The Systemic Impacts of War:
Child Soldiers and Artists in Mozambique, A Cultural and Structural Analysis

by

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Abstract

Between 1976 and 1992 a vicious armed conflict raged in Mozambique. This history provides essential background for the thesis that explores the impact of armed conflict on individuals who were under 18 at the time. These include former child soldiers and others who have dealt with the experience of war by transforming weapons into art. Eleven years after a peace accord was signed in Mozambique, former child soldiers and artists were interviewed to explore their experiences.

Understanding the Mozambican conflict and its impact on young people requires an examination of international frameworks. The thesis examines the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* and the limits of a 'rights-based perspective'. The use of children in war requires an understanding of the nature of 'new wars'. The argument is made that conditions created by global institutions and other global factors are as important to understanding the current problems former child soldiers face, as is their historical experience.

The Turning Arms into Ploughshares (TAE) project is a disarmament initiative that exchanges weapons for development tools. Study participants were related to this project. The thesis provides a structural analysis of macro conditions influencing their lives. While attention is paid to global considerations, the role of cultural practices and impacts on healing and reconciliation are noted.

The thesis uses a critical cultural studies perspective, based on the work of the Frankfurt School (Adorno, Horkemier, Marcuse and Fromm). Five themes explore the experience and problems confronting former child soldiers and young artists. These are: (1) Education, War and Lost Social Opportunity, (2) Marginalization and Meaning, (3) Exchanging Guns: why bother and for what? (4) Being and Becoming: Healing and Recovery and (5) Art and the Culture of Hope.

The conclusion addresses approaches to social work practice in international settings and the importance of considering global and historical factors when working with children affected by war and living in post-conflict settings. The work cautions against overemphasizing the uniqueness of individual experience and failing to pay adequate attention to needs all human beings have in common, and structural realities increasingly affecting all children, worldwide.

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"*We see what we think we see, but we need to dig beyond to see what might really be happening.*" [Chair made of weapons, Africa Art Section, British Museum, London]

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is based on research originally part of a larger project in which I participated in Mozambique during the summer of 2003. In 1992 a Peace Accord was brokered between the Frelimo government of Mozambique and Renamo forces. This ended a 16 year armed struggle that preceded a ten-year liberation movement for independence (gained in 1975). CUSO – a Canadian volunteer- sending NGO – has worked in Mozambique since the late 1970s. In 1995, the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM) initiated a project designed to remove weapons from the civilian population of the country, following the many years of armed conflict. In 1996, CCM on a 'foot march' approached CUSO for funding support. Consequently, CUSO approached the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for financial support. The Canadian government then supported the 'Turning Arms into Ploughshares' (TAE) project through three grants in 1997, 1998 and 2000, administered by CUSO.

At the end of the last funding period, CUSO set out to evaluate the TAE project. They approached Frank Tester at the School of Social Work and Family Studies UBC, who had a history of involvement with CUSO and international development work. As I am interested in international social work practice I was asked to assist in the evaluation. Fieldwork in Mozambique stirred a particular interest. My first language is Portuguese. As a child I remember, when visiting family in the Açores, hearing about the colonial wars in Angola and Mozambique. Having visited Mozambique, one of the world's poorest countries, I found the people extremely generous, always willing to give when they themselves had very little.

My interest in international social work has been to work with young people. The focus of my thesis became the experiences of former child soldiers and young people affected by war. 'Making sense' of their experiences is the focus of this thesis. My hope in producing this work is that I have done justice to the voices of young people who had their lives disrupted by armed conflict. In working to understand the experiences of young people affected by armed conflict, I struggled with the problem of how one

conducts research *for* a population instead of *on* a population. It is critical for social workers to believe that their work is productive in that it serves a useful purpose and results in insights that help to redirect or improve the way in which we practice. Social work can be approached as 'charitable work' or it can be seen as an exercise in the struggle for social justice. I would like to think that this has been an exercise in making a contribution to social justice work by looking at both the micro and the macro considerations important to the lives of young people affected by armed conflict in Mozambique. Social justice means addressing the social conditions that affect people's lives versus working with individuals to help them 'cope' better with their circumstances. At times, social work practice takes this latter form.

As a social worker with a background in practice with at-risk populations I am interested in the current status of youth in society and am sensible to their realities. The work of writing this thesis has been a process and it does not end with the final chapter. I invite the reader to be critical and hope that the work opens further dialogues about social justice issues pertaining to children and youth. In the text, I have attempted to deal with two things at the same time: the context in which we practice as well as the realities of individuals who, in this case, have lived lives affected by events that most Canadians cannot easily appreciate. I have always recognized that culture plays an important role in identity and who we are, so in writing this thesis, I looked for ways of making sense of culture and cultural experience. I am aware that there are always different ways of making sense of lived realities. Therefore, I sought out theoretical ideas that deal with culture. The one that I have focused on is the work of the Frankfurt School and Critical theory. What I appreciate about Critical theory is the way it looks at the individual and structures of society at the same time in making sense of human experience.

Excerpts from the interviews conducted in Mozambique are noted in the text in italics. The participants are identified by their first names only. This provides the young people who were interviewed with some anonymity. Other people who were interviewed are public figures and their full names are given, as well as the dates on which they were

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interviewed. The photographs included in the text were taken by myself and Frank Tester in the context of the research we conducted in Mozambique.

In Chapter One, I talk about the contexts in which children faced with armed conflict live: their economic and social circumstances and how international institutions are affecting their lives. In Chapter Two I present the history of Mozambique and the circumstances that contributed to the so-called 'civil' war in the country. Although the chapter is somewhat detailed I felt it was important to explain the historical circumstances that led up to the armed conflict and the impact on the civilian population. In the third chapter I examine the literature relevant to children and armed conflict. The fourth chapter addresses theoretical ideas relevant to understanding the circumstances in which the young people I interviewed live their lives. I also present my method for collecting and analyzing the interviews I conducted. In Chapter Five I discuss the results of the interviews, drawing upon the theoretical ideas outlined in Chapter 4. In Chapter Six I conclude by presenting the insights that I believe derive from the rest of the text.

Chapter One

The Context: Children and War

Are all Humans Human, or are some Humans more Human than others?
(Romeo Dallaire, address at the Chan Centre, Vancouver, March 14, 2004)

The question of children and armed conflict is an integral part of the United Nations' core responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, for the advancement of human rights and for sustainable human development. [Secretary-General Koffi Annan (in a speech delivered to the UN Security Council, July 26, 2000)]

Introduction

The World Trade Organization reports that 1.2 billion people (at least half of these children) live in absolute poverty: on less than $1 a day. A further 1.6 billion people (more than a quarter of the world's population) live on $1 to $2 a day (World Trade Organization: www.wto.org/english/news_e/pre....). Closer to home, in the early 1990s, the Canadian government pledged that by the year 2000 they would eliminate child poverty in Canada. What are the current realities for the bulk of the world's children? What are our responsibilities for children? Often the communication and information we receive about children is incomplete, biased and doesn't paint a very complete or useful picture of the impact of global and structural realities on the lives of children.[1]

The media offers a limited lens to the state of the world's children and the headlines are hard to miss: newspapers dealing with a continent that, in the minds of very many Canadians, is a 'write-off'. The conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa are many and they have, for years, made headlines day after day. Articles paint a picture of a continent in unrest but often ignore the circumstances that fuel unrest and violence. The conflicts and the focus on countries experiencing violent confrontations have certainly coloured the

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[1] For example, images of deprived and starving children used by some aid agencies as part of their fund raising campaigns often suggest that the problem is simply a lack of resources. However, what are not portrayed are the structural and political realities that account for child poverty. Perhaps a more accurate visual image related to child poverty internationally, would be shots of International Monetary Fund officials getting off their private jets at an airport in an African country and heading, with their specific agenda – one with serious implications for children - to the local Ministry of Finance building for a meeting.

Canadian conscience. The portrayal of young children carrying AK'47s leaves an impression that African youth are a 'lost generation'.

Among the many problems associated with this reality is the recruitment of children as child soldiers in order to fight in what are really adult conflicts. The idea of children as young as six years of age transporting food and materials pillaged from villages to military camps, and twelve year olds killing their parents, neighbours and relatives, is absolutely horrifying. Headlines like: "War in Africa a thriving business" (*Vancouver Sun*, June 27, 2002: A11) with a subtitle: "Child soldiers have become one legacy of the continent's alarming slide into anarchy and dysfunction", leave little doubt in the minds of western readers that something truly evil characterizes sub-Saharan Africa.

In 2001, Alhaji Babah Sawne, a child from Sierra Leone, became the first child soldier to address the United Nations Security Council. Abducted when he was ten years old, he stated in an innocent plea: "I ask this body on behalf of all the children of Sierra Leone to do all they can to bring our sad story to an end" (United Nations: http://www.unrec.org/eng/StoryCW.htm). In Africa, some armed conflicts have raged for years and years and some children have never known a life without warfare. While children's participation in armed conflict is not a new trend, the types of war being waged are different. While the end of the Cold War was thought to bring peace, as superpowers ceased to fight about control of different regions of the world, as noted later in the text, new kinds of armed conflict are posing complex problems for the international response to the issues of children and armed conflict. These *new wars* are having serious implications for children.

It is commonly believed that child soldiers are young boys who take up arms and kill. In fact, young girls are also involved. Young girls are used as 'wives' of commanders and as sexual incentives for soldiers who might otherwise be less enthusiastic about joining the military forces. Here is an example of a caption for a photo found in *The Globe and Mail*, June 15, 2002: "A Lost Childhood: The rebels attacked her village and, as they did with so many children, made off with Hawa Secay. She was forced to have sex with them and

now, it's what she does for a living on the streets of Freetown. She is 15." Much contemporary literature looks at child soldiers in the context of boys carrying guns and fighting on the front lines. The fact remains that girls are also used in armed conflicts.

The consequences are that many young girls are forced into sexual slavery. They become pregnant. They often give birth without any medical assistance, in the presence of others their own age. As a result, they are left with the responsibility of raising children without any support and must, at the same time, continue to fulfill their obligations to the soldiers they have been ordered to 'service'. The problem is that the voice of these girls is most often 'disappeared'. Their circumstances are being lost as the general focus of the literature looks to the experience of child soldiers who are predominantly male, and a preoccupation with the disarmament of young populations (de Berry, 2001; Hick, 2001). While many child soldiers have been forced into military roles, some volunteer, and few sources of literature look at the number of children who voluntarily agree to take up arms and fight for a cause.

Reintegration programs often fail to address the unique experience of young females forced into, or who have volunteered for, military service. The topic of child soldiers – including girls as part of combat - is important not simply because their circumstances are horrifying, but because we must question how their experiences will shape their participation in society.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) was adopted unanimously in the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1989 and was created to protect children. It is the first legal document to acknowledge that children have the right to autonomy as well as rights to basic necessities such as health and education, and the right to be protected from forms of abuse. Conventions agreed to prior to the *Convention on the Rights of the Child,* included those developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and dealing with child labour. With respect to children's rights in relation to participation in

armed conflict, little is outlined in the Convention. Only Articles 38 and 39 directly deal with the issue of children and armed conflict.

> Article 38: State parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities.

> Article 39: State parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, state Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.

Ratification of The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* means that using children under the age of 15 in conflict is prohibited.[2] However the Convention also accepts the notion that a child is a person under 18 years of age[3]. The reader must recognize that this age is specific to a western definition of the child. The definition is a matter of ongoing debate worldwide[4]. All situations are unique and the inclination to use children may be stronger in some conflicts as opposed to others. The United Nations Convention is difficult to enforce due to global realities. These include the social, economic and political realities that often drive those involved in conflict to disregard the Convention in order to sustain their own political agendas. For example, a social reality is that bodies are needed in order to sustain a conflict. Slightly more than 42% of Mozambique's population is under the age of 14 (World Factbook: http//www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook) and, therefore, it is no surprise that children are regarded as an available and abundant source of labour – including military labour. These demographics alone – typical of South countries other than Mozambique - compel us to pay attention to the current welfare of the world's children.

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[2] All countries (with the exception of the United States and Somalia) have ratified the document.

[3] In May 2000, the United Nations General Assembly accepted an optional protocol for the CRC establishing 18 as the minimum age for children's participation in hostilities.

[4] For the purpose of this thesis, children are regarded as individuals under the age of 18.

Children and Structural Adjustment

Children are also frustrated with their economic circumstances and future prospects and are easily led to see participation in military conflict as providing them with better opportunities and security. African countries are overshadowed by political agendas that are dictated by international institutions. These limit opportunities for children. Structural adjustment programmes limit public programmes that might otherwise meet the needs of children: education, recreation, job training and health.[5] Cutbacks in national budgets for these services, the result of structural adjustment programmes imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have contributed significantly to the deteriorating circumstances of children in sub-Saharan countries. These institutions impose education and health fees that make it difficult (if not impossible) to access these services. Often this means that children cannot get medical care or an education because their families cannot pay user fees imposed by national governments forced to bow to the agenda of international agencies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Mozambicans recognize these realities first hand. In 1984 they began talking to international financial institutions, driven by an economy in shambles; the result of a civil war that was destroying the country's infrastructure and environmental disasters, in particular, a drought. This combination of a civil war and the imposition of structural adjustment programmes, well-documented by at least one author (Hanlon, 1996) strongly suggests the relationship between economic circumstances and the social conditions created by structural adjustment *and* the prevalence of child soldiers (male and female) in the so-called civil war that embraced Mozambique from 1975 until a truce was signed in 1992.

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[5] Structural adjustment programmes were developed and implemented by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank starting in the early 1980s and reflect economic theories and ideas that gained political force at a time when Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan were in power. The neo-liberal approach to dealing with deficits required South countries to address loan repayment problems and debt by, among other things, cutting back on the costs of government. The result was severe cutbacks to all government or State sponsored programmes including those in the areas of health, education and welfare in general, as well as State involvement in economic development. In effect, these international institutions took over the policy agendas of many South countries. Many sources outline this reality. For example, see Joseph's Stiglitz. (2003). "Globalization and Its Discontents. New York. W.W. Norton & Company.

The Reality of Child Soldiers

What are the historical, social and political realities faced by these children? The problem with child soldiers in Mozambique is that they have been demobilized as young adults but as a result of their military service and what many describe as "lost years" they have no or little education and little chance for going back and getting one. These children lost their childhood years, may never have received any formal education, although after 16 years of armed conflict in the country, they are very familiar with handling weapons.

After a long history of colonial oppression and almost 30 years of armed conflict, the people of Mozambique participated in their county's first elections in 1994. The 1992 Peace Accord ended a 16-year civil war (preceded by a war of independence that started in 1964). In many ways, the peace process was successful. When speaking of the country's reintegration efforts after the civil war, the then United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sergio de Mello, noted there was: "no form of recrimination or hatred" among Mozambicans and praised Mozambique as "the culture of reconciliation" (Thompson, 1999: 191). However, while such statements may apply to the civilian population in general, the post-conflict experience of child soldiers does not fit well with the subsequent experience of many demobilized adults.

While Mozambique is a poor country and while all adults are confronted with the struggle to make a living, many young adults have particular problems. Their expectations following liberation from Portuguese colonial rule were particularly high and the socialist policies set in place by the first rulers of the newly de-colonized country emphasized and for some time, realized, dramatic changes in the economic and educational opportunities available to young people. Therefore, the experience of child soldiers whose lives and expectations were disrupted by the experience is unique in many respects and deserves special attention in a country where the peace process has been otherwise, remarkably – if not entirely – successful.

Writing in *The Review of African Political Economy*, Carol Thompson stresses that the lasting peace in Mozambique has not been the result of actions by the State, opposition

parties or the economy. Instead she highlights the work of civilian populations that have overcome huge obstacles in bringing about peace in the country (Thompson, 1999). Not only were peace talks initiated by the people themselves commencing in 1988 - as represented by the Christian Council of Mozambique, a coalition of protestant churches – they have worked hard to sustain this peace. An example of this was a subsequent effort to disarm the civilian population following the armed conflict, by exchanging community development tools for weapons. Other organizations have attempted to meet the needs of demobilized soldiers – including those disabled by the conflict and other problems of reintegration and the resolution of conflict among soldiers who fought on both sides and the communities to which they may have returned.

The fact remains that Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world. For example, the Mozambican government operated in 2001 with an annual budget of $1.025 billion. Of this, only $ 393.1 million was revenues. Economic aid made up the difference - $ 632.8 million (World Factbook: http//www.cia.gov./cia/publications/factbook). By way of contrast, the United States spends at least $300 billion annually on military expenditures and consumers in Canada reportedly spent $26 billion last year! Peace has done little for the economy of Mozambique and the gap between rich and poor, not unlike other South countries, is considerable. In regards to income distribution, the lowest 10% of the population earns 2.5% of the national income while the top 10% of the population earns 31.7% of the national income. In Canada, the lowest 10% of the population earns 2.8% of the national income while the highest 10% of the population earns 23.8% of the total national income (World Factbook: http//www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/). In other words, it can be reasoned that even if Mozambique's overall economic situation improves, doing so under the current 'logic' and guidance of international institutions will likely mean other problems generated by significant income disparities among the overall population. Over 70% of Mozambicans currently live below the poverty line (typically defined as $1.00 US/day of income). Over 80% of the Mozambique's population lives in rural areas and the rural population is particularly poor.

Problems like HIV/Aids and vicious civil wars and related conflicts in Africa are leaving more and more children to take on increased responsibilities in social settings in which traditionally they, together with women, have been denied a political voice with limited bargaining power. The social landscape occupied by children and women is vast. Where is their voice? While understanding their experience of war is necessary, we need to use our understanding to better appreciate and foster the spirit of resiliency and strategies for survival and personal growth in contexts that have undermined basic human needs.

Conclusion

There are bigger and other international problems to which this thesis is related. Hopefully, the text provides some reason to think about not only the specific situation of child soldiers in Mozambique that I attempt to describe, but also more global or international realities facing young people in a world where national economies have been transformed from ones where a collective responsibility included a social obligation to young people to economies where young people (and others) are left to 'fend for themselves'. In other words, the welfare nation state – however incomplete and imperfect – is being replaced by a global economy characterized by individualism, competition and, more than ever, 'survival of the fittest'. This has particular implications for those who need the assistance of others – especially young people.

We do not need to look far to see what happens in our own back yard. Over one million children live under Canada's measured poverty line. What is our social and collective responsibility to children in light of current world affairs? Given the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, what is our responsibility for children – in Canada and internationally? Who speaks for the well being of children internationally, if not the United Nations, and what is its force and power in a world increasingly dictated by the policies of global institutions like the IMF and the World Bank? These policies and practices, for at least the past two decades, have had devastating implications for children everywhere.

While conventions and activities of an international body like the United Nations are clearly central to addressing problems experienced by young people in a globalized world, young people themselves need to be given 'political space' to better express themselves and in which they can take action that serves their interests. Other approaches have an element of paternalism that, I believe, undermines and diminishes the capacities of young people.

In the following chapter, I examine in greater detail the history of Mozambique with some emphasis on culture and the economy, my belief being that these are central to understanding the problems faced by former child soldiers in Mozambique 2004.

Chapter Two

Mozambique: Geographical and Historical Realities

In just one generation, Mozambicans have gone through a rapid and battering series of economic transformation – from oppressive colonialism to the exhilaration of independence to a war that killed a million people to an election that promised peace and prosperity; from primitive shopkeeper capitalism to Marxism and back to primitive capitalism. (Hanlon, 1996: 1)

Introduction

Mozambique is located on the southeastern coast of Africa. The country is situated on the Indian Ocean with a coastline extending over 2,500 km and a landmass of over 700,000 square kilometers; the country is almost three times the size of Britain. Mozambique shares its land borders with six countries; Swaziland and South Africa to the south, Zimbabwe to the west, Zambia and Malawi on the northwest, and Tanzania to the north (Figure 1). All but two of these countries are land locked, providing Mozambique a market for its coastal ports. The capital city, Maputo is located in the far southern region of the country. The natural boundaries of the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers divide the territory into regions. Geographical realities have had a great influence on the economic development of Mozambique. This chapter provides the reader with a brief history of Mozambique, the emphasis being on the social aspects of colonial history. It also outlines the more recent history of the country that assists in understanding the lived realities of former child soldiers and other young people affected by years of war.

Early Settlers

According to the historical record, the Bantu speaking people, migrating east, were the first to settle in the area known today as Mozambique. Under Bantu rule, Mozambique did not exist as a country, but as kingdoms. North of the Zambezi River was dominated by the Makonde Kingdoms. The Shona Empire was established between the rivers and the area south of the Limpopo was occupied by various Shonga tribes. The Bantu people were the first to establish trading posts along the coast creating trade links to the Middle East, Indian and other parts of Africa (Andersson, 1992). Arab influence in these ports

was strong and objects from India and Asia were traded for African gold, ivory and skin. Swahili was the '*lingua franca*' of trade.

Colonial History and the Economy

Like all countries of sub-Saharan Africa, Mozambique's history is a colonial one. In search of a sea route to India, Vasco de Gama, a Portuguese explorer, reached the eastern coast of Africa in 1498. Upon his arrival, he claimed he had found a welcoming people and referred to the area as the '*terra da boa gente*' (land of good people). Although familiar with trade merchants, the presence of the Portuguese was to greatly alter the livelihood of Bantu settlers. Despite resistance and conflict with Arab traders and Bantu tribes, the Portuguese were able to take advantage of trade in gold and ivory and established their own trading posts along the coastline (Azevedo, 2002). The Island of Mozambique (the country's first capital) was occupied in 1505. Angoche was occupied in 1511 and Quelimane in the 1540's. The country's capital was moved to Lourenço Marques (now Maputo) in 1544. By the mid 1700's, slaves acted as human cargo for trade and provided the Portuguese with a start to economic profit from the country.

In 1881 the Berlin Congress, referred to as the 'scramble for Africa', divided the African continent among various colonial rulers. As a result, the Portuguese officially occupied Mozambique. The artificial borders had little to do with the patterns of migration for the indigenous people but more with the colonial concern for economic advantage in the area. Mozambique was treated as an economic hinterland to Portugal. Economic policies did not focus on the development of Mozambique *per se,* but rather on the development of Portugal.

Slavery had been, prior to 1881, the first course of exploitation and a profitable source of trade for the Portuguese. As noted, the Portuguese quickly took advantage of the labour potential of Mozambique. The indigenous people of Mozambique were sold to sugar plantations in Brazil, another Portuguese colony, and to Cuba for forced labour. Between 1810 and 1860, it has been estimated that half a million Mozambicans were sold to the slave trade (Munslow, 1983). Other sources have estimated these numbers at over a

million people before the slave trade died out at the turn of the nineteenth century (Waterhouse, 1996). The result was a considerable disruption of traditional societies and a weakening of their social and economic power. This undoubtedly played a role in the future subservience of the population, as Portuguese colonial rule took on new and different forms. On the other hand, Mozambicans were not altogether passive recipients of the colonization process[6].

As a weaker colonial empire, Portugal lacked the capacity and capital to built infrastructure in Mozambique. As a result, they rented out the available resources in the area. Land was leased to British and French companies that set up plantations growing cash crops such as cotton and tea. By 1891 over one third of Mozambique was in the hands of foreign investors. The Mozambique Company and the Niassa Company were both owned by the British. The leasing of the areas meant that African lands were seized and peasants were forced to work, preventing them from growing and selling their own crops[7]. Transportation routes were created from east to west in the country, versus north to south, to accommodate transport and export of product from neighboring countries to Mozambique's ports. With minimal social investment, the Portuguese established their presence through administrative, military and legal provisions. They aligned themselves with tribal chiefs (*regulos*) and appointed them to collect hut taxes from the indigenous populations – a strategy also used in other colonies (i.e. Nigeria and India) by the British.

In 1889, the colonial government created the first labour laws that brutally regulated the lives of Mozambicans. The laws targeted the indigenous people and made it mandatory

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[6] See Allen Issacman. (1976). *The Tradition of Resistance in Mozambique*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd. The book provides a detailed analysis of resistance activities among the African populations - specifically in the Zambesi region. While this thesis provides a brief history of Mozambique, it does not present an account of anti-colonial activity, but I recognize that localized forms of opposition were common among the settled African tribes.

[7] The use of the term 'peasant' is problematic as it conjures up all kinds of pre-conceived ideas about people – most of them, in a western European context, negative. Peasants are seen as simple (i.e. not too intelligent) people living basic (i.e. not very sophisticated) lives. In actual fact, in many parts of the world, peasant classes have quickly discovered their subservience, have been responsible for many revolutions and have produced some of the world's greatest writers, artists and political leaders. I use the term 'peasant' with all this in mind.

that they all work for the colonial administration (Azevedo, 2003). The *prazo* system made the cotton plantations possible and contributed to the export of cheap materials to Portugal. Not only did this process subsidize Portugal's textile industry, but materials were then re-exported and sold back to the colonial markets. The forced labour system, referred to in the south as *xibalo*, imposed various forms of work throughout the country. *Xibalo* provided cheap (and often unpaid) labour for the colonialists. This involved, but was not limited to, the construction of roads, buildings, railways and work on the *prazo* estates.[8] *Xibalo* laws applied to both men and women. The Mozambicans endured many hardships under colonial rule. Women worked long hours planting and picking cotton, often with their children strapped onto their backs with *capulanas*.[9] They had little time and minimal means to grow their own food. *Xibalo* offered no economic prosperity to either men or women.

South Africa Spins its Web

To some extent men had a means to escape the *xibalo*, but by no means did this bring economic advantage to the Africans. Mozambican labour was used to sustain other markets. The diamond and gold mines of South African attracted migrant labour, and continues to do so to this day. In 1901 the Portuguese signed an agreement with the Witwaterand Native Labour Association in South Africa. The association acted as a representative body for South African mining companies. This agreement regulated the migration of Mozambican labour to the mines and stipulated that over half of the miner's salaries be paid in gold to the government in Mozambique (Alden, 2001). This then allowed the Portuguese colonial government to profit from the resale of gold on the world market. When the miners returned to Mozambique, payment was received in the Portuguese *escudo* currency. This agreement benefited the Portuguese and South Africans governments tremendously. One received cheap labour while the Portuguese

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[8] A *prazo* referred to the vast area of land leased to the various foreign companies. The first were created on the Zambezi River and used as plantations to cultivate the land. Many Mozambicans were relocated from their traditional territories and forced to work on the *prazo* estates.

[9] A capulana is a piece of material one meter by one and a half, worn by Mozambican women. They are used for various reasons, one of which is to carry children while leaving their hands free for work. Today, the tradition of using the capulanas continues and is a common sight.

received gold giving them a means to participate in the European market. Hall and Young (1997) in their analysis of the migratory labour system outlines that this migration came to dominate life in the southern and central regions of the country. "Working a contract on the Johannesburg mines became part and parcel of the household economy and the male culture for the southern districts – so much so that a period on the mines became both a necessary form of initiation into manhood, and a means of accumulating cash for lobola" (Hall and Young, 1997:4).[10]

Assimilation

In 1917, the *assimilado* (assimilation) laws were passed. This represented Portugal's attempt at the 'cultural whitening' of Mozambican people. The laws were created to 'civilize' and assimilate the indigenous Africans into Portuguese culture. Raul Honwana, in his autobiography (covering the period of Mozambican history from 1905 - 1975) explains:

> Africans who wanted to be considered 'civilized' had to pass an examination by answering certain questions and by allowing a committee to go to their homes to see how they lived and if they knew how to eat at a table as whites did, if they wore shoes, and if they had only one wife. When Africans passed these examinations, they were given a document called the 'certificate of assimilation' for which they paid half a pound of sterling or its equivalent (1988: 12).

According the Honwana, in some ways the laws provided a better alternative to the realities faced by the Mozambicans. Having the status of *assimilado* freed the Mozambicans from paying the hut tax and being conscripted into *xibalo*. Honwana points out that the Mozambicans did not participate in the *assimilado* status because they wanted to give up their African ancestry, but because it was the only form available to them to become citizens (1988: 13).

Catholicism became the official religion in Mozambique (Figure 2). Of the few schools and hospitals that existed, most were located in the cities and were reserved for the

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[10] This refers to the customary bride price paid by the future husband to the bride's family. The payment of *labolo* is still practiced in Mozambique.

Portuguese and the privileged African *assimilados* (Figure 3). Mozambican children were sent to school where they were taught to act and live like the Portuguese. They did not receive the same education as the colonist's children. Rather they learned the Portuguese language and were taught to act like the white man[11]. These practices were similar to Canadian policy and its attempts to assimilate indigenous people. As in Canada, the church (and particular the catholic churches of Mozambique) was responsible for education. This lack of an educated population would prove to have major implications at the time of independence, as there were no skilled people to occupy positions in government, health, education, business, etc. The Mozambicans, like many Africans, suffered a long history of oppression that resulted in extreme forms of exploitation, racism and marginalization. This prompted an organized resistance to end the long period of colonial presence in the area.

Frelimo and the Struggle for Independence

The war of independence was prompted, not only by the particular realities and circumstances previously outlined, but by one event in particular that gave rise to outrage and rebellion. In 1960, there was a massacre of 600 Mozambicans in Mueda, Cabo Delgado province. The peasants, living in the area, organized themselves into cooperatives with the support of the *regulos* (traditional chiefs) in the area. The cooperatives were successful and to some extent threatened other plantations. Attempts by the Portuguese were made to sabotage these cooperatives. They were a source of social organization and created pressure for changes in the policies of the colonial administration. The protest of rural Mozambicans against colonial rule was met with armed resistance. If nothing else, it convinced many that peaceful transition to independence was impossible.

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[11] Mozambican children received their education outside of the curriculum provided to children of the colonialists. Instead, this education was structured under *"forma 1", "forma 2"* and *"forma 3."* Before the indigenous children could attend the colonial schools, they had to complete their *"forma"* education.

In 1962, three groups of exiles came together in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, to form Frelimo, the *'Frente de Liberacao de Mocambique'*.[12] The first Frelimo congress was held in Dar es Salaam in 1962. Eduardo Mondlane was elected the first president. To his advantage, he had no prior affiliation with either of the amalgamated parties. Mondlane was educated in Portugal, South Africa and the USA. He was the first Mozambican to achieve a doctor's degree that he received in anthropology. Prior to his role with Frelimo, he held a position with the United Nations. In this position he had met with the Kennedy administration in relationship to Mozambique's struggle for independence. He asked that the United States provide pressure on Portugal to let go of it colonies. The American government did not offer such support (Cabrita, 2000). Mondlane returned to his homeland with his American wife, three children, and worked to liberate the Mozambicans from a long history of colonial rule.

The first shots in the ten-year struggle for independence were fired from northern Mozambique, Cabo Delgado province in 1964. The front was launched through Tanzania where Julius Nyerere – the president of Tanzania - actively supported the liberation struggle. Mondlane's presidency was to be short-lived. In 1969, the 'father of the revolution' was killed by a letter bomb. The charismatic leader Samora Machel was elected as his successor. Machel had trained as a nurse and quickly realized that no education would give him the same status as his Portuguese overlords. In learning about the liberation struggle he went to Tanzania and proved himself as a strategic military combatant. He was trained in Algeria and returned to Tanzania to join the revolutionary forces fighting Portuguese colonial rule in Mozambique.

Samora Machel also saw the revolution as one for women; from its inception the Frelimo welcomed women to the front. In 1965, the first group of women received military training in Dar es Salaam. In 1967, the *Destacamentos Feminio* (Female Detachments) were officially established within the front. Later, in 1973, the *Organizacão da Mulher Mocambicana* (Organization of Mozambican Women) was formed. Women played an

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[12] The three organizations were; the National Democratic Union of Mozambique, the Mozambique African National Union and the National Democratic Union of an Independent Mozambique.

important role in the movement. Women had military experience and the idea of women playing a role in combat was not new to Mozambican consciousness when children – which included women – were later conscripted into the internal conflict that developed after independence.

The liberation war consisted of guerrilla type tactics against the Portuguese administration and military posts throughout the country. Anticipating a liberation movement, the Portuguese responded with the creation of the PIDE.[13] Arrests, detention and tortures were frequent. The V*ila Algarve* stands as a testimony to the enormous obstacles faced by the Mozambican people in gaining independence.[14] (Figure 4). Members of the PIDE infiltrated various organizations and Frelimo was constantly challenged by the authenticity of its members. Cultural activities and various social gatherings of Mozambicans were outlawed.[15]

From the beginning, Frelimo worked closely with the peasant population and had strong support from the Makonde people in the north. In driving out the Portuguese, Frelimo re-organized villagers into 'liberated zones.' Once established, these areas were protected and guarded by Frelimo soldiers. For the first time peasants were able to grow their own crops. People from within the communities were chosen to act as part of 'dynamizing' groups – individuals who acted as popular educators, educating peasants about Frelimo, liberation and the ideals of the Frelimo movement.

By the early 1970's support for Frelimo was widespread. The number of liberated zones increased while the Portuguese colonial government was left with less and less land to control. On September 7th, 1974 the Lusaka Accord was signed and relinquished Portugal's control over Mozambique. The Armed Forces Movement of Portugal and the

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[13] PIDE stands for the 'International Police for Defence of the State'. Members of the secret police worked to identify individuals organizing in defiance of colonial rule.

[14] The Villa Algarve is a building in Maputo that the PIDE used to torture and interrogate Mozambicans. Today, the building structure still stands and acts as a visible reminder of the once powerful colonizing forces.

[15] For example, the cultural music and dancing of Marabenta was prohibited by the Portuguese.

Frelimo liberation movement negotiated the accord. Tired of the colonial wars, the Portuguese Armed Forces eventually overthrew the fascist dictatorship, Salazar in April 1975. Since only one official liberation movement existed, colonial power was transferred to Frelimo. A transitional government was established for seven months. The commemorative day of independence was declared in Mozambique on June 25th, 1975 (Figure 5). Samora Machel, former military commander, became president of the newly formed republic.

Portuguese settlers meanwhile, fearing counteracts of racial violence, fled the country. It is estimated that within three years of independence, over 90% of the Portuguese population emigrated from Mozambique (Hall and Young, 1997). The new Frelimo government did not make distinctions among races. They opposed the apartheid system in South Africa and some whites chose to remain in the country. [16]

Frelimo's Transition

Frelimo inherited a fragmented and uneducated Mozambique. At the time of independence, over "90% of the black Mozambican population was illiterate" (Hall & Young, 1997: 56). Liberation not only created a major exodus of skilled labour but the country was left in economic shambles. The labour pool consisted largely of unskilled labour. When Frelimo came to power, they began a daunting task of rebuilding a nation. Surprising, the newly established political party managed significantly without skilled labour. One of their first moves was to remove responsibility for education and social services from the churches. Rural people grew their own food outside of the *xibalo* system and children received an education within the national curriculum framework. Education was accessible to all children. As the colonial schools were built around the

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[16] For example, the famous Mozambican journalist, Carlos Cardoso, was one such person. Born in Mozambique to Portuguese settlers, Cardoso chose to stay. When property in Mozambique was nationalized, he gave up his family's property holdings. Cardoso later emerges as a Mozambican nationalist, producing alternative forms of communication (newspaper) often challenging the Frelimo government's policies and practices. Cardoso was ultimately assassinated in 2002 by people rumored to be linked to the Frelimo government. At the time of his death he was investigating a case of corruption related to the privatization of the country's largest bank.

urban or peri-urban settings of Mozambique children had to leave their traditional zones[17].

Frelimo retained a socialist stance at independence and declared itself under a Marxist-Leninist program in 1976. Frelimo set up schools, literacy classes and health clinics in rural areas. Within 5 years the country saw an increase in health and education standards and received world acclaim for these advancements (Waterhouse, 1996). The new government nationalized property, removed church responsibility for education and prohibited church attendance. The party's system of organizing communal villages, with collective farms and primary health care, laid the foundation for its socialism.

From the onset, the organizations that formed Frelimo were not united under a strong notion of nationalism. Instead they had come together with a desire to end colonial rule. Frelimo defined class, not race as the main cause of oppression in Mozambique. Although the liberation movement was united by its own accord, from the beginning there were attitudes that divided the party. These were mainly rooted in ethnic and regional differences. The suspicions did not disappear overnight and Machel was left with the daunting task of establishing a political nationalist platform. Ian Christie, in his biography of Samora Machel, explains:

> There were those who saw the struggle from a tribalist or regionalist point of view and could not quite grasp the implication of a Front which encompassed all the Mozambicans. There were differences of opinion about how to define the enemy. Some had a simple answer: the white man. Others had come into contact with whites from many lands who were helping the anti-colonial struggle so had a different view. Their anti-racial position led them logically to the conclusion that there could be such a person as a white Mozambican. Some disagreed. ...The only question was who would come out on top. Would it be the tribalists, regionalists and racists, or those whose vision of an independent, united Mozambique transcended such notions"(1988: 21).

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[17] The boarding schools were located in the urban areas and were previously used to educate the children of the Portuguese colonists.

As a political force, Frelimo ignored the traditional values and chiefdoms of the various ethnic groups throughout the country.[18] If they had paid attention, finding common ground amongst the various cultural groups could have acted as a unifying force for Frelimo. But on the contrary:

> Frelimo arose not as the fusion of these feelings but as their negation: a single people, a single nation, from Rovuma to Maputo.... The nation was thus not only a project, it was a project directed against the existing ethnic nations. Nationalism was *induced* in the anti-colonial social movement, not produced by the movement. With independence, it completely identified state nationalism with the nation-state. The national project was the nation, proclaimed, imposed and identified with the party. Frelimo was in essence not a single party but a party-nation" (Cahen, 1999: 4).

As Frelimo was transforming itself into a political party, there was much unrest within the party. In Michael Cahen's work, *Nationalism and Ethnicities: Lessons from Mozambique*, he notes that Frelimo "reproduced unchanged the phenomena of marginalization characteristic of contemporary colonization" (1999: 2). This approach tended to marginalize and isolate various ethnic groups.

Frelimo's policy actions created splits within its party. They lost touch with the peasantry and did not respect the traditional role of the *regulos*. The government replicated colonial relations by situating themselves in the far south of the country, in the capital Maputo. The Sena people of northern Mozambique wanted their own land. The Sena had originally collaborated with Frelimo to end colonial domination but they were not willing to follow orders from Maputo. These internal struggles gave rise to dissention. The fact that Frelimo had been working to create a nation built around its agenda meant that inadequate attention was given to what might need to be done and how the country would operate once they achieved the objective of liberation. Originally some factions supporting Frelimo did so only because they wanted the Portuguese 'out'. But, like the Sena people, they were not anticipating or necessarily wildly supportive of Frelimo.

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[18] It is important to note that socialism, as practiced by many liberation movements was very 'modern' in Mozambique. Socialist movements often had as little respect for traditional cultural practices and forms of organization as did capitalist ideologies. This failure to integrate and/or respect traditional practices in the development of socialism often contributed to its difficulties and, in some case, its demise as a credible alternative to other social and economic forms of organization.

Mozambican's were never unified as a nation – and they did not become unified through Marxist perspectives on 'ending colonization', stopping the exploitation of the worker, etc.

In *Mozambique: the Tortuous Road to Democracy*, João Cabrita notes that while the Frelimo victory was a milestone for liberation, "no arrangements were made to ensure a democratic basis for future African countries. Power was transferred to the nationalists who were regarded as the authentic representatives of the people, a claim based on their years of fighting for Independence" (2000: 4). Although Frelimo could have held Mozambique's first democratic elections, as a Marxist-Leninist party they had no commitment to do so. Instead Frelimo pursued the creation of a socialist state and consequently it is no surprise in attempting to built a nation, that they neglected regional and ethnic differences.

The failure to hold elections may have been linked to a general fear of opposition to Frelimo's vision of what the country should look like. As a movement with socialist ideals on a continent that had already, by the mid 1970s, seen the cold war conflict between the former USSR and the United States played out in terms of assassinations (i.e. the Congo, 1961) and organized repression of the ideals of black Africans (apartheid in South Africa and white rule in Rhodesia), it is perhaps not difficult to understand the fear Frelimo had in so-called democratic elections.

Armed Conflict: Creation of Renamo and an ensuing insurgency

The armed conflict that followed independence in Mozambique is often described as a civil war[19]. Unlike disputes in Africa that are based on tribal, religious or race differences, this clash was based on ideology, that is to say, competing socialist and capitalist market relations. Gaining independence during the tense years of the cold war,

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[19] Whether or not the conflict in Mozambique was a 'civil war' is debatable. The conflict with Renamo was largely initiated from outside the country and involved expatriates who had lost property and privileges when Frelimo came to power and attempted, through land distribution and other policies to address the injustices created by colonial rule. Renamo forces also included black Mozambicans who did not agree with the policies pursued by the new government. The question can be asked as to whether the conflict was a civil war or an invasion.

Mozambique became a battleground of ideology. The socialist principles of Frelimo were not accepted by neighboring countries and those following neo-liberal and market ideologies. To make matters worse, in 1976, Frelimo, keeping with its nationalist's principles, lent support to Zimbabwe's nationalist struggle. They allowed Robert Mugabe and his guerilla fighters to operate from Mozambican territory. Machel also supported United Nations action against Rhodesia. In accordance with United Nations backed sanctions, Mozambique closed its border to Rhodesia in 1977. Ian Smith's white ruled Rhodesia retaliated on Mozambique with military retribution. In 1977 armed incursions against Mozambican territory occurred in the provinces which border Zimbabwe: Manica, Sofala and Gaza. That same year, Rhodesia's intelligence forces, working with the South African security forces, created the right wing movement known as the *Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana*, or as it is commonly referred to today, Renamo.

Renamo forces consisted of opponents to the Frelimo regime. Smith's regime tactfully recruited ex-patriots, mercenaries, former Portuguese secret police (PIDE) members and ex-Frelimo soldiers. Of the former Frelimo fighters, Andre Matzangaiza and Alfonso Dhlakama received prominent positions within Renamo providing a black presence to the insurgency. Both individuals had both been expelled from the Frelimo party for theft and corruption. In the beginning the movement lacked any nationalist credentials was organized largely by Rhodesia and South Africa.

The Rhodesians provided military training and supplies to Renamo. In return for military assistance, the military commander of Rhodesia demanded subservience in the operations. In 1980 the current leader of Renamo, Alfonso Dhlakama, stated; "we worked for the English, neither I nor the deceased Andre (Matzangaiza) could plan any military operations. It was the English who determined the areas to attack and where to recruit" (Magaia 1988: 7). As stated by Dhlakama, Renamo started as a 'puppet' force.

The Renamo insurgency was created as a larger policy to destabilize Mozambique. The aim was to destroy the country's infrastructure and the net effect of destabilization was to undermine the credibility of the Frelimo party and its ability to govern the country. If

liberation spread from Mozambique, it could threaten South Africa's firmly established racist apartheid policies. It was believed that the destabilization efforts would allow for the continued racist domination of South Africa and Rhodesia. The civil unrest of the Soweto uprisings (1976) threatened the legitimacy of the apartheid South African government. The white authorities shot and killed hundreds of school aged children as a result of the public protest. Civilian unrest was too strong and it was believed that Mozambique was working to undermine the apartheid system. Consequently the South African government shared a genuine interest in destabilizing Mozambique. The Frelimo government did not present a clear picture to the Mozambican people about what was happening in the country. Instead of clearly identifying the conflict with the South African government, Frelimo merely referred to the attacks as conducted by *banditos armados* (armed bandits). A close analysis to the armed conflict in Mozambique unveils a complex reality. External and internal factors must be understood in terms of the historical, political, social and economic realities of Mozambique.

These realities may also be related to the fact that the vast majority of Mozambicans were never very politically ideological; a *paradox* given that the subsequent 'civil war' was fought along ideological lines. If, as later argued, the civilian population could not be persuaded to participate because they were not ideologically motivated to do so, then conscription would clearly become a very necessary means for involving a reluctant population in an internal ideological conflict. This is an important consideration in understanding the vast number of children who were caught up in these conflicts.

In 1979 Ian Smith's Rhodesian regime collapsed. The Lancaster House Agreement brought an end to white settler rule and, consequently, Renamo lost technical support in the newly liberated Zimbabwe. Machel must have felt a great sense of relief with a hope that this would bring an end to Renamo. But South African cleverly waited in the wings. South African military personnel transferred Renamo headquarters and bases to the Transvaal, a northern province adjacent to Mozambique. By the end of 1980 Renamo was relocated and fully operating from the Transvaal. Instead of an end to Renamo activity,

the war intensified. South Africa provided sophisticated communications equipment that allowed for better organization, coordination and attacks by Renamo.[20]

In the international press, Renamo was portrayed as a group of freedom fighters fighting against the spread of communist rule in the world. Renamo was also financially supported by the far right in the United States, individuals like Jesse Helms, Patrick Buchanan and the Heritage Foundation (Vines, 1991). By the mid 1980's, when Renamo was receiving new support from South Africa, Mozambique was in shambles. In 1984 the Frelimo government appealed to the international community for food aid. At this point, the country had few options. An earlier drought in 1983 complicated the issue. The international community was placed in an awkward position as they realized that hunger was not entirely the result of a natural disaster, but an act or war. Providing food to Mozambique could be seen as giving support to the Frelimo government and its policies. Clearly, Frelimo needed a policy shift, with starvation looming, Marxist-leaning Mozambique was left no alternative but to make its 'turn to the West'.

In the months that followed, Mozambique signed the Nkomati Friendship Accord with South Africa and joined the IMF and the World Bank. The Nkomati Accord promised that Mozambique would not allow the Africa National Congress (ANC) to use Mozambique as a base for its military operations against South Africa. The Mozambican government abided by the agreement, but South Africa ignored the accord and Renamo attacks continued in Mozambique. In 1986, Samora Machel died in a mysterious plan crash on return from a diplomatic visit from South Africa. Machel was succeeded by Joaquim Chissano. In 1987, then United States president, Ronald Reagan, met with Chissano and urged negotiations with Renamo.

Politically, this resulted in much discontent in the party. For the people, Renamo was seen as an alternative to the one party government. While Renamo is seen as being

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[20] In fact, some rural populations did support Renamo. This is somewhat ironic given that Renamo was created by outside forces. They supported Renamo because it provided an alternative to Frelimo that was losing the support of rural people because Frelimo was not paying enough attention to cultural practices in rural areas and because people were being forced to relocate in order to make the party's agricultural policies work.

created on the 'outside', they in fact developed into an organization. As an organization they were strategic in gaining the support of the population. Today, in some rural areas, Dhaklara posters still hang. Where Frelimo ignored the traditional cultural values of the chiefdom system, Renamo capitalized on the resulting dissent. They worked to create an alliance with tribal people, reproducing the kind of relationships that the Portuguese had developed in order to keep power and control over the population. The irony is that Frelimo, which failed to reproduce these relations as a means of keeping power and control of the population, paid the price of what some have called a civil war.

Impact of War on the Civilian Population

The war in Mozambique was mainly instigated by external factors but perpetuated by political and economic circumstances internally. Nobody was left untouched or unaffected by the war. While the peasant population was the farthest removed from the political and ideological contrasts of the time, it was affected most directly. Lina Magia's book, *Demba Nengue: Peasant tales of Mozambique* (1988) gives voice to the atrocities committed during the war. *Demba Nengue* is a Mozambican expression that means 'trust your feet' or 'think fast.' It reflects the reality of coping and surviving in a state of warfare in a world of unknowns. A culture of war produces constant uncertainties: possibly losing family members, not having enough food to feed your family, attacks at unknown times, etc. Magia (1988) paints a grim picture of the war.

> And I saw my children ground, disemboweled, rent with bayonets or with their heads blown open by a bust from a machine gun. And I heard it being said that there was a civil war in Mozambique. Civil war ... What is a civil war!? Wars, whether civil or not, are waged between armed contingents. That's not what's happening in Mozambique. There's no civil war in Mozambique. In Mozambique there is genocide perpetuated by armed men against defenceless populations. Against peasants [sic]. (3)

The destabilization efforts had an enormous impact on the people of Mozambique. The war that ensued after Mozambique's struggle independence killed more one million people with up to 4.5 million dislocated internally or as refugees in neighbouring countries. The war was of such a nature that the rural communities paid a very high price.

Renamo operated a pillage economy and lived off the fruits of others people's labour. The destabilizing characteristic of the war is illustrated by the atrocious massacres and kidnapping of civilians, including children. The destruction of the social and economic infrastructure - factories, plantations and means of transport - was all used as means to destroy the core of Mozambique's economy. The destruction of infrastructure was mainly aimed at schools, hospitals, transportation routes, bridges and sometimes homes (Figure 6). Mobility for the population was severely limited. Homes were burnt, crops destroyed and family members killed and slaughtered. Often people were forced to watch their family members being killed. This became a technique by Renamo to break social ties in the community. Children were sometimes forced to kill their parents or other relatives. Women were also forced to live in the Renamo camps. One woman describes her experiences:

> I was kidnapped by the Bandidos Armados several years ago when they attacked our village, and forced to march back to their base camp. Life was awful: we had only the clothes on our backs, a fist in our face, heavy loads on our heads to carry, nothing in our bellies. ...I was 'given' to many men, and in the way of nature, shortly became pregnant and gave birth at the Renamo camp. It seemed like I was gone forever, for a lifetime. Sometimes I could not believe I was still alive...(Nordstrom, 1997: 131).

With respect to children, constant dislocations and deaths resulted in many orphaned children and abandoned war zones of war and separated from their families. The attacks resulted in family dislocations as well as loss of relationships, including seemingly irreconcilable anger and tensions and the loss of coherence within families and communities.

Populating the military service on both sides, at least in one respect, proved to be an easy task. Frelimo and Renamo both forcibly recruited children, many of who were captured at school or on their way to school. *Operaçao Tira Camisa* – 'Operation Take Off Your Shirt' – was continuously referred to during the fieldwork in Mozambique. Children were often kidnapped or recruited at schools. The recruitment of children at schools was an easy target for both Frelimo and Renamo. Often the school would be ambushed with

young children ordered into the bush. If selected they were told to 'take off their shirts".
As such, they were easily identified in case they tried to escape en route. They
automatically became soldiers. Often they were tied up and forced to carry boothy.

Once in camp, children were often drugged. Children were also given drugs and/or forced
to drink from barrels of water that had been boiled with *seruma* – cannabis. Gunpowder
was reported as easily accessible and smoked by children. This was cited as providing
courage for the children in times of combat. An indicator of hierarchy in the camp - with
specific reference to Renamo - was drinking the seruma water out of a person's skull.
Commanders would offer this privilege to select children. When asked if intoxication
made a difference in combat, one former child soldier responded: *"when someone drinks
he drinks in order to be strong, he used it to have courage and not be scared, these
actions are out of a normal situation"* (Dindiza)

Peace and Reconciliation

The Frelimo government recognized as early as 1984 that Renamo's 20,000 strong rebel
force could not be defeated by military means alone (Vines, 1991: 120). Frelimo opened
its doors to dialogue with Renamo, which was working to gain political power. The
Mozambican churches played an important role in the peace process. The Christian
Council of Mozambique (CCM) – an umbrella organization of Protestant churches – in
the early 1980's, approached Frelimo for permission to dialogue with Renamo. In 1988,
the Christian Council announced that a 'Peace and Reconciliation Commission' headed
by the Anglican Bishop of Maputo, Dinis Sengulane would attempt to meet with the
Renamo leaders to initiate peace talks. In an interview with Bishop Sengulane, he
describes the role of the churches in the negotiations.

> *It was in 1988 that some kind of 'green light' was given that the church
> would look for the other side, and try and persuade them to sit down and
> talk. So we had to travel to the United States, to Kenya, to Switzerland, in
> order to make contact with Renamo and talk to them about the need for
> them to sit down and talk to the government. Once the two sides agreed,
> we felt – actually – even before that – we felt that the CCM and the Roman
> Catholic Church should be represented by four people to avoid having a*

big delegation. So two Roman Catholic bishops and myself and the president of the Christian Council continued in this effort of bringing the two sides together. What we see happening in 1992 was the result of a long and complex work of persuading the two sides and preparing the ground (Interview with Bishop Dinis Sengulane, Maputo, July 3, 2003).

In 1992 the Rome Peace Accord was signed. In December 1992, at a meeting of the Peace and Reconciliation Commission, strategies were defined for dealing with violence and the high numbers of weapons in the country. An identified key strategy was that of disarming the civilian population and removing as many weapons as possible from circulation. The strategy reflected awareness that, following the Rome Accord, Renamo forces in particular, mistrustful of government commitments, had cached weapons throughout the countryside.[21]

> *Once negotiations started in Rome in 1991, we felt that we needed to prepare the people for peace: asking people what were their concerns; what were their fears when they think about peace. It was in one of these seminars that was held in every province of the country, that in Nampula, a lady said it: "Now, what is going to happen with the guns? We have so many guns. Both sides of the conflict have been distributing guns, and we have so many. So what are we going to do because they are going to threaten our peace.*
>
> *At the time I personally thought that my theological training had not equipped me enough to deal with guns, but then turning to the bible, we found in Micah, 4.3 an in Isaiah 2, that actually the bible talks about guns. So the following day, when the seminar was continuing I though: "Well, okay – we will implement a biblical disarmament programme which will consist of four operations – four steps. The first step is to persuade the people to bring their guns. We receive the guns from the hand of the people who have got them. The second step is making the gun unusable: to destroy it, if possible to dismantle it completely so that even if the same people who had given us the gun were to try to ambush us in order to get it back, it won't be useful at all to them. The third step is to give to the people, an instrument of production. It could be – we had the idea that a gun could be exchanged for a plough, or a bicycle or a sewing machine. And the fourth step would be to turn that gun into an instrument of production. I must add that later on we felt that we could make the guns into an instrument of art, and works of art, which is another way of turning them into instruments which are not inspiring violence. So we*

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[21] Often weapons that were cached were protected from weathering factors by wrapping the guns in oil and fuel soaked cloth and burying them in pits.

said to the people that after the end of the disarmament process that will be conducted by the United Nations and the government, this is exactly what we will be doing. And it is exactly what we have been doing since October 1995. (Interview with Bishop Dinis Sengulane, Maputo, July 3, 2003).

Both sides in the conflict were demobilized in 1992 with the United Nations playing a role in demobilizing soldiers and certain stations set up throughout the country, accepting their arms and restoring demobilized soldiers to their home communities. Soldiers received some benefits for demobilizing. Unfortunately, because neither side was willing to admit to its use of child soldiers, soldiers less than 18 years of age were not demobilized and received no tangible recognition for the years they had spent fighting. In 1994, the first national elections were held in Mozambique. Frelimo won the majority of votes, Renamo was closely behind.

Transformacao de Armas em Enxadas or Transforming Arms into Ploughshares (TAE) project was initiated in Maputo in 1995. The TAE office in located in Maputo (Figure 7). The first coordinator of the TAE project was Jacinto Muth an employee of CCM. In 1996 CCM/TAE was looking for funds to support the project and approached CUSO, a Canadian NGO, doing development work in Mozambique. The project was subsequently funded by the Canadian government, through the Canadian International Development Agency, from 1997 until March of 2002. CCM/TAE later approached an artists guild in Maputo, Nucleo de Arte to see what could be done with the decommissioned pieces. It is in the context of evaluating this project that research for this thesis was conducted.

Chapter Three

Child Soldiers: A Literature Review

Adults go to war, but they don't realize what damage they are doing to children. (Quote from a Nicaraguan child in: Machel, 2001: ix)

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on child soldiers and their circumstances. The bulk of the literature in this field takes a 'right's-based perspective', while other materials look at changes in the nature of contemporary wars and the political economy of countries involved in conflict. The background is important to accounting for the increased participation of children in armed conflicts. Other sources look at global factors of relevance while additional materials deal with the psychosocial impact of war on children and focus on the reintegration of youth in post conflict settings.

In 1994 the United Nations commissioned a study to look at the impact of war on children. Much of the literature thereafter is a response to this study, or builds substantially upon and comments on the content. The *Machel Report* is a critical piece of literature that researches and documents the impact of armed conflict on today's children. The document looks at the issue of children's participation in war in light of children's rights. The literature that follows broadens this perspective to analyze the increased participation of children in armed conflicts. A document already cited, and critical to understanding the literature related to child soldiers, is the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

The Machel Report

In 1994 the United Nations General Assembly, on recommendation from the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, commissioned a global study to assess the impact of armed conflict on children. An independent expert was asked to head the research. Ms. Graça Machel, former First Lady and Minister of Education in Mozambique, conducted the research that involved consultations in various countries. To

write her report, Machel personally visited many areas where wars continued to rage and children's conditions were continuing to worsen.

The study takes as its starting point, the concept of children's rights. Released in 1996, the 90-page document looks at five areas: (1) children's participation in armed conflict; (2) preventative measures; (3) the relevance and adequacy of existing standards; (4) measures to improve protection for children affected by armed conflict and; (5) actions to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children affected by armed conflict (Machel, 1996).

It is estimated that more than 300,000 children are currently participating in armed conflict. These include children participating with government armies, rebel forces and guerrilla groups in more than 30 countries in the world. Numbers from war-effected Sierra Leone include over 5,000 former child soldiers. Machel's report found that armed conflict has displaced over 20 million children, killed over 2 million in the past decade, has 300,000 children fighting as soldiers and has placed 60 million land mines in 87 countries (Machel, 1996).

It is obvious that children's rights are impacted in various ways and the report documents these impacts. While five pages in the document deal with psychosocial aspects directly, these impacts are interwoven throughout the document. Because of armed conflict, children are displaced and become refugees; children are recruited or abducted to become child soldiers; girls are sexually assaulted and exploited; war disrupts the education of children; HIV/aids is spread by soldiers who increasingly infect other women and children; and children going out to play are killed and maimed by land mines.

The report shows that modern wars are impacting children in increasing numbers and in new ways. Considering children and armed conflict in the light of an international agenda, Michael Wessells, in his work on peace and conflict, points out that the report: "shows an unprecedented, holistic assault on children that has been hidden for reasons of political and military gain or ignored to avoid personal discomfort. The assault

accompanies wider changes in the nature and pattern of warfare that have not received adequate attention" (1998: 322). Wessells goes on to state that the Machel Report serves as a consciousness-raising tool about the damage that armed conflict is having on children worldwide. The study acts as a problem-solving exercise, and provides recommendations on how to effectively protect children's rights.

Child Soldiers and the Global Economy

In the current literature, the use of child soldiers is seen as part of the contemporary nature of war. With the prevalence of civil conflict, it might be said that global monitoring of arms and the prevention of conflict is enough to protect children. However, other perspectives sensitive to State sovereignty suggest that the role of the military in internal State politics must be addressed from within the State to prevent children from feeling that their best political interests can only be achieved through recourse to violence.

Wars of today are unlike the wars of the past. Contrary to wars between nations (referred to as interstate), today's wars are commonly fought within nations (intrastate) (Hicks, 2001; Machel, 2000; Millard, 2001). It is held that the changing nature of war and the use of children in these conflicts must be understood against a background of changes in world affairs and the globalization of the world economy. De Berry (2001) and Allen (2000) note that what is common to collective violence in society is that the proportion of intrastate civil conflict compared to interstate conflict has increased over the last century. The changing nature of war is contributing to the increased participation of children in armed conflict, something that must be understood – as noted in the previous chapter - in terms of the demographics of South countries where most of the conflict takes place (De Berry 2001).

Global processes – many of which provide intense pressures to exploit child labour (military and other forms) - undermine the application of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC). Thus a 'right's-based perspective' offers a limited scope to deal with the increased use of children in conflict. Ananda Millard (2001) in her

article, "Children in Armed Conflict: Transcending Legal Responses", contends that the increased use of children in armed conflict should be understood as a manifestation of the evolution of warfare. Millard sees that there is an increase in the use of children because there are 'new wars'. These new wars are brought about, according to Millard, by the failure of post-colonial regimes, despotism, corruption and the inability of States to control conflicting interests in society. These failures, according to Millard, cultivate an atmosphere in which children become involved in armed conflicts. Children are a cheap source of military labour. Children can fight with new technologies: lighter and smaller arms. Children are impressionable and willingly (and unknowingly) put themselves at risk and, finally, in the face of poverty, the promise of food or clothing is sometimes enough to seduce them into military service. Hence in order to address the issues of children in conflicts, it is necessary to acknowledge and examine the dynamics of new wars. Furthermore, Millard sees that the "current trends in conflicts employing children is to use younger and younger children as active participants" (187).

Millard draws on the work of Ian Brownline's, *Principles of Public International Law*, and Geoffrey Best's *War and the Law Since 1945,* to highlight the changes of warfare and limitations of legal responses toward children. She points out, quite adequately, that the international community has little ability to oversee and control conflict. Warfare is increasingly chaotic (unlike the systematic and planned conflicts that develop *between* nations) and often without planned direction. Her analysis provides a deeper understanding of the nature of wars and the increased use and participation of children. The legal approach, she argues, provides a limited understanding of the issues. While she believes that the use of children as active participants in war is indeed a violation of international legal standards[22], these standards alone provide a limited view of the reality of children in armed conflict. Millard believes that an understanding of 'new wars' is essential to developing new ways for preventing the involvement of children and for dealing with the problem of reintegration.

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[22] The term 'legal' is frequently used in regard to United Nations *conventions,* and whether or not these constitute "legal" documents is a matter of debate – and not one that I propose to undertake here. However, the fact that these texts are called *conventions* and not laws, strongly suggests their current status – one that is admittedly changing with time. Hopefully, the time will come when these conventions can, without doubt or debate, be regarded as international laws.

Jo De Berry, working for the 'Center for Child-Focused Anthropological Research' states that if the *Convention on the Right's of the Child* (CRC) is to move from ratification to implementation, there must be consideration of the contexts that influence the phenomena of child soldiers. He identifies two contexts that influence the use of children in armed conflict: the first often being a State crisis, and the second being one that accounts for local influences on children's participation. He argues that effective implementation of the CRC is possible when it is considered less as a global charter, and is based more in knowledge about the specific and local realities which frame children's lives (De Berry, 2001).

Steven Hick, (2001) a Canadian academic and cofounder of 'War Child Canada', stresses that an international policy shift is needed in order to meet the challenges of new wars and armed conflict. The new intrastate wars have multiple roots and are located in the changing world politics of economic globalization. Hicks argues that the international community should respond to the use of child soldiers, protect children and prevent wars by addressing the political and economic contexts that give rise to these conflicts. Globalization, as a new stage in the development and expansion of capitalism, has also resulted in an increase in intrastate war.

With free trade and the rhetoric of market liberalism, capitalism thrives more on the international scale rather than the national level. Globalization is responsible for negative impacts on people worldwide. Hicks connects globalization to new economic relations, increased poverty, weapons sales, and corporate intrusions; all contributing to changes in the nature of warfare. "The institutions of globalization, such as the International Monetary Fund, fuel the new wars by forcing countries into structural adjustment programs that weaken national economies and create the conditions for conflict" (p.3). Free trade systems that open countries to the entry of trans-national corporations exist to exploit people and the resources in their countries. He stresses that:

securing access to resources and cheap labor within countries has involved the use of armies to protect resource laden land areas and corporate interests. For example, in Angola, Congo, Sierra Leone, and Sudan, competing oil prospectors, gold and diamond miners and private armies and security forces hired by prospectors are at the root of war. Global businesses not only have created the conditions necessary for many of the current wars but are also directly involved in those wars. In addition, the existence of markets for these products in richer countries has created complicity on the part of developed countries. (2-3)

In summary, Hicks argues that the political and economic environments in new, war-torn countries are all explained by three critical factors:

free trade and direct foreign transnational corporate investment;
forced structural adjustment;
diverging per-capita incomes between countries.

Proliferation of Arms

Free Trade has also opened the border for the manufacturing and proliferation of weapons. The types of technology used to fight and fuel the 'new wars' can also be seen in the context of the global economy and are related to the increasing number of children involved in these conflicts. In Sivard's (1993) look at military expenditures, he notes that military spending globally in 1993 was estimated at $790 billion US. $121 billion of this was spent in developing countries. Much of this expenditure can be related to the global spread and rampant use of small arms and light weapons, especially in African conflicts.

Since the 1990's, the manufacturing of arms and the arms trade has flourished. More companies are producing increased quantities of cheap assault rifles and small arms. There are also Cold War stockpiles of weapons that are easily sold on the world market (Hicks, 2001). The Soviet and Chinese-made AK47s, with their M16 American counterpart, are easy to use, cheap and widely available. In one African country the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (1995) reported the cost for an AK47 was US $6. The wars are perpetuated by international weapons sales, especially small arms. There proliferation is all the more possible in a world where trade in general

has increased, therefore making it increasingly difficult to monitor the movement of goods internationally.

Small arms are easily accessible and access to guns is getting easier on a global scale. As previously noted by Millard, there is a proliferation of light and inexpensive weapons that are easy for children to use (Goldwin & Cohen, 1994). This issue is becoming a bigger problem and one that the UN is working to address. Solving the problem of small arms proliferation is extremely relevant to addressing the issue of child soldiers.

In July 2001, various governments came together in the UN to discuss the global proliferation of small arms.[23] In July 2003, over 100 governments convened once again for the UN's *First Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Program of Action*[24] at the regional, national and global levels. But Lisa Misol, an arms trade researcher with 'Human Rights Watch', warns that: "Governments have a long way to go to address the scourge of small arms. …They should start by cleaning up their own behaviour" (Deen, in: *ipsnews*, http://www.ipsnews.net/interna.asp?idnews=19131).

Children: Volunteers or Victims?

Much of the literature deals with an important perspective, perhaps too little appreciated in the West. The commonly held view is that children are innocent victims of war and that their participation as soldiers must be against their will. There is no doubt that this is often the case. However, in counter-distinction to western ideas of childhood as a period of innocence, in fact some children *volunteer* as soldiers. De Berry believes that the reference made to children and their involvement in armed conflict supports a view that children don't have the right to autonomy or the capability for self-protection or preservation. This results in the common view that children are 'non-participatory' victims of armed conflict. He goes on to state that this contradicts a reality faced by many

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[23] Small arms are defined as weapons that can be carried and used by one person or light weapons used by two people working together. These include handguns, assault rifles, machine guns, grenades, launchers, anti-tank or anti-aircraft guns, including light mortars. "Small arms" includes both categories in addition to explosives and ammunition.

[24] The 2001 conference resulted in a document called the *UN program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects.*

young people involved in armed conflict. Not only do some children claim to have chosen to become active participants, "children become soldiers in light of the influences and pressures upon them, which they experience as part of their day-to-day environment" (2001: 2). In the case of Sierra Leone, it is said that 'children fight with their eyes open'. This matter is addressed by McIntyre et al. in an article entitled: *Politics, War and Youth Culture in Sierra Leone* (2002). Like many other studies, (Peters & Richards, 1998; Aning, 1998; Zack-William, 1990) the authors derive insight on children as volunteers from a case study in Sierra Leone.

According to McIntyre et al., children join armed conflicts for different reasons. While some experience forced recruitment, others sign up voluntarily. Those who join voluntarily do so on account of the poor economic condition of their families, or to avenge the suffering or death of a member of the family, or simply because it gives them a thrill. The authors note: "The marginalization of youth in Sierra Leone came about as a result of political and economic factors ...the youth in Sierra Leone thus had an interest in joining any process that in their worldview would contribute to improving their living conditions. ... For some the RUF [Revolutionary United Front] offered a different incentive: to bring about change through destruction" (2002: 5). These authors point out that many children participate in wars because of a lack of other options: a lack of educational opportunities and material benefits, not otherwise available. They quote a young girl caught up in the fighting: "They offered me a choice of shoes and dresses – I have never had decent shoes before." (2002: 3). Other authors note similar circumstances (West, 2000; Goodwin-Gill and Cohen, 1994).

At least one author (West, 2000), who interviewed female child soldiers in Mozambique (largely between the ages of 12 and 15 at the time they participated) claims that young people volunteered because they wanted to engage in a liberation struggle and joined Frelimo in its fight against Portuguese colonial rule. Their reasons were related to their commitment to the ruling regime and protecting the Mozambican revolution for independence from what they saw as forces pitted against it. Their reasons also invoked

gender considerations; the opportunity to be considered more equal than might otherwise have been the case. West includes the following account by a woman in his paper:

> Our mothers led a limited life. Outside the house and, even, inside it they could not speak freely. During the *luta armada,* we lived a different life. We rose to meet the needs of our whole society, not just of husbands and our own children. In this way, we were just like men and we had to be treated just like men. (187)

Child Soldiers in Mozambique

There is a considerable amount of literature dealing specifically with child soldiers in Mozambique. The literature includes material that addresses women and armed conflict (Thompson, 1999; West, 2000, Mazurana and McKay, 2001), the social reintegration of children (Mausse, 1998; Aird, Junior & Errante, 2001; Honwana, 1997), small arms and child soldiers in Mozambique (Aird, Junior and Errante, 2001) and cultural healing practices (Honwana, 1997). These papers deal with other topics of relevance to understanding child soldiers in Mozambique, including social, political, historical and economic contexts.

Writing in *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology,* Honwana discusses the social and cultural dimensions of the process of reintegration. She deals with traditional spiritual practices for the reintegration of child soldiers and argues that a combination of several psychological approaches are necessary to take into account a variety of world views and beliefs that for historical and geographical reasons (urban versus rural) are present in the country. She also notes the initiative of local populations in solving everyday problems such as those of restoring peace and stability.

In contrast to Western culture, responsibility for injustices is not an individual concern but a social issue. Children who return to their communities are not viewed as having a disease or illness but need the nurturance of adults (Aird, Junior and Errante, 2001). In some cultures of sub-Saharan Africa – ill health is seen to be a result of conflict with one's ancestors – and therefore it is necessary for child soldiers to cleanse and purify so

they will no longer be a threat to the community. The purification process works to stabilize the relationship with the ancestors.

Psychosocial Impact, Cultural Sensitivity and Reintegration

Much of the literature concerns steps that need to be taken in order to address psychosocial impacts and reintegration of child soldiers. The literature presents us with a need to understand 'trauma' in a different context and not simply to transfer ideas from the west and to individualize the problem (i.e. establish people who have a pathological condition). There is a need to deal with this as a community and collective problem rather than to take an individual approach.

Much of the current literature takes a critical stance on the conventional and western approach to dealing with trauma (Bracken et al. 1995; Bracken 1994; Gibbs, 1994; de Berry 2001, Summerfield 1994). These authors urge workers to question their style of interventions. In a chapter in *Rethinking the Trauma of War*, Bracken and Petty (1998), focus on the underlying assumptions of western psychiatry, with a particular focus on the current conceptual and therapeutic approaches to trauma that are formulated and diagnosed through the DSM IV. Bracken argues that the western discourse of trauma makes sense only in the context of a particular cultural and moral framework (38-59).

Because psychiatry is understood to be scientific and consequently culturally neutral, it can be argued that it fails to grasp the cultural specificity of its concepts and interventions. Bracken (1998) states:

> What clearly emerges from work in a number of areas is the importance of contextual factors in shaping the experience of and response to trauma. Issues of context are not secondary factors that merely impinge on the progress of a universal psychological or biological process. Rather, issues of context in terms of social, political and cultural reality should be seen as central to this experience and response. (55)

Bracken work's is critical of the concept of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). He uses the logic of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault to deconstruct the concept and argues that the whole idea of PTSD has arisen from the cultural contexts of the time. He claims that the concept is consistent with a cognitive approach to psychology and psychotherapy that is grounded in the Enlightenment project and its emphasis on 'reason' in determining human affairs. The other tradition that has contributed to the concept is subjectivity and a concern with the 'inner voice' (43). What is important to note is that these traditions are very western and questions can be raised about their importance and relevance to dealing with the trauma experienced by child soldiers in an African cultural context.

It is easy to generalize about the long term or disabling psychosocial damage to children as a result of armed conflict. But as Machel (2001) points out;

> ...it is important not to overlook the fact that many children display remarkable resilience in the face of adversity. Resilience refers to the capacity to overcome and deal with adversity. It is a fluid notion, dependent on individual characteristics and environmental factors. Psychosocial support programmes should build on these innate capacities (83).

Conflict, Catharsis and Artistic Production

One of the other themes I have addressed in the thesis is the role of art, produced by young people affected by the war, either directly or indirectly. There is very little in the literature that deals with art and artistic production as a cathartic practice that might help young people address, in a meaningful way, the effects of war on their lives. Writing about memory and war and the use of art as part of a healing process and as part of reconciliation, Pilar Riaño-Alcalá describe actions taken by a community in Colombia to remember the victims of conflict (2003). However, there is virtually no literature (none that I could identify) that deals specifically with the relevance and/or use of art and artistic production as a means of addressing the psychosocial impact of war on children. While there is much in the literature on art therapy, it would appear that it is a form of

intervention that has not been identified in relation to the unique experiences of child soldiers.

Figure 1: Map of Mozambique
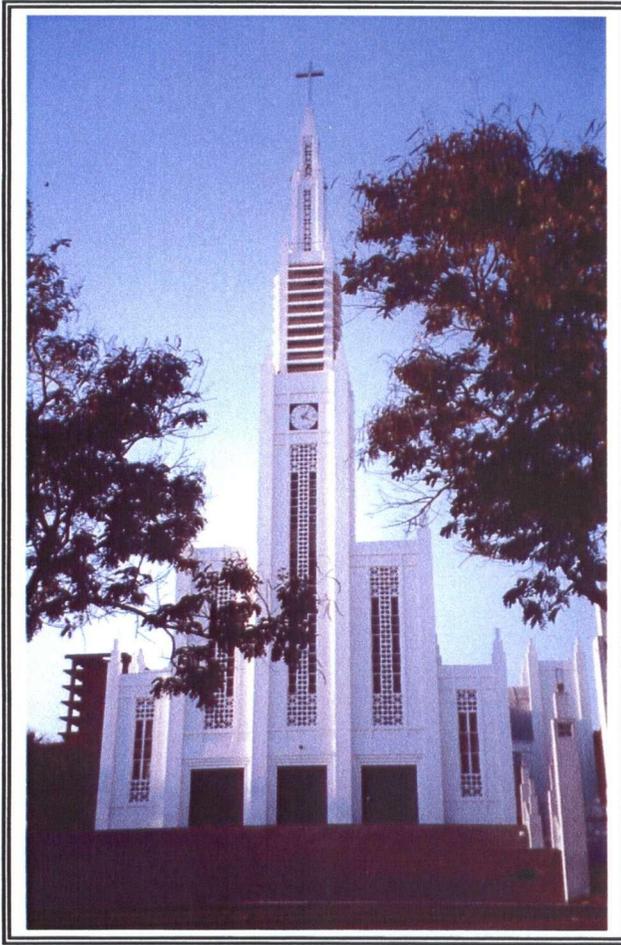
Figure 2: Catholic Cathedral, Maputo

Figure 3: Colonial School, Beira

Figure 4: Villa Algarve, Maputo

Figure 5: Revolutionary Mural, Maputo

Figure 6: Interior of Home in Chibuto, Bombed by Renamo

Figure 7: TAE Headquarters, Maputo
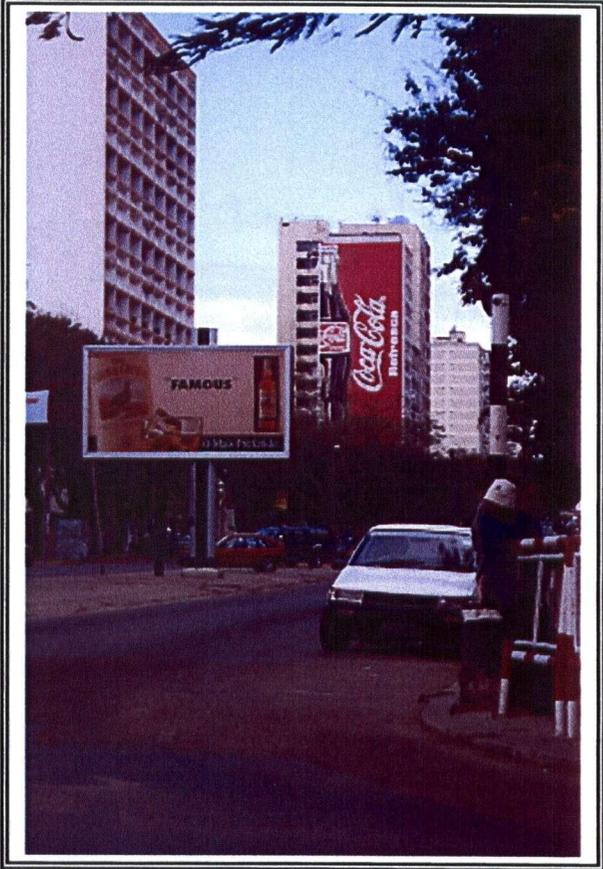
Figure 8: Modernity Arrives: Coke vs. the Famous Grouse in Maputo

Figure 9: Housing in Rural Mozambique
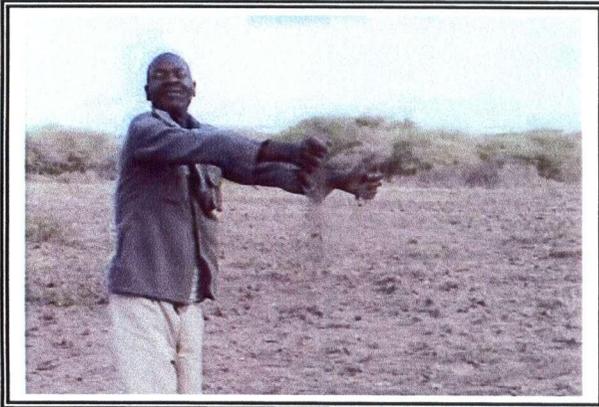
Figure 10: Drought Affects Rural Areas
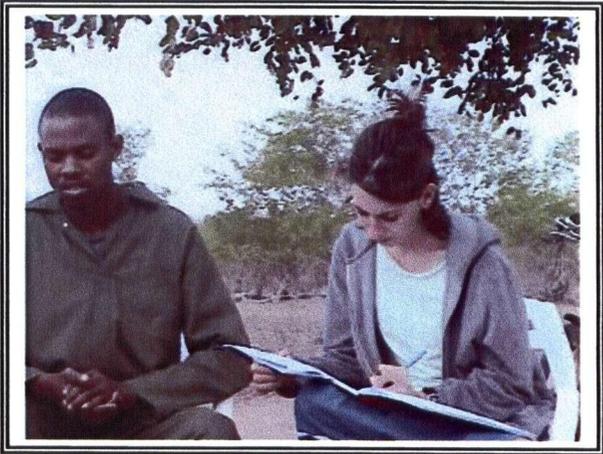
Figure 11: Interview Conducted in Rural Area
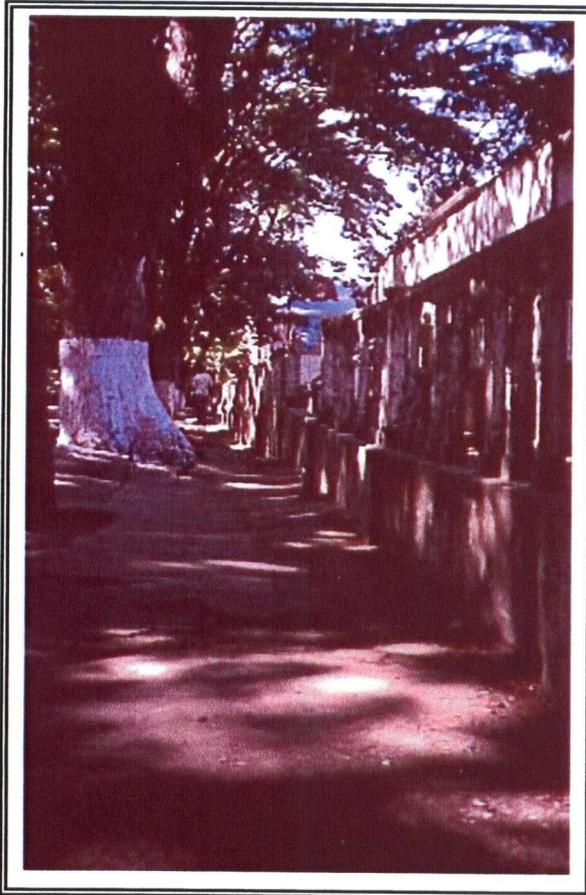
Figure 12: Street Scene, Beira
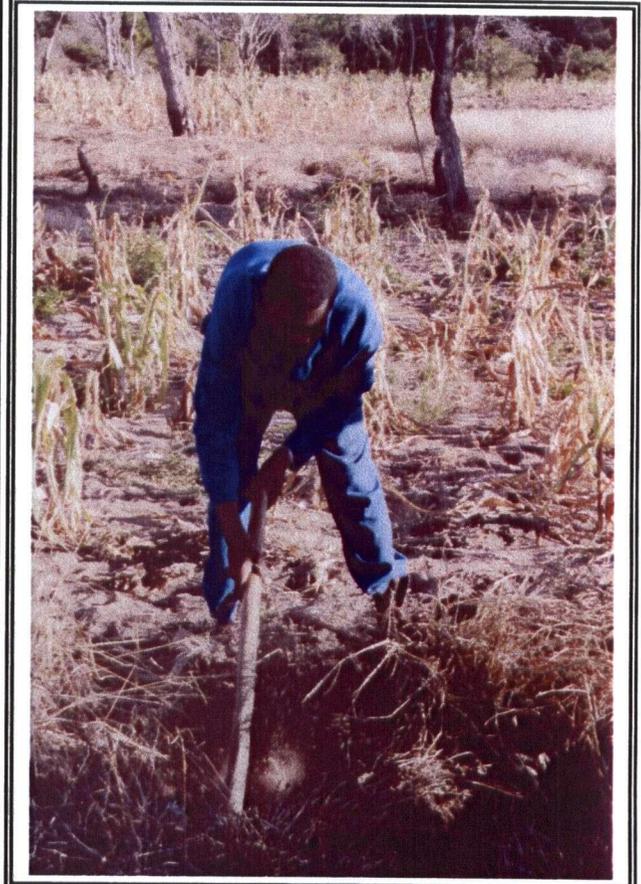
Figure 13: Digging for Arms, Gaza Province
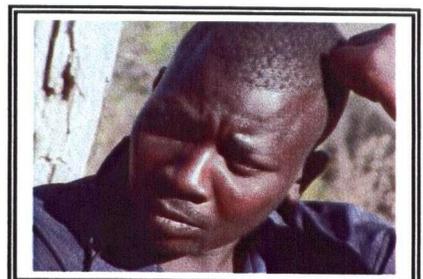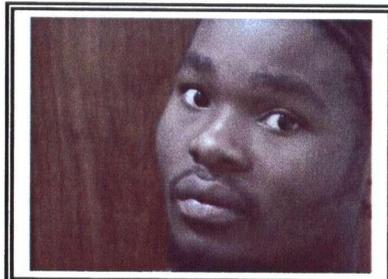
Figure 14: Former Child Soldiers and Artists Interviewed in Mozambique
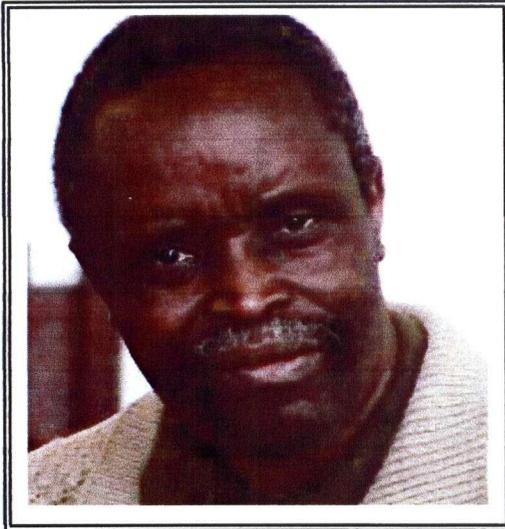
Figure 15: Bishop Dinis Sengulane
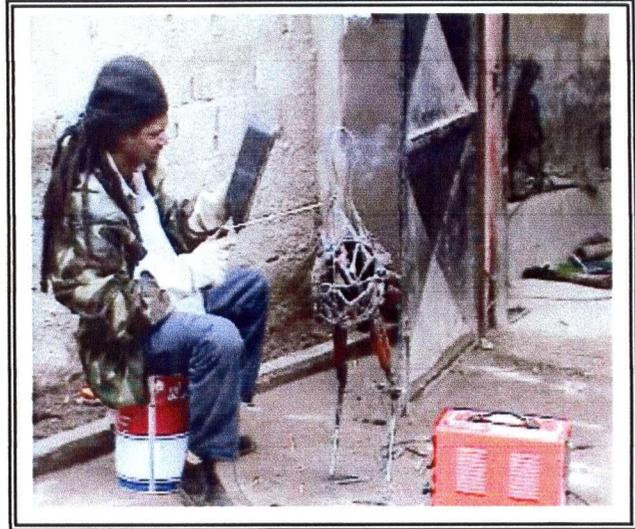
Figure 16: Transforming Weapons to Art
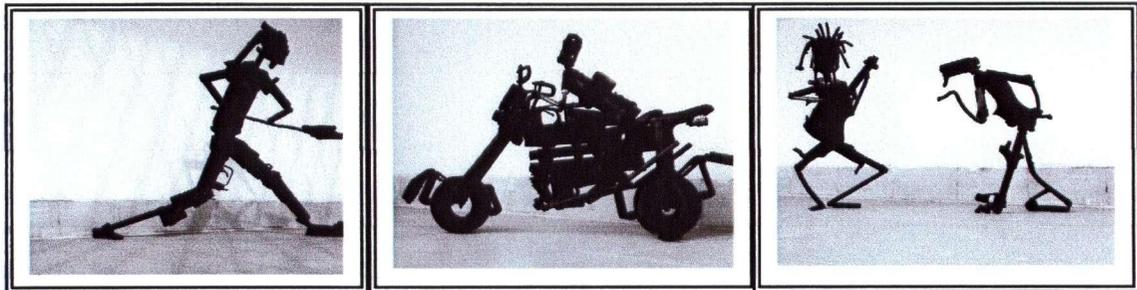
Figure 17: Sculptures made of weapons and representing themes of freedom, peace and joy.

Figure 18: Ten Years After the End of Hostilities, an Armoured Personnel Carrier Becomes a Child's Toy

Chapter Four
Theory and Method

Introduction

This chapter explores theoretical considerations relevant to an examination of the experience of Mozambican children, and particularly former child soldiers. Cultural theory acts as an important framework to understanding this experience. In Mozambique, the lives of children have been affected by war in many different ways, including lives disrupted when children were forced – or, as noted in the last chapter, even volunteered – to participate in the fighting. Now, as adults, these former child combatants live a culture where peace has been achieved. The second section of the chapter details the methodology used in the study.

Theoretical Considerations

Theoretical considerations do not always receive enough attention in the field of social work. The profession is oriented toward practicalities, and therefore it is no surprise that in training social workers, emphasis is placed on practical problems – the development and use of methods and skills. However, methods are related to theoretical considerations and should be informed by theory. The purpose of research and the content of a questionnaire or interview are, ideally, informed by theory. For example, in interviewing former child soldiers, emphasis may be placed on their experience trying to meet the needs of their families because, as a researcher, I am aware that this is likely a serious problem in a country affected by the structural adjustment programs of international institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In other words, knowing something about neo-liberal economics and its implications ends up directing the conversation about this aspect of a person's life. Therefore, in this chapter I have chosen to discuss theory and method together, recognizing that I have used theoretical considerations to make sense of the experiences I am studying.

The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory

Many theorists use culture as a framework to explain what is happening in societies. This chapter briefly examines the approach taken by the Frankfurt School and its development of what is known as Critical theory, and the way those ideas are applied to the study of culture. The Frankfurt School analyzes the impact of culture on the individual and society as a whole. The Frankfurt School is particularly concerned with the uses of science and technology to try to control and dominate the environment, in order to manage and regulate necessity and human consciousness. One of the most significant contributions to the field is the work of Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer, whose chapter "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" found in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1972), in addition to Fromm's work on mental health and society are used in this analysis. Another really important work of the Frankfurt School and a contribution of critical theory is Herbert Marcuses' *One Dimension Man* (1964). To a considerable degree the book popularizes the ideas found in *The Dialectic of Enlightenment* and contains many ideas about culture, technology, Reason and society that are very relevant to contemporary social work practice. Ideas about the culture industry are useful in further analyzing the role that the conversion of arms into art by young artists has played in symbolically dealing with peace and conflict in Mozambique.

The Frankfurt Institute began its work in Germany in 1923. The Frankfurt writers were primarily influenced by the world around them. They were writing at a time when fascism and fascist ideas were developing in Germany and this became a focus of their work. In addition, they focused their analysis of the changing aspects of modern capitalism. Members of the Frankfurt school were Jewish. With the fear of Nazism at every corner, commencing in the early to mid 1930s, many Frankfurt theorists relocated to the United States. With the exception of Herbert Marcuse and Eric Fromm, they returned to Germany after the Second World War.

Critical theory is influenced primarily by German philosophical traditions and the social analyses of Karl Marx and Max Weber. Critical theorists focus on the ideas of modernity

and progress. Their work analyzes the ways in which modernity creates problems for individuals and society. The Frankfurt School relied mostly on Marx's earlier writings and a humanistic interpretation of all of Marx's work. The humanistic version sees human behaviour as a result of historical consequences. People are born into circumstances and the dialectic relationship of these material circumstances and consciousness (how do we make sense of the world) results in our understanding of the world. These ideas are derived from Freudian psychoanalytic theory with an analysis of the material – including the cultural - circumstances in which people live (Held, 1980).

> Their spheres [the social and the psychological] are interdependent but irreducible to each other; for the individual is a 'unity of identity and difference with society'. Every society reaches into the individual, but within the individual, it is translated into a language quite distinct from that of everyday life – 'the language of the unconscious'. The languages of society and the unconscious are related but separate entities. ...The relationship between these phenomena cannot be stipulated once and for all. The relationship changes with history. In a contradictory totality, the spheres of the sociological and psychological cannot be integrated. (1980: 110-11)

This suggests that it is essential to pay attention to two things at the same time: internal processes and conditions *and* societal realities *and*, most importantly, the relationships between them. It also suggests that important problems occur when there are contradictions between who we are (our needs as human beings, for love, security, affirmation, belonging, etc.) and the way in which society is structured (based on greed, competition, 'survival of the fittest') and where the family is, for whatever reason, no longer a place that provides love, security, affection, etc. With this in mind, it is obvious why the reintegration of young people with their families, even under very difficult circumstances where they may have committed terrible acts of violence against their families, is important and something very difficult to achieve. It also suggests the importance of social workers paying attention, not only to individuals and trying to get them to cope with contradictory circumstances, but of social workers paying attention to and dealing with *both* the individual and the social conditions in which people live.

Cultural Studies

Cultural studies are part of Critical social theory and derived from Marxist and neo-Marxist frameworks for analyzing culture - both elite and popular - as a mode of ideology (Agger, 1996). Within the realm of cultural studies the scholars were attempting to understand why the social revolution, as predicted by Marx, did not occur and as such, they worked to reformulate Marx's concept of ideology. Marxist culture theorists explore culture as a realm that is more complex than when Marx was writing in the 1860's. For the Frankfurt theorists, Marx overlooked the role of culture and instead paid most of his attention to alienation and the commodity fetish. Marx's mechanistic reduction of cultural ideology to the economic 'base' of capitalism, where culture results as simply a reflection and extension of the base was not enough in explaining the role culture takes in modern societies (124).

While they agree with Marx that ideology is set to protect the status quo, Agger suggests that the Frankfurt analysis of the culture industry sees culture as a more independent phenomenon that Marx suggested (124). Critical theorists agree with Marx that capitalism requires ideologies to create false consciousness so that people do not recognize the injustices of capitalism. The concept may be useful in understanding the approach taken by interveners – perhaps and especially western ones - who believe that the process of reintegration is a psychological one that can be detached from economic considerations. An absence of a critical understanding of the economic and international realities faced by a country like Mozambique, social workers and psychologists dealing with child soldiers are likely to 'compartmentalize', and subsequently inadequately address the problems child soldiers or former child soldiers face.

The Frankfurt theorists extended Marx's ideology and believed there was more at play – mainly that new ideologies work to manipulate the human consciousness. The culture industry is seen as diverting people's attention away from their alienation. As a result, the market serves a dual purpose. It creates problems of alienation and then offers solutions to those problems (all-inclusive vacations, 12-step programs, etc). The culture industry creates false needs. They treat culture (i.e. television, radio, movies, advertising

etc.) both in an ideological and economic realm involving consciousness, discourse and consumption. Marxist cultural theorists agree with Marx that culture serves a purpose in the economic realm; however, the culture industry is seen as vital to create false consciousness and divert people's attention. Marxists cultural theorists argue that through domination, reification and hegemony, the culture industry manipulates and continues to colonize the minds and decisions of individuals. For child soldiers and the Mozambican population in general, becoming convinced that market forces can offer them a better life is critical to vested (western) economic interests. An interesting question is what happens (and the frustration of child soldiers is illustrative) when 'the system' cannot deliver the 'goods' it promised.

The flip side of the coin is that cultural production (the making of images, spectacles, events – anything that conveys a cultural message – and it can be argued that nothing escapes this definition) and resistance can also be used to give out other messages. Cultural production can be used to challenge colonization of the mind (in any form – including the colonization that takes place within a culture of war) and to replace one form of culture (war, individualism, aggression, etc) with yet another (peace, reconciliation, connection, family, community, mutual obligation etc.). The TAE project is trying to reinstate communal values under difficult circumstances – best captured by the term 'globalization'.

Preventing war depends on communal values. To put it in terms that those of us caught up in western culture can relate, I have to "be my brother's (and sister's!) keeper"; I have to care about others to the point where I am extremely reluctant to do them harm. This implies a sense of collectivity – or communal values - and a willingness to "share and care". The argument can be made that you cannot have peace and radical individualism at the same time because the former disconnects people from each other and minimizes the mutual obligations that tie people together.

The manner in which people are tied together through mutual obligations is the subject of much of the enquiry of the Frankfurt School and the writings of, among others, Eric

Fromm (1947). Fromm, for example, examines the impact of market relations (the kind of relations promoted through globalization of the Mozambique economy) on interpersonal relations and, we can generalize from this to understanding the replacement of production in traditional Mozambican society – primarily subsistence and for exchange with others, as needed – with conventional market relations (see Fromm's "Human Nature and Character" in *Man For Himself*, 1947: 75-89). It can be argued that these ties work effectively in preventing the outbreak of violence. But TAE and CCM are trying to achieve this in a society that at the same time is being subjected more and more to western style capitalist production and institutions – business is booming in Maputo and Coke is competing with whisky as the drink of choice (Figure 8).

Culture and Cultural Theory

Cultural theory is an important framework for understanding the implications of social, political and economic policies on people. Cultural theory has not been considered or used extensively in the field of social work although culture, recognizing cultural differences and responding to problems that exist in a cultural context, is what much social work practice is about. In an article "Culture, Theory, and Narrative: The Intersection of Meanings in Practice", Dennis Saleebey highlights the importance of culture and theory to social work practice. As a social worker, Saleebey notes:

> Practice is an intersection where the meanings of the worker (theories), the client (stories and narratives), and culture (myths, rituals, and themes) meet. ...There are many ways to construe and construct a world of meaning, and we will benefit as practitioners if we come to understand more clearly how people and culture create a world of meaning and what implications such meanings have for how we approach our work (1994: 351).

My preliminary assumption is that when children experience war, and subsequently experience the peace process, culturally sensitive processes can add and contribute to their healing. In the thesis, and in making sense of the information shared with me by former child soldiers and the artists I interviewed, I have relied principally on the work of the Frankfurt School and its interpretation of cultural theory. In doing this I am entering the debate over universal (modern) assumptions about the condition of people versus

diverse (post-modern) perspectives that emphasize differences and uniqueness. In the field of social work, anti-oppressive practice pays particular attention to the personal realities of individual lives and promotes a view on difference, while challenging 'expert' knowledge and promoting the recognition of individual ways of knowing (Campbell, 2003: 122) However, moving from this intense focus on individuals to a concern with structure is perhaps not easily done. I start with what we have in common and therefore the work of the Frankfurt School is relevant. I move to looking at the use of local and specific cultural practices and ideas in dealing with basic – and universal - human needs (i.e. wholeness, healing, belonging, etc.).

Definitions

'Culture' is a vast concept. It is not static but changes with time. In the book *Resistance Through Rituals,* John Clarke et al. (1976) describe culture in terms of traditions, the types and structures of social relations between individuals, and the way in which these are embodied in institutions and in material objects and shapes. The definition also includes a reference to 'maps of meaning' that members of particular cultures use to make sense of their environment and the world around them. They not only make their point in terms of tradition or types of beliefs and customs, but also include the ways in which these relations express themselves in concrete, real ways, as in institutions and material objects of value.

The 'culture' of a group or class is the peculiar and distinctive 'way of life' of the group or class, the meanings values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems of beliefs, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life. Culture is the distinctive shapes in which this material and social organization of life express themselves. A culture includes 'maps of meaning' carried around in the head: "they are objectivated in the patterns of social organization and relationship through which the individual becomes a 'social individual'. Culture is the way the social relations of a group are structured and shaped: but it is also the way those shapes are experienced, understood and interpreted" (Clark et al., 1976: 10-11).

Having defined culture in these terms, Clark et al. go on to define subcultures in relation to the dominant culture. A subculture "must be focused around certain activities, values, certain uses of material artifacts, territorial spaces etc., which significantly differentiate them from the wider culture" (14). Sub-cultures can exist within cultures. So, we can speak of a 'culture of women' or a 'culture of youth' or a 'culture of hip-hop' or, in this case, 'a culture of child soldiers'. Most importantly, language reflects all of these previously mentioned qualities and, in the minds of most theorists, is the 'gateway' to appreciating another culture. The reality is that Mozambican people are not speaking their own language; they are speaking – most often - the language of the colonizer – Portuguese.

Cultures can be altered by social, economic, environmental and political circumstances. War brings with it major uncertainties and disruption to day-to-day living. Many facets of life become disjunctive. Living in a time of war produces a very different culture than what one would expect to exist in the absence of war. One day people are afraid that someone is likely to come along and burn their village and the next day, someone comes along and says: "Hostilities have ended and you no longer need to be afraid." This is a relevant consideration because as social workers, we need to appreciate that populations such as Mozambique are being 'yanked' from one culture to another, while occupying the same physical space. Furthermore, as researchers, we come along 'after the fact' and it is all too easy to forget where it is that people have come from – something made all the more difficult if one has never experienced the realities of war. A neglected area of research is how young people cope with the realities of living in the context of a society at war and then, making the transition to a postwar context.

Development, Globalization, Structural Adjustment
The modernization that has been associated with attempts to "develop" South countries, especially since the 1950s, has obvious implications for culture. Historically, the West has defined development and our ideas of 'progress' have been projected onto the Third World. It is a discourse that claims that modernization is the only means possible to achieve development. Modernization is the belief that progress, science and technology

will advance the human condition. The North projects the idea that modernization and the concept of 'progress' is a universal one and that all countries should work in the same manner to achieve this linear programme of progress.

After WW II the United States turned to the South in an initiative to develop the "primitives" of the Third World. The 'Third World' is a term created by the West and measured by western notions of progress. These 'poor' countries were seen as 'underdeveloped' as they lacked modern economies, modern cultures and modern psychological traits (Bradshaw and Wallace, 1996). The Third World included almost all of the countries of Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, South Southeast, East Asia and Oceania. Hence, they looked at the "Other" and worked to 'bring them up to speed' with Northern so-called developed countries. Manson concludes that in 1950, out of a total world population of 2.5 billion, the Third World population comprised 1.6 billion, or just fewer than 65 per cent of the total. By 1992 out of a world population of 5.5 billion, the Third World population made up 4.25 billion or about 70 percent (Manson, 1997). Since the 1950's, efforts to modernize these countries have not improved their economic status. They remain, so-called 'Third World' countries.

The debt crisis affected African countries in particular; among them, Mozambique. During the 1980s, the prices for the agricultural goods Mozambique produced – sugar cane, cotton, cashew nuts - dropped considerably, consistent with a general decline in the price of agricultural goods on world markets. The structural adjustment programmes that encouraged South countries to get out of debt by increasing rates of production was one cause of the decline. In Mozambique, this took place at the same time as the government was involved in an armed conflict with Renamo rebels. The result was predictable. By the mid 1980s, Mozambique was in serious financial trouble and agreed to an IMF imposed structural adjustment programme as a strategy for getting itself out of debt, and as a condition for being eligible for much needed development capital.

The culture of war-affected countries must be understood in light of adjustment programmes, which set out political, social and economic agendas. In practice structural

adjustment programmes are measures to 'liberalize' and reduce the role of the State. The aim of structural adjustment programmes is economic growth (consistent with neo-liberal ideas of 'trickle down theory'. Mozambique was once a proudly independent country committed to socialist ideas. The socialist ideology emphasized social services be administered by the state. In the late 1980's the country was devastated by externally based aggression and by natural disasters. They turned to the international community for help. Aid was delivered on the condition that Mozambique join the structural adjustment plans of the World Bank and IMF. At the time, the policies did not take into account other factors, such as the fact that the country was in a state of war (Hanlon, 1996).

As noted above, within the framework of structural adjustment policies, the State should play a minimal interventionist role in the country. As such, the State should not have to provide for the welfare of the people. In the early 80's Mozambique's socialist policies gained national acclaim for their progressive health care programs. (Waterhouse, 1996)

For example, after independence, water supply became a public works program. Taps were supplied by the State and water consumption was free. This preventative health measure was eliminated by the work of structural adjustment programmes and the Bretton Wood's Institutions. Today, as a result of joining the World Bank and IMF, Mozambicans have to pay for their water. In fact, as one of the world's poorest countries, citizens also have to pay for their vaccinations, prescriptions, education, visit to the doctor's etc. The World Bank and IMF policy of privatization declares that water, health and education must be paid for. It is evident that structural adjustment policies have left Mozambicans with less control over their future.

Modernization and Culture in Africa

Franz Fanon, an Algerian political thinker, argues that there are many problems between the notion of modernization and nation building in Africa. Fanon's discussion is relevant and important as his work deals with the power imbalance between the center and periphery (or more specifically the urban and rural areas of a country). For example, there are many weapons left in the Mozambican countryside after the war. In addressing the

needs of child soldiers and others affected by war, the disparity in power and wealth between rural and urban areas must be taken into consideration. Fanon argues that modernization is directly intertwined and related to the nature of the colonial State and its historical heritage (Jinadu, 1978). Fanon claims that culture, as a concept, is crucial to providing an analysis of colonial processes.

From Fanon's perspective, culture can work to transform the political system. This determination results from the dialectical relationship between culture and the material base, and the belief that the material base for the post-colonial economy was laid by the colonial economy (Jinadu, 1978: 128). The result is a "false decolonisation" where power and control of the country is concentrated in the cities. Like other African political thinkers on modernization, Fanon sees an emergence of a new class formation in Africa that creates a distinction between the culture of town and the culture of country. Fanon's belief is that modernization results in a structural imbalance between town and country. It is "indicative of the perverse and unprogressive nature of colonial rule and the equation of development or modernization with urbanization" (128).

Fanon does not identify class with modes of production. He departs from Marx's analysis of class adding a cultural twist: identifying the bourgeoisie and proletariat in terms of their cosmopolitan and urban character (culture). On the other hand, Fanon sees the peasantry in terms of their rural character and their suspicion of the culture of town. Fanon's thesis is that the problem of modernization in post-colonial Africa is attributed to "the failure to reconcile these two cultures by building bridges across them" (128). According to both Fanon and Amilcar Cabral (former leader of Guinea-Bissau), the presence of this gap recreates colonial relations because the urban center aligns itself with the modernization agenda, whereas rural areas are more wedded to traditional relations and cultural practices. They also don't see the so-called 'benefits' of modernization that come to be reserved for the urban population.

The reader should keep in mind that 80% of the Mozambican population is rural. As a result of the geography of the war, guns are hidden in rural Mozambique, but TAE is

based (along with the Christian Council of Mozambique) in Maputo. One argument advanced by an CCM official at the BCCIC conference about the art sculptures produced from weapons was that they could not be used to promote the project in rural Mozambique because of how the sculptures may be misinterpreted by a (primitive) rural culture. It may be that in rural areas, any reluctance to hand over weapons as part of the TAE project may be related, not so much to fear of being identified with having weapons, but rather be related to a general distrust between the center and periphery. In Mozambique, it is not hard to notice the extreme difference between the capital, Maputo, where the status symbol is a cell phone and rural districts where many communities lack water, adequate food and where people live in mud huts (Figures 9 and 10).

Former child soldiers demobilized in rural areas are particularly disadvantaged. There is no employment in these areas and consequently much frustration. At times the frustration of former child soldiers (accented by a lack of economic opportunities) leads them to steal and engage in illegal activities to survive – presumably saying something about the neglect of the rural areas because the resources go into the "modern" and developing urban center (Maputo).

Methodology

General Considerations

Questions about how to approach research in a context very different from a Euro-Canadian context are important to the research that informs the thesis. Cultural and contextual considerations were critical. The former includes the social relations that arise in response to a particular context. In this situation, I was dealing with people affected by war, people whose experiences may have been traumatic. I was working in a country regarded by the United Nations as the fifth poorest country in the world. I was dealing with people with little or no formal education - although there were exceptions. It is also true that there are many sub-cultures in Mozambique and, while Mozambicans have much in common with one another, the many subcultures could not be explored or understood in the context of this research. Therefore, as part of an effort to evaluate the

TAE project, I relied heavily on Mozambican assistants in orienting me to the country, the countryside and in considering who I would interview and where I would go.

The tradition of western-European scientific research strives to achieve and maintain the neutrality or objectivity of the research and of the researcher at every opportunity. For example, it is unusual for members of a project to choose the subjects who are to be interviewed as part of a process of evaluating it. Yet this is precisely what was done in this context. The objective was to learn as much as possible about this project and its impacts on beneficiaries and the artists involved in contributing, in their way, to the objective of peace and reconciliation. Given the circumstances, a decision was made to rely on our Mozambican assistants – who were also employees of the TAE project (one a regular employee and the other a CUSO co-operant) to identify the people with whom I spoke. It might be feared that this would result in a situation where I spoke with people identified, because they would give a 'rosy' picture of the TAE project and its benefits.

However, this assumption is based on what might happen if a so-called 'scientific' approach was used *in total*; meaning that the posture and approach used is restricted to having subjects answer a set number of questions (as in a self-administered or researcher administered questionnaire) and that the focus is a narrow one. In fact, the TAE project was looked at in its entirety. Information was cross-referenced by speaking with staff, others associated with the history and development of the project, government officials, former CUSO cooperants, TAE staff, former CUSO employees – a wide range of people with different experiences and, as it turns out, different perspectives on the project. In interviewing beneficiaries and artists, the information gathered (which grew exponentially in content as the evaluation unfolded) was used to better inform questions asked of others – including beneficiaries and artists. Key people were interviewed more than once to follow up on information acquired in the interim from other parties.

The 'objectivist' tradition of the social sciences was discarded not only because it was logically (and logistically) impossible in this context. It can be argued that far from producing rich and informed results, it produces sterile and contextually vacant 'bits' of

information that lead to less than a complete understanding of what is going on. 'Conversations' were held with participants, to create an atmosphere that was conducive to openness. I shared myself, and some of my own ideas and experiences and listened to theirs.

The results speak for themselves. Respondents were critical of certain aspects of TAE, even in the presence of people associated with the project. They did not always - or even - agree with ideas put to them. This suggests that in Mozambican culture, there is less tendency for people to be concerned with simply 'fitting in' – as, can be argued, is true of Canadians in general - and, subsequently, being fearful of giving anything but a socially acceptable response to questions and ideas that are put to them. It also highlights the limits of taking assumptions and the methods that are produced by these assumptions (which a researcher may not even think about) into another cultural situation.

The participants made constructive suggestions for change. They sometimes expressed their frustration - and even anger - with things that had happened in the course of relating to the project. In summary, the data does not support any claim that because of the manner in which subjects were identified or interviews conducted, people were inhibited or restricted in their responses. On the contrary, the richness of text suggests that the method produced insights and information that would not have been obtained had any other approach been taken.

Area Covered by Research

I spent seven weeks in Mozambique from May 23rd, 2003 to July 6, 2003. During this time interviews were conducted in Sofala, Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo provinces in the central and southern regions of Mozambique (Figure 1). Interviews began in the first week of June in Maputo. I then traveled northeast to Beira in Sofala province, the central region of the country. Beira is the second largest city in Mozambique. Like Maputo, the remnants of colonialism remain mainly through architecture, churches, schools, large cement structures; trees were growing so big they uproot the cement sidewalks (Figure 12). Beira appeared to be more worn by the war, more struck by poverty. It is a city with

little wage labour. Since over 80 percent of Mozambicans live in rural areas, it was important that the participants comprised a diverse sample of individuals in both rural and urban settings.

The rest of the interviews were conducted in more rural locations (Figure 11). After Beira, I traveled to Inhambane province to Maxixe, Cambine and Inhambane. In the province of Gaza interviews were conducted in Majacaze, Chibuto, Dindiza and Chate. In the rural areas people were often hungry. Regions far away from the coastline are dry and, in Chate, Gaza Province, it was evident that people were having great difficulty in getting enough to eat.

As a researcher I set out to interview the respondents in their natural environments, in the cultural space that they find themselves in. I interviewed people in their homes, in their yards, surrounded by children, gardens, chickens and neighbours. Domestic duties continued throughout the interviews and often interviews were conducted with the background of young women grinding corn into powders to make traditional foods. Transport in both rural and urban areas was with a Nissan 4X4. Some rural areas were not entirely accessible by vehicle and at that time, travel to the interviews was by foot. During one interview in a rural area, we traveled with a former child soldier to discover an arms cache (Figure 13).

The Sample

This research is part of a larger study evaluating the TAE project. A total of 50 participants were interviewed for the larger project. This included interviews with 26 respondents as direct beneficiaries of the TAE project. Six of these respondents are former child soldiers. All the former child soldiers included in this study were recruited at school or on their way to or from school. They were abducted and forced to participate in military life.

The results reported in this thesis are compiled from 12 interviews conducted in Mozambique, including interviews with former child soldiers and artists associated with

the transformation of weapons into sculptures. Of the former child soldiers, three individuals were recruited by Renamo (two in 1979 and one in 1981). They were 11, 14 and 16 years of age at the time of their capture. The other three respondents were recruited by Frelimo (in 1982, 1984 and 1986) and were 12, 14 and 16 years of age. As adults, at the time I interviewed them, their ages ranged from 31 to 38 years old. One former child soldier was residing in Maputo, two in Beira and the remaining participants were living in rural areas. Only one former combatant was employed in the formal sector and the remaining had no means of earning wage labour. Their years of service with either Frelimo or Renamo ranged from one to 13 years. All the former child soldiers lived outside of capital with the exception of one (Figure 14).

In addition, the data from interviews with six artists involved in transforming weapons into works of art as part of the TAE project are also included. While these participants were not former child soldiers, they were young people during the war and, in conjunction with TAE, collaborate with the project in their contribution to peace and reconciliation. The artists, with the exception of one individual, are under 30 years of age. All resided in Maputo and some had moved to the capital from their traditional zones. All the artists had lost family members and were affected in one-way or another by the war.

The Interview Process

One of the problems with research conducted in contexts with which researchers are not overly familiar – particularly cross cultural setting – is that researchers often enter the field with their methods, schedules and instruments already in place. Having made this kind of commitment – something that is characteristic of the idea of 'good planning' in western culture – researchers can find themselves locked in or heavily committed to ideas and approaches that don't work once they are in the field. Apart from reading about the history and culture of the country – and having access to some background material on the TAE project - I did not formally prepare 'instruments' or commit myself to a particular approach until arriving in Mozambique. Once there, standard approaches were considered: the use of a questionnaire (which was developed and field tested) and the development of an open-ended interview format that would seek some common

information from the participants, as well as information that was in response to their unique situations (locations, experiences, gender, age, etc.) A questionnaire was developed and, subsequently, two pre-tests were conducted in the city of Maputo. After field-testing the questionnaire, I opted for open-ended interviews and also decided to conduct 'conversations' with participants intended to create an atmosphere that would be casual, informal and accommodating.

The initial list of interview questions were reviewed and refined by noting particular areas of inquiry that generated the most discussion. I was sensitive to the identity of the participants (gender, age, lived experience, education, geographic location [urban versus rural] level of involvement with TAE, etc.) and explored experiences from there.

The interviews were divided into two parts. The first portion was directed towards questions of life history and reflection of the armed conflict. The second portion focused specifically on aspects of the TAE project [see Appendix 1]. Questions asked during the interviews encouraged participants to reflect on the civil war in Mozambique, the TAE project and its work towards peace and reconciliation in the country.

Interviews were conducted in English, Portuguese and the local languages. A local Mozambican involved with the TAE project traveled with us. He was born in the province of Tete and speaks various local dialects (including, Nyungue, Nyanja, Sena, Ndau, Shona, Chitewe, Changana and Chichewa). In addition at least one and sometimes two CUSO cooperants accompanied us on the interviews.

Analysis of Results

Interviews for this research were all recorded on audiocassette and some on videotape. Audiocassettes were then translated and transcribed. The transcripts were analyzed by a process of reviewing the information and sorting the content of the 12 interviews into different thematic categories. After thematic categories were established they were reviewed again and comments from individuals were compiled under the different thematic headings.

Grounded theory is supposed to give rise to new ways of thinking about social issues and problems by letting the data 'speak for itself'. Whether or not this is logically possible is debatable. The idea of 'data speaking for itself'; that is, giving rise to categories of analysis and hence, to new and perhaps different theoretical understandings, is challenged by the claim that all of us approach our work with ourselves 'in tow'. The idea that the researcher can reduce herself to a 'blank slate' in order to 'let the data speak for itself' seems to be progressive, but in fact, it can be argued is merely an extension of the objectivist – and positivistic - tradition of the social sciences. In fact, all researchers have values, commitments, ideas and inclinations. Furthermore, social work emphasizes the importance of 'being in touch with oneself' as a pre-requisite to effective practice. It is entirely paradoxical, therefore, that for purposes of research, the researcher is supposed to divest herself of 'her self' and take on an objective position that 'lets the data speak for itself'. My values are clearly reflected in theoretical perspectives used to inform the thesis.

Therefore, the categories developed and presented in the research are the result of an iterative process: one of working back and forth between the data and information gathered and theoretical traditions that to some extent and in different ways, already incorporate the values, inclinations and experiences of myself as a researcher. What subsequently happens is one is forced to expand, modify (perhaps even severely) ideas and theoretical commitments that one already has. In this case, I started with an interest in class and culture – both categories that relate, as I have noted, to my personal experience, and refined and developed these ideas – in fact was encouraged to do so in order to make better sense of the situation that I was studying (Mozambique and a history of Portuguese colonial rule as well as a war of liberation followed by further conflict) and people struggling – child soldiers in particular – to make sense of their own lived realities, consciousness and material circumstances. Therefore, the categories – identified in the next chapter - were informed by theoretical considerations arising from Critical theory and a critical approach to cultural theory and, conversely, my exploration and the refinement of my theoretical thinking was informed by the results of the interviews.

Conclusion

Conclusions generated from interviews do not, by any means, speak for all former child soldiers in Mozambique. They represent a cross-section of experiences from different regions and different military groups. In the presentation of results, two objectives were considered: (1) to include the range of opinions found in the results and, (2) to emphasize the areas of collective importance to participants. In presenting the results in this way, differences of opinion are noted and general consensus highlighted.

This chapter has discussed some of the macro theoretical concepts relevant to understanding the situation of child soldiers and the method used to gather information. The next chapter explores the experiences and situation of former child soldiers and uses additional theoretical considerations grounded in the content of this chapter.

Chapter 5

Results and Discussion

Self-awareness, reason, and imagination have disrupted the 'harmony' which characterizes animal existence. Their emergence has made man into an anomaly, into the freak of the universe .He is part of nature, subject to her physical laws an unable to change them, yet he transcends the rest of nature. He is set apart while being a part; he is homeless, yet chained to the home he shares with all creatures. (Fromm, 1947: 48-49)

Introduction

In this chapter, I present the results of the interviews conducted with former child soldiers and discuss what they had to say. The chapter draws upon the theoretical tradition outlined in the previous chapter and is organized under five headings. As previously noted, the headings are the product of looking at the interviews in the same manner as someone using grounded theory. I have sorted through the content of the data and identified common concerns and topics arising from the relatively open-ended interviews. The headings identify the themes that emerged once common comments and observations were grouped. The headings are: (1) Education, War and Lost Social Opportunity, (2) Marginalization and Meaning, (3) Exchanging Guns: why bother and for what? (4) Being and Becoming: Healing and Recovery and (5) Art and the Culture of Hope.

Education, War and Lost Social Opportunity

This section uses a macro perspective to provide an understanding of the impact of war on children. It is critical for aid workers working with former child soldiers, particularly in Africa, to understand the historical and material circumstances and how these shape consciousness in a dialectical process. It was only in the mid 1970's that Mozambicans, for the first time, could produce food for their own survival rather than producing for the export needs of the colonial power. Children had more opportunities to attend school outside of the *forma* education children were receiving. Regardless of reintegration programmes, the economic and social barriers that young people face have a direct relationship to the impact of war on children. This needs to be understood as a relationship and extension of the economic realities of a country. The history and material

circumstances of the country need to be understood in order to define and bring light to the present situation.

Structural adjustment programmes work to reorganize markets and social relations. The lack of social and economic opportunities for young people returning from war was an overriding theme in the interviews. A lack of economic and social opportunities is seen to have a large impact on the lives of former child soldiers who now, as adults, are working to support their large extended families. The majority of participants interviewed made a living through *negociacaos*,[25] and the lack of social and economic opportunities for former child soldiers make it difficult for them to provide for their families. The following quotes are illustrative of some of the economic problems faced by former child soldiers.

> *For me, I don't work. In order to get money I have to make a lot of sacrifice. The only preoccupation is to go to one place or another to find work. (Madane)*

> *In Beira, there is no money, The preoccupation is what we are going to eat today. (Alfredo)*

Another interviewee reported that:

> *Now, I only know how to shoot, hunt and manage guns because when I was young I only learned how to manage guns. (Dindiza, recruited at 11 years of age)*

Participants frequently spoke of their lack of economic opportunities. Opportunity for wage labour is limited in Mozambique and finding a source of income, a major preoccupation for many of the participants. When I asked these former child soldiers about the greatest impact of war on their lives, their response was their difficulties in

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[25] *Negociacaos* is how the majority of former child soldiers (in addition to the adult population) defined their means of employment. *Negociacaos* is a way of conducting trade and business. The word literally means 'to negotiate'. For example, a trader can go to a rural area, get the local people to cut sugar cane, which he may then purchase, and take the sugar cane to an urban area and use it in the making for sugar water for sale locally. These operations involve little or no capital equipment and are often conducted in the home or back yard of the trader. Participants described their *negociacos* as selling of sugar water, charcoal, second hand cloths etc.

efforts to find a job and the limited opportunities of participation in the work force. However, not all participants attributed this to the war *per se*, they related their difficulties to a lack of education.

> *I wasn't able to complete my education and today I don't have a job. What I have today is a huge battle to deal with, but if I had studied I think the difficulties of finding a job would be minimized. So realistically I fell behind. (Alfredo)*

And:

> *Sometimes I used to think about this, I wasted my time, those people are not supporting me, there is no food, because I wasted my time, instead of studying and getting a good job, now I am suffering with my family and they [the government] are in a good position eating well. (Dindiza)*

When speaking of other former child soldiers, one participant commented:

> *There are many around [young adults who fought in the war as children], without jobs, using drugs and alcohol. All and all, the big problem is they don't have the chance to find a job. (Zacarias)*

The lack of economic and social opportunities is seen to be an important theme for former child soldiers in a post war context. Without education they cannot find work, and not finding work leads to a disconnection from their communities, as they are unable to provide for their families.

However, training or retraining programs will not necessarily solve the problem. The reality is that there is a lack of employment opportunities so the question: "Training for what?" is a valid one. The problem is one of the general economy. For example, if someone is trained to fix motorcycles, there will be no employment if there are no motorcycles to repair because no one can afford and, therefore, own one. The problem of the general economy is also linked to what was discussed earlier: the effects of structural adjustment on the economy. In other words, to effectively deal with the problem, there have to be macro level changes taking place at the same time as more micro level ones like the introduction of job training programs.

Another observation that is evident from the quotes presented above is that there appears to be bitterness and resentment on the part of some former child soldiers who "wasted" their time and who resent the government that is "eating well". This kind of anger and resentment can lead to other social problems that are also mentioned – like crime and the use of alcohol and drugs.

Finally, it should be noted that these problems are no different than those encountered when job training is offered people who are poor or unemployed in western countries like Canada. The difference is that the problem in Mozambique is a severe one very much related to a history of colonialism, conflict and, more recently, interference by international institutions with agendas that do not serve the well being of Mozambicans.

Marginalization and Meaning

This section illustrates another theme emerging from the interviews. Former child soldiers, in addition to having concerns about their economic status, as noted above, also see themselves as isolated and alienated from their communities and full participation in society. As a result of their time spent and their involvement in the armed conflict, as noted, they lost the opportunity to attend school. When former child soldiers reflected on how the war affected their lives they noted the *tempo perdido* (lost time) as a result of the armed conflict.

The participants all easily recalled the day they were recruited. All had aspirations as children to finish their education and to pursue employment in areas such as engineering, mechanics and as teachers. Not fulfilling these desires has resulted in isolation in relation to participation in their society. This isolation is profound in another way, in that this lack of "connectedness" also raises questions about meaning and their role in their community. In some respects this raises questions about suicide in relation to having been a former child soldier, something that is not often explored or examined in studies done in relation to the problem of child and former child soldiers. The duration of the armed

conflict and its impact created a sense of marginalization of the individual from his or her community.

> *For me, it resulted in a process, a loss. I fell behind and I didn't study, I didn't recuperate the time that I lost... (Zacarias recruited at 14 years old, served with Frelimo for 8 years)*

> *I feel like I wasted my time, because as you know, I spent my life, the whole time fighting. I didn't study. Even now, for me to find a job, it's very difficult because I didn't study. So what I think is that I wasted my time and now I am doing nothing and I wasn't able to do anything because I didn't study. (Dindiza, recruited at 12 years old, served with Frelimo for 7 years)*

Drawing upon Marx, Fromm talks about marginalization; the same concept identified by the former child soldiers. Fromm also suggests that marginalization is related to being alienated. Because these former child soldiers *feel* alienated, they are marginalized. The *feeling* of being alienated comes about as a result of having seen, experienced and done things as a child soldier that others will likely not understand or appreciate. A lot has to be kept 'inside'. Fromm explains that marginalization is an experience where the individual experiences him/herself as being outside of what is going on. In other words the individual has little or virtually no control over his or her circumstances. This results in socially patterned defeat (Fromm, 1955). Former child soldiers do not see themselves as having the same opportunities as their peers. While addressing the human needs of people is complex and depends on many factors, it is evident that in addition to 'therapy' – an opportunity to talk about and make sense of terrible experiences – as Fromm notes, the importance of the way society is organized and how this organization affects human relations (creating a welcoming space and opportunity for former child soldiers) is equally important. In putting it this way he is drawing upon the work of Karl Marx who saw that the way in which production was organized in western capitalist societies was responsible for the alienation experienced by workers. In other words, to be effective, social workers working internationally have to coordinate meeting the personal needs of child soldiers with addressing *at the same time*, the bigger structures and organizations that will affect outcomes.

With certainty it [the time lost to living while fighting in the war] *was a big loss, if I had studied until today maybe I would be working. But as we were in the bush, when we were demobilized home, it was like we were marginalized, because there was nothing. (Madane)*

Many of them [child soldiers] *are marginalized, they lost much time in the war and now they don't have familiarity with anything. (Zacarias)*

Many of those interviewed felt a huge sense of frustration that the signing of the peace accord in 1992 did not substantially improve their lives. It is evident from the results that it is important to some former child soldiers that they interpret their participation as having made a difference and that they did not waste their lives in a futile war. If they do perceive that they wasted their lives, this can lead to depression, anger, and violence and affect their psychological functioning. Of course there are no absolutes. Not everyone felt this way.

In a certain sense I could be doing something else now...but on the other side, I feel proud because I did something good, it changed something in the country. Some people say Renamo was a terrorist movement, but something changed from how life was before. (Alfredo)

A former child soldier rationalized his experiences by noting that because of the civil war, the government turned into a multiparty system, an aim they were working to achieve through the Renamo movement. However, while this was seen as a benefit of having been involved in the conflict, in the same breath, this former soldier was also quick to point out that the outcome was not ideal. This person supported a large family and one child had to go and live with his ex-wife because her new husband could support the child. Structural adjustment programmes have also had an impact on former child soldiers (and everyone in the country) providing for their families. Less spending on public services has resulted in the implementation of school fees. Although the cost is minimal, there is no employment and money is difficult to get.

...I feel bad because before you didn't have to pay for school, but now it is very expensive and I have to pay for school. (Alfredo)

This individual "feels bad". He has internalized, not only his experience and the lost opportunity resulting from being a child soldier, he is now faced with the reality of structural adjustment programmes on his life and chances to make a living and support a family. However, the point is that he feels bad. In other words, it appears that he has internalized the experience. He "feels bad", not angry or "ticked off" at the government or the IMF or World Bank (as he may never heard of the IMF or World Bank). In the conversation I had with him, he understandably didn't identify the World Bank as the source of the problems experienced. Thus it appears he has internalized the experience. To further complicate what is going on, it may also be a gender and cultural matter where he feels bad that, as a man and as a 'breadwinner', he is not able to provide for his family. All of these considerations must be addressed by anyone working in this setting and with these problems. However, it must be remembered that not all child soldiers have the same experience. In the West, there tends to be a somewhat unified image of who child soldiers are, the nature of their experience and how it has affected them. What I found was a great deal of difference among former child soldiers and how they interpreted and handled their experiences.

Exchanging Guns: Why Bother and for What?

The chapter now turns to the TAE project and the experiences of the exchange of weapons for development tools. In this section, I present the feelings, ideas and concerns that former child soldiers have about the exchange process. The significance of what they have to say in relation to the project is discussed. The TAE project has two focuses, one of disarmament (the exchange of weapons for development tools) and the other, of peace, reconciliation and transformation.[26] There were many stockpiles of weapons left from the

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[26] On June 23, 2003, the BCCIC in cooperation with World Vision held a workshop on the TAE project in Mozambique. Bishop Sengulane was invited to attend and in his presentation outlined that the original aim of TAE was that of peace, reconciliation and transformation, to "turn pieces of destruction into productive tools for development" (pieces that could be used to aid in production, shovels scissors etc.). However Mozambique lacked the facilities to transform the materials and subsequently approached Nucleo de Art to experiment on what could be done with the decommissioned weapons.

armed conflict. For the Mozambicans, guns are artifacts[27] left over from the armed conflict and the TAE project is working to transform the weapons as objects of peace and reconciliation.

The beneficiaries were directly involved in the war and from their military experiences are aware of hidden caches throughout the countryside. In terms of weapons collection, the information provided by former child soldiers acts as a valuable resource to a project like TAE. When asked about the TAE project and their impressions of the project, the participants discussed the benefits of exchange and transformation. The response to the exchange was generally a positive one. Former child soldiers talked about many hidden gun caches in the countryside. In particular, it was often highlighted that these guns contributed to social problems, such as crime and hijackings. The guns pose threats in the community and at times tempers easily flare and guns are a threat to individual and community safety. The following statements elicit why former child soldiers decided to exchange weapons left over from the armed conflict.

> *I thought of trading arms mainly because arms are dangerous, they are used to kill, my family can die from these guns. I thought it was worth transporting them instead of leaving in the bush. (Betual)*

> *I really suffered because of these guns. That is why we have to collect the guns because I suffered a long time and we have to collect up to the end. (Dindiza)*

> *The project turns things into something good.... When this project appeared, I said, I have this here for what? There is an advantage; I can have something better. (Madane)*

Many benefited from the project in ways that improved their livelihood. Participants also identified things that would improve their contact with the project.

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[27] I use the word artefacts to get across the idea that the guns were not a part of Mozambican culture before the conflict but acts as reminder of the conflict. They have more symbolic value than they do actual use value for people who chose to participate in the TAE project.

I constructed a house in Maqueze, I received a plough, chapas[28]...I would like a bike. I am suffering. I know that there are weapons in the bush but to walk is very difficult, with a bicycle I can go and transport. (Betual)

The participants indicated 'suffering' was a common experience as a consequence of the armed conflict. The objective of the TAE project is to impact the way people think about peace. Feelings of helplessness in war, as participants in the war (as children) are easily led (with no free will or choice), while on the other hand, the experience of former child soldiers is the situation of 'kill or be killed'. Exchange and transformation allow for some control of their world again; they are making culture and contributing to peace instead of being made by culture (as, for example, being *made* by the culture of war). The exchange acts as a public display, a personal contribution to peace and reconciliation, a contribution to their families, to their communities and to themselves. Such an experience can result in a personal cathartic experience. Their time during the armed conflict and their relationship to the weapons (to which they had no choice and were forced to use) is now altered as they have control over their relationship to the guns. In the way of gun collection, transformation, and its impact on peace, one former child soldier commented:

The fact is that the more guns that are destroyed, or collected to be destroyed, in itself contributes to peace. For a person who analyzes it, he reaches a conclusion that at the end of the counting, there is more space and impact on peace. (Alfredo)

The beneficiaries of the project are well aware that TAE is administered through CCM. Historically the Christian Council of Mozambique was a very proactive body throughout the war and the group who called for a dialogue between the two sides to end the long years of armed conflict. Importantly, CCM is a group that the population of Mozambique can trust. As highlighted in the interviews this was very important to the participants.

As the former child soldiers pointed out, there is a lack of trust in exchange with the people with power who are not seen as part of the rural landscape but who are at 'the center': the government.

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[28] Chapas are sheets of zinc used for roofing village homes.

We treat these things [gun exchange] of great secret. Having weapons, it's a big secret to deal with these things.... I think that I can say that TAE is better in trading with the people instead of the government because they have a better relationship with the people, in the form of sensibilization, to help them see. TAE comes through the Conselho Cristao, using religion, it make the people understand.[29] (Zacaris)

I think in actuality TAE has more influence in the south zone. But here we do not feel a strong presence. (Alfredo)

As the work of Fanon outlines, the process of modernization in post-colonial contexts often leaves a sense of distrust between the rural and urban populations. Fanon notes the discrepancy between the two that results in a split between the centre and the periphery: the culture of town (urban centre) and the culture of the country. Child soldiers, many of who operated in rural areas and are currently living in rural areas, have a greater mistrust of State authorities than other members of Mozambican society - and for good reason. Their experience illustrates this urban/rural split. The process of 'false de-colonization' creates a split between the centre and periphery, between the culture of town and the culture of country. This is evident from the account given above. The centre becomes representative of a globalized world that is doing nothing for the periphery, just as the colonizers did nothing for the well being of their colonists.

<u>Being and Becoming: Healing and the recovery of culture</u>

As a critical theorist Fromm, in his book, "The Sane Society", focuses on how people draw meaning in their lives and the impact meaning has on personality. For Fromm, mental health is dependent on a person's relations with others. As such, sanity and mental health depend on the "satisfaction of needs and passions that are specifically human and which stem from the conditions of the human situation" and he notes these as the "need

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[29] This former child soldier was recruited by the Frelimo government when he was fourteen years old. He served in the military from 1982 to 1990. He did basic military training and then went to train as a border guard. From there he moved to the commander's office as a secretary and then took a course in military intelligence. He asked for a transfer to Inhambane Province and had difficulties with his commanders. He had his finger shot off as a result of someone tampering with his gun. He suspects that this was the work of his commander. His job was to talk to the captured Renamo people and take guns away from them, which he hid in the bush instead of handing them over to Frelimo. He left in 1990 before demobilization, without consequences or compensation.

for relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, the need for a sense of identity and the need for a frame of orientation..." (1955: 67). Fromm further claims that if these peculiarities of human existence are not satisfied in one form or another a person will become insane[30].

For Fromm a person must relate him/herself to others in order to be of good mental health. However, if this occurs in a "symbiotic or alienated way, he loses his independence and integrity; he is weak, suffers, becomes hostile or apathetic; only if he can relate himself to others in a loving way does he feel one with them and at the same time preserve his integrity" (1955: 68).[31] For former child soldiers, a sense of meaning and healing resulted from being accepted into their home communities – which they had often attacked as soldiers, even murdering relatives and neighbors – as a result of traditional ceremonies that involved the entire community. Fromm's point about mental health and, in this case, restoring mental health is well taken. It must involve community. This is a sharp contrast to a western technique for addressing mental health – psychotherapy – a highly individualistic and private undertaking. For social workers dealing with trauma and mental health problems in settings such as rural Mozambique, it is very important to understand cultural practices of communities as the participants in this study related connection and meaning to traditional cultural forms.

People retain meaning through traditional practices and from the interviews with former child soldiers it is evident that such practices have served towards positive integration. Many participants revealed that returning home, to their family, and to their original zone resulted in a bridging with their cultural ties.

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[30] While the word 'insanity' may seem an extreme way to define 'poor mental health', readers must recognize that Fromm was writing in the 1930's and 1940's and this was the language used at the time.

[31] The use of the male pronoun is characteristic of the writing style at the time. Getting past its use is important to appreciating what is actually being said. Fromm talks about relating to others in an alienated way. This would include ways that are not meaningful in that they don't involve human feelings or emotions. For example, in a business deal, the relationship may be little more than the exchange of money for some good that neither the buyer nor the seller has any real interest in – other than getting or paying money for it. This would be an alienating relationship. But if someone buys or exchanges something for a cake and knows how much care, skill and attention has gone into its production by the person exchanging it, then the nature of the relationship between the two people involved in the purchase or exchange is different.

A former child soldier captured in Maniça province describes this experience;

> *When I returned to my family, my family was very happy and everyone was crying. They started with a traditional ceremony to welcome me...there exists a purification process, because we were saying we killed many people and those spirits can follow me and make me a bad man for my whole life.... This psychologically is a very important thing because everyone started to say, that Albino is purified and he became 'as he were in the beginning'. He is a normal person, he is like us, you are accepted, you are recovered. (Albino)*

Many of the former child soldiers interviewed found meaning through participation in traditional practices. In western society, the notion is to attend one-to-one sessions with psychiatrists or psychologists. This is a western model of working with individuals. It is important to understand 'trauma' in a different context and not simply transfer ideas from the west and the individualization of the problem (i.e. that a person – and not the community of which he or she is a part - is suffering a mental health problem). A psychologist from Mozambique describes the importance of cultural practices.

> *The very first thing we discovered was their curandeiros[32] conceptualization of sickness and health was very different then what we take from our books as psychologists. For them the state of health and sickness is really fundamentally linked to an individual's relations to his ancestors. It is dependent on that, to his ancestors and community members. (Interview with Lucrésia Wamba, July 3, 2003)*

Children experience war in different ways. The idea of "trauma" is a western concept. For the communities, the returning children were not seen as having an illness but, instead, children were seen to be in need of nurturance. This approach deals with children returning from war as a community collective problem that requires a collective (i.e. traditional healing involves whole community) approach and not individual psychotherapy. When addressing reintegration for former child soldiers it is important to acknowledge traditional cultures and healing practices.

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[32] *Curandeiros* refer to traditional healers in Mozambique. In many areas *curandeiros* are still used and are the first choice in seeking medical treatment instead of a doctor.

Here is one account of such healing practices.

First my mother prepares a drink, a specific drink; a traditional drink. And during this process of preparing, she also invites traditional healers, people we call doctors. Our African doctors make up what we call a "consult". They consult to see how my body is and inform my family that I killed people and black spirits are with me now and they can make me more bad and here, because the spirit of my grandfather showed me this way back home, and he protected me all the time in the base, and they say that we know many of his friends were killed, but he was at the base. The spirit of my grandfather protected me.

Many, many, many people ask and follow this process. And he also says what is necessary to do is to protect my body so the bandit won't come again to get me. It's also a protection process.

After this time, he used to - there are two or three (doctors) – they use special clothes mainly made of dead animals and those things, the skin of animals, and they use these things to start the purification. What they did was to give you specific water, mixed with many things inside. They say to you: "Take this water, and take a bath." And usually it's hot water and after this they used to rub singing and saying many things and saying: "Bad spirit, this is not your home. Our child did what he did because there was a war. Please don't follow us. In this house there are specific spirits which are commanding this place, and now you have to go back to your place and leave this place and leave Albino, this child, to be with his family, because he didn't want to do what he did. Those things ... and from now on we are giving him power." His family start to sing and they used to give you some vaccine with some medicine to protect your body and those things.

...And after this process, after the party and the eating and so on, they start another one (another process) at the same time after this process, only with the spirit of the house, my grandfather and my father, because he also died, to ask them if the body of this child is purified now and if my spirit, if they accepted me from this time. All those things, if something went wrong, they have to repeat the process because my spirit is saying: "No, there is something wrong and you need to do this correctly." Because these healers, some of them are also paid, but not paid by money – from something in the field – a live chicken to say: "thank you". ... This is the purification process. At this time you are accepted. You can also look for one to marry. Those things. All the people consider you normal. You are purified. If something bad happens you have to consult your own spirit from the home. (Albino)

The above quote makes it clear that an alienated individual can be reconciled with his or her community. Fromm states that the alienated person does not experience himself as the centre of his world, as the creator of his own acts — but:

> his acts and their consequences have become his masters, whom he obeys, or whom he may even worship. The alienated person is out of touch with himself as he is out of touch with any other person. He, like the others, is experienced as things are experienced; with the senses and with common sense, but at the same time without being related to oneself and to the world outside productively (111).

Child soldiers were not in control of their lives.

> *They came and circled the school and they took all the children, when they entered the bush, they chose the young ones, those who looked young. They tied us up, they made us carry baggage and we went to the bush (Madane, recruited by Renamo)*

In fact, they were not permitted to get in touch with themselves or their feelings. This would make killing impossible. As noted, in some cases, drugs were used to make sure that child soldiers could not really get in touch with their feelings. In this and other ways, child soldiers are out of touch with themselves and as soldiers, are experienced by others as any other thing – perhaps as a mere extension of the gun that he is carrying.

> *It was a different way to be treated and I was thinking of my family, my home. It wasn't so easy to be young and be a soldier. (Zacarias recruited by Frelimo at 14)*

He is someone under the control (at least *physically*) of others. This speaks to being made by a culture (the culture of war) instead of making culture. It is this relationship that the healing ceremony sets out to undo.

Former child soldiers find meaning through traditional healing practices where they are accepted back to the community. They resort back to that what they know as stable: their culture and traditions. They focus on their being (something stable, providing a sense of

belonging). This contrasts with defining oneself in terms of "becoming" – a state that doesn't exist yet or that is being created. In capitalist societies, people define themselves by the latest thing that the market has to offer. And soon this is replaced by something else. In other words, the things that are used to define being in a modern world are always changing or are unstable. In Mozambique, people are obviously still using their own cultures – tradition and practices – to define themselves in the process of healing. At least in some ways, modern ways of trying to define one's being (dress, clothes, shoes, changing one's image) have not taken hold.

War can be seen as a subculture. There are things going on and symbols present, which have meanings that are not found in normal civilian life in any culture. As a result of the circumstances of war, families' change and the meaning of families also change (they are forced to change for basic reasons of survival). Children are no longer in school. Books are replaced by machine guns as tools with which one has day-to-day interaction and familiarity. The culture goes from one of affection, relationship, connection, commitment, obligation and reciprocity to one of alienation, hostility, violence, fear and disconnection. There is a sense that things are out of control and individuals are not able to control their own fate.

> *I was under orders of the commanders and there was no way to refuse or to escape. Because if I was not the first one to shoot the enemy, I could die…the only thing that I knew is that we were fighting Renamo…. There was no way to escape because they used to tell us, there is war and you should defend your country, so why should I escape because I was living in this country…. During the night we use to talk to each other to gain courage. There was no way to go back. We had to fight. This was our country. (Dindiza)*

Reintegration is difficult because of what former child soldiers have learned at the camp. As a young child associated with war, authoritarianism is all too familiar, as they have been socialized in a culture of hierarchy and authority. There, children learn that survival is based on exercising power and authority. And the child learns that the more authority that he or she has at the camps, the better off he or she will be. This can cause great difficulties for communities. Young people have been socialized in forms of instant

gratification. For example, when they want food, in camp life, they could go to the highway and rob the next vehicle. Upon returning home, they have to wait for some things until crops are harvested. Instant gratification is not possible. Communities have to deal with these problems in their children.

Art and the Culture of Hope

Art is an important component of culture as it works to capture a space or moment of time in the artists' life, or as is the case with Nucleo, in a country's history. Art is a form of cultural production and, in contemporary society, by no means escapes the culture 'industry'. Aid organizations use various forms of art to capture, identify and explain their work in developing countries. The art can take various forms (i.e. the use of photography, or video) to convey a message about these efforts. There are many ways to interpret art and these can be based on the experiences of the viewer of the art. I recognize that there are multiple explanations within art, and particularly the sculptures produced by the Nucleo artists. I am not attempting to attach fixed meanings to the sculptures or the work of the Nucleo artists but what follows is a discussion in relation to the art and the experiences of Nucleo artists working with a project funded by international development agencies. I look at art in three forms. The first section discusses art as a form of unalienated production, and then looks at art for purposes of public display and finally moves towards a discussion of art and its 'quasi-market' aspects.

In Mozambique, many young people who were affected by war – indirectly if not directly (as is true of child soldiers) – are trying to 'heal' and to deal with the experience of war through artistic production. It is important to look at this production as in social work, art is often conceptualized as a form of therapy and artistic production might be understood as having some role to play in addressing the problems faced by former child soldiers. It can be argued that the experience of being a child soldier is a *very* alienating one. As I noted before, child soldiers lose control of their lives. They are taken forcibly from schools and watched, guarded and their behaviours are controlled. They are alienated from their families and communities and that is why reintegration is so important. Artistic

expression can be a form of unalienated, free and creative labour. It therefore has some therapeutic value in countering the experience of those caught up in war or affected by it. However, artistic production can also become an alienated form of production and this tension and what I observed in the case of young people in Mozambique is discussed below.

Art as Unalienated Production

Within a capitalist system the majority of labour, and the form that wage labour takes, is most often alienated. Workers are disconnected from their product and their individual labour does not often result in a finished product. This, for example, is especially true of assembly line production. However, this does not mean that all labour is alienated. Producing art (as an occupation) is an activity where the labour of the artists is not measured by attaching an hourly wage to their product. Artists involve themselves in the product of their labour from start to finish. They produce pieces to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions to a particular situation or set of circumstances.

As it was difficult to melt down the weapons the Christian Council of Mozambique, represented by Bishop Sengulane, approached the Nucleo artists in 1997 with an invitation to see what they could do with the weapons (Figure 15). Sengulane points out:

> *...the third foundation [of the TAE project] was an artistic angle. We believe that artists should assume an attitude of peace: artists should be peace lovers and peacemakers. Arms are a glorification of death. With this in mind, we invited artists to take guns and makes them into pieces of peace and beauty – sculptures as living messengers of peace. (Interviewed, June 24, 2003)*

Some of the artists had previous experience working with metal, while the others had backgrounds in work with clay, paints, wood, etc. The 10-day workshop, *Transformacao de Armas em Objectos de Arte*, proved successful, with the artists producing various pieces followed by an exhibition in Maputo. This was seen as an innovative proposal and the artists were happy to collaborate as they saw this as a venue to contribute and participate in the peace and reconciliation process. The production of art allowed artists

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to express themselves, their ideas, values, hopes and aspirations in reference to peace (Figure 16). The artists involved with the TAE project were all young people during the war and all had direct experiences with the war (in the way of losing family members, friends, having to flee their homes in anticipation of upcoming attacks, etc.). The artists explain their memories of the war:

> *There were many, many, many people who lost their lives. Many. I lost many people, many cousins. I have an aunt of mine who disappeared in that time and until today we don't know what happened to her, and we still don't know if she is alive or dead.... It was very sad for me, that is, it was...no, it is very sad for me to lose an aunt who I loved very much. When I was born I lived there with her in Majacaze, this is the place where she disappeared. I lived with her there and...I think it was luck [in not being killed or kidnapped] because it happened shortly after I had come to Maputo (Sensao).*

And:

> *Realistically there exists a recollection of many things that happened during the armed conflict. One of these things is that three of my cousins disappeared during the war with Renamo and others members who were involved on the side of Frelimo. It is something very sad to see two brothers resent each other who loved each other very much. Only they are separated because they are on the other side. It is very sad to have two people in a family separated because of the armed conflict where, in the end, there was no premise for it to exist because Mozambique was a country that was just being born. It was laying its foundation. (Kester)*

As children during the armed conflict, and today as adults working towards peace and reconciliation, the artists also struggle with the medium and materials that they are working with. As armed conflict often leaves no one untouched, one artist explains:

> *There are some days that are difficult to work because I have memories. They appear, these memories, and fill my head. These are of old situations, because I lost school, it was a time of war. There are days when you get up and you are not feeling well. It is these things...you see something in the most destroyed state and your head doesn't support it. But there are days when I tolerate, I tolerate because 'O.K, they are cut and I can do something different with them'. (Fiel)*

The weapons were previously used in the country to kill many people. The sculptures produced by Nucleo are powerful in that they are made from weapons used for destructive purposes during the civil war. However, the weapons are transformed into forms that are far removed from war; that are in fact, pieces of beauty, often symbolizing life instead of death (Figure 17). Art is related to a person's creation, imagination and capacity to capture such imagination in a physical form. It is striking in terms of art, to use materials that have been used to destroy, to create positive and peaceful images. Weapons in Mozambique represent real tangible items messages. Various sculptures have been produced and the artists explained their pieces work to signify new life and freedom as opposed to the inherent destructive nature of the material. The sculptures are made from assault rifles, bazookas and automatic pistols. One sculpture produced by the artists is a saxophone made from both AK 47's and a bazooka. Transforming a bazooka - which makes a loud booming sound and the AK47 – one of war's most deadly weapons – into a musical instrument takes on new meaning and represents something that is joyful. Using materials that are symbolic of death and transforming these to materials that are symbolic of life in the same piece of art is powerful. Fiel explains his desire to work with such a project:

> There are times when I start thinking, 'This killed, this killed, this killed,' and then the weapons are difficult to touch. ...But by creating this art, I'm destroying these weapons. ...I'm creating something new, something that will make people think differently of the war. (Fiel, *New York Times*: www.asu.edu/cfa/wwwcourses/art...)

The transformation of turning weapons of destruction into pieces of beauty as an artistic concept captures the imagination and the potential for peace. Using weapons as a form of art beckons us to ask ourselves: "How can something used to destroy life also be used to enhance it?" The artists produce amazing symbols. Their hopes, feelings and aspirations for peace are embedded in the sculptures. International peace building mandates also speak to the hopes, dreams and aspirations of peace. As one artist notes:

> *...it changed our lives in many ways, in terms of artists, in terms of social recognition, and particularly in terms of artistic integration. It is not only*

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a project that has social benefits but it has an artistic integrity that is materially different, it is outside of the common sculptures using wood or ceramic. Now working with this material is a different realm, it's another technique in art. It's an integration into art as a new material. And so for me, I play a role of these people that are integrating this art. (Fiel)

The artists, connected to their labour and the finished product, have chosen to weld the decommissioned pieces and reproduce them in their raw form. The sculptures are not painted or altered but simply converted in a way that transforms their use and purpose in society. The process of conversion and producing art from arms is not without hazards. The artists pointed out that they sometimes found munitions in the guns and some have sustained minor injuries as a result. Regardless, the artists remain committed to their art and the transformation of their artistry. The inspiration in making the pieces takes various forms. As one artist explains:

> *Sometimes I don't have a specific inspiration or vision [to make a sculpture]. The forms of the weapons give me the inspiration where I can make a certain figure. But other times, it is imagined. I imagine it and think, 'this here allows me to make something that is beautiful, at least for me. (*Kester)

The process of this conversion and the symbolism that accompanies it is important both for the artists and the public. In terms of meaning, feelings, redemption and catharsis it allows for something different, something that is tangible and can be realized. As such, this form of production is both powerful and as close to unalienated labour as one can get.

Art as Public Display

Art also takes on a social dimension. The display of art in public space serves a social purpose in that it has the ability to convey a message, invite discussion and generate debate about the particular piece being displayed. For the first few years the artists received little social recognition for their sculptures. There was no formal relationship established with the artists and CCM/TAE, but the artists continued to produce the pieces. As one artist noted:

The project started in '97 and in the beginning nothing happened. We just worked; there were not many exhibitions. After two to three years we still worked, we had to find the money: we used our own money to buy the materials[33] ... When the project started we had all the materials from the project. But after that, all the materials is broken, you know, and we still work and we continue to use our money to do – to work – because we are artists and we're interested in working with the project. (Goncalo)

Slowly the sculptures started to gain international recognition. The artists did a tour in Canada in 1999 supported by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs. That same year the artwork was displayed in Maputo during the 'Ban the Landmines Treaty Conference'. In June 2001, the sculptures were displayed at the 'United Nations Conference on Small Arms' in New York and, in January 2002, the pieces were exhibited at the Oxo Tower Wharf Gallery in London England. This exhibition was sponsored by the NGO, Christian Aid, and over 30 pieces were subsequently sold. Seven of these pieces were then displayed in public places including, the Imperial War Museum, The Commonwealth Institute, the British Museum and The Royal Armories in Leeds.

The artists have had the opportunity to travel with their pieces. At such exhibitions, many different messages 'hit' the viewer at the same time. One of the artists' explains the common public reaction to such pieces:

For me, it was a surprise, clearly. Because the people that admire, admire in different ways. There are those that admire, but are afraid, and others that admire and like to see something that is realized; something that is different. (Fiel)

It became evident throughout the research that the display of the art was taking on different forms and meanings in different areas of the world. In Mozambique the sculptures are not as "coveted" as they are in other countries. At Nucleo, random pieces occupy the landscape and some sculptures are exhibited at the French Cultural Centre in Maputo. Two chairs made of weapons and a sculpture of the Eiffel Tower, dominate the

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[33] By 'materials' Goncalo is refers to welding machines, mitre saws and to other equipment needed to convert the weapons into art. He is not referring to the weapons.

entrance of the culture centre. The pieces are exhibited publicly outside. On the contrary, in the west, the display of the art takes a very different form. At the British Museum, in the Africa art section, a chair by one of the artists is encased in a glass box. It sits as a monument with a title "Throne of Weapons" emphasized with lights.

It is interesting to note, that Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis of art distinguishes art as either "high" or "popular" art. Popular art was, for them, art that was mass-produced (and produced by the 'masses'). It was art that was accessible but also vulnerable to corrupting influences and could be used to promote the values and ideals of capitalism. High art was said to be 'pure' and not so easily corrupted by market relations. It was also not accessible to most people. Ballet, symphony music, opera, etc., might fall into this category. The work of the Nucleo artists shows that often art cannot be classified as "either" "or".

The work of the Nucleo artists is popular art in that it is produced, not by highly trained artists, but by some Mozambicans struggling to survive from their art and producing art for sale to 'ordinary' people in local markets and shops. But the sculptures were also produced with a 'higher' (non-market) purpose in mind – to contribute to the peace and reconciliation of countries in post conflict settings.

For social workers involved in community development settings it is important to recognize and acknowledge the potential of art in social change. However, as social workers we must also be aware of how art is influenced by market relations and be critical of this relationship. As 'high art' the sculptures produced by Nucleo artists, addressing the themes of war, peace and reconciliation, contain a romantic element about the possibilities of achieving higher level values of peace and reconciliation; a "conscious, methodical alienation from the entire sphere of business and industry and from its calculable and profitable order" (Marcuse, 1964: 58). However, the young people involved in producing this art, as it became popular, have also been pushed to produce it in a more commercial way and this is discussed in the next section.

Quasi Market and Commercial Forms of Art

While artists have the ability to maintain connected to their labour and the finished product, the production of art runs the risk of being altered by commercial demand and market relations. The use of the sculptures by the TAE project has been a means to direct attention to TAE and the disarmament initiative. While no formal relationship was established with the artists, TAE would often use the sculptures to promote the disarmament project.[34] In some ways, for Muth, the sculptures served a marketing/advertising purpose for the project as it brought attention to TAE on an international level that brought in potential donations for the financial support of TAE.

There is a dispute that arises within the commercial value and use of the art. In the case of TAE, the art - originally seen for its symbolic value - came to be used as a fundraising tool. The sculptures started to appeal to donors and this resulted in a symbolic shift in the purpose and consequently the value of the art. As the art became known and sold internationally it acquired both symbolic and economic value. This sale of the art benefited the TAE organization more than it did the artists who, it can be argued, gained comparatively little benefit.[35] In other words the pattern that has developed has much in common with what the Frankfurt School - and Herbert Marcuse in particular - document about high and popular art. In reference to the transition of art from high to popular culture, Marcuse says;

> The assimilation of the ideal with reality testifies to the extent to which the ideal has been surpassed. It is brought down from the sublimated realm of the soul or the spirit or the inner man [sic], and translated into operational terms and problems. Here are the progressive elements of mass culture. The perversion is indicative of the fact that advanced industrial society is confronted with the possibility of a materialization of ideals. The capabilities of this society are progressively reducing the sublimated realm in which the condition of man was represented, idealized and indicated. Higher culture becomes part of the material culture. In this transformation, it loses the greater part of its truth. (1964: 58)

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[34] As noted by the artists, the first co-ordinator of TAE, Jacinto Muth, in his international efforts to promote the project, often left the sculptures as "gifts" to prospective donors and potential funders.

[35] During the Oxo tour in London, over 30 pieces of art were sold. The exhibition raised a total of $56,103 (CAN). At the time of the interviews, the artists have still not received any commission from these sales.

Such commercialization of art removes the individual from the production of art. In the current situation (at the time of interviewing the artists) TAE was suggesting that the Nucleo artists be put on a wage or salary to produce sculptures. In this scenario the meaning of the art takes a different form for the artists. The following illustrates the discontent by the artists on such a suggestion:

> ...it's not a good idea, we are artists, we are free. We must create what we think. It is like this in all of the world. Artists do not work for a salary, they just work, sometimes they have money or they don't have money and this is ok... *(Gonçalo)*.

In some respects being paid a salary and producing the art in an 'assembly-line' fashion (as is the case in salaried work as the artists produce according to what the market demands), strips away the meaning the artists attach to their work. As one artist notes:

> *The way it is now, we have inspiration to make the pieces, but this way [paying us a salary], takes away the inspiration. (Humberto)*

The original concept of the artwork for this project was to contribute to peace and reconciliation in the country. It also apparently played a cathartic role for the artists themselves. However, it is interesting to note the gradual progression of the art from a very idealistic and non-commercial form to a form threatened by commercial (fund-raising) purposes.

There are lessons here for social workers and others working internationally and looking at art and artistic expression as something with the potential to address not only personal but social problems arising from the involvement of child soldiers (and not only child soldiers) in armed conflict. As a technique, art and the use of art to contribute to a peace process has lots of potential. However, it is important to be critical of how it is used and the possibility of market relations altering its original message and changing its original purpose.

CONCLUSION: Implications for Practice

I still maintain that children present us with a uniquely compelling motivation for mobilisation. Our collective failure to protect children must be transformed into an opportunity to confront the problems that cause their suffering. The impact of armed conflict on children is everyone's responsibility. And it must be everyone's concern. (Graça Machel, 2001 in *The Impact of War on Children*)

Introduction

In the conclusion I consider the implications for social work theory and practice of the material and experiences outlined in the preceding chapters. First, I discuss the use of Critical and cultural theory and the benefits of using such frameworks in international social work settings, contrasting these, briefly, with a current emerging theme for practice and education: anti-oppressive practice. Secondly, I look at social work practice in international settings and the importance of understanding structural conditions and global processes that lead to increased numbers of children involved in armed conflict and that also affect post-conflict attempts to meet their needs. Finally, this chapter focuses on practice interventions for working with young people impacted by armed conflict and concludes with a brief comment on the use of art in the healing and reconciliation processes.

Cultural Theory in International Social Work Settings

Critical theory offers a unique lens for understanding the human condition, welding together ideas about society, individual and social behaviours and culture. Cultural theory provides a framework that lends itself to an understanding of how cultures function in light of, and in order to address, social, economic and political circumstances. A reading of cultural theory - as a branch of critical studies – suggests to social workers the considerable importance of considering the cultural contexts in which they practice. Moreover, both critical and cultural theory pay particular attention to the dialectic relationship between material circumstances and the shaping of consciousness. Working in a post-conflict setting brings out the importance of such an approach. We must work to understand how the populations we serve experience, interpret and make meaning of conflict. As Salessbey stresses:

Two essential characteristics of the human condition important for social work practitioners to remember are (1) human beings build themselves into the world by creating meaning, and (2) culture gives meaning to action by situating underlying states in an interpretive system....Social workers must open themselves up to the clients' construction of their individual and collective worlds. The major vehicles for this are stories, narratives, and myths. Acknowledging and helping to refurbish them does not doom social workers to psychologizing what are, in part, social and political problems. Social workers can assist in the 'insurrection' of subjugated meanings and help get them into the agency, school, hospital, commission, institution, community, and profession through externalization. Such an approach to practice helps clients edge into the larger and often oppressive world, strengthens the self, and emboldens the folklore of the group (1994: 351).

With issues related to health and sickness we must work to understand the concept of health and what childhood means in specific cultural settings. The use of traditional cultural practices is gaining more and more recognition in African countries, in contrast to a western and psychological approach to 'trauma'. In addition, we must understand that 'youth' is a historically constructed category. Different cultures assign different meaning to the transition from childhood to adulthood and there is very little literature that focuses on the transition from youth to adulthood in African cultures and what the transition means. This emphasizes the importance in practice of focusing on local practices and respecting other ways of making sense while, at the same time, acknowledging that there are ideas, concepts and realities that apply to all of us – perhaps increasingly in a globalized world. Social work practice needs to give greater consideration to this balance between respecting differences on the one hand (and in the thesis I have noted the value of local healing practices) and what we have in common (and I have used the ideas of Critical theory and the Frankfurt School to get at some of these).

Something else occurs to me as a result of the experience of doing this field work. In social work, we tend to focus first and foremost on individuals. It is a concern for people (singular) that often brings students to social work as a profession. Such a concern leads to a tendency to focus on first the individual and how he or she is impacted by macro or structural realities. The problem is that with so much emphasis on understanding the

individual, it is sometimes the case that inadequate attention is paid to understanding structural realities – how systems operate – how they work and what the implications are for people's lives.

Structural and Global Processes

The following are some observations about international development assistance and the potential role of social workers in international settings, made in the context of interviewing former child soldiers. If we want to work internationally and be part of global community, what approach should social work take? An anti-oppressive framework (Mullaly, 2002) cautions us in regard to our role in the global community. The fear of oppression, or replicating the process of colonization for populations we work with, are important considerations for social work practitioners. This fear can paralyse us: can prevent us from acting. The problem in a so-called post-modern world is that we spend a lot of time identifying and listening to everyone's unique story. Because of this, we spend our time focusing on people's differences and differences in their lived experiences, as opposed to recognizing that people are experiencing common structural oppressions. For example, everyone in Mozambique is affected in some way by structural adjustment: cutbacks to spending in health, education and welfare. The problem is that social workers often spend a lot of time talking to men and women about their experiences, but more time and energy needs to go to addressing the macro issues and structural problems that help *explain* these experiences – as different as they may be. An approach to practice that fears recreating colonial relations may push practitioners to be ultra sensitive to listening to and capturing everyone's unique experience. Having done so, however, the question remains. What should be done to address these experiences? Acting requires some sort of common ground or some sort of common analysis. It is developing a common analysis, and the fear of lumping everyone's experience together (and losing the uniqueness), that prevents some social workers from moving beyond individual experience to social action.

Helping people to discover or articulate the structural realities that explain their personal problems does not necessarily need to recreate colonial relations (i.e. where the analysis

of the social worker - as expert - is imposed on others). However, having a structural analysis can be useful in assisting others in framing things so that they have a better understanding of the factors that explain their circumstances. For example, taking a macro perspective on the armed conflict in Mozambique leads to a better understanding of why children became involved. Some children volunteered because they were poor and were promised benefits. Others join and stay because they believe they are fighting for a good cause. Children can be soldiers because arms are now made that are light and easy to use. The demographics of the populations make it clear that there are a lot of children who could potentially be soldiers. Armed conflicts arise for many reasons, including as a result of macro-level or structural problems: competition over resources and wealth in countries that are poor.

The important thing is not whether one has or uses 'expertise' – or not – but *how one uses what one knows*. In other words, social workers should not disappear what they may know in an attempt not to set themselves up as "experts" (and thus recreate colonial relations). Rather, it is how one uses one's expertise in working across cultures, that is important. In other words, processes are important in helping people to discover truths or realities that we, because of our privilege might have special knowledge of. On the other hand, local populations also have expertise and knowledge that social workers need to discover by listening, questioning and observing. We see what we think we see, but we need to dig beyond to see what might really be happening. This reciprocal process is important to international work.

Work in international settings can pose serious challenges to social workers concerned about building or strengthening civil society. Meeting basic needs can be difficult. The reader will recall that about three quarters of Mozambique's national budget is based on foreign aid and loans from international institutions. NGOs play an important role in meeting many of the needs of Mozambicans in the areas of health, education and the economy. The problem is often that the activities of NGOs are not tied into the activities of government – that sometimes is not active in an area simply because it has no funds to offer programmes or opportunities that are parallel to, or relate in some way to what

NGOs are doing. In fact, the work of NGOs can undermine the little effort that governments may be undertaking. Staff might move away from government positions to work for NGOs because the pay is better. Governments might not continue or initiate programmes because these needs are being met by NGOs and the question might be asked: "Why should we – who have few or no resources – meet this need when a foreign NGO is willing to do it for us?" In this way, dependency relations are created whereby a government does not feel it can (or should) meet the needs of its citizens as long as it can depend on foreign aid to do the job.

However, the TAE project – a peace and reconciliation effort that included some former child soldiers who were exchanging weapons for community development tools – is an interesting alternative to the kind of situation described above. In this case, TAE is a Mozambican NGO and CUSO was not running a programme, but merely directing financial assistance toward TAE and providing some technical expertise. Furthermore, the TAE project was integrated to some extent with government efforts. The TAE project has evolved alongside the work of the Ministry of the Interior to reduce crime and promote peace and reconciliation efforts in Mozambique. TAE employees meet to collaborate with government officials on the disarmament initiative and work together to identify arms caches throughout the countryside. This model – a partnership between an international NGO and a local organization – is a good one in that it addresses the concerns noted above and suggests to social workers interested in international work, one way of approaching it that gives credibility and encouragement to local populations and organizations. At the same time, there are very many problems that confront local NGOs (corruption, organizational problems, lack of managerial and accounting skills, tenuous funding and all the problems that follow from this, etc.) that social workers in international settings need to be more sensitive to.

Local politics and disparities are other problems that international development workers should be aware of. In the case of disarmament initiatives, it is important to recognize rural and urban differences. The TAE office is situated in the southern part of the country and this poses problems for the collection of arms and the transport of tools for exchange.

As the majority of fighting between Frelimo and Renamo happened outside of the city, the weapons are located in the countryside. Disarmament projects should consider their location relative to areas where heavy fighting was taking place.

Social Work Practice Interventions

The young people interviewed for this research clearly felt that they had been alienated, had lost time in the making of their lives, were disadvantaged, frustrated and felt marginalized. These feelings had much to do with the opportunities – or the lack of opportunities – available to them after the war had ended. While most studies focus on the "trauma" experienced by former child soldiers, the interviews I held with these child soldiers suggest that what greeted them *after* the conflict had ended, was at least as "traumatic" as the experiences they had as child soldiers. It is interesting to note that western researchers have focused heavily on the experience of child soldiers and the psychological damage done to individuals. This takes attention, energy and research in a different direction – one of treating individual problems. What my research suggests is that it is just as important to look ahead: at the opportunities (or lack of opportunities) afforded young people who, when they were kidnapped (or volunteered) to join in armed conflicts, were – by virtue of being among the few young people who were privileged enough to be getting an education – among the brightest and most motivated youth in the country. Meeting their needs after the end of conflict is important and requires that social workers give some consideration to the macro level considerations that explain their frustrations and feelings. It is also true that these same considerations affect many others in the general population and therefore former child soldiers have much in common with others who have no or inadequate economic (and social) opportunities. It is also clear in the research that cultural processes, namely, purification practices contributed to reconciliation and healing in a post-conflict setting.

In a post conflict setting, training programmes can foster a sense of purpose in young people, improve self-esteem and offer a new identity besides that of combatant. These programmes should be integrated with the national education system and realistically linked to the needs of the local labour market. The problem with the local labour market

in Mozambique is that it has been tied to the structural adjustment programmes of the IMF and the World Bank. Particularly in rural areas, economic opportunities – outside of agriculture (much of it subsistence) are few. Young people in rural areas are particularly frustrated. They should not be given a few months of vocational training and sent out with a mistaken belief that they have a marketable skill. To end this, an analysis of the local market, people's needs, and alternative ways of meeting these needs are part of identifying the most appropriate forms of apprenticeship or economic development approaches. What much of rural Mozambique needs are cooperative and collective forms of economic activity that don't, currently, figure in the economic logic of the global institutions directing national economic policy.

Given the demographics of the country, it is easily seen that children can and should be engaged in the planning of community programs, recovery and reconstruction. This helps young people rebuild their lives and strengthen their working relationships in the community. In the absence of war in Mozambique, children continue to enjoy their childhood years amidst the remnants of war (Figure 13). The considerable initiative and creativity of young people producing art as part of the peace-building process in the country is illustrative of this kind of energy at work and suggests the importance of connecting cultural considerations with economic realities in working with former child soldiers to meet a complex combination of needs based on complex and, especially for western observers, barely comprehensible historical experiences.

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APPENDIX I

Interview Format

TAE PROJECT - QUESTIONS FOR BENEFICIARIES

Introduction

We are here to talk to you about the TAE project. We are conducting an evaluation for CUSO Canada. We would like to talk to you about your experiences with the project.

We want to know if the TAE programme was a good one for you. We would like to know the good things and some of the things that are not so good about this programme. We also want to know if there are any ideas that you have that can make it better.

We would like ask you some questions about this project and the benefits your received.

We would like you to answer us with your true feelings. We will not be revealing your name or anything that might identify you in our final report. Our report will be for people in Canada who have been supporting the TAE project, and who might like to support it in the

Thank you for you time.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

II Socio-demographics

0. What is your name?

1. When were you born? (how old are you?)

2. Where were you born?

3. How many people are in your immediate family (children, parents)?

4. Are there other relatives that you support or who you depend on for support?

5. Have you lived here all your life? If not, what other parts of the country did you live in?

6. Did you ever go to school?

   6A. If so, for how long?

7. What do you do to make a living?

8. Have you ever been interviewed about the TAE project before?

III Arms – Process and Benefits

1. How did you hear about the TAE Project?

2. What do you know about the TAE project?

3. How many times have you made exchanges with the TAE project?

4. Did you make the exchange or did someone else make the exchange?

      4A. If so, who (in relation to the person being interviewed.)

5. When did you make the exchange?

6. What did you exchange?

7. What did you receive?

8. Did you get what you wanted in the exchange?

9. Did you keep what you got or did you do something else with it (give it away, trade if for something else, or sell it for money?)

10. Why did you turn in the weapon or ammunition?

11. What did you use the tools for? (i.e. Did you use the tools to make money for yourself, to feed your family, or to grow food, to trade it for something else, etc.?)

12. Did you share the tools with others? (in the community, family members etc.)

13. Can we see what you got? (if it was not traded or given away)

14. Did you trust TAE when you made the trade or did you have any doubts?

15. Did you believe people working for TAE handled the weapons properly once they received them?

16. Did you have any fears or concerns when you made the deal?

17. Do you think TAE has done a good job of destroying the weapons?

18. Why do you think that TAE and the CCM are doing this weapon destruction?

19. Would it be better if only the government destroyed weapons?

    19A. Why or why not?

20. Did TAE people talk to you about peace and reconciliation when the deal was made?

    20A. If yes, can remember, what they said?

21. Is there anything about this weapon exchange that could be made better?

22. Do you think a lot of people would turn in weapons if they knew about this project or just a few?

23. Would anything different happen to arms if the TAE project did not exist?

IV Context

1. Where were you living before the peace was achieved in 1992?

2. What were you doing during the war? (Were you a soldier or just trying to make a living?)

3. Can you tell me anything that you think is important about how the war affected your life?

4. Did you lose family members in the war?

5. Do you believe there are a lot of weapons in your country or is it not so much of a problem anymore?

6. Do you feel safe in your community?

7. Did the TAE project change the community or did it just help your family?

    7A. If it helped your community – how?

8. Are you able to support your family?

    8A. If not, is there anything that a TAE project might do to help you to support your family?

9. Do you have any good ideas about how to promote peace and reconciliation in your community or in Mozambique that you would like to share with us?

V Youth Component

1. When the war ended in 1992, how old were you?

2. The war caused lots of problems in your country, what problems did it cause for you, how did it impact your life?

3. Do you feel safe in your community?

4. If no, how does this affect you?

    4A. If no, do you talk about safety – guns, land mines, etc. amongst your friends?

5. Are there any conflicts/disagreements left from the civil war that you know about?

    5A. If yes, what are these?

    5B. Do they get solved or dealt with?

    5C. If so, how?

6. Do you have any ideas about promoting peace and reconciliation that you would like to share with us?

7. Do you participate in activities in your community (art, singing, church).

    7A. If yes, does this help?

    7B. If yes, how does this help?

8. If people aren't feeling good when they think about the war that ended in 1992 and everything that happened to them, what is the best thing they can do to make themselves feel better?

9. What would you like to do in your life?