

9 From Victims to Voters: Renamo's Delayed Supporters

9.1 Renamo, or How to Evade the Blame

Few episodes of Mozambique's history have attracted as much scholarly attention as the Mozambican Civil War. At first, most narratives of the war were more or less congruent with the version presented by the Mozambican government. The war was depicted as a destabilization effort, orchestrated against Mozambique by the white minority governments of Rhodesia and South Africa. Renamo's soldiers were considered terrorists or—as Frelimo often referred to them—“armed bandits.” This dominant version of the war was only challenged from the mid-1980s. The revisionists, led by the French scholars Christian Geffray and Michel Cahen, argued that Frelimo's authoritative modernization course had alienated the peasantry in many regions and thus allowed Renamo to gather a significant social base within Mozambique. According to this reasoning, Renamo had evolved “from foreign-backed Contras into one side in a genuine civil war.”¹

As a consequence of these claims there was a fierce debate about the origins and nature of Renamo.² Subsequent studies showed significant variations in how Renamo was received by people in different parts of the country. They also showed

1 For the quotation, see: Georgi Derluguian, “Book Reviews: Revolution, Counter-Revolution and Revisionism in Postcolonial Africa: The Case of Mozambique, 1975–1994. By Alice Dinerman,” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 40, no. 2 (2007): 307–308. For the early revisionist literature, see: Christian Geffray and Mögens Pedersen, “Transformação da organização social e do sistema agrário do campesinato no Distrito do Erati: Processo de socialização do campo e diferenciação social” (Maputo: Departamento de Arqueologia e Antropologia, Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, 1985); Michel Cahen, *Mozambique: La révolution implosée. Études sur 12 ans d'indépendance (1975–1987)* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1987); Christian Geffray, *La cause des armes au mozambique: Anthropologie d'une guerre civile* (Paris: Karthala, 1990). It is noteworthy that Joseph Hanlon had already anticipated much of the argument of the coming debate in his 1984 monograph *Mozambique: The Revolution under Fire*, even if his conclusions were not drawn from genuine fieldwork but rather from his profound knowledge of the political situation in Mozambique, which he had acquired during his residence there as a journalist. See: Hanlon, *Mozambique: The Revolution under Fire*, 228–231.

2 See especially: Michel Cahen, “Mozambique: The Debate Continues. Michel Cahen Writes ...,” *Southern Africa Report* 5, no. 4 (1990): 26–27; Claude Meillassoux et al., “Mozambique: The Debate Continues. The Cahen Document: Victory via Democracy for Socialism,” *Southern Africa Report* 5, no. 4 (1990): 26–27; Otto Roesch, “Mozambique: The Debate Continues. Otto Roesch Replies,” *Southern Africa Report* 5, no. 4 (1990): 28–29.

that Renamo evidently adapted its regional strategies according to this different level of receptivity, taking a much more brutal and terrorist-like approach in the country's south and a much more civilized and political approach in the country's center.³ In any case, the "revisionists" were certainly quite successful in arguing that Renamo had more sympathizers within the country than was previously assumed. According to analysts, this fact was also reflected in the results of the first multi-party elections of 1994 in which Renamo did much better than had been commonly expected.⁴

This chapter will explore the war experiences of Nkhlongue's population. The central point of the chapter is that the alienated peasantry did not necessarily turn into supporters of Renamo's war effort: according to the argumentation laid out in Chapter 8, it seems evident that Nkhlongue might have constituted a fertile recruiting ground for Renamo. Frelimo had few sympathizers here, mainly because of the economic situation, but also because of its authoritarianism. It would be of little surprise if Nkhlongue had belonged to those places where Renamo was able to win the population for its war. This is, however, not what happened. Rather, it was the opposite: Nkhlongue suffered badly under the repeated attacks by the South African-backed rebels. It was only after the war and, despite these attacks, that Renamo was able to gain considerable political support within Nkhlongue and even to win the legislative elections of 1994 and both the presidential and legislative elections of 1999. To sum this up, many villagers of Nkhlongue were delayed Renamo supporters. In the chapter, I will try to explain why the villagers did not become Renamo supporters in the first place when the chances for a symbiotic relationship looked rather promising, but did so in the second place when such a move seemed rather implausible at first glance. The chapter thus equally investigates the question of why Renamo's brutal past did not impact on the party's political attractiveness after the war.⁵

3 For a regional study of the war in the south, see: Otto Roesch, "Renamo and the Peasantry in Southern Mozambique: A View from Gaza Province," *Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines* 26, no. 3 (1992): 462–84. See as well: Eric Morier-Genoud, Michel Cahen, and Domingos Manuel do Rosário, eds., *The War Within: New Perspectives on the Civil War in Mozambique, 1976–1992* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2018); William Minter, *Apartheid's Contras: An Inquiry into the Roots of War in Angola and Mozambique* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994), 211–217.

4 Bernhard Weimer, "Mosambik hat gewählt: Analyse der Wahlergebnisse und Perspektiven des Wiederaufbaus (Mozambique Has Voted: Analysis of the Result and Perspectives for Reconstruction)," *Africa Spectrum* 30, no. 1 (1995): 12.

5 This question has been raised by others but been answered only unsatisfactorily. Vines mentions rather vague possibilities that contributed to this outcome, such as "informal amnesty," "traditional healing," and "forgiveness processes," without really examining these processes. See: Alex Vines,

The analysis of this chapter is also a contribution to the literature of political scientists who since the end of the Cold War have examined the “Rebel-to-Party Transformations” and the electoral performance by post-rebel parties around the globe.⁶ It seems obvious that the use of indiscriminate violence is counterproductive in gaining popular support in civil wars.⁷ Accordingly, the widespread use of indiscriminate violence is also generally seen as a negative factor in the electoral performance of rebel movements in the post-war period. Following a “vengeful voting logic,”⁸ it is usually expected that electoral support for a party is suppressed in those areas where it committed human rights atrocities. Using broad quantitative data, various political scientists have attempted to evidence such correlations statistically. The results have thereby not been uniform. Thus, Michael Allison has claimed to have found such a correlation for the case of El Salvador, and John Ishiyama and Michael Widmeier for the cases of Tajikistan and Nepal respectively.⁹ However, Sarah Daly has denied such a general correlation based on a broad cross-national database, and also offered calculations to reject Allison’s findings, as he had ignored considering the direction of violence.¹⁰ In contrast, Daly has argued that those belligerents who are militarily stronger at the time of the elections are usually able to appeal to swing votes, as the militarily stronger appear able to provide security. She has further highlighted the advantages of incumbents who usually “enjoy advantages through their control of the state apparatus and their experience in government,”¹¹ and, thus, also operate a “superior propaganda machine” that facilitates control over the writing of history and helps them “evade culpability for violence.”¹² These are all factors that barely unambiguously apply

“Renamo’s Rise and Decline: The Politics of Reintegration in Mozambique,” *International Peacekeeping* 20, no. 3 (2013): 382.

6 For overviews of such research, see: Carrie Manning and Ian Smith, “Electoral Performance by Post-Rebel Parties,” *Government and Opposition* 54, no. 3 (2019): 2; Katrin Wittig, “Politics in the Shadow of the Gun: Revisiting the Literature on ‘Rebel-to-Party Transformations’ through the Case of Burundi,” *Civil Wars* 18, no. 2 (2016): 137–159.

7 Kalyvas offers an attempt to show when and why indiscriminate violence is nevertheless used, highlighting above all that it is cheaper than its selective counterpart. See: Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 146–172.

8 Sarah Zukerman Daly, “Voting for Victors: Why Violent Actors Win Postwar Elections,” *World Politics* 71, no. 4 (2019): 752–753.

9 Michael E. Allison, “The Legacy of Violence on Post-Civil War Elections: The Case of El Salvador,” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 45, no. 1 (2010): 106; John Ishiyama and Michael Widmeier, “Territorial Control, Levels of Violence, and the Electoral Performance of Former Rebel Political Parties after Civil Wars,” *Civil Wars* 15, no. 4 (2013): 534–535.

10 Daly, “Voting for Victors.”

11 Daly, 768.

12 Daly, 749.

to Renamo's position in Nkhlongue in 1994. Instead, my qualitative research points above all to the importance of having a story that resonates with people's grievances and pre-war experiences, something that might be difficult to capture by quantitative means.

By focusing on the history of the war in Nkhlongue, this chapter also focuses on the history of the war in a province that has barely received any attention in this respect so far. While Niassa was one of the central theaters of the War of Independence and is also depicted as such in the existing superficial historiography, the province figures as a side-scene for the Civil War at best. Most synopses of the war totally ignore events in Niassa.¹³ This ignorance is questionable if one looks at the statistics: Table 8 shows the share of schools that had been destroyed or closed as a consequence of the war per province since 1983. With 69 percent, Niassa ranks third. Figure 8 shows the number of demobilized soldiers as a share of the total population by province.¹⁴ Here Niassa ranks first. In Yussuf Adam's "destabilization index," measuring the percentage of population out of government control, Niassa ranks fifth.¹⁵ Certainly numbers need always to be treated with caution. But, in any case, the ignorance of the previous war literature on Niassa seems to be rather questionable and certainly not connected to the fact that the province was among the "least affected by the war" as claimed by Richard Sygne.¹⁶

13 One exception is Carolyn Nordstrom's brief ethnographic passage on the *The Quiet War of Two Villages in the Northern Hinterlands*. See: Carolyn Nordstrom, *A Different Kind of War Story* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 98–101.

14 Lago District had the second highest number of demobilized soldiers per inhabitants of all Mozambican districts according to this map: United Nations Office for Humanitarian Assistance Coordination, "Projected Density of 160,000 Demobilized Soldiers and Dependents (by District)," January 1994, accessed March 30, 2019, http://www.mozambiquehistory.net/history/peace_process/94/01/19940100_density_of_demobbed_soldiers.pdf. The sources of the data for the graph are the national census data of 1997 for the number of inhabitants per province and data provided by Sally Baden for the number of demobilized soldiers: Sally Baden, "Post-Conflict Mozambique Women's Special Situation, Population Issues and Gender Perspectives: To Be Integrated into Skills Training and Employment Promotion," BRIDGE Report, no. 44 (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, June 1997), 72, accessed December 4, 2017, <http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/bridge/Reports/re44c.pdf>.

15 Adam, "Trick or Treat," 103.

16 Sygne claimed that "Cabo Delgado and Niassa had been least affected by the war." See: Richard Sygne, *Mozambique: UN Peacekeeping in Action, 1992–94* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 87.

Tete	94.8
Zambezia	88.2
Niassa	69.3
Sofala	65.5
Maputo Province	60.2
Manica	48.4
Nampula	47.9
Inhambane	43.4
Gaza	30.9
C. Delgado	20.1

Table 8: Schools destroyed or closed because of the war by province (percentage of schools existing in 1983).¹⁷

The shift of focus to Niassa is equally interesting as the province was also a site of the previous War of Independence. To date, few studies have been conducted on regions that experienced both wars. Studies that have covered such areas have remained surprisingly silent about people's life during the 1964 to 1974 war and did little to contribute to compare the experiences of people in the two wars.¹⁸ As this chapter attempts to show, a comparison through the prism of Nkhlongue allows for a better understanding of the local characteristics of both wars.

9.2 The Local History of the War

The Mozambican Civil War is usually said to have lasted from 1976 to 1992. In Mozambique, the war is nowadays often called the 16-year war (*a guerra dos 16 anos*), the Frelimo way of avoiding calling it a civil war. From Nkhlongue's perspective, such a delimitation makes little sense. It was not until 1985 that the first fighting occurred in Lago District. But it would also be mistaken to define the duration of the war according to the occurrence of local fighting, because wars can be felt and feared before they actually reach you directly.

¹⁷ Based on: Mario Joaquim Azevedo, *Tragedy and Triumph: Mozambique Refugees in Southern Africa, 1977–2001* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2002), 33.

¹⁸ For examples, see: Englund, *From War to Peace*; Juergensen, "Peasants on the Periphery."

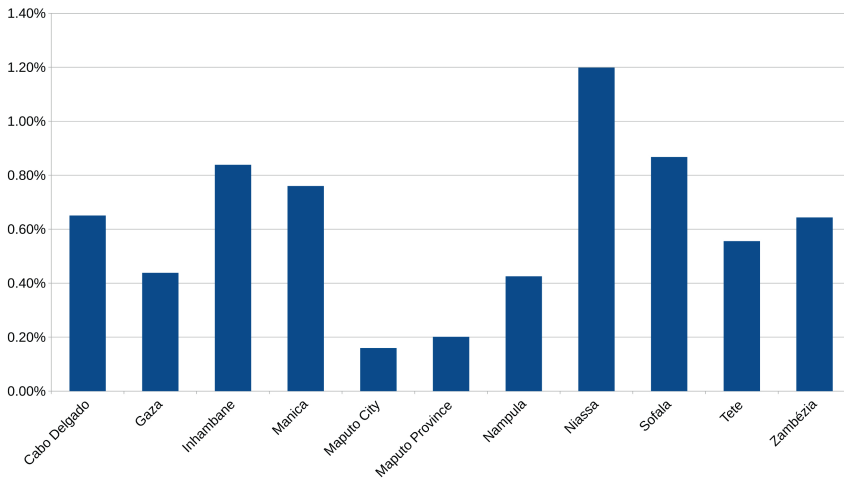


Figure 8: Number of demobilized soldiers as a share of the total population by province.

Recruitment Begins

The first clearly visible effect of the war in the region was certainly the beginning of the forced recruitment of men by government troops. Forced recruitment might sound extremely harsh in this respect. Most countries have some form of compulsory conscription, and rarely one speaks of “forced recruitment” in this context. Still, and apart from the fact that it is what it is, the “forced” nature of conscription in Mozambique probably needs to be emphasized for three reasons:

First, Mozambique was still a very young nation. People were not necessarily identifying themselves as much with the nation or the government as elsewhere. Second, the reach of the government’s bureaucracy was very limited, the knowledge about the place of residence or age of its citizens often rudimentary or non-existent. Conscription was thus by nature a rather arbitrary process and, in the case of Mozambique, also included the recruitment of minors. Last but not least, Frelimo’s recruitment practices differed markedly from those of the late colonial government which had set incentives to attract people to the military or militia service (see Chapter 7).

The experiences of Nkhlongue’s population allow us to assume that the effects of conscription on people’s feelings have been rather underestimated so far. The evidence from my interviews shows that young men increasingly began to flee the country in the early 1980s because they were afraid of being recruited

by the government.¹⁹ Two of my interviewees who were recruited had to serve very long conscription periods of nine years each.²⁰ The younger of them was recruited at an age of only 15 years. According to his testimony, he was just picked up off the street by the army. He managed to escape the first time but was caught again some time later.²¹ One interviewee lost her son who was conscripted and killed in fighting.²²

The Course of the War

As in other parts of the country, Renamo's attacks in the lakeshore area were directed to a large extent against the civilian population. Attacks on villages were used to sow general insecurity, destroy state infrastructure, and capture people and supplies such as food or clothes. Nkhlongue's population was thereby attacked several times.²³ The exact course of the war in Nkhlongue is difficult to reconstruct, since the war left many people traumatized and several people also declined to speak about it in detail, or about it at all. Furthermore, and in compar-

19 PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:29:35; PA, I158: interview with P0764 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, June 20, 2016), min 00:13:01–00:13:54, 00:15:52–00:17:00; PA, I162: interview with P0512 (♀, 1967) (Nkhlongue, June 22, 2016), min 00:32:32–00:30:43.

20 PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:19:46–00:22:10; PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 01:01:38–01:02:24; PA, I036: interview with P0200 (♂, 1970) (Nkhlongue, August 4, 2012).

21 PA, I036: interview with P0200 (♂, 1970) (Nkhlongue, August 4, 2012), min 00:16:06–00:23:52. For the arbitrary nature of recruiting practices by the government, see also: PA, I162: interview with P0512 (♀, 1967) (Nkhlongue, June 22, 2016), min 00:35:06–00:36:27; PA, I133: interview with P1473 (♂ ~1938), P1504 (♀) (Limbi, June 1, 2016), min 00:39:44–00:42:22.

22 PA, I057: interview with P0262 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 01:32:44–01:38:28.

23 The number of attacks that it is claimed to have taken place varies between four and seven. This discrepancy could be partly due to different definitions of the term "attack," but is also attributable to the fact that many villagers did not witness all of the attacks, having left the village after the first attacks. Four attacks were reported by: PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkhlongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:04:39–00:12:06; PA, I069: interview with P0650 (♀, 1939) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:33:52–00:43:15; PA, I071: interview with P0191 (♂, 1965) (Nkhlongue, September 4, 2013), min 00:17:28–00:20:15. Five attacks: PA, I052: interview with (♀, 1940) (Nkhlongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:25:23–00:29:21. Six attacks: PA, I067: interview with P0236 (♂, 1975) (Nkhlongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:09:53–00:16:19. Seven attacks: PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkhlongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:36:39–00:37:26.

ison to the War of Independence, we have almost no written evidence that could be balanced with the oral accounts of the war.²⁴

Still, at least the sequence of the beginning of the war is more or less clear. The first time Renamo appeared on the local scene was in the course of 1986 when Nkhlongue's chief Chingomanje VI and his wife were abducted by Renamo while staying at their maize fields in Mang'ombo (near Malo). The second time was about a week later, probably on October 4, 1986, when a group of about 30 armed Renamo soldiers entered Malango at dusk.²⁵ On that day, about 30 of Malango's inhabitants were abducted, 12 of which were subsequently shot near the Luchemanje river. After the attack on Malango, which will be discussed in detail below, most people fled to Metangula. Some, however, again returned to the village after some male villagers had received training and guns from the government to act as militia.²⁶ The information from my interviews suggests, however, that the militia was not capable of defending the village against further attacks.²⁷ Interviewees indicated that they as a rule ran away when Renamo attacked. And Renamo continued to attack. In another raid, this time on Nkhlongue, Renamo's soldiers abducted six inhabitants, one of which died as a consequence of serious injuries that had been inflicted on her by one Renamo fighter.²⁸

The general insecurity generated by these attacks had a deep impact on people's lives. People did not dare to sleep in their houses any more, as Renamo usually attacked in the evening hours. Instead, they slept in the reeds along the shores of the lake. Everyday activities such as collecting firewood had suddenly become

24 The records of the APGGN seem to be comparatively weak on the war period, and were, in any case, still mostly under "closure period" at the time of my research.

25 The exact date was given by one interviewee, see: PA, I074: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:28:25–00:30:38. The date would fit with the fact that other interviewees stated that the attack happened on a Saturday. See: PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 02:23:41–02:40:28. On the duration between the two incidents, see: PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, September 9, 2013), min 01:11:01–01:11:33.

26 PA, I144: interview with P0411 (♂, 1965) (Nkhlongue, June 8, 2016), min 00:07:41–00:09:46.

27 PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:48:01–00:48:37; PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkhlongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:14:32–00:15:17; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:34:24–00:36:40; PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 01:31:44–01:33:36.

28 PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 01:08:36–01:12:46; PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 02:23:41–02:40:28; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:25:57–00:39:15.

most dangerous.²⁹ Most people abandoned the village at some point. Some fled to Malawi.³⁰ But most went to Metangula. This time, life in Metangula was, however, difficult and many people remained dependent on their fields in the village. One interviewee who was still a child at the time put it like this:

We always depended on here. Life in Metangula was very difficult. For we had no place to get soap, no place to get food. Therefore, whenever there was a calmer period without this movement of war no war, we came back here.³¹

One interviewee described how they paddled here on canoes, harvested their fields as quickly possible and then rushed back to Metangula.³² Another described it like stealing from their own fields.³³ The risks that people were taking were considerable. The just-quoted interviewee recalled how they once came from Metangula to Nkholongue in order to fish. They had put out their nets and were playing soccer in the evening hours. At around 5.30 p.m., they heard a shot coming from the area where today Mbuna Bay is (see Map 4 on p. 374). They managed to escape, but Renamo was able to rob most of their belongings. They slept hidden behind big rocks and returned to Metangula the next day.³⁴ In another attack, the commander of Malango's militia was ambushed and seriously injured by Renamo as he was on his way to the village.³⁵

29 PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkholongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:04:39–00:12:06; PA, I054: interview with P0554 (♀, 1949) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:11:47–00:13:59; PA, I067: interview with P0236 (♂, 1975) (Nkholongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:33:52–00:43:15; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:31:01–00:34:24; PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkholongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:33:16–00:35:19; PA, I069: interview with P0650 (♀, 1939) (Nkholongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:33:52–00:43:15.

30 PA, I007: interview with P0298 (♀, ~1922) (Nkholongue, September 1, 2010), min 01:02:56–01:04:18; PA, I035: interview with P0743 (♀, ~1930), P0765 (♀, ~1932) (Nkholongue, July 28, 2012), min 01:11:34–01:17:16.

31 PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkholongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:02:44–00:03:31. See as well: PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 01:17:12–01:17:53; PA, I057: interview with P0262 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 01:45:26–01:45:56; PA, I085: interview with P0147 (♀, ~1928) (Nkholongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:27:09–00:28:07; PA, I071: interview with P0191 (♂, 1965) (Nkholongue, September 4, 2013), min 00:20:15–00:22:21.

32 PA, I039: interview with P0898 (♀, 1960) (Malango, August 15, 2013), min 00:39:34–00:40:10.
33 PA, I046: interview with P1045 (♀, 1932) (Malango, August 20, 2013), min 00:39:41–00:40:35.

34 PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkholongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:04:39–00:12:06.

35 PA, I159: interview with P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, June 20, 2016), min 00:32:36–00:33:30.

The Two Wars in Comparison

It has been claimed that Frelimo reverted to very similar policies as the Portuguese in fighting the counter-insurgency, using the communal villages in a very similar way to how the Portuguese forces had used the *aldeamentos*.³⁶ However, it seems that the colonial and post-colonial government had quite different priorities. We have already seen in Chapter 7 that the Portuguese state began to follow a strategy that considered the promotion of “rural progress” as more important than the proper military actions. The post-colonial government was guided by different priorities. This is, for example, shown by an internal restricted manual for the communication of the Nkomati accord. It is true that it said that the war against the “bandits” can only be won by a combination of four actions: military, political, diplomatic, and economic. But it left no doubt whatsoever that “[t]he principal, decisive action is the military one.”³⁷ In its guidelines and rhetoric, Frelimo was long convinced that “the armed bandits do not have and will never have a social base.”³⁸

Around the lakeshore, the post-colonial government seems to have never attempted to pursue any sort of counter-insurgency resettlement effort nor were there any comparable attempts to win “the hearts and minds” of the people. Help for refugees in Metangula was most limited.³⁹ Furthermore, there was no sud-

36 Lubkemann, *Culture in Chaos*, 145; Chichava, “They Can Kill Us but We Won’t Go to the Communal Villages!,” 120, 127–128; Hanlon, *The Revolution under Fire*, 128–129; Christian Geffray and Mogens Pedersen, “Nampula en guerre,” *Politique Africaine*, no. 29 (1988): 30; Cabrita, *The Tortuous Road*, 194. In contrast to these observations, Borges Coelho stated that the arrival of the war led to the decline of Frelimo’s villagization scheme in Tete. See: João Paulo Borges Coelho, “State Resettlement Policies in Post-Colonial Rural Mozambique: The Impact of the Communal Village Programme on Tete Province, 1977–1982,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 1 (1998): 86–91.

37 APGGN, 1 A: Guião para o trabalho de esclarecimento sobre as conversações entre Moçambique e África do Sul, Restrito (Maputo, October 7, 1984), 3.

38 APGGN, 1 A: Intervenção de sua Excelência o membro do Bureau Político do Comité Central do Partido Frelimo e Dirigente da Província na recepção dos membros do governo por ocasião do fim do ano de 1985, 7.

39 It seems that the system (*calamidade*) was only set up in the course of the war and remained limited in its extent: PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkhlongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:53:30–00:57:15; PA, I069: interview with P0650 (♀, 1939) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 00:44:35–00:46:24; PA, I073: interview with P1012 (♂, 1955) (Malango, September 5, 2013), min 00:48:03–00:48:45; PA, I067: interview with P0236 (♂, 1975) (Nkhlongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:09:53–00:16:19; PA, I071: interview with P0191 (♂, 1965) (Nkhlongue, September 4, 2013), min 00:20:15–00:22:21.

den rise in income possibilities as during the War of Independence.⁴⁰ One interviewee just laughed disparagingly when asked whether they received any support from the government, and his sister-in-law only groaned “those,” shaking her head.⁴¹

Certainly, this lack of help was partly due to the government's limited capacity. This also becomes evident if one considers that the colonial government had paid militias comparatively high salaries. Frelimo did not pay them a salary at all.⁴² Still, the evidence leaves no doubt that the post-colonial government indeed pursued quite a different war strategy. This is best demonstrated by the statement of the above-quoted interviewee who, with his friends, was caught by a surprise attack by Renamo while fishing on the beach of Nkhlongue. He recalled that a navy boat patrolled the shores in the morning hours after the raid. They called the boat to the shore, told them of the attack, and begged for a ride to Metangula. But despite them being half-naked because Renamo had robbed part of their clothes, the navy soldiers did not take them.⁴³

This incident shows not only that people were disappointed with the support they received from the government, but also that the Frelimo government cared much less about keeping civilians away from the enemy than the colonial government had done. While the Portuguese soldiers would have definitely returned the group to Metangula, the post-colonial government pursued a different strategy that imposed less control over the people, but equally offered them less protection. While the colonial government had tried to concentrate the whole population in a few well-defended locations, Frelimo applied a much more decentralized strategy that was barely able to prevent contacts between the population and the rebels.

This strategy was probably due not only to the fact that Frelimo's possibilities were much more limited than those of the Portuguese had been, but also to the fact that Renamo itself locally pursued a very different strategy than Frelimo had during the War of Independence. It is true that there were certain similarities,

40 PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 01:17:35–01:17:38.

41 PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 01:18:37–01:18:51. See as well: PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:42:33–00:43:00; PA, I054: interview with P0554 (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:52:54–00:53:11; PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkhlongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:36:39–00:37:26; PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkhlongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:14:32–00:15:46.

42 PA, I105: interview with P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, April 4, 2016), min 01:35:00–01:35:42.

43 PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkhlongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:04:39–00:12:06.

like for example the fact that Renamo had its bases in much the same areas as Frelimo during the previous war. But there is no doubt that, otherwise, their approaches could not have been much different.

We have seen in the previous chapter that Frelimo had tried to mobilize the people politically at the beginning of the War of Independence. Renamo's efforts in this respect were quasi non-existent. If politicization happened, then, it seems it was only after the abduction of people.⁴⁴ Or, as one of the survivors of Renamo's fatal attack on Malango put it:

Nobody came saying, "We are now the group of Renamo," "We have the following program with the following objectives." No, that did not happen. It just came this day when they came to take us.⁴⁵

Furthermore, Renamo's attacks were marked by a very high degree of violence. Even around Tulo, Renamo's local stronghold during the war, I was unable to find people who had not been first forcibly recruited by Renamo.⁴⁶ This perfectly fits with the general pattern that has been observed by scholars for most other regions of Mozambique.⁴⁷

However, this does not mean that Renamo did not try to convince people politically once they had been abducted. This is demonstrated by the case of Nkhlongue's chief, Chingomanje VI. As he was taken by Renamo while in his fields near Malo, we cannot be entirely sure whether the general assertion by interviewees that he was abducted is indeed correct. We also do not know whether the Renamo soldiers were aware of the fact that they had targeted a chief. In any case, the evidence clearly shows that Renamo was well aware of it later. This is because Chingomanje VI was "re-instated" as a chief at Renamo's base, first at Chilotochi and, later, at Tulo. If we follow my interviewees, he was highly esteemed by Rena-

44 This difference has also been very well analyzed by one of my interviewees: PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 01:03:06–01:04:23.

45 PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:22:54–00:23:48. See as well: PA, I083: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932), P1074 (♀, ~1940), P1141 (♂, 1932) (Malango, September 8, 2013), min 01:16:28–01:20:23.

46 PA, I102: interview with P1509 (♂, 1972), P1510 (♀), P1511 (♀), P1512 (♀) (Tulo, February 22, 2016), min 00:05:03–00:09:20, 00:47:31–00:51:56.

47 The results of Carrie Manning are especially interesting in this respect, as she shows that even among Renamo's later party cadres a high number was initially recruited against their will. See: Carrie Manning, "Constructing Opposition in Mozambique: Renamo as Political Party," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 24, no. 1 (1998): 161–89; Jessica Schafer, *Soldiers at Peace: Veterans and Society after the Civil War in Mozambique* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 58; William Minter, "Inside Renamo as Described by Ex-Participants," *Transformation*, no. 10 (1989): 5.

mo for his alleged spiritual powers. As such, he performed ritual ceremonies for the fighters and, according to one interviewee, also counseled them on military questions as he was said to have been capable of foreseeing the enemies' movements.⁴⁸ To sum up, Chingomanje VI served Renamo as a kind of personified demonstration of their political aim to reverse Frelimo's modernization policies.

Renamo's Fatal Attacks

Chingomanje's role with regard to the attacks on Malango and Nkhlongue is controversial. While some considered or asserted that he sent the soldiers in order to bring "his people" to him,⁴⁹ others denied the possibility that the soldiers might have acted on his command in this respect.⁵⁰ One interviewee, an influential person from Metangula, accused him of having sent the soldiers to explicitly kill certain people.⁵¹ Others, though, clearly defended him and said that he did what he could to save people. This included one of the few who spoke of Frelimo in appreciative terms.⁵² One who was originally from Messumba but had married into Nkhlongue, stated that Chingomanje helped his people, but simultaneously accused Chingomanje's wife of having sent Renamo to kill certain individuals.⁵³

In any case, the version of Chingomanje having ordered specific killings seems rather implausible. This becomes clear if one looks at the course of Renamo's fatal attack on the village. According to my interviewees, Renamo gathered people indiscriminately, without regard to their age or sex.⁵⁴ It seems that Renamo's (non-)se-

48 PA, I102: interview with P1509 (♂, 1972), P1510 (♀), P1511 (♀), P1512 (♀) (Tulo, February 22, 2016), min 00:38:47–00:43:09; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 01:03:55–01:06:59; PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:39:45–00:40:45; PA, I036: interview with P0200 (♂, 1970) (Nkhlongue, August 4, 2012), min 00:27:09–00:29:24, 00:34:13–00:40:42; PA, I075: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:55:05–00:58:33.

49 PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkhlongue, June 9, 2012), min 00:21:56–00:23:22; PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:33:08–00:33:44; PA, I151: interview with P1108 (♂, ~1973) (M'chepa, June 15, 2016), min 00:15:12–00:16:30.

50 PA, I072: interview with P0262 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, September 5, 2013), min 00:29:56–00:33:44; PA, I036: interview with P0200 (♂, 1970) (Nkhlongue, August 4, 2012), min 00:29:30–00:30:42.

51 PA, I077: interview with P1489 (♂) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:24:33–00:30:04.

52 PA, I075: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:55:05–00:58:33; PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkhlongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:41:35–00:43:21.

53 PA, I036: interview with P0200 (♂, 1970) (Nkhlongue, August 4, 2012), min 00:40:51–00:43:47.

54 PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:55:52–00:57:04; PA, I114: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940), P1141 (♂, 1932) (Malango, April 15,

lection mainly depended on where they lived and what they owned rather than everything else. One has to imagine that it was already dark when Renamo arrived at the village.⁵⁵ One of the survivors of that night stated that most victims came from two specific zones in the village and explained it thus:

Well, Sengenya was the place where they first arrived. And in the other place they heard the goats bleating. So then they went to Mr. X to the goat shed.⁵⁶

Renamo was not only interested in capturing people but above all food (including animals) and other goods. The people who were captured by Renamo had to carry these goods. This was no different on that night. As already stated, about 30 people including men, women and children were forced to go with Renamo into the forests.⁵⁷

After the Luchemanje river, the soldiers began to separate the captives. The reasoning behind this separation is not entirely clear, and, if we follow statements of survivors, there was no visible selection criteria. In any case, people were told by the soldiers that one group was to proceed to Renamo's base and the other to return to the village.⁵⁸ Meanwhile, the government had received information about Renamo's raid on Malango. One interviewee stated that a man cutting bamboo in the forest had sighted the group and alarmed the government's detachment at Mi-

2016), min 01:51:48–01:52:52. See as well: PA, I094: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M'chepa, January 27, 2016), min 01:17:43–01:18:09. One interviewee, however, guessed that her husband might have been killed because they found his Frelimo membership card in their house. She was, though, not in the village during the attack. See: PA, I075: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:31:02–00:34:12, 00:43:04–00:49:20.

55 PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:22:54–00:23:48.

56 PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:40:18–00:40:27.

57 PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:25:53–00:26:22.

58 For the accounts of the survivors, see: PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:24:29–00:25:23; PA, I151: interview with P1108 (♂, ~1973) (M'chepa, June 15, 2016), min 00:10:33–00:18:40. For other accounts describing the incident, see: PA, I114: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940), P1141 (♂, 1932) (Malango, April 15, 2016), min 01:51:48–01:59:02; PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 02:45:18–02:47:09; PA, I040: interview with P1030 (♀, 1965), P1009 (♀, 1958), P1029 (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 01:10:36–01:12:41.

cucué. The government troops pursued the rebels and managed to intercept the one group that was still on its way to the base.⁵⁹

According to my interviewees, the captives from this group were all able to escape. It was the other group on its way back to the village that contained the victims.⁶⁰ One survivor of this group stated that it was shortly after they had heard shots, obviously coming from the fighting between the other group and the government troops, that the rebels began to kill them.⁶¹ At least 12 of Malango's inhabitants perished on that day.⁶² They were not only shot, but their bodies were apparently also mutilated. One interviewee stated that they had difficulties burying them properly.⁶³

Renamo's brutality was equally demonstrated during their attack on Nkholongue when they captured six people (four women, one man, and one baby). Again, we can observe a similar pattern: at some point in the forest, the group was separated. One woman, a niece of Nkholongue's chief in the matrilineal line, was said to be sent back to the village. The exact circumstances of what happened then are not entirely clear. But a rebel is said to have made her jump alive into a fire after they had some sort of argument. She initially survived, but later died of her injuries in Maniamba. Of the five others of this group, the man managed to escape at an unknown point of their journey. The three others (plus the baby) were carried up to Renamo's base at Chilotochi. Two of them (including the baby) managed to escape from Renamo after about a week when they had been sent to rob food from people's fields near Maniamba. The other stayed with Renamo until the end of the war.⁶⁴

59 For the interviewee who reported that the man cutting bamboo informed the troops, see: PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 02:23:14–02:40:28. For other accounts, see: PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 02:45:18–02:49:48; PA, I151: interview with P1108 (♂, ~1973) (M'chepe, June 15, 2016), min 00:11:49–00:15:08.

60 PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:28:06–00:28:44.

61 PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:28:54–00:31:07. See as well: PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 02:47:10–02:49:48.

62 PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:26:10–00:26:22; PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 02:23:41–02:40:28.

63 PA, I058: interview with P1074 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, August 28, 2013), min 02:23:41–02:40:28.

64 PA, I078: interview with P0258 (♂, 1953) (Nkholongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:33:16–00:35:19; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:36:40–00:39:15; PA, I080: interview with P0641 (♂, 1952) (Nkholongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:05:15–00:07:35, 00:35:30–00:39:04; PA, I036: interview with P0200 (♂, 1970) (Nkholongue,

These events show that the use of violence by Renamo against the villagers of Nkhlongue was indiscriminate as far as the selection of victims is concerned but probably also calculated to demonstrate what could happen to those who opposed the rebels. They also provide an approximate idea of the atmosphere that prevailed at that time around Nkhlongue. They allow us to understand that one interviewee, who had lost several family members during the attack on Malango, declined to talk to us about the history as he was understandably still left traumatized by this tragedy.⁶⁵ There is little doubt that Renamo's brutal behavior also included a high degree of sexual violence. One woman retold how in one attack her clothes were pulled away by a soldier so that she was naked, and related how she was beaten.⁶⁶ The one woman who stayed with Renamo until the end of the war also declined to speak with us on the grounds that she had seen too many sad things and was thus not willing to think about the past.⁶⁷

It is difficult to understand that people, in the light of these events, would still return to the village during the war and rather not just stay in Metangula where Renamo never entered. But the fact that they returned nevertheless clearly suggests that the living conditions in Metangula must have been very difficult. Almost all villagers remembered the Civil War as having definitely been the worse war.⁶⁸ One man from M'chepa compared the two wars as follows in MLM's oral history project:

The colonial war was somewhat normal because they did not kill. They did not have this law [of killing].⁶⁹

August 4, 2012), min 00:05:59–00:16:06; PA, I005: interview with *P0641* (♂, 1952) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2010), min 01:36:57–01:40:59.

⁶⁵ This occurred on August 19, 2013, in Metangula, where the person had lived ever since.

⁶⁶ PA, I052: interview with *P0940* (♀, 1940) (Nkhlongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:40:44–00:42:10.

⁶⁷ She did not live in Nkhlongue/Malango at the time of fieldwork, but in a neighboring village.

⁶⁸ PA, I040: interview with *P1030* (♀, 1965), *P1009* (♀, 1958), *P1029* (♂, ~1959) (Malango, August 16, 2013), min 01:18:03–01:18:37; PA, I052: interview with *P0940* (♀, 1940) (Nkhlongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:29:21–00:30:09; PA, I042: interview with *P1193* (♀, 1953) (Malango, August 17, 2013), min 00:50:44–00:50:57; PA, I073: interview with *P1012* (♂, 1955) (Malango, September 5, 2013), min 01:01:11–01:02:59; PA, I115: interview with *P0160* (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 01:02:47–01:03:04; PA, I054: interview with *P0554* (♀, 1949) (Nkhlongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:11:47–00:13:54.

⁶⁹ MLM, 028: interview with A. A., Portuguese translation of the Chinyanja transcript (M'chepa, June 28, 2007). See as well: PA, I115: interview with *P0160* (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 01:03:06–01:04:23.

9.3 How Renamo Victims Became Renamo Supporters

Maybe one of the greatest surprises in Nkhlongue's history is the fact that inhabitants of a village that had suffered several violent attacks by a rebel group became political supporters of this very group. Renamo's local political post-war success is visible in at least three different ways. First, Renamo performed surprisingly well in both the 1994 and the 1999 elections. Second, several men from the region became Renamo members after the war. And, third, it is Renamo's narrative of the war that clearly dominates people's perception of the course and causes of the war. Let us first have a look at the election results.

Mozambique's First Multi-Party Elections of 1994

Renamo's performance in Mozambique's first multi-party elections of 1994 was not only surprising on the local but also the national level. International observers were startled that this rebel group, above all known for its war atrocities, was able to win as much support as it did.⁷⁰ In the legislative elections, Renamo won 37.8 percent of the votes and thus not that significantly less than Frelimo with 44.3 percent. Renamo was able to win a majority in five of the countries' 11 provinces. The results were somewhat clearer in the presidential elections, where Mozambique's president Joaquim Chissano defeated Renamo's leader Afonso Dhlakama with 53.3 percent to 33.7 percent, but even here Dhlakama performed better than Chissano in five provinces. Renamo was able to further improve its results in the second elections of 1999 when the party secured 39 percent in the legislative and even 47.7 percent in the presidential elections.

Seen from a continental perspective, Renamo's political post-war performance is quite unique. Renamo performed clearly above average in the post-war elections in comparison to other former rebel movements like the RUF in Sierra Leone or UNITA in Angola.⁷¹ In the 1990s, Renamo even temporarily became the largest opposition party of the whole continent.⁷²

The results on the level of Niassa Province are especially interesting. Niassa was the only province that switched sides between the elections. While Frelimo

⁷⁰ Carrie Manning, *The Politics of Peace in Mozambique: Post-Conflict Democratization, 1992–2000* (Westport: Praeger, 2002), 170; Vines, "Renamo's Rise and Decline," 383. The results probably surprised Vines himself. See: Alex Vines, *Renamo: Terrorism in Mozambique* (London: James Currey, 1991), 131–132.

⁷¹ Vines, "Renamo's Rise and Decline," 375, 390.

⁷² Vines, 383.

did better in the 1994 elections, Renamo won the 1999 elections. But on the level of the district of Lago, the situation was again different, with Frelimo winning both elections. If we, however, zoom further in we can see that while Frelimo won the district as a whole the party performed much worse in the predominantly Muslim areas of the district and thus also in Nkhlongue's ward. There are no official results available on the village level for the first elections as it was only from 2009 onward that the village had its own polling station. In 1994, the villagers had to go to Meluluca, and in 1999 and 2004, to M'chepa.

	Chissano/ Frelimo	Dhlakama/ Renamo	Others	Blank votes	Invalid votes	Turnout	Voters registered
1994 Pres Meluluca	660 (36.9%)	553 (30.9%)	574 (32.1%)	102 (5.1%)	101 (5.1%)	1,990 (91.5%)	2,174
Country	53.3%	33.7%	13%				
1994 Leg Meluluca	439 (26.8%)	677 (41.3%)	525 (32.0%)	235 (11.8%)	110 (5.5%)	1,986 (91.4%)	2,174
Country	44.3%	37.8%	17.9%				

Table 9: Election results, 1994.

Table 9 shows the results of the 1994 elections of the polling station of Meluluca. A look at these elections results reveals some surprises. Renamo did not only perform unexpectedly well but was even able to beat Frelimo in the legislative elections. The biggest surprise and clearest deviation from national patterns, however, is the considerable success of third parties and their presidential candidates at the cost of a clearly below average Frelimo performance. Frelimo's bad performance in Meluluca was more pronounced in the 1999 elections and even more so if we zoom in to Nkhlongue's polling station in M'chepa (see Table 10). Here, Dhlakama was able to win a landslide victory of almost 74 percent of the votes in the presidential elections. How can we explain the outcome of these elections?

	Chissano/ Frelimo	Dhlakama/ Renamo	Others	Blank votes	Invalid votes	Turnout	Voters registered
1999 Pres M'chepa	150 (26.1%)	424 (73.9%)	-	34 (5.5%)	11 (1.8%)	619 (72.6%)	853
1999 Leg M'chepa	116 (24.0%)	301 (62.2%)	67 (13.8%)	72 (12.1%)	39 (6.6%)	595 (69.8%)	853

Table 10: Election results, 1999.

If the 1994 elections showed anything, it was probably how unpopular Frelimo was in the region. The discrepancy between the presidential and legislative elections can probably be explained by three interrelated phenomena: first, we can ponder whether some people did not understand properly the aim and objective of the legislative elections or were pretty ignorant about them. This is somewhat supported by the relative high number of blank votes. Second, we can guess that the splitting of the vote was a deliberate strategy of some voters to ensure the continuation of the peace process.⁷³ Third, and probably most importantly, we can suppose that the popularity of the parties and their leaders differed. The information from my interviews suggests that Chissano was more popular than his party because he was credited with having ended the problems in the supply of goods such as salt and clothing, and with ending the war.⁷⁴ The results also suggest that Renamo's attraction was initially indeed somewhat limited, as it could only partly build on Frelimo's unpopularity, with such a high percentage of votes going to third parties. These votes were also not centered on one party, but rather distributed over many.

Renamo's Supporters

Still, in light of the war events just described, the question arises as to how Renamo could attract so much support in the 1994 elections and even more in the 1999 elections. Of course, one could consider that it was not Nkhlongue's population who voted for Renamo but those of neighboring villages who voted at the same polling station. However, Renamo's local post-war success is not only suggested by the official results of the elections, but also very much supported by the statements of different interviewees. To make it clear: some of my interviewees categorically ruled out the possibility of ever voting for Renamo, saying that they could never

73 Vines claimed that this happened in various parts of the country, but without providing evidence. See: Vines, 382.

74 PA, I076: interview with P1449 (♂, ~1948) (Metangula, September 6, 2013), min 00:27:52–00:30:52; PA, I084: interview with P1451 (♂, 1949) (Nkhlongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:40:12–00:43:02; PA, I118: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Malango, April 21, 2016), min 01:34:49–01:35:30; PA, I124: interview with P0376 (♂, 1968) (Nkhlongue, April 26, 2016), min 01:12:08–01:13:28; PA, I083: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932), P1074 (♀, ~1940), P1141 (♂, 1932) (Malango, September 8, 2013), min 01:20:23–01:22:03; PA, I161: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, June 22, 2016), min 00:29:02–00:31:09. The fact that Chissano was more popular than Frelimo is also reflected in the countrywide results of the 1994 elections. This outcome was also anticipated by international media shortly before the elections. See: Bill Keller, "Mozambique Voting Today in First Free Election," *The New York Times*, October 27, 1994, accessed January 4, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/1994/10/27/world/mozambique-voting-today-in-first-free-election.html>.

vote for a group that had caused them that much suffering.⁷⁵ But others were less clear in this respect. One interviewee explicitly stated that a thing that is bad for somebody can be good for somebody else.⁷⁶ Some thought out loud that, maybe, those who had lost no direct relatives may have voted for Renamo.⁷⁷ While some, and these are the most interesting cases for the inquiry here in question, admitted their open support for Renamo. One of them had even been a survivor of Renamo's fatal attack on Malango. He was, however, not in the group that was sent back to the village and contained the victims, but in the other that was intercepted by the government troops.⁷⁸

The interesting thing is that all Renamo supporters who I interviewed claimed that they only became supporters of the party after the war. The two villagers, who openly admitted their Renamo membership, claimed that they only joined Renamo in 1992/1993.⁷⁹ One of them, who had been in Malawi during the war, described his integration into Renamo like this:

Then, in 1993, I came [back] here. [...] Now, it was when these gatherings of Renamo started that I finally began to realize: "aha, they were fighting for our liberty." Because for much of time here we did not live well with Frelimo. They prohibited the chief and the children's ceremony, this *jando*.⁸⁰

Similarly, other interviewees who identified as Renamo supporters explained that they had not known what Renamo had actually been fighting for.⁸¹ Even Renamo's district delegate at time of my fieldwork, living in the neighboring village of M'che-

75 PA, I052: interview with P1218 (♀, 1940) (Nkholongue, August 26, 2013), min 00:42:10–00:44:02. See as well: PA, I118: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Malango, April 21, 2016), min 01:57:40–02:00:22.

76 PA, I062: interview with P0713 (♂, 1944) (Nkholongue, August 30, 2013), min 00:55:55–00:57:33.

77 PA, I080: interview with P0641 (♂, 1952) (Nkholongue, September 7, 2013), min 00:50:45–00:53:14; PA, I118: interview with P1218 (♀, 1930) (Malango, April 21, 2016), min 01:58:07–01:58:19; PA, I055: interview with P0639 (♀, ~1952) (Nkholongue, August 27, 2013), min 00:41:17–00:42:59. Even a Renamo supporter indicated this: PA, I141: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, June 6, 2016), min 01:08:02–01:08:26.

78 PA, I151: interview with P1108 (♂, ~1973) (M'chepa, June 15, 2016), min 00:10:33–00:20:37.

79 PA, I141: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, June 6, 2016), min 00:33:02–00:34:38; PA, I151: interview with P1108 (♂, ~1973) (M'chepa, June 15, 2016), 00:18:40–00:18:53.

80 PA, I141: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, June 6, 2016), min 00:33:02–00:34:38. See as well his statement in the 2013 interview, when he did not yet reveal his membership but explained the population's support in very similar terms: PA, I086: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, September 9, 2013), min 00:35:31–00:36:46.

81 PA, I083: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932), P1074 (♀, ~1940), P1141 (♂, 1932) (Malango, September 8, 2013), min 01:15:06–01:20:23; PA, I082: interview with P1141 (♂, 1932) (Malango, September 8, 2013), min 00:42:18–00:48:37.

pa, only joined Renamo in 1993.⁸² When asked if he had not thought of joining Renamo during the war, he replied as follows:

I didn't think that way because I actually didn't know what the motive, the objective of the war was.⁸³

Interestingly, another Renamo sympathizer argued not only that they did not know what Renamo was fighting for during the war, but also that Renamo may not have known how the people of Nkhlongue and Malango were feeling about Frelimo.⁸⁴ She thus attempted to explain the indiscriminate violence Renamo had inflicted on them. In doing so, she perfectly reflected what Stathis Kalyvas has called the "identification problem," the "inability to tell friend from enemy" in irregular wars.⁸⁵ Certainly, such statements about lack of knowledge and involvement could also be interpreted as a deliberate (retrospective) strategy of evading responsibility.⁸⁶ However, I think that they were genuine, not only because they were generally consistent with the narratives presented as a whole but also given the fact that many who made them could just as easily have concealed their post-war allegiance to Renamo, especially since there seemed to be little objective advantage to being an overt Renamo supporter at the time of my fieldwork.

The Preponderance of Renamo's Version of History

All the evidence points to the fact that Renamo locally ran a quite successful election campaign that obviously perfectly resonated with people's grievances about Frelimo's post-colonial policies.⁸⁷ This success did not always necessarily translate into political support but is perfectly demonstrated by the fact that Renamo was

⁸² He had previously been a member of Frelimo. Furthermore, he had worked in a *loja de povo* ('people's shop') in Lichinga and, later, for the parastatal trading company Agricom. See: PA, I081: interview with P1450 (♂, 1961) (M'chepa, September 8, 2013), min 00:11:53–00:13:19, 00:40:49–00:42:55.

⁸³ PA, I081: interview with P1450 (♂, 1961) (M'chepa, September 8, 2013), min 00:15:16–00:15:25.

⁸⁴ PA, I083: interview with P1102 (♂, 1932), P1074 (♀, ~1940), P1141 (♂, 1932) (Malango, September 8, 2013), min 01:16:28–01:18:20.

⁸⁵ Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 89–91.

⁸⁶ Similar statements about lack of knowledge and involvement have been gathered by other scholars. See for example: Sheldon, *Pounders of Grain*, 196.

⁸⁷ See especially: PA, I144: interview with P0411 (♂, 1965) (Nkhlongue, June 8, 2016), min 00:25:07–00:28:54; PA, I068: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkhlongue, September 2, 2013), min 01:18:37–01:23:10; PA, I072: interview with P0262 (♀, ~1940) (Malango, September 5, 2013), 00:35:55–00:43:21.

most successful in spreading its version of history. Thus, my interviewees were pretty unequivocal in explaining the causes of the Civil War as a consequence of inner conflicts, as a split within Frelimo, or as some put it: “Renamo was born from Frelimo.”⁸⁸ This is exactly what Renamo’s propaganda was all about after the war.⁸⁹ Renamo’s success in steering people’s perception of the cause of the war is even more astonishing if one considers how much energy Frelimo had formerly put into their version of depicting Renamo as an externally driven terrorist movement. One interviewee answered my question of whether they did not learn Frelimo’s external version at school by saying, “we learned it, but we forgot it.”⁹⁰ Many interviewees credited Renamo or Dhlakama with having ended Frelimo’s unpopular policies and having brought democracy to the country,⁹¹ another of Renamo’s often-made claims.⁹²

Who are the people who have supported Renamo on the one and Frelimo on the other? There is no clear pattern recognizable. Equally, we cannot see too many ideological continuities. Rather, the evidence points to the fact that many people have adapted to new situations quite undogmatically and nominal membership does also not mean that people necessarily really identify with their party. The commander of Malango’s militias during the Civil War was a former GE. Later, he even served as a village secretary for Frelimo.⁹³ One of two Renamo members who joined the party shortly after the war had been the head of Frelimo’s youth

88 PA, I115: interview with P0160 (♂, 1952) (Metangula, April 18, 2016), min 02:14:10–02:17:32; PA, I158: interview with P0764 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, June 20, 2016), min 00:45:08–00:46:15; PA, I037: interview with P0855 (♂, 1954) (Malango, August 14, 2013), min 01:04:36–01:06:06; PA, I067: interview with P0236 (♂, 1975) (Nkholongue, September 1, 2013), min 00:24:09–00:25:18; PA, I094: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M’chepe, January 27, 2016), min 01:08:02–01:09:25; PA, I113: interview with P0367 (♂, 1936) (Nkholongue, April 13, 2016), min 01:01:13–01:03:44. Even Frelimo supporters advocated for this theory. See: PA, I064: interview with P1447 (♂, 1969) (M’chepe, August 31, 2013), min 00:18:57–00:22:29. The story told very much resembled that heard by Juergensen in Angónia (Tete). See: Juergensen, “Peasants on the Periphery,” 299.

89 Manning, *The Politics of Peace in Mozambique*, 142.

90 PA, I158: interview with P0764 (♂, 1962) (Nkholongue, June 20, 2016), min 00:46:23–00:00:46:50.

91 PA, I033: interview with P0643 (♂, 1981) (Nkholongue, June 9, 2012), min 01:59:14–02:00:31; PA, I151: interview with P1108 (♂, ~1973) (M’chepe, June 15, 2016), 00:19:42–00:20:36; PA, I145: interview with P0284 (♂, 1966), P0273 (♀, 1950) (Metangula, June 9, 2016), min 00:44:44–00:45:43; PA, I071: interview with P0191 (♂, 1965) (Nkholongue, September 4, 2013), min 00:28:27–00:32:42; PA, I094: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M’chepe, January 27, 2016), min 01:02:35–01:02:42; PA, I127: interview with P1468 (♂), P1469 (♂), P1470 (♂), P1471 (♀) (Malo, May 2, 2016), min 02:00:05–02:01:06; PA, I160: interview with P0727 (♂, ~1940) (M’chepe, June 22, 2016), min 00:07:59–00:08:41.

92 Manning, *The Politics of Peace in Mozambique*, 142, 209.

93 PA, I105: interview with P0242 (♂, 1945) (Malango, April 4, 2016), min 01:30:08–01:35:00.

movement in the village after the war.⁹⁴ He explained his later membership in Renamo not only with Frelimo's unpopular socialist policies but also with the fact that the police had put him in jail for about a week as he had been caught smuggling.⁹⁵ His brother was a Frelimo party member at the time of fieldwork, flying Frelimo's flag. But he, too, was in fact very critical of Frelimo.⁹⁶ The other Renamo member claimed that he joined Renamo above all because the government did not help his family with the burial of his brother who had been conscripted by the government and killed in fighting.⁹⁷

It can certainly be assumed that Nkhlongue's chief played some role in the post-war success of Renamo in the village. For he returned to the village after the war, and, obviously, remained a member of Renamo until his death from cholera in 1999.⁹⁸ His concrete role in the village and his influence on village politics after the war remains unclear. Statements from the interviews suggest that he indeed enjoyed some sort of political respect in the 1990s and that many did not blame him for his role during the war. We can assume in this regard that people's own awareness of their limited agency also facilitated local reconciliation after the war, at least to some degree.

In any case, it seems quite evident that Renamo's post-war success was owed in large part to the great lack of credibility that Frelimo had among Nkhlongue's population as a consequence of its previous behavior that has been discussed in Chapters 7 and 8. This lack of credibility almost certainly also explains why Renamo was locally so successful in spreading its version of the history of the Civil War in spite of Frelimo's predominant position in national media and public discourse.

9.4 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to explore the question of why parts of Nkhlongue's government-alienated population did not become Renamo supporters from the outset, but did so only after the war, when such a move seemed rather irrational at first glance. It has also examined the question of why Renamo's brutal war past did not affect its political appeal in the post-war period.

Although the results are not conclusive, some observations can be made. As for the first question, we have seen that Renamo locally did not appear very much like

⁹⁴ PA, I141: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, June 6, 2016), min 00:35:25–00:37:56.

⁹⁵ PA, I141: interview with P0375 (♂, 1962) (Nkhlongue, June 6, 2016), min 00:51:04–00:56:05.

⁹⁶ PA, I124: interview with P0376 (♂, 1968) (Nkhlongue, April 26, 2016).

⁹⁷ PA, I151: interview with P1108 (♂, ~1973) (M'chepe, June 15, 2016), min 00:00:20–00:06:11.

⁹⁸ I saw his Renamo membership card in 2010, which was then still kept by one of his relatives.

a political actor during the war. Most people did not know what Renamo was fighting for. Its recruitment practices totally differed from those Frelimo had used at the beginning of the War of Independence. As for the second question, I have argued that Renamo's post-war success must probably be explained with Frelimo's local unpopularity, its lack of credibility, and the lack of support that the government provided to people during the war. Conscription might also have played a role. In any case, my findings show that Renamo was locally pretty successful in blaming Frelimo (and above all Samora Machel) for the war.

My findings, even if not conclusive, can contribute to previous research on the war in at least four ways. First, they show that the revisionists' claim that Renamo gained a social base during the war cannot be transferred to every setting in (northern) Mozambique where people resented Frelimo, and also not to every setting where Renamo achieved political successes after the war. Second, and related to this first point, they show that in the case of the lakeshore area, Renamo made little attempt at political mobilization during the war. Chingomanje may have been re-instated as chief in Renamo's camp during the war, but he had also been forcibly recruited in the first place. Broad political mobilization began only after the war had ended. Third, my research has emphasized that the effects of state conscription on people's perceptions has so far most likely been underestimated. Finally, the various changes in political affiliation among individual villagers over the course of the two wars and beyond point to what might appear to be considerable ideological flexibility. In the end, however, they probably show above all that local perspectives had little to do with the dogmas and ideas being discussed among the national and international intelligentsia.