Zilhão," in *Combater em Moçambique: Guerra e descolonização 1964–1975*, by Manuel A. Bernardo (Lisboa: Prefácio, 2003), 342.

ment of the Anglican mission of Messumba.⁵⁶ Lago was also the district where Frelimo fired the first shots of the war on September 24, 1964.⁵⁷

While the remainder of 1964 had seen only sporadic attacks, Frelimo's actions in the region increased in the course of 1965.⁵⁸ It was also at this point that Nkhlongue's population was visited by Frelimo fighters for the first time. The fighters had established a base near the upper reaches of the Luina river, about five to ten miles from the village. According to my interviewees, the fighters first made contact with Nkhlongue's chief in order to win the population's support.⁵⁹ This is consistent with the evidence from other places where the chiefs played an important role in winning followers for Frelimo during this phase of the war.⁶⁰

As elsewhere, Frelimo was able to gain considerable support in the form of food and recruits in Nkhlongue. Several young men and probably one woman joined Frelimo as fighters, others carried food to the base, and a portion of the population (both women and men) began living near the Luina base.⁶¹ In light

56 David F. Ndegue, *A Luta de Libertação na Frente do Niassa*, vol. 1 (Maputo: JV, 2009), 17–42.

57 In Frelimo's liberation narrative, the war began with simultaneous attacks in Niassa and Cabo Delgado on September 25, 1964. Alberto Chipande is credited with having fired the first shot of the war during the attack on the administrative post of Chai (Cabo Delgado). However, according to Portuguese military sources, the attack on the administrative post of Cobué had happened already on September 24, 1964. See: AHMil, FO/63/13/948/3: José R. M. da Matta, "Anexo C (Actividade IN desde 1959 até 10FEV68) ao Relatório Especial de Informações n° 01/68" (Metangula, February 1968), 2; John P. Cann, *Brown Waters of Africa: Portuguese Riverine Warfare 1961–1974* (2007; repr., Solihull: Helion, 2013), 184.

58 For an overview of the initial developments of the war in the area, see: APGGN: António Gonçalves Marques, "Situação política da área do Lago, e evolução dos acontecimentos a partir do dia um do Janeiro de 1965 até à presente data" (Augusto Cardoso, October 23, 1965); AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 032/MO: Sérgio Zilhão, "Análise dos acontecimentos do Niassa," Confidencial (Metangula, February 10, 1966); AHMil, DIV/2/7/149/6: Batalhão de Caçadores 598. História de Unidade, n.d.; AHMil, FO/63/13/948/3: Matta: Anexo C ao Relatório Especial de Informações n° 01/68.

59 PA, I056: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 00:32:14–00:34:15; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:09:37–00:12:30; PA, I038: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:14:20–00:15:05.

60 PA, I095: interview with P1453 (♂, ~1947), P1506 (♀, ~1950) (Malango, January 28, 2016), min 00:27:32–00:28:49. This is also confirmed by Frelimo veterans and Portuguese sources. See: João Facitela Pelembe, *Lutei pela pátria: Memórias de um combatente da luta pela libertação nacional* (Maputo, 2012), 73–74; Ndegue, *A Luta de Libertação na Frente do Niassa*, 134–143; AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 032/MO: Sérgio Zilhão, "Análise dos acontecimentos do Niassa," Confidencial (Metangula, February 10, 1966).

61 PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:09:50–00:11:20; PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 00:12:16–00:13:35; PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:31:50–00:33:05; PA, I041: interview with P0951 (♀, 1948), P0242 (♂,

of what has been said about Frelimo's memory politics, we must be critical of people's assertion of broad voluntary support.⁶² Some testimonies suggest that not everyone was helping Frelimo as willingly and eagerly as many have portrayed it. Several interviewees stated that they had little choice as they were asked to do so by armed men, and others also said that they were afraid of war.⁶³ Frelimo reinforced these fears by killing several people in the region whom they suspected of being colonial "collaborators."⁶⁴

1945) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:11:41–00:16:38; PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 01:45:28–01:50:40. The men from Nkhlongue who joined Frelimo and whose identity I was able to determine with certainty are P1452, P1102, P1439, P1036, P0555, P0581. P0299 also claimed to have joined Frelimo, though his story seems pretty implausible (see Footnote 62). Others were, at times, mentioned as part of the group of those who joined Frelimo, but I was not able to determine their identity beyond any doubt. Among them is one woman. See: PA, I038: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:13–01–00:21:42; PA, I056: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 00:01–02–00:09:35; PA, I087: interview with P1452 (♂, 1927) (Lichinga, September 10, 2013), min 00:04–02–00:09:11; PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 00:10–02–00:12:16; PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 01:45–08–01:49:12; PA, I158: interview with P0764 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, June 20, 2016), min 00:06–03–00:08:21; PA, I065: interview with P0583 (♂, 1972) (Nkhlongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:04–02–00:06:47; PA, I008: interview with P0299 (♂, 1938) (Nkhlongue, September 1, 2010), min 00:29–08–00:32:57.

62 The are clear indications of cases in which people misrepresented their role. For an example, see: PA, I008: interview with P0299 (♂, 1938) (Nkhlongue, September 1, 2010), min 00:27:43–00:35:31, 00:46:06–00:52:04. The respective interviewee claimed to have joined Frelimo at the beginning, but also stated that he was later allowed to go to Metangula because of his sick mother. There, according to his statement, he became navigator of a Portuguese fishing boat. In fact, though, he was chief navigator of a Portuguese military boat, and most probably had never joined Frelimo at the beginning. See: AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 066/MO: Relação do pessoal civil voluntário para receber instrução nas lanchas, n.d., 1. For another example, see P1453 (originally from Metangula) who claimed to have stayed with Frelimo until the end of the war. His colleague (P1102), though, claimed that they left Frelimo together and went to Malawi. See: PA, I095: interview with P1453 (♂, ~1947), P1506 (♀, ~1950) (Malango, January 28, 2016), min 00:45:22–00:46:18; PA, I056: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 00:40:40–00:47:20.

63 PA, I094: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M'chepe, January 27, 2016), min 00:38:51–00:38:59; PA, I117: interview with P1458 (♂, ~1945) (Micundi, April 20, 2016), min 00:33:52–00:36:56, 00:40:04–00:41:55; PA, I054: interview with P0554 (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:19:41–00:23:04; PA, I059: interview with P0090 (♀, ~1932) (Metangula, August 29, 2013), min 00:22:45–00:23:40.

64 For killings by Frelimo of alleged colonial collaborators, see: MLM, 003: interview with A. S., transcript Chinyanja (Micuiu, June 18, 2007), 8; APGGN, António Gonçalves Marques, "Situação política da área do Lago, e evolução dos acontecimentos a partir do dia um do Janeiro de 1965 até à presente data" (Augusto Cardoso, October 23, 1965), 2; AHMil, DIV/2/7/149/6: Batalhão de Caçadores 598. História de Unidade, n.d., 4; PA, I094: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M'chepe, January 27,

Nevertheless, I have little doubt that in this phase of the war many of Nkhlongue's inhabitants supported Frelimo willingly and readily. The motivations for this support are more difficult to determine in retrospect. It may seem obvious that many were against the racist system of colonialism. However, as has been shown in Chapter 5, previous resistance against colonialism had been limited. Moreover, it is noteworthy that many explained that they themselves had not had bad experiences with Portuguese colonialism, but that it was their parents and elders that told them how they had been exploited by the Portuguese.⁶⁵ This fits in with the local developments of colonialism described in Chapter 5, in which the hardships of colonialism were alleviated locally first by the reduced presence of the colonial state from the 1920s onward, and later by more liberal Portuguese "men on the spot." Still, previous experiences and the voices of the elders may have played an important role in people's reasoning to support Frelimo. One interviewee rationalized that even though *machiras* ("palanquins") were no longer in use in the 1960s, they had never forgotten them.⁶⁶

Support for Frelimo was not only a consequence of current and past exploitation, but also a product of expectations for the future. There is little doubt that many backed Frelimo because they hoped for a change for the better, especially in terms of the economic situation. Many blamed the Portuguese for the lack of employment opportunities and for the poverty in the country.⁶⁷

2016), min 00:29:50–00:32:01; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: PERINTREP N.º 91 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, September 13, 1965), 6. One of Messumba's local teachers was dragged out of his house at midnight and shot by Frelimo fighters on April 2, 1965, because of his sympathies for the Portuguese (he survived). See: Joan Antcliff, *Living in the Spirit* (Herefordshire: Orphans, 2004), 116; Paul, *Memoirs of a Revolution*, 115.

65 PA, I047: interview with P0596 (♂, ~1950) (Metangula, August 21, 2013), min 00:09:21–00:10:18; PA, I048: interview with P1446 (♂, ~1945) (Metangula, August 21, 2013), min 00:07:43–00:09:45; PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 01:49:24–01:50:40; PA, I087: interview with P1452 (♂, 1927) (Lichinga, September 10, 2013), min 00:26:52–00:29:02; PA, I125: interview with P1463 (♂, 1951) (Ngala, April 27, 2016), min 00:54:35–00:55:27.

66 PA, I118: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Malango, April 21, 2016), min 01:38:48–01:42:53. See as well: PA, I094: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M'chepe, January 27, 2016), min 00:33:13–00:33:56; PA, I119: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, April 21, 2016), min 01:32:07–01:32:43.

67 PA, I076: interview with P1449 (♂, ~1948) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:05:08–00:08:34; PA, I054: interview with P0554 (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:28:39–00:33:38; PA, I038: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:05:21–00:05:29. See as well: Litumbe, "Bishop Paulo Litumbe's Memoirs," 149. Note also the importance that the prominent Frelimo veteran Osvaldo Tazama has attributed to the lack of employment opportunities as a reason for his support for the nationalist cause: Osvaldo Tazama, "Osvaldo Assahel Tazama," in *Protagonistas da Luta de Libertação Nacional*, ed. Ana Bouene Mussanhane (Maputo: Marimbique, 2012), 618–19.

The reasoning to support Frelimo was probably also not only based on experiences made inside Mozambique but also outside. For the people living in Nkhlongue, the main reference point had always been Nyasaland. While they regarded the Portuguese side as a place of poverty, the British side of the lake was seen as the place to get employment and goods. One interviewee who joined Frelimo explicitly stated that they wanted to follow the example of Nyasaland, which had gained its independence in 1964.⁶⁸ It can also be noted that most of those who entered Frelimo had been to South Africa working in the mines before.⁶⁹

Statements like “we wanted our country” or “we wanted to save our country” were often made in the interviews.⁷⁰ This points to the fact that people indeed wanted to overthrow the system of colonialism. However, alternative visions of independence might have locally been as attractive and imaginable as Mozambican nationalism. In other words, one should be cautious in expecting that most people necessarily identified “our country” as Mozambique at that time.⁷¹

Regardless of the exact motives, it can be said that the example of Nkhlongue is hardly consistent with liberation narratives, which assume that the deterioration of the colonial situation and exploitation eventually escalated into armed struggle. Such a revolutionary teleology can hardly be observed in this case.⁷² In general, it can be said that the regional followers of Frelimo included many of those who had previously helped sustain the colonial state.⁷³

68 PA, I038: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:01:42–00:08:12.

69 PA, I038: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:13:18–00:13:28; PA, I056: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932) (Malango, August 28, 2013), 00:00:49–00:01:15; PA, I082: interview with P1141 (♂, 1932) (Malango, September 8, 2013), min 00:12:26–00:18:59; PA, I087: interview with P1452 (♂, 1927) (Lichinga, September 10, 2013), min 00:22:13–00:26:52.

70 PA, I123: interview with P1460 (♀), P1461 (♂, ~1935), P1462 (♂, ~1935) (Meluluca, April 25, 2016), min 01:28:39–01:29:29; PA, I157: interview with P1455 (♂, 1952) (Tulo, June 18, 2016), min 00:17:33–00:17:54; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:09:57–00:10:10; PA, I118: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Malango, April 21, 2016), min 01:38:48–01:39:29; PA, I049: interview with P0267 (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 23, 2013), min 00:31:17–00:33:12; PA, I117: interview with P1458 (♂, ~1945) (Micundi, April 20, 2016), min 00:35:16–00:35:40.

71 On this point, see as well: Milton Correia, “História e textualização: A historiografia da frente do Niassa (Moçambique) 1964–1974,” *Revista de História*, no. 178 (2019): 6.

72 Isaacman et al. have for example claimed that there was a direct link between cotton resisters and Frelimo in the Maniamba region. This seems doubtful, especially in light of what has been said in Chapter 5. For the claim, see: Isaacman et al., “‘Cotton Is the Mother of Poverty’: Peasant Resistance to Forced Cotton Production in Mozambique, 1938–1961,” 614–15.

73 They included many chiefs and also family members of *cipaíes*. See Footnote 60 and: Katto, “Grandma Was a Guerrilla Fighter,” 76, 109, 183.

Portuguese reports from the initial phase of the war reveal plainly that Frelimo had the momentum on its side. The Portuguese forces were rapidly losing control over the region and its population. In mid-1965, entire communities began to “disappear” seeking refuge in the forests.⁷⁴ On August 24, 1965, almost all inhabitants of Metangula ran away when the Portuguese forces moved out to pursue a group of five Frelimo fighters who had allegedly tried to “kidnap” some local employees of the navy base.⁷⁵ The Portuguese loss of control over the area was so extensive that the Portuguese military reported in October 1965 that “[t]he entire area of the Lago District is infested by subversion. Almost the entire population has taken refuge in the bush and is explicitly helping the terrorists.”⁷⁶

This development is confirmed by my interviews, even if in the case of Nkholongue not everyone left the village. Furthermore, the movement patterns were not uniform. While most of those who had left the village claimed to have settled near Frelimo bases,⁷⁷ others seem to have tried to avoid both Frelimo and the Portuguese.⁷⁸ Both statements from my interviews and written sources show that Frelimo took advantage of people’s fear of the Portuguese forces to persuade them to leave their villages.⁷⁹ People had every reason to fear the Portuguese forces, as the

74 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: PERINTREP N.º 77 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, June 7, 1965), 1; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: Anexo “B” (Contra-Informação) ao PERINTREP N.º 88 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, August 23, 1965), 2.

75 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: PERINTREP N.º 89 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, August 30, 1965), 5; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: Anexo “C” (Contra-Informação) ao PERINTREP N.º 89 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, August 30, 1965), 1; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: Anexo “C” (Contra-Informação) ao PERINTREP N.º 91 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, September 13, 1965), 3. Later investigations of the incident pointed to the fact that Frelimo’s fighters had incited the population to leave. See: ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), proc. 4276, NT 7336, pt. 1, f. 39–40: PIDE Subdelegação VC, “Auto de Perguntas: Anafi Bonomar” (Vila Cabral, January 28, 1966); ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), proc. 4276, NT 7336, pt. 1, f. 41–43: PIDE Subdelegação VC, “Auto de Perguntas: Saide Adamo” (Vila Cabral, January 28, 1966); ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), proc. 4276, NT 7336, pt. 1, f. 44–47: PIDE Subdelegação VC, “Auto de Perguntas: Momade Lezuani” (Vila Cabral, January 28, 1966).

76 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: Anexo “C” (Contra-Informação) ao PERINTREP N.º 94 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, October 4, 1965), 2.

77 PA, I042: interview with P1193 (♀, 1953) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:27:35–00:32:14; PA, I054: interview with P0554 (♀, 1949) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:07:47–00:11:47; PA, I062: interview with P0713 (♂, 1944) (Nkholongue, August 30, 2013), min 00:19:56–00:22:24; PA, I052: interview with (♀, 1940) (Nkholongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:19:15–00:20:45.

78 PA, I093: interview with P0050 (♂, ~1922) (Nkholongue, January 19, 2016), min 01:32:08–01:32:49; PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:08:00–00:10:38.

79 PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:05:19–00:05:47; PA, I052: interview with (♀, 1940) (Nkholongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:19:15–00:20:45; ANTT, SCCIM N.º 1947: Situação no Distrito do Niassa de 1 a 15 de Setembro de 1965, 22.

latter had reacted to the appearance of Frelimo in a highly repressive manner. In the first months, some villages who had lent support to the nationalists were simply razed to the ground.⁸⁰ Around Messumba, the Portuguese secret police PIDE arrested 350 persons on a single morning in July 1965.⁸¹ The same month, the Portuguese forces threatened the population of Metangula during public gatherings with collective reprisals if mines continued to be deployed on the roads. The population was urged to abandon its passivity and take active action against Frelimo.⁸² However, Portuguese repression primarily affected the area from Metangula to the north. This included the areas where Frelimo had been most active, but also the areas that were predominantly Christian and more easily accessible by road.⁸³

Most people who had left their villages in mid-1965 to live in the forests did not stay there for long, mainly because they had great difficulties finding food.⁸⁴ In November 1965, shortly before the beginning of the rainy season, many people began to return to the Portuguese sphere of influence. Metangula received 500 returnees within a week, and Messumba was crowded with 6,000 refugees, many more than had previously lived there.⁸⁵ Also in the case of Nkhlongue, many people returned to the village after a short absence. They explained this citing the precarious living

80 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: PERINTREP N.º 73 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, May 10, 1965); Antcliff, *Living in the Spirit*, 113; Paul, *Memoirs of a Revolution*, 119–20.

81 Paul, *Memoirs of a Revolution*, 125, 152–54. For the records of the interrogation of some of these, see: ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), proc. 4276, NT 7336, pt. 2, f. 260–389.

82 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: Anexo “B” (Contra-Informação) ao PERINTREP N.º 83 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, July 19, 1965), 2.

83 The latter applies above all to the operations of PIDE, which focused primarily on the social environment of the Anglican mission of Messumba. See the numerous records of interrogation files under: ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), proc. 4276, NT 7336, pt. 1–3; ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), proc. 4276, NT 7337, pt. 4–7.

84 For the problems that people had in the forests, see especially: ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: Anexo “B” (Contra-Informação) ao PERINTREP N.º 86 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, August 9, 1965), 2; PA, I043: interview with P1148 (♂, 1960) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:03:12–00:12:00; PA, I049: interview with P0267 (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 23, 2013), min 00:11:00–00:29:42. P1148 lived near Nova Coimbra at the beginning of the war, and P0267 near Bandeze. They both fled into the forests after the outbreak of the war, living there in very difficult conditions. P0267 was pregnant and sick at the time.

85 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/57: PERINTREP N.º 01 (Nampula: COMZIN/2a REP, November 22, 1965), 14; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/57: PERINTREP N.º 03 (Nampula: COMZIN/2a REP, December 6, 1965), 18–19; Luís S. de Baêna, *Fuzileiros: Factos e feitos na guerra de África. 1961/1974*, vol. 4: Crónica dos feitos de Moçambique (Lisboa: INAPA, 2006), 41.

conditions they had encountered in the forest and the hunger they had suffered there.⁸⁶

The fact that so many sought refuge in Messumba, the center of the Anglican Church, rather than in their former villages or Metangula, shows that their return should not be interpreted as a sign of growing confidence in the Portuguese forces. The latter were aware of their unpopularity and their inquiries into why people had originally fled revealed that most of them—partly instigated by Frelimo—had feared being attacked by the Portuguese forces.⁸⁷ The Portuguese commander of the navy base in Metangula described the situation as follows:

The fact that the people have returned to the villages does not mean that they are on our side now; they have simply fled from hunger and rain to the side that is stronger at the moment.⁸⁸

To counter the problem of their unpopularity, the Portuguese forces now began to apply their resettlement policy. Already in October 1965, the Portuguese Navy issued an internal guide explaining how people were to be regrouped and resettled in *aldeamentos*.⁸⁹

Nkholongue was to become one of the first villages to be resettled, namely on May 30, 1966. The Portuguese forces had encircled Malango at night (at 4.30 a.m. according to the Portuguese military report describing the mission). It was only when the people woke up and came out of their houses that they saw the soldiers. They were directed to the beach where in the meantime the administrative forces had arrived by boat. At the beach, people were told to pack all their belongings as they would be taken to Metangula to live there. Within one day, the Portuguese

⁸⁶ PA, I062: interview with P0713 (♂, 1944) (Nkholongue, August 30, 2013), min 00:19:56–00:23:11; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:05:19–00:05:59; PA, I054: interview with P0554 (♀, 1949) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:19:18–00:19:31 and 00:24:41–00:24:54; PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:08:51–00:10:02. For these problems in the region as a whole, see: ADN, FO/F002/SC002/38: Anexo “B” (Contra-Informação) ao PERINTREP N.º 86 (Lourenço Marques: QG/RMM/2a REP, August 9, 1965), 2; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/57: PERINTREP N.º 03 (Nampula: COMZIN/2a REP, December 6, 1965), 18.

⁸⁷ ANTT, SCCIM N.º 16 (folhas 142–146): Administração da Circunscrição do Lago, “Resposta ao questionário referido na Nota N.º 211/A/13 ao Gabinete de Informações do Governo do Distrito do Niassa” (Maniamba, May 31, 1966), 1.

⁸⁸ AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 032/MO: Sérgio Zilhão, “Análise dos acontecimentos do Niassa,” Confidencial (Metangula, February 10, 1966), 4.

⁸⁹ AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 045/MO: Comando Naval de Moçambique, “IOMOC 16: Instruções Operacionais para protecção, recuperação e internamento de populações,” Confidencial (Lourenço Marques, October 28, 1965). See as well: AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 032/MO: Sérgio Zilhão, “Análise dos acontecimentos do Niassa,” Confidencial (Metangula, February 10, 1966), 5.

Navy transported the 329 inhabitants of Malango by boat to Metangula.⁹⁰ There was little or no resistance against this order. Various interviewees told me explicitly that they were not thinking about an escape on that day, since they had already seen the difficult life of the forests.⁹¹ Moreover, the people who still lived at the old site of Nkholongue were not encircled the same way and later joined the others when they heard about the order to go to Metangula.⁹²

But the fact that there was no direct resistance does not mean that everyone was convinced of the plan. Indeed, the Portuguese intelligence report mentions that one woman and one man tried to escape when they surrounded the village.⁹³ Furthermore, as will be shown below, some people stated that they fled the *aldeamento* after their resettlement. People's reluctance is also apparent in the reaction of other people living further south. Among them was the group of villagers who had migrated from Nkholongue to M'chepa in the 1950s. Most of them fled to Malawi, apparently as a reaction to the resettlement of the people further north:

We just heard that they had taken the people in Malango and that they had taken the people in Nkholongue. So, we lived there [in M'chepa]. It was when we saw that they took the people in Micundi that we thought: "epa, we can't stay. Let's go." We woke up at night and set out on our journey.⁹⁴

That not all people were willing to go to the *aldeamentos* is also suggested by the significant under-representation of men among the resettled. According to the Portuguese report concerning Nkholongue's resettlement, the number of the resettled

90 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/117: Anexo "A" (Dispositivo e Actividade das F. Navais na ZIN) ao SITREP Circunstanciado N° 23/66 (Nampula, June 6, 1966), 6–7; PA, I073: interview with P1012 (♂, 1955) (Malango, September 5, 2013), min 00:02:25–00:08:15; PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:36:00–00:43:32; PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 00:13:35–00:14:37.

91 PA, I062: interview with P0713 (♂, 1944) (Nkholongue, August 30, 2013), min 00:22:24–00:23:11; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:09:47–00:10:55; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:07:44–00:08:14.

92 PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:07:56–00:08:14.

93 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/117: Anexo "A" (Dispositivo e Actividade das F. Navais na ZIN) ao SITREP Circunstanciado N° 23/66 (Nampula, June 6, 1966), 7.

94 PA, I100: interview with P0025 (♀, 1948) (Nkholongue, February 22, 2016), min 00:00:28–00:01:20. Another woman, who was living with her husband in Meluluca at the time, also reported that they fled to Malawi after the population of Malango and Ngolocolo had been brought to Metangula. See: PA, I057: interview with P0262 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 01:17:07–01:21:54.

comprised 122 women, 152 children, and only 55 men.⁹⁵ This means that for every 100 adult women there were only 45 adult men. We have already seen in the previous chapter that the unevenness of the sex ratio had already been the pre-war standard due to the widespread male labor migration to Nyasaland and South Africa. However, if one looks at the pre-war statistics for the P.A. Metangula, there were after all 65 adult men for every 100 adult women in 1958 and 69 adult men for every 100 adult women in 1960. One can think of three explanations for this increased under-representation of men. First, more men than women joined Frelimo as fighters. Second, we can assume that men may have deliberately reduced their age because they were afraid of being recruited by the Portuguese armed forces.⁹⁶ And third, we can assume that more men than women fled the country for the same reason.

Once people arrived in Metangula, they had to stay on the premises of the navy base for the first night. On the second day, those who had relatives or family in Metangula were told to go there, while the others could stay longer at the navy base. In the following days, the resettled began building their own houses. The Portuguese forces supported them by transporting building materials from the forests to the *aldeamento*.⁹⁷ It is noteworthy that the state authorities did not intervene very strongly in the organization of life in the *aldeamento*, at least not at first. Even the land for the fields was not allocated by the government. Rather this

95 ADN, FO/F002/SC002/117: Anexo “A” (Dispositivo e Actividade das F. Navais na ZIN) ao SITREP Circunstanciado N° 23/66 (Nampula, June 6, 1966), 7.

96 This is indicated by the changes of the sex ratio in the *aldeamentos* of the administrative post of Metangula in the course of the war. In 1967, there were only 53 adult men for every 100 adult women. In 1971, however, this ratio was 73 to 100 and at the same time the ratio of underage men to underage women had shrunk from 103:100 to 80:100. This may be attributed to the fact that the fear of forced recruitment had vanished and that young men were more likely to (re-) raise their age in order to obtain employment. For the statistical data, see: ANTT, SCCIM N.° 1639 (folha 49): Mapa Geral dos Aldeamentos em 31.7.1967 (Augusto Cardoso, August 12, 1967); AHM, ISANI, cx. 99: Mário Freiria, “Relatório da Inspeção Ordinária à Circunscrição do Lago 1971” (Vila Cabral, July 4, 1971), 3.

97 PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 00:15:30–00:16:13; PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:16:14–00:18:13; PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:42:30–00:46:05; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:08:35–00:10:48; PA, I075: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:21:02–00:26:22; PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkhlongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:00:00–00:01:30.

was done “among us,” as many interviewees put it. The newcomers had to ask Metangula’s original population for land.⁹⁸

The *aldeamento* was surrounded by a barbed wire fence. Both the fields and the forest (as a source of firewood and construction material) were outside this fence. All inhabitants of the *aldeamento* were given an identity card which they had to show when leaving and entering the *aldeamento*. Before sunset, everyone had to return there.⁹⁹ But especially in the beginning, the control was not very strict. In November 1966, for example, a Portuguese navy unit discovered a group of women collecting food at some distance from the *aldeamento* “without escort and protection.” The report of the unit stated that “despite the fencing with barbed wire, the population of the *aldeamento* of A. Cardoso continues to leave the *aldeamento* dangerously without escort.”¹⁰⁰ Several people were also able to flee from Metangula after their resettlement. One of the more prominent fugitives was Chingomanje V, the chief of Nkholongue. If we follow the statements from the interviews, he had been imprisoned for a short time after the resettlement because the village was suspected of having lent support to Frelimo. After his release, he fled to Malawi.¹⁰¹

98 PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 00:56:08–00:56:51; PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:18:32–00:19:17; PA, I042: interview with P1193 (♀, 1953) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:18:41–00:19:38; PA, I047: interview with P0596 (♂, ~1950) (Metangula, August 21, 2013), min 00:16:39–00:17:44; PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 01:54:23–01:55:05; PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkholongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:11:47–00:12:38; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:11:41–00:11:56.

99 PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:10:48–00:14:23; PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 01:52:57–01:54:43; PA, I069: interview with P0650 (♀, 1939) (Nkholongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:14:03–00:15:58; PA, I073: interview with P1012 (♂, 1955) (Malango, September 5, 2013), min 00:21:29–00:25:08.

100 AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 303/MO: José Teixeira, “Relatório de Operações N° 32 (Operação ‘Chavedouro’), de 210650 a 211700 Novembro de 1966” (Metangula: DFE 5, n.d.). For a similar incident, see: ANTT, SCCIM N.° 1639 (folha 219): Carlos Mesquita, “Relatório N.° 22/67” (Comando Naval de Moçambique. Serviço de Informações Militares, March 10, 1967).

101 The chief was, later, followed by two of his daughters. See: PA, I041: interview with P0951 (♀, 1948), P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:21:07–00:30:18; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkholongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:29:46–00:32:59; PA, I042: interview with P1193 (♀, 1953) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:12:18–00:13:48. For other people who indicated to have fled after the resettlement to Malawi: PA, I133: interview with P1473 (♂ ~1938), P1504 (♀) (Limbi, June 1, 2016), min 00:10:46–00:15:15, 01:03:57–01:07:33; PA, I130: interview with P1472 (♀, ~1955) (Mangochi, May 29, 2016), min 00:04:28–00:07:45. For those who indicated to have done so to Tanzania: PA, I041: interview with P0951 (♀, 1948), P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:21:07–00:24:30, 00:25:48–00:30:18. Another interviewee indicated that she fled from Metangula, but later returned to the *aldeamento* because of the difficult life she encountered

But, in general, escapes from the *aldeamento* were not very numerous and seem to have completely stopped in the course of the war. The main reason for this decrease in escapes was not necessarily the enforcement of control, but rather the Portuguese scorched earth policy outside the *aldeamentos* and the comparatively “good” life that people found in the *aldeamento* of Metangula.

The Portuguese Scorched Earth Policy: Starving the Insurgents

It has already been mentioned that the actions of the Portuguese forces against suspected Frelimo supporters were extremely repressive at the beginning of the war. In the course of the conflict, the classification of who was a Frelimo supporter was increasingly determined by his or her dwelling place. All those who lived outside the *aldeamentos* were considered possible enemies. Accordingly, the Portuguese forces began to systematically destroy everything they found outside the *aldeamentos*. Houses and huts were burned down. Food was either destroyed or removed. Crops were harvested or uprooted. This way, life outside the *aldeamentos* was to be made unbearable, the people starved and thus forced to go to the *aldeamentos* themselves.¹⁰² This strategy was described as follows in the operational instructions of an infantry battalion stationed in Metangula from March 1967 to February 1968:

As a first priority and in coordination with the forces of the navy, continue with the destruction of the enemy camps [...] and create insecurity among the refugee population by gradually depriving them of their means of living.¹⁰³

It is noteworthy that many military and secret service reports specifically recorded the destruction of infrastructure belonging to civilians in contrast to infrastructure belonging to “proper” combatants.¹⁰⁴ The summary of the “positive results” of the navy unit DFE 6, for example, reads as follows:

outside: PA, I051: interview with P0481 (♀, 1942) (Nkholongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:21:50 – 00:24:47, 00:26:06 – 00:32:24.

102 For examples, see: ADN, FO/F002/SC002/57: PERINTREP N.º 16 (Nampula: COMZIN/2a REP, March 7, 1966), 7; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/57: PERINTREP N.º 17 (Nampula: COMZIN/2a REP, March 14, 1966), 4 and 9; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/57: PERINTREP N.º 19 (Nampula: COMZIN/2a REP, March 28, 1966), 9; ADN, FO/F002/SC002/57: PERINTREP N.º 34 (Nampula: COMZIN/2a REP, July 11, 1966), 7.

103 AHMil, DIV/2/7/79/1: Batalhão de Caçadores 1891. História de Unidade (Vila Junqueiro, August 8, 1968), II–85.

104 For an example, see: AHMil, DIV/2/7/150/3: Batalhão de Cavalaria 1879. História de Unidade (Vila Junqueiro, February 1968), II/3-II/5.

g. Destroyed encampments

- (1) TQ [*tipo quartel* ('barracks-like')] 7
 (2) PF [*população fugida* ('refugee population')] 18
 (3) SC [*sem classificação* ('without classification')] 10¹⁰⁵

Some reports even explicitly mention the killing of civilians, such as the summary of the “positive results” of the navy unit DFE 8 (stationed in Mozambique from 1966 to 1968), which lists not only 35 “guerrillas killed in combat,” but also 26 members of the “population killed in combat.”¹⁰⁶

Most of Nkholongue’s inhabitants were only indirectly affected by this destruction policy as most of them were resettled comparatively early in the course of the war, at a time when the Portuguese scorched earth policy had not yet been applied as systematically as later. So it was only a minority of Nkholongue’s current inhabitants who recounted how they had to hide from the Portuguese aircrafts and cook at night to avoid being discovered. One of them was a woman who had been living on Niassa’s *planalto* at the outbreak of the war.¹⁰⁷ Another was one who claimed she had escaped from Metangula to the forests after the resettlement.¹⁰⁸ None of Nkholongue’s inhabitants seems to have been captured by Portuguese troops while they were in the forests. Those non-combatants who had not been resettled or not fled in the first place eventually all left the forests and fled either abroad or to one of the *aldeamentos*.¹⁰⁹ The majority of the men from Nkholongue who had joined Frelimo as fighters deserted during the first years of the war.¹¹⁰ Only in two cases is it credible that they remained with Frelimo until the end of the war.¹¹¹

While most of Nkholongue’s inhabitants had only limited direct experience with the Portuguese scorched earth policy, there is little doubt that people’s knowledge of it contributed to the fact they did not leave the *aldeamento* once they were

105 AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 054/MO: Henrique Vasconcelos, “Resumo Histórico da Comissão do DFE 6” (Nampula, August 19, 1970).

106 AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 058/MO: João Bastos, “Relatório de Comissão DFE N. 8,” n.d., 11.

107 PA, I049: interview with P0267 (♀, 1949) (Nkholongue, August 23, 2013), min 00:12:06–00:15:55, 00:22:20–00:31:17.

108 PA, I051: interview with P0481 (♀, 1942) (Nkholongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:26:06–00:38:27.

109 This also includes the following interviewee, who lived at Mtucula when the war broke out: PA, I043: interview with P1148 (♂, 1960) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:03:12–00:15:12.

110 PA, I056: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 00:40:40–00:47:20; PA, I038: interview with P1439 (♂, ~1940) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:21:09–00:25:08; PA, I158: interview with P0764 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, June 20, 2016), min 00:07:05–00:08:21, 00:37:52–00:38:23; PA, I065: interview with P0583 (♂, 1972) (Nkholongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:04:12–00:06:47.

111 PA, I087: interview with P1452 (♂, 1927) (Lichinga, September 10, 2013), min 00:38:12–00:38:45; PA, I105: interview with P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, April 4, 2016), min 01:19:45–01:27:48.

there. But, in the case of the *aldeamento* of Metangula, there was an even more important reason that kept people in the *aldeamento*: the good living conditions.

“Finding Peace” in the *Aldeamento* of Metangula

To my own initial surprise, most of those who were resettled to Metangula and stayed there during the war spoke positively about life in the *aldeamento*.¹¹² Most of my interviewees perceived the barbed wire as a protective rather than a controlling element.¹¹³

Food security was the prerequisite for the positive assessment of life in the *aldeamento*. Subsistence-oriented peasants (for a critical appraisal of this term, see Chapter 6) like those of Nkhlongue have a fundamental problem when they migrate. Either they still have access to their old fields at their new location, or they can take their old harvest with them to it, or they need an alternative source of food until their fields at their new location have yielded something. It was precisely this problem that made life difficult for those who had left the villages at the beginning of the war, and this problem was further exacerbated by the Portuguese forces with their scorched earth policy.

112 PA, I093: interview with P0050 (♂, ~1922) (Nkhlongue, January 19, 2016), min 01:45:44–01:45:58; PA, I156: interview with P1478 (♀) (Metangula, June 18, 2016), min 00:23:02–00:23:45; PA, I150: interview with P1483 (♀, 1950), P1481 (♂, 1954) (Lussefa, June 15, 2016), min 00:20:33–00:21:49; PA, I051: interview with P0481 (♀, 1942) (Nkhlongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:59:25–01:00:53; PA, I080: interview with P0641 (♂, 1952) (Nkhlongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:12:08–00:13:02; PA, I062: interview with P0713 (♂, 1944) (Nkhlongue, August 30, 2013), min 00:36:01–00:37:24; PA, I073: interview with P1012 (♂, 1955) (Malango, September 5, 2013), min 00:17:21–00:17:48; PA, I069: interview with P0650 (♀, 1939) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:17:17–00:20:50.

113 PA, I044: interview with P1081 (♀, 1945) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 0:18:13–00:19:20; PA, I047: interview with P0596 (♂, ~1950) (Metangula, August 21, 2013), min 00:17:44–00:18:08; PA, I049: interview with P0267 (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 23, 2013), min 00:56:15–00:57:32; PA, I051: interview with P0481 (♀, 1942) (Nkhlongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:58:09–00:59:25; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:44:53–00:47:00; PA, I069: interview with P0650 (♀, 1939) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:14:03–00:15:38; PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:04:00–00:04:49; PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:48:14–00:48:36; PA, I062: interview with P0713 (♂, 1944) (Nkhlongue, August 30, 2013), min 00:30:21–00:31:53; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:13:53–00:14:23; PA, I066: interview with P0085 (♂, 1960) (Nkhlongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:55:09–00:56:47.

In the case of the resettlement of Nkhlongue's population, this problem was mitigated in two ways. First, the Portuguese navy brought the people back to the village several times to harvest their fields.¹¹⁴ Second, the Portuguese administration distributed food at the beginning.¹¹⁵ In the long run, almost all people were able to receive fairly fertile fields located on the plains around the mouth of the Luchemanje River. Furthermore, dependence on food subsistence production decreased significantly in the *aldeamento*.

In Metangula, the war and the sudden rise of the presence of the colonial state created many income possibilities. In 1958, there had only been two Europeans living in Metangula.¹¹⁶ This number increased significantly in the years that followed. For the Lago District as a whole, the number of European civilians tripled between 1960 and 1971, from 41 to 129.¹¹⁷ In addition, the war led to the stationing of about 600 soldiers in the district, most of whom were of metropolitan origin.¹¹⁸ This

114 This was done on June 2, June 26, August 25/26, September 2/3, and December 10, 1966. See: ADN, FO/F002/SC002/117: Anexo "A" (Dispositivo e Actividade das F. Navais na ZIN) ao SITREP Circunstanciado N° 23/66 (Nampula, June 6, 1966), 7; AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 058/MO: Relatório da Companhia N° 6 de Fuzileiros, referente à comissão em Moçambique desde 19 de Março de 1965 a 18 de Maio de 1967, n.d., chap. III, 3–5; AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 156/MO: Anexo "A" (Dispositivo e Actividade das F. Navais na ZIN) ao SITREP Circunstanciado N° 35/66 (Nampula, August 29, 1966), 4; AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 156/MO: Anexo "A" (Dispositivo e Actividade das F. Navais na ZIN) ao SITREP Circunstanciado N° 36/66 (Nampula, September 5, 1966), 2, 4; AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 156/MO: Anexo "A" (Dispositivo e Actividade das F. Navais na ZIN) ao SITREP Circunstanciado N° 50/66 (Nampula, December 12, 1966), 2; PA, I109: interview with P1081 (♀, 1945) (Malango, April 6, 2016), min 00:13:39–00:15:23; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:35:35–00:37:13; PA, I001: interview with P0050 (♂, ~1922) (Nkhlongue, August 17, 2010), min 01:34:08–01:34:28.

115 PA, I001: interview with P0050 (♂, ~1922) (Nkhlongue, August 17, 2010), min 01:33:43–01:35:12; PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 00:15:30–00:16:22; PA, I075: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), 00:21:02–00:26:22; PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:15:28–00:17:00.

116 Paul, *Memoirs of a Revolution*, 27.

117 The boundaries of the district changed during these years. The figure given for 1960 refers to the district in the boundaries of 1971. See: AHM, S.E. a.I p. 5 no. 7i: III Recenseamento Geral da População na Província de Moçambique (1960), Vol. 9: Distrito do Niassa (Lourenço Marques: Direcção Provincial dos Serviços da Estatística, 1969), 20; AHM, ISANI, cx. 99: Mário Freiria, "Relatório da Inspecção Ordinária à Circunscrição do Lago 1971" (Vila Cabral, July 4, 1971), 3.

118 In 1969, for example, there was 1 *Batalhão de Artilharia* (360 men), 2 *Destacamentos de Fuzileiros* (80 men each), and 1 *Companhia de Fuzileiros* (120 men) stationed in the area of the district. See: AHMil, FO/63/7/938/3: J. F. Gravito, "Estudo da Situação N° 01 DO SECTOR "A" DA R.M.M." (Vila Cabral, 1969), 95–96; Comissão para o Estudo das Campanhas de África (CECA), *Resenha histórico-militar das campanhas de África, Vol. 4: Dispositivo das nossas forças Moçambique* (Lisboa: Estado-Maior do Exército, 1989), 256 and 260; Baêna, *Factos e feitos na Guerra*, 4: Crónica dos feitos de Mo-

growing European presence produced a lot of jobs as people were needed to cook and to do the laundry, while the military employed men for the maintenance of its infrastructure or as guides for its troops. Others were employed by private businesses such as stores and restaurants.¹¹⁹ Prostitution and prostitution-like relationships were widespread.¹²⁰ In 1969, Metangula's military and administrative apparatus was said to provide permanent employment for about 400 people from the local population.¹²¹ This was a huge number considering the population of the *aldeamento* of approximately 3,400 (half of them children), even if the employees also came from other nearby *aldeamentos*.¹²² One interviewee described this development as follows:

It was when people were brought [to Metangula] that they started to recover, that they started to know the money. For, in Metangula, many, in order to eat, entered the jobs of the whites to make the jobs there. And what we now suddenly saw was the movement of money.¹²³

çambique, 150–162. For the standard size of the units, see: Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa*, 71–73; Cann, *Brown Waters of Africa*, 94–95.

119 PA, I047: interview with P0596 (♂, ~1950) (Metangula, August 21, 2013), min 00:20:29–00:23:03; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:18:21–00:19:46; PA, I076: interview with P1449 (♂, ~1948) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:19:20–00:20:13; PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 00:21:36–00:22:42; PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:54:02–00:55:19; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkholongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:41:00–00:44:35; PA, I148: interview with P1500 (♂, ~1946) (Bandeze, June 10, 2016), min 00:06:13–00:06:42.

120 Opinions of interviewees on how to assess relationships between Portuguese soldiers and local women vary widely. Two of my interviewees (a couple), who lived in Lichinga at the beginning of the war, left Lichinga for Metangula, because they were against the relationship that their daughter had with a Portuguese soldier. Another (female) interviewee regretted, however, that the Portuguese soldiers had not stayed longer, as otherwise all the women today would have children by them. She would have welcomed this, obviously because she saw in it an appropriate path for social advancement. See: PA, I112: interview with P0129 (♀, 1930), P0128 (♂, 1928) (Nkholongue, April 12, 2016), min 01:48:24–01:58:13; PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 01:04:24–01:15:12. For prostitution in the *aldeamento* of Metangula, see as well: APGGN, QJ: Correspondência Confidencial N.º 39/C/GAB: A. Reis Fernandes (Administração de Circunscrição de Lago) ao Comandante do Batalhão de Artilharia 2838 (Augusto Cardoso, January 17, 1969).

121 APGGN, QJ: Correspondência Confidencial N.º 39/C/GAB: A. Reis Fernandes (Administração de Circunscrição de Lago) ao Comandante do Batalhão de Artilharia 2838 (Augusto Cardoso, January 17, 1969).

122 ANTT, SCCIM N.º 1638 (folhas 376–381): Dispositivo das Forças Administrativas em 31 de Março de 1969, n.d.

123 PA, I105: interview with P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, April 4, 2016), min 00:55:49–00:57:20.

This sudden “movement of money” was welcomed by most people, also because it enabled them to buy such products as salt, soap, or clothes in comparatively large quantities. For even though Metangula was located in the middle of the war zone, there were never any supply shortages, and due to the growing European presence, the supply of consumer goods did not decrease in the course of the war but increased. Several interviewees highlighted the low prices, and two of them even recounted that things like soap were just lying around on the beach.¹²⁴ One interviewee stated:

After we had arrived in Metangula, there was no shortage whatsoever anymore.¹²⁵

And one who was still a child at the time commented:

We had everything, almost to the point of throwing it away.¹²⁶

Such idealizations should be interpreted with caution, since it was precisely goods such as salt, soap, or clothes that disappeared from the market after independence (see Chapter 8). However, the evidence leaves little doubt that a considerable part of Nkhlongue’s population perceived a significant increase in their material standard of living during the time in the *aldeamento*. It is noteworthy that it is the oral perspective that allows such an assessment, Portuguese sources were often more self-critical about the situation.¹²⁷

The local improvement of the war situation for non-combatants is also apparent in the fact that several people who had fled to Malawi at the beginning of the

124 PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 01:06:06–01:10:15; PA, I156: interview with P1478 (♀) (Metangula, June 18, 2016), min 00:23:02–00:24:13; PA, I099: interview with P1420 (♂, ~1922) (Ngongo, February 16, 2016), min 01:01:24–01:01:53; PA, I069: interview with P0650 (♀, 1939) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:19:06–00:20:45. For soap lying around on the beach, see: PA, I060: interview with P0331 (♀, ~1948), no audio (Metangula, August 29, 2013); PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 02:00:53–02:01:48.

125 PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:13:34–00:13:35.

126 PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:06:06–00:06:22.

127 For examples, see: AHMIL, DIV/2/7/55/4: Batalhão de Caçadores 2906. História de Unidade, n.d., II–52; APGGN, QJ: Correspondência Confidencial N.º 39/C/GAB: A. Reis Fernandes (Administração de Circunscrição de Lago) ao Comandante do Batalhão de Artilharia 2838 (Augusto Cardoso, January 17, 1969); APGGN, QJ: Nuno Egídio ao Administrador da Circunscrição do Lago, “N.º 245/C/GAB: Construções do edifício geminado para funcionários e ampliação da secretaria / reestruturação do aldeamento da Sede,” July 28, 1969.

war returned to Metangula while the war was still going on.¹²⁸ Others planned it. In April 1974, shortly before the Carnation Revolution, the Portuguese authorities received a letter from people who had fled from Nkholongue to Malawi after the outbreak of the war. In the letter, the refugees declared their willingness to return to Mozambique if they were allowed to live at the former location of their village.¹²⁹ The Portuguese forces also assessed the situation in the *aldeamento* of Metangula as so relaxed that they saw no reason for imposing restrictions on people to travel to Malawi for visits.¹³⁰ Thus, one interviewee traveled to and from Nkhotakota during the war to visit his second family.¹³¹

Most interviewees described the relationship with the Portuguese as “good.”¹³² People as a rule denied that the high military and police presence caused particular problems.¹³³ Similarly, negative changes in their everyday lives were usually either denied or played down, and the *aldeamento* was associated with the place “where they found peace,” or “forgot about the war.”¹³⁴ While some “forgot

128 PA, I006: interview with P1480 (♂, 1947) (Nkholongue, August 30, 2010), min 00:25:40–00:28:14; PA, I077: interview with P1489 (♂) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:04:31–00:11:34.

129 ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), GU, cx. 10 (NT 7950), f. 30–31: DGS/SUBVC, “Relatório Imediato N.º 2177/74/DI/2/SC” (Vila Cabral, April 17, 1974). Their desire to live at the former location of the village must also be understood in the context of the decentralization of the *aldeamentos* that was taking place at the time. The *aldeamento* of Mondué, for example, had just been opened in early 1974. See: ANTT, SCCIM N.º 1641 (folhas 2–5): Aldeias existentes no Niassa – MAR74 (Vila Cabral, March 23, 1974), 1; APGGN, 1 A: Mapa do Movimento da População da Circunscrição do Lago, Janeiro 1974 (Augusto Cardoso, February 8, 1974); APGGN, 1 A: Mapa do Movimento da População da Circunscrição do Lago, Abril 1974 (Augusto Cardoso, May 5, 1974). Others were still planned: APGGN, QJ: José Guardado Moreira, “IV Plano de Fomento: Ficha Anual de Projecto, 1974” (Vila Cabral, April 22, 1974). 130 APGGN, QJ: Correspondência Confidencial N.º 294/C/GAB: Nuno de Melo Egídio (Governador do Niassa) ao Secretário-Geral da Província de Moçambique (Vila Cabral, September 22, 1969).

131 He even fathered a child while he was in Malawi. See: PA, I139: interview with P1475 (♀, 1960), P1474 (♂, 1972) (Nkhotakota, June 2, 2016), min 00:06:21–00:07:04.

132 PA, I069: interview with P0650 (♀, 1939) (Nkholongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:19:59–00:20:55; PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 01:03:48–01:05:33; PA, I045: interview with P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:15:52–00:16:04; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:16:55–00:17:02; PA, I077: interview with P1489 (♂) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:06:37–00:07:16; PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:13:52–00:14:13.

133 PA, I148: interview with P1500 (♂, ~1946) (Bandeze, June 10, 2016), min 00:07:54–00:08:12; PA, I101: interview with P0316 (♀, ~1952) (Nkholongue, February 22, 2016), min 00:36:52–00:37:10. One mentioned problems for those who had no ID: PA, I153: interview with P1477 (♂, ~1940) (Micucue, June 17, 2016), min 00:40:38–00:41:51.

134 For those who claimed to have found peace, see: PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkholongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:15:08–00:15:15; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀,

about the war” in the *aldeamento*, others began to fight it, but now on the side of the Portuguese forces. Every *aldeamento* was defended by militias who were recruited from the local population.¹³⁵ Those who worked for the technical services of the navy base also served the military as guides and porters on its operations.¹³⁶ At least three of Nkhlongue’s population even joined the Special Groups (GE).¹³⁷

Financial incentives seem to have played an important role in motivating people to support the Portuguese war effort. According to the missionary John Paul, a militiaman received the same salary as a teacher.¹³⁸ While two former GE claimed that they had been forced to do so,¹³⁹ other interviewees highlighted the monetary incentives and stressed that those who joined the GE did so of their own free will.¹⁴⁰ One of the two later himself underscored the amount of his salary by saying:

At that time things were very cheap. [The Portuguese] had very low prices. So when we got 80, that was a lot of money. We could go and buy us a lot of things and still save a lot at home.¹⁴¹

But some statements suggest that money was not the only attraction. The following interviewee, who himself started working for the technical services of the navy base and as guide of the Portuguese troops, explained for example:

There were those who knew what Frelimo was fighting for, and there were those who did not know what Frelimo was fighting for, so that they even blamed Frelimo. Those lacked political education [...] So it happened that many joined the colonial troops, for example the GE or the

~1952) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), 00:05:47–00:06:17. For those who claimed to have forgotten about the war: PA, I062: interview with P0713 (♂, 1944) (Nkhlongue, August 30, 2013), min 00:36:01–00:36:47.

135 At least two of Nkhlongue’s former population served as militias. See: PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 00:18:18–00:19:51.

136 PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 00:29:41–00:35:24; PA, I117: interview with P1458 (♂, ~1945) (Micundi, April 20, 2016), min 01:08:04–01:13:57.

137 PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 00:19:28–00:20:25. For a possible fourth, see: PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:39:36–00:41:00.

138 Paul, *Memoirs of a Revolution*, 183.

139 PA, I041: interview with P0951 (♀, 1948), P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:35:06–00:35:28; PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 00:28:02–00:30:37.

140 PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:39:36–00:41:00; PA, I073: interview with P1012 (♂, 1955) (Malango, September 5, 2013), min 00:14:51–00:16:46; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:13:38–00:16:42; PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:05:25–00:05:44.

141 PA, I105: interview with P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, April 4, 2016), min 01:18:54–01:19:02.

GEP.¹⁴² They helped the colonial troops to prevent Frelimo's advance. There were troops consisting only of Africans.¹⁴³

"Modernization" and "Urbanization": Education and Health

In many respects it can be said that the Portuguese modernization propaganda indeed became reality in the case of the *aldeamento* of Metangula, even though the jobs that were created here were certainly not part of some rural extension program, as envisaged by the propaganda, but plainly and simply part of the military apparatus. The modernization did not just affect the economy. Schooling, previously available only at mission schools, was now made possible by the spread of "secularized" schools. Many of Nkhlongue's children—especially the boys—now began to go to school.¹⁴⁴

Portuguese sources from this period were self-critical, admitting the rudimentary state of their schools and demanding improvement.¹⁴⁵ However, the quality of these schools was not necessarily poor from a local perspective. This is shown by the development of the teacher-pupil ratio: in 1972, the elementary school of the *aldeamento* of Metangula had seven teachers for 242 male and 116 female pupils. This gives a ratio of about one teacher for every 51 pupils. For the entire district of Lago, the ratio was about one teacher for every 52 pupils.¹⁴⁶ Later, in 1983, there was only one teacher for every 67 pupils, and in 2003 the rate was almost the same again with one teacher

142 GEP stands for *Grupos Especiais Paraquedistas*, the paratrooper version of the GE.

143 PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:17:06–00:17:44.

144 PA, I073: interview with P1012 (♂, 1955) (Malango, September 5, 2013), min 00:10:51–00:13:40; PA, I124: interview with P0376 (♂, 1968) (Nkhlongue, April 26, 2016), min 00:17:15–00:19:07; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:02:15–00:03:43; PA, I066: interview with P0085 (♂, 1960) (Nkhlongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:05:20–00:12:18; PA, I071: interview with P0191 (♂, 1965) (Nkhlongue, September 4, 2013), min 00:07:18–00:10:42; PA, I043: interview with P1148 (♂, 1960) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:40:54–00:41:19; PA, I079: interview with P0510 (♂, 1963) (Nkhlongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:01:34–00:03:13; PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:02:01–00:03:56. If I am not mistaken, I have not interviewed a single woman from Nkhlongue who went to school in the *aldeamento*. Portuguese statistics give a ratio of about two to one. So, in April 1974, there were said to be 381 boys and 197 girls attending school in Metangula. See: APGGN, 1 A: Mapa do Movimento da População da Circunscrição do Lago, Abril 1974 (Augusto Cardoso, May 5, 1974).

145 AHU, Biblioteca, L9560: José Guardado Moreira, "Governo do Distrito do Niassa: Relatório do ano de 1972" (Vila Cabral, May 31, 1973), 30, 36; AHMil, FO/63/13/950/17: José Azevedo, "Relatório Especial de Informações 01/71" (Metangula: Batalhão de Caçadores 2906, July 9, 1971), 14–15.

146 AHU, Biblioteca, L9560: José Guardado Moreira, "Governo do Distrito do Niassa: Relatório do ano de 1972" (Vila Cabral, May 31, 1973), 196–197.

for every 51 pupils.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, interviewees had largely positive memories of their school days in the *aldeamento*. This was also due to the fact that school attendance was made popular by the distribution of food to the children. Or, as one former pupil put it:

Even we, who were schoolboys: we always got milk with bread. Yes, always, that was every day.¹⁴⁸

The knowledge of the Portuguese language increased significantly during the time in the *aldeamento*. But we can observe a growing gender gap: while older people hardly speak Portuguese at all, men born in the 1950s and 1960s command a comparatively fair knowledge of it. Among women, the increase in Portuguese language skills has been much less pronounced.

This kind of “social modernization” affected not only the educational but also the health sector. Let me illustrate this with Table 6 which compares the number of people born in a hospital with the number of people born at home, ordered by age cohorts. The figures, taken from the 2016 survey, show that the number of births in hospitals began to rise before independence.

	1926 – 1955	1956 – 1965	1966 – 1975	1976 – 1985	1986 – 2000	Total
At home	20 (87 %)	9 (56 %)	5 (36 %)	11 (46 %)	8 (50 %)	53 (57 %)
Hospital	3 (13 %)	5 (31 %)	9 (64 %)	11 (46 %)	8 (50 %)	36 (39 %)
Unknown	0 (0 %)	2 (13 %)	0 (0 %)	2 (8 %)	0 (0 %)	4 (4 %)

Table 6: Number of births at home and at hospital ordered by age cohorts.

Changes in Everyday Life in the *Aldeamento*

There is little doubt that everyday life in the *aldeamento* differed from that in the village beyond the changes already discussed. Other ways had to be taken to fetch

¹⁴⁷ APGGN, 1 A: Relatório resumido da situação sócioeconómica e cultural do Distrito do Lago, 1983, July 20, 1983, 5; Ministério da Administração Estatal, “Perfil do Distrito de Lago, Província de Niassa” (Maputo, 2005), 34, accessed April 16, 2019, <http://www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz/por/content/download/2837/23237/version/1/file/Lago.pdf>.

¹⁴⁸ PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:06:55–00:07:38. See as well: PA, I071: interview with P0191 (♂, 1965) (Nkholongue, September 4, 2013), min 00:08:21–00:10:42; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:02:43–00:03:43.

water, cut firewood, or go to one's fields. There was less space around the houses and there were other neighbors. Moreover, in the course of the war, the Portuguese administration began to require a grouping of houses that hardly corresponded to the way people had lived before (see Figure 6).¹⁴⁹ Interestingly, my interviewees usually did not highlight these factors by themselves and also tended to play down their importance if asked about them.¹⁵⁰

Nevertheless, we can expect that people's experiences of the *aldeamento* influenced their lives in manifold ways, both in the short and long run. It is important to know that while the population of Nkhlongue remained under the jurisdiction of their chief,¹⁵¹ they did not form a spatial unit in the *aldeamento*. People lived all over the *aldeamento*. Many even changed their homes during their stay in Metangula, some more than once.¹⁵² Nkhlongue was also not the only village that had been resettled to Metangula. Rather, the town was populated by people from a wide range of other villages.¹⁵³

Living together with people of different origins in a more urban environment doubtlessly impacted people's habits, customs, and ideas in many different ways, even if the individual effects cannot always be reconstructed one-to-one. We

149 This more organized grouping was enforced from 1969 onward. See: AHMil, DIV/2/7/55/4: Batalhão de Caçadores 2906. História de Unidade, n.d., II-52; APGGN, QJ: Nuno Egídio ao Administrador da Circunscrição do Lago, "N.º 245/C/GAB: Construções do edifício geminado para funcionários e ampliação da secretaria / reestruturação do aldeamento da sede," July 28, 1969.

150 PA, I109: interview with P1081 (♀, 1945) (Malango, April 6, 2016), min 00:43:48–00:44:27; PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 01:57:16–01:58:24; PA, I043: interview with P1148 (♂, 1960) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:23:20–00:24:59; PA, I093: interview with P0050 (♂, ~1922) (Nkhlongue, January 19, 2016), min 01:40:10–01:45:58; PA, I096: interview with P1216 (♂, 1957) (Malango, February 1, 2016), min 00:33:15–00:41:42; PA, I101: interview with P0316 (♀, ~1952) (Nkhlongue, February 22, 2016), min 00:29:27–00:33:08.

151 PA, I051: interview with P0481 (♀, 1942) (Nkhlongue, August 26, 2013), min 01:10:05–01:11:12; PA, I059: interview with P0090 (♀, ~1932) (Metangula, August 29, 2013), min 00:26:53–00:28:55; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:39:00–00:39:36; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:08:35–00:09:45; PA, I076: interview with P1449 (♂, ~1948) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:09:35–00:11:10; PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkhlongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:11:47–00:12:38.

152 PA, I047: interview with P0596 (♂, ~1950) (Metangula, August 21, 2013), min 00:14:59–00:16:39; PA, I049: interview with P0267 (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 23, 2013), min 00:54:11–00:54:46; PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:09:45–00:10:48; PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkhlongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:11:47–00:12:38; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:39:00–00:39:36. Still, the majority of those resettled from Nkhlongue seem to have lived in the neighborhood of Thungo. See: PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 00:17:43–00:18:06.

153 Including the villages of Micuio, Chipili, M'checha, Meluluca, Ngolocolo, Lussefa, and Chinuni.

can, for example, expect that different dialects of different people influenced each other. Furthermore, people brought different religions to the *aldeamento*. The majority of those who were resettled to Metangula were Muslims, but the town itself had a significant Christian population. The Muslims, for their part, belonged to two different Sufi “brotherhoods,” a majority (including those from Nkhlongue) to the *Shadhiliya* and a minority to the *Qadiriya*.¹⁵⁴



Figure 6: The *aldeamento* of Metangula in 1973. Photograph available at LUGAR DO REAL <http://lugardoreal.com>, courtesy of Manuel António Lima Torres Ribeiro.

The different communities not only followed different religious practices, but also different cultural codes that could be imitated. As will be further discussed in Chapter 11, there is for example some evidence that the time in the *aldeamento* initiated or accelerated a trend from uxorilocal to virilocal marriage practices. In the Christian areas of the district, virilocality had already replaced uxorilocality

¹⁵⁴ A conflict arose between these two brotherhoods during the time in the *aldeamento*, prompting the *Qadiriya* followers to build their own mosque. This mosque was used by people from Nkhlongue after the *Qadiriya* followers had been re-settled to the newly built *aldeamento* of Meluluca. See: PA, I149: interview with P1501 (♂, 1949), P1513 (♂, 1943) (Chinuni, June 11, 2016); PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 00:14:50–00:17:43; PA, I118: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Malango, April 21, 2016), min 01:26:37–01:27:18.

as the norm long before the war. A similar observation can be made with regard to the housebuilding techniques. I have already pointed out in the previous chapter that before independence the wall of houses had largely been formed by plastering skeletons of trunks and beams (see p. 227). Coincidence or not, the fact is that shortly after their stay in Metangula people from Nkholongue began to build their houses increasingly with sun-dried mud bricks as the Christian populations of the region had already done before the war. People from Nkholongue had known this technique before, but according to statements from my interviewees they had looked at it with a mixture of respect and anxiety until that point.¹⁵⁵

7.4 Zooming Out: Nkholongue's Experience in the Broader Perspective

In view of the fairly unambiguous verdict of previous literature, one is inclined to read the wartime experiences of Nkholongue's population as a deviation from the standard course of the war.¹⁵⁶ There are indeed many factors that point to the exceptional nature of the perspective of the villagers of Nkholongue. However, some of my findings, combined with sources concerning the wider region, strongly suggest that scholars have so far ignored, neglected or misrepresented certain patterns and processes of the war. In other words, the wartime experiences of Nkholongue's population were unique, but to a certain extent they also reflected more general developments of the war course.

The Particularities of the Wartime Experiences of the Villagers of Nkholongue

Thinking of the particularities of the wartime experiences of the villagers of Nkholongue, six factors need to be highlighted. First, the high military presence prevented the *aldeamento* from ever being attacked by Frelimo. This situation differs from

155 PA, I042: interview with P1193 (♀, 1953) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:38:12–00:39:35; PA, I043: interview with P1148 (♂, 1960) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:44:07–00:46:44; PA, I046: interview with P1045 (♀, 1932) (Malango, August 20, 2013), min 00:07:41–00:09:15, 00:29:23–00:30:04; PA, I048: interview with P1446 (♂, ~1945) (Metangula, August 21, 2013), min 00:36:45–00:39:41; PA, I043: interview with P1148 (♂, 1960) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:55:39–00:58:43; PA, I094: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M'chepa, January 27, 2016), min 01:43:54–01:44:41.

156 One colleague once called my findings about the Mozambican War of Independence after a presentation “disconcerting.”

that of other *aldeamentos* that were hit by the war—repeatedly at times—and therefore did not offer their inhabitants the security and stability that Metangula did. Second, the presence of various state institutions (civil administration, army, navy, police etc.) may have favored the enforcement of official state policy and prevented arbitrary actions that may have been more common in more remote *aldeamentos*. Third, Metangula's location on the lake guaranteed constant access to drinking and service water, something that was much more difficult to obtain in other *aldeamentos*. Fourth, the location of both the village and the *aldeamento* on the lake also facilitated the transport of people and their belongings. Fifth, Nkhlongue's population seems to have benefited from being among the first to be resettled to Metangula. This gave them access to resources such as land at a time when there was still enough available. Evidence from “latecomers” from more distant villages suggests that it was more difficult for these people to secure sufficient farmland.¹⁵⁷ Last but not least, not every *aldeamento* offered so many income opportunities and as good a supply situation as Metangula.¹⁵⁸ The Portuguese forces were well aware of Metangula's special position in this regard. Orlando Cristina, son of a Portuguese trader in Niassa and an important member of the irregular armed forces,¹⁵⁹ wrote for example in May 1968:

The situation has been like this for four years, and nothing has been done to organize the economic life of the populations [...] Metangula, with its workers in the army and navy, is saving the face of this problem.¹⁶⁰

While all of these particularities need to be taken into account when thinking about the generalizations that can be drawn from the resettlement experience of Nkhlongue, the knowledge of the wartime experiences of Nkhlongue's population can undoubtedly help improve our analysis of the general patterns of the war. To this end, seven points can be made.

¹⁵⁷ See for example: PA, I149: interview with P1501 (♂, 1949), P1513 (♂, 1943) (Chinuni, June 11, 2016), min 00:28:27–00:31:06.

¹⁵⁸ ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), GU, cx. 12, f. 225–237; DGS SUBVC, “Relatório de Situação do Dist do Niassa: Período de 31OUT a 15NOV” (Vila Cabral, November 19, 1972), f. 228–229.

¹⁵⁹ Cristina was an associate of Jorge Jardim, who was an important Portuguese businessman. He repeatedly participated as an irregular member in operations of the Portuguese armed forces in Niassa. After the war he became the first secretary-general of Renamo. See: João M. Cabrita, *Mozambique: The Tortuous Road to Democracy* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), 133–92; Baêna, *Factos e feitos na Guerra*, 4: Crónica dos feitos de Moçambique, 93–95; AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 058/MO: Relatório de Comissão DFE N. 8. Anexo Delta: Comissários Políticos, n.d.; AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 058/MO: João Bastos, “Relatório de Comissão DFE N. 8,” n.d., 13–14.

¹⁶⁰ Baêna, *Factos e feitos na Guerra*, 4: Crónica dos feitos de Moçambique, 113.

The Growing Presence of the Colonial State at the Periphery

First, although Metangula occupied a special position, the fact is that the war brought similar developments to other areas that had used to lie at the margins of the colonial state. Portuguese presence in these areas was not necessarily weakened by the outbreak of the war, but rather in many cases rose to higher levels than ever before. It also needs to be emphasized that the people who lived in these areas had had different (pre-war) experiences with the colonial state than the inhabitants of the plantation areas of Zambezia, the cotton zones of southern Niassa, or the racially segregated settler areas of Lourenço Marques.

The Myth of the “Liberated Areas”

Second, my findings allow us to complicate the standard narrative of the course of the Mozambican War of Independence, which is still very much framed by Frelimo’s liberation script. While certain elements of this script have recently come under increasing scrutiny,¹⁶¹ the course of the war is still under-researched and largely marked by ideas of the progressive growth of Frelimo’s “liberated areas.” According to such ideas, Frelimo received widespread popular support in northern Mozambique and “steadily expanded its ‘liberated zones’ until they covered the northern fourth of the country.”¹⁶² Our knowledge of those “liberated areas” is still very basic and little has been done to challenge Frelimo’s propaganda that claimed that they became the cradle of the nation, where Frelimo started to set up a previously missing health and educational infrastructure and where Frelimo began to organize production collectively.¹⁶³ A rare exception in this regard are the

161 Paolo Israel, “A Loosening Grip: The Liberation Script in Mozambican History,” *Kronos* 39, no. 1 (2013): 10–19; João Paulo Borges Coelho, “Politics and Contemporary History in Mozambique: A Set of Epistemological Notes,” *Kronos* 39, no. 1 (2013): 20–31. See as well Michel Cahen’s older critical assessment of the Massacre of Mueda: Michel Cahen, “The Mueda Case and Maconde Political Ethnicity: Some Notes on a Work in Progress,” *Africana Studia*, no. 2 (1999): 29–46.

162 Finnegan, *A Complicated War*, 30. For a recent scholarly claim for the importance of Frelimo’s successes in Niassa, see: Correia, “História e textualização.” How strongly this idea has been popularized is shown by a recent statement by the Portuguese novelist Lúcia Jorge, who claimed that at the beginning of 1974 the northern part of Mozambique was “completely taken” by the nationalists. See: Nazaré Torrão, “Entrevista com Lúcia Jorge,” *Língua-lugar: Literatura, História, Estudos Culturais*, no. 1 (2020): 186.

163 For examples of this propaganda, see: “Zonas Libertadas: Berço da revolução,” *Tempo*, Número especial: Dedicado à viagem presidencial à Província do Niassa (December 26, 1979): 91–95; “O processo eleitoral no Niassa: Entrevista com Aurélio Manave, Primeiro Secretário Pro-



Figure 7: Mozambique and the “liberated areas” in 1969 according to Frelimo’s propaganda. Source: Eduardo Mondlane, *The Struggle for Mozambique* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969).

vincial,” *Tempo*, no. 376 (December 18, 1977): 36–40; APGGN, 1 A: Síntese do Relatório do Distrito de Maúá, Primeira Reunião de Administradores, Comissários Políticos e Grupos Dinamizadores dos Distritos da Província do Niassa (Lichinga, May 19, 1976), 3.

comments by Yussuf Adam, who set out a more nuanced panorama and stated for example that in Niassa co-operatives were “practically non existent until the end of the war.”¹⁶⁴

My findings substantiate Adam’s claim and show that the nationalist propaganda had little to do with realities. As for Niassa, the Portuguese forces succeeded in containing the initial gains of Frelimo rather effectively. If this war was about controlling people, it has to be said that the colonial state did better than Frelimo in the long run of the war. Table 7 shows the number of people living under the control of the Portuguese forces in the Lago District over the course of the conflict. It reveals that the colonial state, after having lost considerable ground at the beginning of the war, was able to gradually regain people, so that their number at the end of the war corresponded to about 50 percent of the pre-war census. On the other hand, the number of people under Frelimo’s control shrank in the course of the war to the point that at its end probably less than five percent of the district’s pre-war population was living under the nationalists’ control.¹⁶⁵ Most others had fled to either Tanzania or Malawi (which was against the aims of both Frelimo and the colonial state). The death toll is very difficult to assess. But, given the Portuguese hunger policy against those outside the *aldeamentos*, it may have been considerable in certain areas of the war zone.¹⁶⁶

164 Yussuf Adam, “Trick or Treat: The Relationship between Destabilisation, Aid and Government Development Policies in Mozambique 1975–1990” (PhD thesis, Roskilde University, 1996), 47. See as well: Munslow, *Mozambique*, 94–95.

165 In 1971, the Portuguese military estimated the number of Frelimo fighters living on the bases within and around Lago District to be about 365 and the number of civilians living around these bases to be about 1,630. When these numbers are added together this is about six percent of the district’s pre-war census. However, these bases were only partly located within Lago District and also included a considerable number of “inhabitants” from other districts. Moreover, it can be expected that this number was further reduced in the last years of the war. See: AHMil, FO/63/13/950/17: José Azevedo, “Relatório Especial de Informações 01/71” (Metangula: Batalhão de Caçadores 2906, July 9, 1971).

166 The AHM’s oral history crew was, for example, told in Mavago that many died of hunger, and that, in fact, the number of those who died of starvation was higher than the numbers of death from the proper war. See: AHM, Secção Oral, Transcrito NI 10: Germano Ntaula and Aly Saidy, N.º 162–163, Entrevista com o responsável da comissão de aldeias comunais (Mavago, Niassa), interview by José Negrão, 1980, 7. See as well: Depósito Museológico de Lichinga (DML), 1a Gaveta/N.º 8: Samuel Raisse, “Pequeno episódio sobre a História da L.A.L. Nacional” (Mavago: Serviço Distrital de Cultura – Mavago, n.d.), 3.

1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	06/1971	1971	1972	12/1973	07/1974
32,161	9,828	10,946	13,660	14,556	15,013	15,246	15,408	15,539	15,943	16,292	16,495

Table 7: Population under Portuguese control, Lago District, 1964–1974.¹⁶⁷

In the case of Nkhlongue, the distribution was even more pronounced in favor of the Portuguese side. Portuguese statistics from 1972 put the population of Chingomanje's chiefdom at 486, compared with a pre-war census of 550.¹⁶⁸ Assuming there had been no natural population growth, this would mean that about 88 percent of Nkhlongue's pre-war population lived in the *aldeamento*. However, these figures should be treated with caution. The information from my interviews suggests that the percentage of those who fled abroad must have been higher, namely about 25 to 30 percent of the original population. There are two possible explanations for reconciling the two sets of data: first, we can suppose that the pre-war census did not include the family of Chief Chingomanje VI. They had lived near Mtucula at the outbreak of the war and only came to Metangula during the war, where Chingomanje VI was then appointed successor to Chingomanje V.¹⁶⁹ Second, we can speculate whether the pre-war census excluded those who had migrated to M'chepa in the 1950s, most of whom fled to Malawi during the war.

My research clearly shows that the "liberated areas" did not correspond to what has been commonly written about them. In 1972, PIDE/DGS estimated the number of non-combatants living under the control of Frelimo in all of Niassa Province at only 2,900. The number of combatants was estimated at 920.¹⁷⁰ This compares to a population of 291,935 who lived under the control of Portuguese forces, which shows how critical we should be of Frelimo's version of history,

¹⁶⁷ Sources: AHM, GGM XX, cx. 2097: Nuno Egídio, "O Niassa: Relatório Anual de 1970" (Vila Cabral, February 28, 1971), 192; AHM, ISANI, cx. 99: Mário Freiria, "Relatório da Inspeção Ordinária à Circunscrição do Lago 1971" (Vila Cabral, July 4, 1971), 3; APGGN, 1 A: Mapa do Movimento da População da Circunscrição do Lago, Dezembro 1973 (Augusto Cardoso, January 12, 1974); APGGN, 1 A: Mapa do Movimento da População da Circunscrição do Lago, Julho 1974 (Augusto Cardoso, August 9, 1974); AHU, Biblioteca, L9560: José Guardado Moreira, "Governo do Distrito do Niassa: Relatório do ano de 1972" (Vila Cabral, May 31, 1973), 158.

¹⁶⁸ ANTT, SCCIM N.º 24 (folhas 247–253): Mapa comparativo da população do Distrito distribuída por regedorias e relacionada aos anos de antes da eclosão da subversão (1964/1965), e depois da subversão, para controle dos elementos refugiados (Vila Cabral, June 1972).

¹⁶⁹ PA, I043: interview with P1148 (♂, 1960) (Malango, August 17, 2013).

¹⁷⁰ ANTT, SC-CI(2) GU, cx. 6, f. 18–33: Relatório Periódico de Informações – Grupo II: Niassa (Lour-enço Marques, February 28, 1972), 9–10.

even if the situation in Cabo Delgado and Tete was different.¹⁷¹ In Niassa, the exceptions were not those who lived in *aldeamentos* under Portuguese control, as is usually claimed,¹⁷² but precisely those who lived in the areas controlled by Frelimo.

As I also highlight elsewhere,¹⁷³ daily life in many of the “liberated areas” of Niassa was in reality a precarious affair. The people there were busy ensuring their survival, rather than organizing the revolution. Living in Frelimo’s “liberated areas” was no real option for most people in the long run, because in the case of Niassa these areas did not have the qualities attributed to them by Frelimo’s propaganda. In practice, most people had only two options in the course of the war, either to live in the *aldeamentos* or to flee abroad.

Resettlement through Hunger: The Portuguese Scorched Earth Policy

The third point concerns the question of how people were actually resettled. Previous studies on the Mozambican case have not said much about this question. Evidence from the Lago District suggests that the way in which the majority of Nkhlongue’s population was resettled was not the norm. Rather, Portuguese sources show that a considerable portion of the district’s population came to the *aldeamentos* on

171 PIDE/DGS reports from this period reveal great differences between the war situation in the different provinces. For examples, see: ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), GU, cx. 33 (NT 8966), f. 209–243: Delegação de DGS em Lourenço Marques, “Situação Actual em Moçambique, Março de 1974,” Secreto (Lourenço Marques, March 4, 1974); ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), GU, cx. 13, f. 313–366: DGS SUBVC, “Relatório de Situação do Dist do Niassa: Período de 30NOV a 15DEZ” (Vila Cabral, December 19, 1972); ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), GU, cx. 14, f. 583–595: DGS SUBVC, “Relatório de Situação do Dist do Niassa: Período de 31DEZ a 15JAN” (Vila Cabral, January 19, 1973); ANTT, SC-CI(2) GU, cx. 17, f. 32–49: DGS/SUBT, “Relatório de Situação N.º 8/73: Período de 16 a 30ABR73” (Tete, May 3, 1973), 1; ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), GU, cx. 12, f. 520–545: DGS/SUBT, “Relatório de Situação N.º 20/72,” November 2, 1972.

172 Helena Dolny for example began her description of the communal village of Lussanhando by saying: “Large areas of this northern province were liberated as the struggle for national independence advanced, but the inhabitants of this particular village had been grouped together by the Portuguese in an *aldeamento*, or strategic hamlet.” See: Helena Dolny, “The Challenge of Agriculture,” in *A Difficult Road: The Transition to Socialism in Mozambique*, ed. John S. Saul (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1985), 238.

173 Andreas Zeman, “Caught between the Guerrilla and the Colonial State: Refugee Life in Northern Mozambique During the Independence War (1964–1974),” in *On the Social History of Persecution*, ed. Christian Gerlach (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2023), 115–138; Andreas Zeman, “Flag Independence without Flags? Mozambican Decolonization on the Periphery of the New Nation,” *E-Journal of Portuguese History* 21, no. 2 (forthcoming 2023).

their “own” accord.¹⁷⁴ This is also confirmed by the research of Sayaka Funada-Classen.¹⁷⁵

The Portuguese scorched earth policy played an important role in forcing people into the *aldeamentos*. One could now assume that this policy, because of its brutality, backfired on the Portuguese forces. However, this was not necessarily the case as it was Frelimo who had urged the people to leave their villages and fields in the first place. The available information suggests that most people expected a short war.¹⁷⁶ They were thus not prepared to subsist for long. In a rare critical account of the course of the war in Niassa, Barry Munslow highlighted these regional war hardships already in 1983, but still maintained that “the shared suffering appears to have promoted a firm bond between the people and the guerrillas.”¹⁷⁷ This overlooks how few in fact stayed with Frelimo. My research points out that the lack of food led to considerable tensions among the people living on and near Frelimo's bases.¹⁷⁸ Many lost faith in the nationalist cause and abandoned Frelimo. As I have already mentioned, most of my interviewees who had joined Frelimo as fighters at the beginning of the war deserted in the first years of the war. They were no exceptions. Many of the inmates of Frelimo's post-colonial re-education camps were deserters.¹⁷⁹ In Niassa, Portuguese forces were undoubtedly fairly successful in creating discord among the nationalists and their supporters.¹⁸⁰

174 Portuguese statistics show, for example, that of the 8,514 people “recuperated” by their forces throughout the Mozambican war zone in 1971, nearly 72 percent had “presented” themselves at the *aldeamentos*, and only 28 percent had been captured by Portuguese forces. These numbers have been put together from different documents from: AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 060/MO. See as well: Zeman, “Caught between the Guerrilla and the Colonial State,” 128.

175 Funada-Classen, *The Origins of War in Mozambique*, 322.

176 PA, I093: interview with P0050 (♂, ~1922) (Nkhlongue, January 19, 2016), min 01:29:58–01:30:33. See also the statements of Joanna Katto's interviewees: Katto, “*Grandma Was a Guerrilla Fighter*,” 27, 33, 62. See as well: Munslow, *Mozambique*, 93.

177 Munslow, *Mozambique*, 94.

178 For evidence of such tensions in Niassa see for example: AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 303-B/MO: DFE 5, “Ficha de Interrogatório de Pessoal Capturado ou Apresentado: Lufame Saide,” September 5, 1967; AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 047/MO: Kaúlza Arriaga, “Relatório de Acção Psicológica N.º 3/70” (Nampula, November 25, 1970), 18, 21; ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), proc. 4276, NT 7336, pt. 1, f. 44–47: PIDE Subdelegação VC, “Auto de Perguntas: Momade Lezuani” (Vila Cabral, January 28, 1966); AHMar, Colorado, Pasta 149/MO: Mário Tello Polléri, “Relatório de Acção Psicológica N.º 4/70” (Nampula, February 22, 1971), 20; AHMil, FO/63/12/947/9: Ficha de Interrogatório de Apresentados e Capturados: António Bonomar Namaumbo (Vila Cabral, November 13, 1973); AHMil, FO/63/12/947/9: Relatório de Interrogatório de Pessoal Capturado N.º 05/73 (Olivença, June 1, 1973).

179 Machava, “The Morality of Revolution,” 105. 224–225. There are countless files on deserters at the APGGN, including “histories” of their desertion. See: APGGN, 1 A: Fichas dos Desertores: Inquérito Tipo B (Desertores), n.d.

Previous research has repeatedly highlighted that the colonial state exploited ethnic, regionalist and religious tension within Frelimo to its advantage.¹⁸¹ The exploitation of such tensions certainly played some part in the Portuguese propaganda. However, as I also argue elsewhere, the actual operations by Portuguese forces mainly aimed at producing (economic) tensions over basic necessities among those siding with Frelimo.¹⁸² The lack of food, rather than issues of religion or ethnicity, caused people—both Christians and Muslims and both Anyanja and Wayao—to lose faith in the nationalist cause. Initially, all of them had supported Frelimo in large numbers, even though Frelimo's main base of support had been in the Christian areas north of Metangula.

Examining the impact of the Portuguese scorched earth policy on social relations within Frelimo and its support base might also help explain similar developments on other war fronts. In his study on resettlement in Tete, for example, João Paulo Borges Coelho has provided several pieces of evidence of people who came to the *aldeamentos* on their “own” accord.¹⁸³ In one case, people who had been “freed” from an *aldeamento* by Frelimo evidently returned there as soon as they had the opportunity to do so.¹⁸⁴ However, a reflection on why people acted the way they did is not really provided by Borges Coelho.

“Social Progress”: The Fallacy of the Seductive Propaganda Argument

To properly understand the reasoning of the people, we must consider a fourth point. The evidence shows that at least in Niassa the Portuguese forces were indeed anxious to provide a proper reception for those who came to the *aldeamentos*. They were received with clothing and food.¹⁸⁵ While the Portuguese forces initially tended to use mere repression to bring people to their side, they increasingly used incentives to do so in the course of the war. In fact, the Portuguese forces went surprisingly far in the realization of the “promotion of social progress,” and not only around Metangula. In Mavago, for example, the AHM's oral history

180 On this point, see as well: Zeman, “Caught between the Guerrilla and the Colonial State,” 132–135.

181 Margaret Hall and Tom Young, *Confronting Leviathan: Mozambique since Independence* (London: Hurst, 1997), 27; Edward A. Alpers, “Ethnicity, Politics, and History in Mozambique,” *Africa Today* 21, no. 4 (1974): 39–52; Jundanian, “Resettlement Programs.”

182 Zeman, “Caught between the Guerrilla and the Colonial State,” 132.

183 Borges Coelho, “Protected Villages and Communal Villages,” 269 (n. 89), 273, 313 (n. 55).

184 Borges Coelho, “Protected Villages and Communal Villages,” 271.

185 See as well: Paul, *Memoirs of a Revolution*, 190–191.

project recorded a very similar pattern in an interview in the early 1980s, as one of the interviewees stated:

The Portuguese came first. We, the [real] owners [of the land] were not considered, we were not people. So what happened then! When the armed struggle began, the Portuguese started to feel [for us]. [...] They began to join with us to eat at the same table, [to say] we are of the same type. They began to mobilize the people [and said that] you can come to the administration. They said that you should take the chalk to whiten your houses and that the unemployed could come to get employment so that they would receive money.¹⁸⁶

The Portuguese propaganda to promote educational and health sectors was not just empty talk. In 1971, nine of Lago's ten *aldeamentos* had a school and seven a health post or hospital.¹⁸⁷ In the schoolyear 1971/1972, Niassa Province, previously the blank space of Portuguese education, had the highest schooling rate of all Mozambique. With 61 percent, it even exceeded by far the 41 percent of Mozambique's capital Lourenço Marques.¹⁸⁸ In Niassa, the number of children attending official government schools had risen at an annual rate of more than 50 percent since 1965.¹⁸⁹

Repression: Lifecycles of Particular Types of Violence

Connected to this is a fifth point, namely that of repression. The growing importance of a policy of incentives did not mean that the Portuguese forces completely refrained from repression in the *aldeamentos*. People suspected of collaborating with Frelimo from the *aldeamentos* had to be prepared for anything. Such a fate befell, for example, the father of three of my interview partners. He had lived with his family in the *aldeamento* of Olivença, where he had worked as a privileged ivory carver already before the war. In 1969, he was suspected by the Portu-

186 AHM, Secção Oral, Transcrito NI 11: Assumane Ntaúla and Chimanje Amido, N.º 119–125, Entrevista de Grupo em Nkalapa (Mavago, Niassa), interview by Gerhard Liesegang, Teresa Oliveira, and Mucojuane Mainga Vicente, July 13, 1981.

187 AHMIL, FO/63/13/950/17: José Azevedo, "Relatório Especial de Informações 01/71" (Metangula: Batalhão de Caçadores 2906, July 9, 1971), 15; AHM, ISANI, cx. 99: Mário Freiria, "Relatório da Inspeção Ordinária à Circunscrição do Lago 1971" (Vila Cabral, July 4, 1971), 9.

188 APGGN, 1 A: Higino Carvalheira, "Relatório do Departamento do Ensino Primário 1971/1972" (Lourenço Marques, November 7, 1973), 95–96.

189 AHU, Biblioteca, L9560: José Guardado Moreira, "Governo do Distrito do Niassa: Relatório do ano de 1972" (Vila Cabral, May 31, 1973), 37.

guese forces of being the ring leader of a clandestine Frelimo network.¹⁹⁰ He was taken into custody and sent away to Lourenço Marques. His family never heard from him ever again.¹⁹¹ He was not the only who had disappeared: after the revolution in Portugal, at least 13 Mozambicans who lived in the Portuguese military sector “A” filed a complaint against the extinct PIDE/DGS for the “disappearance of a family member.”¹⁹²

However, certain repressive elements of the Portuguese strategy were dropped after the initial phase. While the Portuguese forces had acted ruthlessly against supposed enemies at the beginning of the war, they began to avoid collective arrests and killings as the war progressed.¹⁹³ As for the killings, this change was evident not only in the lakeshore area, but also, according to Sayaka Funada-Classen, in the district of Maúá.¹⁹⁴ To avoid the killing of people, the colonial state even began to pay its troops fixed bonuses for people brought alive to the *aldeamentos*. While according to the official guidelines of 1972 the bonus was only paid for armed combatants,¹⁹⁵ information from my interviews suggest that at least around Metangula the bonus was also paid for non-combatants.¹⁹⁶ One interviewee who

190 PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:11:37–00:24:28; PA, I041: interview with P0951 (♀, 1948), P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:21:37–00:22:44; AHD, MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0032/00342: PIDE Moçambique, “Informação N.º 996 – SC/CI(2),” September 30, 1969; AHD, MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0032/00342: D.G.S. Moçambique, “Informação N.º 1.169 – SC/CI(2),” November 14, 1969.

191 His daughters denied the “accusation” that he had helped Frelimo and claimed that other people living in the *aldeamento* envied him for his privileged position and had therefore accused him unjustly. See: PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 00:19:27–00:23:12.

192 The list of the complaints contains only the names of the complainants, but not those of the disappeared. We can speculate that case 1 is about the disappeared ivory carver since the name of the complainant is identical with the name of one of his sons-in-law. See: ANTT, PIDE, SC, CI(2), GU, cx. 35, pt. 37, f. 27–28: 2a Repartição, Região Militar de Moçambique, “Relação de processos e queixas referentes a pessoal da Ex-DGS oriundos de COM SEC ‘A’ e entregues para envio ao EMGFA com destino à Comissão de Apuramento de Responsabilidades dos crimes das extintas PIDE/DGS e LP,” n.d.

193 For the avoidance of collective arrests, see: AHMIL, DIV/2/7/55/4: Batalhão de Caçadores 2906. História de Unidade, n.d., II–97.

194 Funada-Classen, *The Origins of War in Mozambique*, 322–23.

195 Comissão para o Estudo das Campanhas de África (CECA), *Resenha histórico-militar das campanhas de África, Vol. 6: Aspectos da actividade operacional, Tomo III: Moçambique, Livro I* (Lisboa: Estado-Maior do Exército, 2012), 120, 197. For the internal discussions of the military about this bonus, see especially: AHMIL, FO/63/21/961/2: COM SEC “A” ao CEM/QG/AV (3a.REP): Prémios por material capturado (N.º 2856/c-70, P.º 505.01.05), December 21, 1970.

196 PA, I117: interview with P1458 (♂, ~1945) (Micundi, April 20, 2016), min 01:09:05–01:10:45; PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 00:39:12–00:43:01.

accompanied the Portuguese troops as a guide during their operations put it this way:

[T]hat government did not allow a soldier to kill people in the bush. It did not allow it. You must listen carefully here: once we had captured people, the soldiers took these people to the administration so that the administration would pay the company that had captured these people. This was done so that the soldiers would not kill people. For they were worth money.¹⁹⁷

It must be emphasized that this does not mean that there were no more killings at all. One need only think of the Massacre of Wiriyamu, which was perpetrated not at the beginning but in the last third of the war.¹⁹⁸ However, as I have argued elsewhere, such massacres were certainly not the norm of an unchanging Portuguese warfare. Instead, they are best understood by taking into account the considerable temporal and regional dynamics of the war.¹⁹⁹

In Niassa, the Portuguese policy began to change markedly from that employed and communicated at the beginning of the war. In January 1966, the Portuguese administrator of Lago District had still announced that “once the *aldeamentos* are in operation, any population encountered outside the planned area would simply be killed by the [Portuguese] troops, as the troops would be in no position to verify the origins of individuals in the bush!”²⁰⁰ In contrast to this, reports of military operations show clearly how important it became for Portuguese troops to bring people back to the *aldeamentos* alive.²⁰¹ They also show that Portuguese troops doubtlessly tried to identify who was who in the area outside the *aldeamentos*.²⁰² My research points to the fact that the Portuguese resettlement scheme might have even been less repressive than its British counterparts in spite of

197 PA, II15: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 00:39:12–00:39:52.

198 Dhada, *The Portuguese Massacre of Wiriyamu*.

199 Andreas Zeman, “Wiriyamu and the Colonial Archive: Reading It against the Grain? Along the Grain? Read It at All!,” *History in Africa*, June 20, 2023.

200 ANTT, SCCIM N.º 1639 (folhas 474–475): Boletim de Informação N.º 3/66 (Augusto Cardoso, January 14, 1966).

201 AHMar, Coloredo 309/MO: António Tierno Bagulho, “Comando Naval de Moçambique ao Comando da Defesa Marítima dos Portos do Lago e ao Comando da Defesa Marítima do Porto de Porto Amélia” (Nampula, July 16, 1969); AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 058/MO: Relatório de Comissão DFE N. 8. Anexo Hotel: Política Operacional, n.d.; AHMil, DIV/2/7, cx. 133, n.º 2, p.º 142: Comandante Fernando Augusto Lopes, “Comentário ao Relatório de Acção N.º 20/68 (BART N.º 2838)” (Metangula, January 15, 1969). See as well: Zeman, “Caught between the Guerrilla and the Colonial State.”

202 AHMar, Coloredo, Pasta 303-A/MO: Comando do DFE 5, “Relatório de Missão de Intervenção do DFE5 N.º 47: ‘Operação Refractário,’” Confidencial (Augusto Cardoso, October 21, 1967), 4.

the Portuguese reputation to the opposite. For, in contrast to Kenya, there was no such thing as “punitive villages” in Mozambique.²⁰³

Pre-history: Taking an Empirical Look at Life before the *Aldeamento*

Sixth, the experiences of Nkhlongue’s population teach us to take a closer look at what happened before the resettlement, both in the short and long term. Relocations are often portrayed as moments that abruptly changed the previously stable life of people.²⁰⁴ Ideas of life before the resettlement are thereby frequently based more on generic expectations than on concrete empirical studies, and often characterized by notions of the Aboriginal Delusion (see my comments in Section 1.4). The previous chapter has shown that at least the life of the people of Nkhlongue before their resettlement had not been as stable as one might expect. In fact, most people had given up their former homes in the decade before the war when they had migrated to Malango for economic reasons. Access to important ancestral graveyards had already been made impossible by the rising lake level in the 1930s. And shortly before their resettlement, many people had already left the village, but then returned there because of the difficult conditions they had found in the forests.

How fruitful it could be to start the analysis of resettlement earlier can also be demonstrated in the case of the book by the Isaacmans on the Cahora Bassa dam.²⁰⁵ Some of the interviews they conducted for their research are now available on Aluka. One conversation with a group of people who were resettled because of the flooding of the lake is especially revealing for my argument. It shows that these people had come to the area of the future lake only a short time before their resettlement, having fled the war and, in their case, the advance of Frelimo.²⁰⁶ Clearly, the resettlement experiences of these people differed from those of the “traditional” inhabitants of the Zambezi valley. But, unfortunately, the Isaacmans have not given space to the analysis of this dynamic in their book.

203 The British counter-insurgency campaign in Kenya made a distinction between so-called punitive and protective villages. See: Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau*, 107–108.

204 See for example: Isaacman and Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development*, 108–109; Henriksen, *Revolution and Counterrevolution*, 160–161; Cann, *Counterinsurgency in Africa*, 156–157; Castelo, “Colonatos e aldeamentos no Niassa,” 488.

205 Isaacman and Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development*.

206 Aluka, The Isaacman Collection: Entrevista com Fernando Alberto Damião et al., July 17, 2001, accessed July 28, 2014, <http://www.aluka.org/action/showMetadata?doi=10.5555/AL.SFF.DOCUMENT.ISAACMAN0004>.

Preventive versus Improvised *Aldeamentos*

This brings me to my last point. Previous research has suggested that the experiences of resettlement were more painful and conflictual in areas where the war was already raging compared to areas where resettlement was carried out preventively.²⁰⁷ The underlying assumption is that “preventive” *aldeamentos* could be better planned and equipped with the necessary infrastructure. In contrast, the *aldeamentos* in the war zones have been considered disadvantageous for their inhabitants, since their construction is said to have been dictated primarily by military needs. Undoubtedly, lack of time in their planning and construction often made these *aldeamentos* sites of improvisation that barely offered people the necessary or promised infrastructure.

The problem with this reasoned interpretation is that it tends to overlook the actual perspective of the resettled. The experiences of my interview partners point to the fact that people in war zones were more willing to accept resettlement because they had already experienced the deprivations of war.²⁰⁸ In other words, people's attitude to resettlement depended heavily on their previous living conditions and less on what exactly they found in the *aldeamentos*. A very similar observation was made by the provincial government of Tete in 1967. Describing people's reluctance to go into the *aldeamentos* in Tete, the government compared the situation with Niassa and Cabo Delgado:

The situation is completely different in this regard in Cabo Delgado and in Niassa. There the people have been suffering privation and lack for years, from the hut they left to the field they lack. They have taken refuge in the bush, where they have lived in precarious circumstances—and some have died—lacking everything, being constantly in a state of insecurity and fleeing both from the terrorists and the regular forces in a life that is no life, and which makes them look upon the *aldeamento* as a place of salvation to escape the suffering that they have been enduring.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ This is for example suggested by: Isaacman and Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development*, 107. Similarly: Castelo, “Colonatos e aldeamentos no Niassa,” 492; Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire*, 218.

²⁰⁸ On this point, see as well: AHMIL, DIV/2/7/55/4: Batalhão de Caçadores 2906. História de Unidade, n.d., II–53.

²⁰⁹ ANTT, SCCIM N.º 1635 (f. 201–202): João Cecílio Gonçalves, “Governo do Distrito de Tete: Informação. Assunto: Aldeamentos,” Secreto (Tete, February 15, 1967).

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to analyze the Mozambican War of Independence from the perspective of the inhabitants of Nkhlongue. I have highlighted the local dynamics of the war and tried to show how it became a viable option for people to go to and stay in the *aldeamentos* and to even support the Portuguese war effort. I have argued that the experiences of Nkhlongue's population cannot just be extrapolated to other villages and/or regions, but that it still might contribute to our better understanding of the Mozambican War of Independence and other asymmetric wars in manifold ways.

In particular, my findings points to the fact that the effort of the Portuguese state to “win people's hearts and minds” should be taken more seriously than has been the case so far.²¹⁰ While there is no question that the state propaganda of minimum force and maximal modernization has hardly ever mirrored the realities, my findings show that the colonial state was regionally, in fact, ready to go quite far with its reforms, raising levels of for example schooling and health infrastructure to unprecedented heights. It must be emphasized that this does not mean that the Portuguese official mind suddenly acquired a desire to realize their myth of lusotropical racial harmony. Rather, as Cooper has argued for the late colonial reforms in French West Africa, Portuguese officials “were [also] acting for reasons of state,” with the aim to “preserve [Portugal] as something more than a small state in Western Europe.”²¹¹ Violence and repression were not given up, as has been shown in relation to the scorched earth policy in the areas outside the *aldeamentos*. Still, the use of violence was re-calibrated in a way that was designed to facilitate blaming the nationalist and evading one's own responsibility.

One might fairly say that this decade of change could barely make up the previous long-lasting experiences of colonial exploitation. However, such a perspective fails to appreciate that, seen from the vantage point of a lifetime, ten years can be a lot. Furthermore, it fails to appreciate that, in this concrete case, the level of colonial exploitation before the war was not as intensive as elsewhere. Around Nkhlongue, the peak of colonial presence occurred at a moment when the colonial state had reoriented its policies toward “development” and was no longer the

²¹⁰ Just recently, Alex Vines for example claimed that “[t]he Portuguese failed because they had neglected the far north and responded solely with violence.” See: Alex Vines, “As Conflict in Cabo Delgado Increases, Will Frelimo Learn from Its Mistakes?,” *The Mail & Guardian*, June 24, 2020, accessed June 29, 2020, <https://mg.co.za/africa/2020-06-24-as-conflict-in-cabo-delgado-increases-will-frelimo-learn-from-its-mistakes/>.

²¹¹ Frederick Cooper, “Routes Out of Empire,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 37, no. 2 (2017): 408.

often purely exploitative entity of the past. While little of the economic propaganda materialized in the case of Nkholongue, the growing colonial presence (especially of the military) still resulted in an increase of opportunities for people to raise their material standards of living, and thus influenced the way they currently look back on the whole colonial period.

The experiences of most of Nkholongue's inhabitants had little to do with global political or ideological divisions, but very much with the local and regional course of history and the war. Other scholars have referred to such constellations as non-ideological or localized contingencies.²¹² In line with this, my research suggests that age was an important factor that contributed to which side one ended up living or fighting on.²¹³

²¹² MacMaster, "The 'Silent Native'"; Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*.

²¹³ My three interviewees who entered the GE/Portuguese militias during the war were 20, 18, and 11 in 1965. Those interviewees who joined Frelimo were 38, 33, and 25 in 1965.