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THE MOZAMBIKAN NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT (RENAMO)

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THE MOZAMBICAN NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT (RENAMO)

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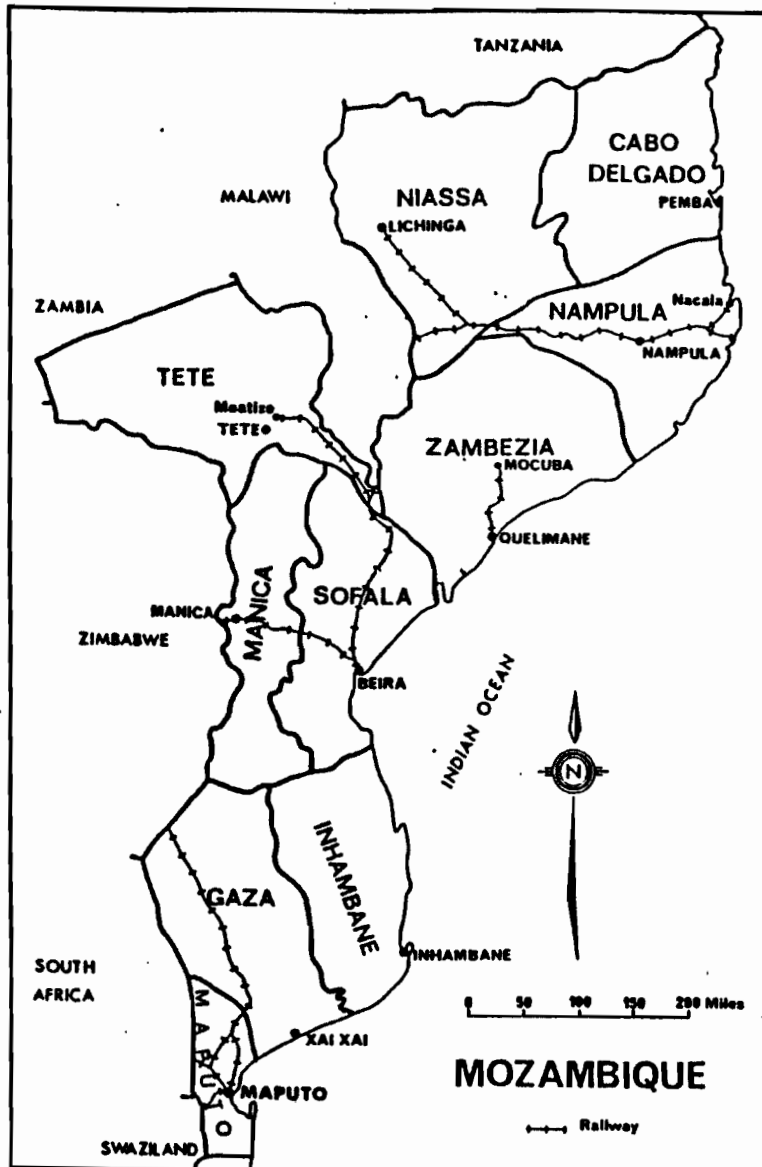
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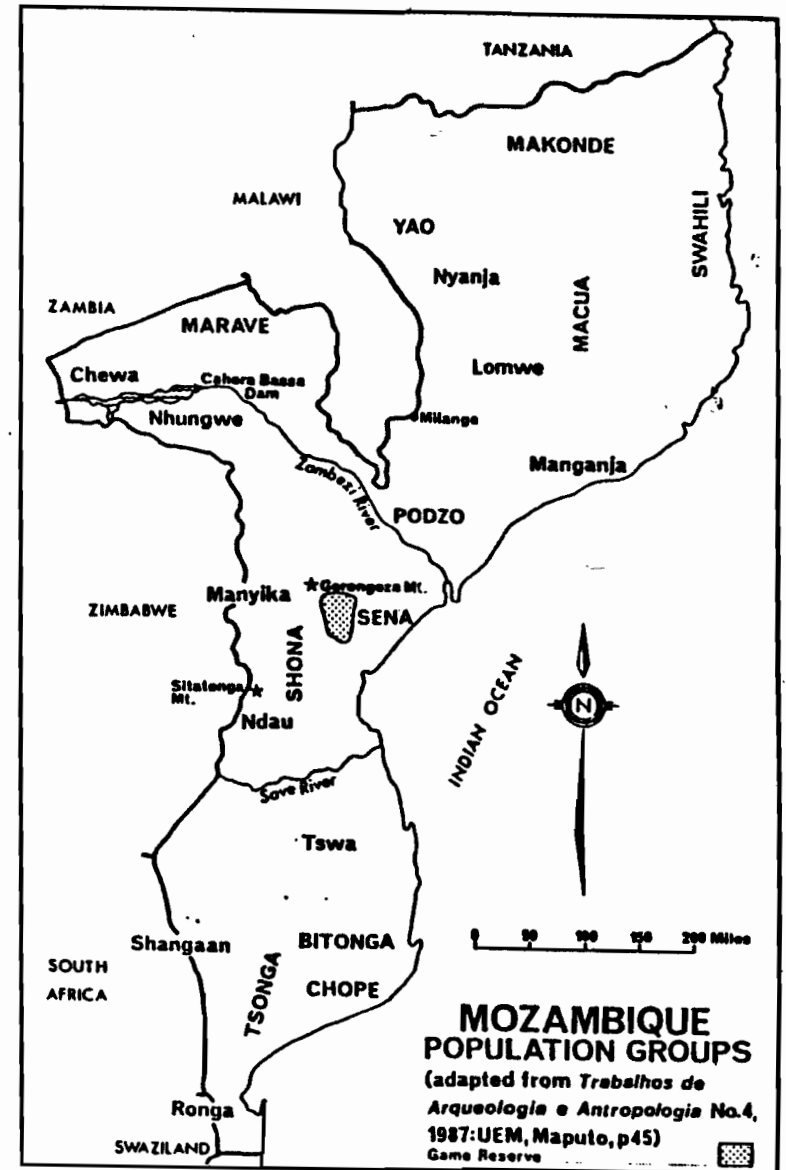
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Cartographic & Map Section, L & R Dept., FCO, Sep 1989



**MOZAMBIQUE
POPULATION GROUPS**

(adapted from *Trabalhos de Arqueologia e Antropologia* No.4, 1987:UEM, Maputo, p45)
Game Reserve

Cartographic & Map Section, L & R Dept., FCO, Oct. 1989

THE MOZAMBICAN NATIONAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENT (RENAMO).**Part I - Origins & Organisation.***Introduction and summary.*

1. RENAMO is a shadowy and ill-understood movement, save for its well-established genesis as a military artifact of the Rhodesians, then its transition in 1980 to South African patronage. (1) Lacking all the features usually associated with successful insurgencies in Africa, such as a charismatic leadership or easily identifiable ideology, it has failed to develop a political identity commensurate with its military strength. It has no clearly defined regional base, relies on widespread forced recruitment, and behaves with notorious brutality towards the civilian population. Yet it operates throughout the length and breadth of Mozambique, and holds the state in virtual paralysis. Since it lacks rear-bases and therefore depends upon local provisioning, it must be able to obtain compliance over large areas of rural Mozambique. That also implies effective organisation.

2. This paper is concerned with RENAMO's internal organisation and operations, in contribution to a better understanding of the dynamics of the war. It addresses the question of how an organisation with so little appeal that it must rely on widespread forced recruitment can achieve such a measure of 'success' against the Mozambican state. Although the paper argues that RENAMO has indeed taken on local roots, despite its external origins and employment as a tool against Mozambique, and that in so doing it has been able to feed on peasant discontent with FRELIMO economic policies, the evidence it examines suggests that the more important factors are the structural weaknesses of the Mozambican State, combined with the degree of violent coercion RENAMO employs against the civilian population.

3. Part I of the paper is largely factual: Section I summarises the origins and spread of the conflict, and Section II RENAMO's organisation and aims, both at the formal and at the grass-roots level. The second Part analyses the processes at work on the ground, concentrating in particular on the internal processes destabilisation has set in train. It concludes that the movement has the capacity to further destroy Mozambique. Thus there is no practical alternative to some form of accommodation with it, but the movement's great brutality, and lack of resemblance to what is normally understood as a political party, poses major problems for the form which a political settlement of the war in Mozambique might take.

SECTION I: GENESIS AND EXPANSION OF THE WAR.

Beginnings.

4. The details of RENAMO's creation and early operations out of Rhodesia are widely known. It was formed in 1976 from the ex-*flechas* who fled Mozambique before independence. Airborne and commando-trained, these small counter-insurgency squads of a half-dozen men responsible to the Portuguese intelligence service, PIDE, had earned a reputation for brutality, torture, and summary execution. They were supplemented by inmates liberated from Mozambican re-education camps near the border, some of whom were former FRELIMO army (FPLM) soldiers incarcerated for corruption. After further military training, this original group operated as scouts for the Rhodesian army against the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) presence over the border and as a fifth-column inside Mozambique. Acts of social banditry, and distribution of food and clothes from Rhodesia during the 1979 drought, bought them a measure of support in central Mozambique, where FRELIMO had established little effective presence. Although most early RENAMO recruitment was undoubtedly forced, some may have been voluntary, especially in places with a former *flecha* connection, for example, the Gorongosa Game Reserve in northern Sofala Province.

5. The end of the Rhodesia war brought first disarray, and then a change in mid-1980 to a more supportive patron in the form of the South African military. But at first RENAMO continued to operate within familiar parts of the country, particularly in Manica Province along the Zimbabwe border and in neighbouring Sofala. By the latter half of 1981, a network of large, semi-permanent bases had been built up, from whence attacks were mounted on small towns. Contemporary Zimbabwean press reports begin to chronicle a pattern of events to be repeated, elsewhere, later: for instance, in August 1981 an influx of Mozambican refugees from Espungabera district sought sanctuary and medical aid at Mount Selinda mission 3km. inside Zimbabwe - the FRELIMO Party members amongst them minus their ears - and told tales of the destruction by RENAMO of Communal Villages across in Mozambique. The capture, in December 1981, of RENAMO's main base at Garagua, 20km. from the Zimbabwe border, was a military setback, but they were able to re-establish themselves in Gorongosa, from where they had been ousted by the FPLM a year earlier.

Expansion.

6. In 1982, RENAMO's period of expansion began. By midyear they had moved south beyond Manica and Sofala into northern Inhambane and Gaza, and also north into southern Tete. Most significant for the future, though, was their shift across the Zambezi River to absorb a small, independent guerrilla movement with local roots called *Africa Livre*, operating near the town of Milange on the Malawi border. This allowed them to open a new front in Zambezia, and penetrate the populous and fertile Zambezi Valley, and from this springboard to move north into Nampula, and across, towards the coast. Originally just a few hundred men, RENAMO was estimated to have grown from 5,000 armed guerrillas in mid-1981, to 8-10,000 a year later. In the period until the Nkomati

Accord of March 1984 RENAMO also spread southwards, especially through Inhambane and towards the sea, only to abandon, or be driven from, these coastal bases at a later date.

7. An offensive in central Mozambique involving the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) during 1985/86 included the capture of RENAMO's Casa Banana headquarters at Gorongosa (twice), and was probably the prime cause of RENAMO's further concentration away northwards and towards the Malawi border. In turn, a major offensive by RENAMO in the latter part of 1986 along the Zambezi Valley threatened the territorial integrity of Mozambique. Combined FPLM/ZNA forces recaptured five towns in February 1987, whilst a Tanzanian force *inter alia* garrisoned the provincial capital of Quelimane. Further gains in the area in mid-1988 included the recapture of Milange.

8. The ZNA subsequently reduced its commitment in Mozambique to the level necessary to secure the Tete road and the Beira corridor, and the Tanzanian force withdrew from Mozambique in November 1988. At the time of writing, FRELIMO reigns unchallenged in the cities and, indeed, remains in control of the towns, but the rural insurgency has become endemic throughout. Since a Summit meeting at Songo in September 1988 between Presidents Chissano and P W Botha of South Africa, RENAMO operations have expanded in all directions, but with a marked concentration of activity in the south, especially around the capital, Maputo.

9. Nearly 3,000 RENAMO members are reported to have taken advantage of the Government's amnesty during 1988, the first year of its operation, but this leaves an estimated 17,000 or more guerrillas at present still in the field. Meanwhile, the conflict has continued to spread beyond Mozambique's borders, with incursions on the increase into Zimbabwe, and even Eastern Zambia. RENAMO 'declared war' on Zimbabwe in October 1986, and the first strike into the country was recorded in June 1987, with an attack on a northern village. Unpublished government figures on that raid and the 374 since are said to detail 335 civilians killed, 280 wounded, 667 kidnapped, and more than 400 missing.

SECTION II: AIMS & ORGANISATION.

Political aims & structure.

10. RENAMO maintains offices in Lisbon, Washington, Paris and Bonn. Its professed aims are set out in its *Manifest and Programme* adopted in August 1981. This slight document calls, *inter alia*, for a Government of National Unity and an army based on RENAMO, but incorporating acceptable elements of the FPLM forces, as well as democratic elections and a mixed economy. In 1982 RENAMO's National Council was formed, comprising Afonso Dhlakama as President, Orlando Cristina(2) as Secretary General, and several minor Mozambican political exiles. Though the National Council has in the past been described as RENAMO's highest decision-making organ, reserve, even scepticism, about the status and authority of this body seems in order, especially in the light of conflicting accounts of its composition(3), combined with a lack of evidence as to its role.

11. According to Reis (a RENAMO defector), the pressure to develop a political leadership and programme originated with the South Africans, who may have considered that RENAMO required such appurtenances in order to attract national or international credibility. Thus the National Council was formed in consequence of Cristina's efforts to lure a few Mozambican exiles to the movement. In addition to this insubstantial political leadership, RENAMO has an external representation in the form of its offices abroad which is real enough, but is both factious and divided. Luckily for RENAMO, this all appears to have had little effect on its military operations inside Mozambique, as witness the lack of impression left by a whole series of murders and defections over the years. (4)

12. In the absence of any strong indications to the contrary, it would seem reasonable to assume that RENAMO's *de facto* decision-making machinery is in the hands of the military commanders inside Mozambique, led by President and Supreme Commander, Dhlakama. But their aims remain opaque. Press interviews with Dhlakama are rare, but in 1983 he spoke in general terms of introducing 'elections, real democracy and a mixed economy', and vouched that after his forces had won the war and guaranteed peace, they would allow the civilians and intellectuals to govern. He described himself as a nationalist, whose only real responsibility was to rid his people of 'communist oppression', and complained that FRELIMO was worse than the Portuguese before them: 'The colonialists exploited us, but at least they didn't try to wipe out our traditions because they are so-called "reactionary"'. In a further interview in 1986 he maintained that RENAMO controlled the countryside whilst FRELIMO 'hid in the cities'. Hinting at the possibility of a military coup from an exhausted FRELIMO officer corps, he suggested that political reconciliation and a Government of National Unity could be an alternative to outright victory, but the latter could come in two years.

13. More recently Dhlakama has called for negotiations aimed at achieving an agreement on reconciliation with FRELIMO, then elections for a Constituent Assembly, and, finally, general, free, legislative elections. This statement coincided with RENAMO's first Congress from 5-9 June 1989 which, according to a communique released in Lisbon, reviewed the movement's statutes and programme, and elected a new National Council with representation from all of Mozambique's ten provinces. A RENAMO delegation which included Dhlakama took part in indirect talks in Nairobi involving Mozambican church leaders in August. Subsequently, RENAMO issued a 16-point programme pledging good faith in continued negotiations towards peace. Conciliatory in tone, this seems concerned to project RENAMO as a political movement fighting for democracy, and opposed to gratuitous violence.

The Military Organisation.

a. Structure, discipline & recruitment.

14. In 1985, RENAMO's then Secretary-General, Evo Fernandes, described a fairly conventional military structure:

'We have the President, Afonso Dhlakama, who is also commander in chief. Then we have generals. The generals have military commanders

under them. The regional commanders have sector commanders. The sector commanders have zone commanders under them. Then there are battalions and platoons and so on.'

A recent report by Minter based on interviews with 32 RENAMO ex-participants(5) throws further light on the military organisation. It concludes that the basic operational unit is the company of approximately 100 to 150 men, generally grouped in one main base with smaller attached bases for special functions, such as security and reconnaissance. Each company, with apparently few exceptions, is equipped with radio-transmission facilities, and a communications officer who is in regular touch with the provincial base, and indirectly with Gorongosa headquarters base. Two or three companies make up a battalion, with some 450 men at full strength, and a provincial base may have two or more battalions in its immediate vicinity, sometimes dispersed in several bases, within a few hours march of each other. Each province is divided into two or more sectors. A company is divided into platoons and sections, as well as 'groups' selected for specific operations.

15. Thus, as Minter clearly shows, RENAMO is not a loose collection of bandit gangs. On the evidence of his interviews it is a hierarchical military body, with an apparently effective system of command and control, accompanied by efficient radio communications. Even if the impression he creates is perhaps over-tidy, it squares with the overall coherence of RENAMO military action. A British hostage held by RENAMO in 1982 reported that his captors were in daily contact with a central base three times a day; in a more recent journalistic account Finnegan has pointed out that RENAMO's radio communications system gives them the ability to mass large numbers of small units for attacks and disperse them rapidly for strategic retreats. Having visited their bases, Moorcraft describes RENAMO cadres as under strict military discipline based upon a formal rank structure.

16. Set against this military hierarchy and centralised coordination, however, are reports of considerable regional variation: Minter himself notes in relation to child guerrillas active with units in the south, that most of his interviewees from central Mozambique and Zambezia stressed that children were *not* used in combat. In some parts of the country, small RENAMO gangs engage in hit-and-run tactics, whilst in Zambezia, especially, they are said to operate at battalion strength, and have held towns for substantial periods. There are also areas in the north where RENAMO is said to behave with less cruelty than in the southern provinces, where their major massacres seem to have occurred. A reasonable assumption, therefore, would be that it is the local, provincial, military command which counts, with regional commanders enjoying considerable autonomy.

17. Forced recruitment is widespread. On the basis of his interviews, Minter puts it at over 90% with most captives responding to their predicament with fatalistic acceptance. A variety of control mechanisms deters escape, principally fear of execution, but also the practice of transfer away from the home area. Recruits are kept in separate training bases attached to, but not integrated with, operational bases, and undergo two to three months military instruction. Alongside harsh internal discipline and forced recruitment, however,

some foreign captives held at RENAMO bases have, paradoxically, reported the existence of high morale. Moorcraft believes that whilst many recruits are press-ganged, others appear to have joined voluntarily out of boredom, or because of hunger and poverty. Hanlon notes that even when originally press-ganged, the excitement - compared to the dull, poor, life in the countryside - is enough to induce some to stay willingly.

b. Ethno-regional base.

18. Shona-speakers from central Mozambique dominate RENAMO's military leadership, reflecting early patterns of recruitment. According to many accounts, the Ndaou sub-group of the Shona to which Dhlakama himself belongs are moreover disproportionately represented within the topmost ranks of that leadership. (6) But, again, there are regional variations: A few of Minter's informants from Zambezia said that almost all the officers in their unit were local. In general, however, his interviewees from all parts of the country described a situation where the large majority of the military commanders are Shona-speaking 'veterans', although the rank-and-file number men from all ethnic groups. Doubtless this reflects both RENAMO's rapid spread throughout Mozambique in recent years, and its practice of compulsory, local, recruitment. In one area of Gaza Province, for instance, the composition of RENAMO bands has reportedly changed over the years - the commanders are still all Ndaou-speakers from the north, but now many of the troops are local men. A Mozambican feature article on a captured RENAMO base at Nhandjele in Inhambane revealed one way in which the organisation has processed this new, mixed, intake: its inhabitants were organised into cells of about fifty from the same ethnic group - Bitonga, Chopi, Tswa etc. The report deplored this attempt to 'tribalise' a war whose essential character was that of external destabilisation.

19. Accusations have been made of Shona linguistic hegemony: Reis claimed that his problems at Gorongosa headquarters arose 'because I didn't speak Ndaou, only Shangaan. And when I spoke Portuguese, they said I was showing contempt for the national languages'. Conversely, Minter observes from his interviews that whilst the majority of RENAMO commanders are Shona-speakers (7), the language used in any particular RENAMO unit depends on the ratio of different ethnic groups represented in its ranks. There may well be more to it than that, however: Mozambican author, Magaia, made the following intriguing comment in a recent interview:

'Many of them seem to be from the Ndaou group, who are people who live in Manica Province. When they attack they talk to the people they kidnap in Ndaou. But I have had a chance to go to Tete and talk to people there, and they have told me they recognise these bandits who speak Ndaou as people from Tete. I also talked to a teacher who recognised bandits who carried out a massacre as former students of his who had been kidnapped. They were talking as Ndaous but they were not Ndaous.'

This might suggest actual linguistic incorporation of forced recruits into the speech of the military leadership. She goes on to link this with a popular belief in Ndaou supernatural powers:

'Traditionally people have thought that the Ndaus had special powers after death - that if you killed one he would punish you for a generation. So this frightens people even more...'

20. Minter indeed believes that far from being a weakness, a common Shona ethnicity amongst RENAMO commanders seems to have contributed to the coherence of the group. This is reinforced by a perceived southern dominance of the FRELIMO Government. Nonetheless, the Shona predominance does cause strains at leadership level. Minter admits that whilst it would be simplistic to speak of 'tribal' divisions, it was resentment of the Shona-speaking circle around Dhlakama which led to the breakaway formation of the *União nacional moçambicana* (UNAMO) in early 1987. The leadership of this breakaway by Gimu Phiri, previously RENAMO commander of Zambezia Province, where UNAMO has its base and operates against both RENAMO and the FPLM, supports the view expressed earlier in this paper that the significant politico-military unit is the regional command.

21. This in turn raises the spectre of rural Mozambique degenerating eventually into 'warlordism', similar to the situation described by May for Chad. It would be a logical outcome of the continued weakening of the central state. However, that it operates in Zambezia also suggests that UNAMO might represent a reassertion of separate identity on the part of the old *Africa Livre*, absorbed by RENAMO in its expansion north of the Zambezi in 1982. Such a coincidence of political and ethno-regional identity may explain why RENAMO's Zambezia command was the one to fragment. Similar breakaways in other parts of the country, but on simple regional lines, are a future possibility. The picture is further clouded by an unknown level of freelance banditry, which may be credited to RENAMO, and by past reports of other armed dissident groups independent of RENAMO operating elsewhere, eg. Cabo Delgado.

Grass-roots ideology, and religion.

22. RENAMO is widely described as crudely anti-communist and anti-FRELIMO, with no political programme as such. (8) But the accounts of various witnesses point to many RENAMO soldiers being motivated by certain specific grievances. These are: resentment at FRELIMO's suppression of traditional chiefly authority and repressive attitude towards religion and religious practitioners (even though there has been a complete change of Government policy on this in recent years); and rejection of FRELIMO's economic and agrarian policies, which are perceived as having brought ruination. Above all, compulsory villagisation, where this has occurred, appears to have been the cause of outrage. RENAMO has been able to capitalise on these concrete grievances.

23. In the absence of any distinct political ideology, a motivating system of beliefs and values should probably be sought at this grass-roots level of the military organisation. Elsewhere in Africa, inherently political peasant grievances have been channelled within a religious idiom. Traditional forms of belief particularly lend themselves to this form of protest, because of the usually strong association between the spiritual realm and the land (it seems especially common in Africa where political activity has been

suppressed, eg. Alice Lakwenya, and the Holy Spirit Movement in Uganda, and there are many more examples).

24. RENAMO's keen interest in religion and religious practitioners should be seen in this context. Such practitioners are no more immune from kidnap, injury or death at their hands than anyone else, and if some collaborate with RENAMO, it should be remembered that like other members of the civilian population, they have little alternative. But RENAMO also pays an exaggerated respect towards the outward symbols of religious observance. The local church, or mosque, is sometimes the only building left undamaged in a RENAMO attack on a settlement. (9) Captives of RENAMO and other observers have remarked on their habit of carrying bibles, and the approving and enthusiastic attitude to religion - any religion, it sometimes appears. (10) However, the most intimate connection seems to be with traditional systems of belief.

25. Fragmentary, but consistent, evidence suggests that in Manica and Sofala, RENAMO has been able to enlist the support of some Shona spirit-mediums. In 1983, a Shona *n'anga*, or spiritual healer, was found at RENAMO's Tome base in Inhambane Province - in southern Mozambique and outside the Shona cultural area - when this was taken by the FPLM. An interview with the woman was published; she was apparently from Zimbabwe, and may have been associated with RENAMO and involved with treating its soldiers ever since the days when it was Rhodesia-based. At a higher level, however, there is clearly a relationship between at least some important territorial mediums and the RENAMO military leadership. Spirit-mediums have certainly been associated with RENAMO bases, at Casa Banana, for example, and at other bases in the Gorongosa area.

26. Given these indicators, it would be tempting to project ZANLA's experience during their liberation war in neighbouring Zimbabwe onto the situation in Mozambique. There, the guerrillas were able to forge a relationship with the mediums of great importance to the success of their campaign. The support of the latter derived from a perception that the struggle the guerrillas were waging was essentially one for control over the land, and the rightful concern, therefore, of the spirits of which they were the instrument and vehicle. The undeniably strong dimension of peasant revolt against the Communal Villages (CVs) in some localised support for RENAMO (described and discussed later) suggests that there is clear potential for the growth of a 'peasant/guerrilla' ideology in Shona-speaking central Mozambique, similar to that which Ranger describes as having developed in Zimbabwe:

'... above any other possible religious form the mediums symbolised peasant right to the land and their right to work it as they chose... It was they who offered the most effective means of bringing together peasant elders... with the young strangers who entered each rural district... Hence not only peasants but also most guerrillas themselves came to draw heavily on the religious elements within the composite ideology of the war.' (Ranger, p189)

This composite peasant/guerrilla ideology included not only a common focus on the 'lost lands', alienated in the Zimbabwean case to white farmers, but also a common belief in the protection of the spirits, and proved exportable across at least two-thirds of rural Zimbabwe.

27. But this option is not available to RENAMO. Shona-speakers are too few in Mozambique - probably less than one in ten of the total population. Otherwise, such a composite peasant/guerrilla ideology drawing on the idiom of the Shona spirit cult could indeed remedy RENAMO's ideological lack. It would encompass the salient peasant concerns within a symbolic language rooted in the land and its use, which would bring Chiefs, spirit-mediums and RENAMO guerrillas under the same umbrella (unlike in Zimbabwe, where the chiefs were viewed as Government collaborators), incidentally legitimising RENAMO modes of administration. However, Shona spirit mediums and their pronouncements must have little significance to the numerous moslems of the north, or christians of the south, and RENAMO operates and recruits (albeit forcibly) amongst all of them. Hence, perhaps, the superficial interest in 'religion' in general, which, one suspects, conceals a closer affinity for the Shona spirit cults on the part of Afonso Dhlakama and the Ndau circle of senior commanders around him.

28. RENAMO, however, is eclectic, and draws locally on traditional religious idioms outside of Shona culture. The healer (under different names) is an important figure throughout Mozambique. According to Magaia, RENAMO fighters, and especially Ndau-speakers, are widely credited with supernatural powers, including being bullet-proof. Yet the main figure responsible for supplying those powers in Manhiça district, in the southern province of Gaza, is a local *curandeiro* named Nwamadjosi, whose fame also serves to attract recruits to RENAMO's ranks (11). Indeed, Roesch perceives a resurgence of traditional rural culture linked to the decline into subsistence production in southern Mozambique. He describes how in the Lower Limpopo Valley this finds ideological expression in the craft of the healer, which:

'is now undergoing a renaissance of sorts, with banned ceremonies being performed in communal villages, and with young people still showing a willingness to apprentice to this traditional and respected profession. Similarly, adherents to the various African Christian sects, who were previously prohibited from building their churches or holding their regular services inside communal villages (being obliged to do so outside of the villages' boundaries), were now openly defying these local government prohibitions.'

Administration of civilians.

29. There is a strict division between RENAMO military structures and the civilian population. Once RENAMO have established a presence in an area, they ensure local provision of food and labour by the simple expedient of utilising and resuscitating the very traditional mechanisms which FRELIMO has been trying, often ineffectually, to suppress. *Mujibas*(12) are appointed to police the system and report those who step out of line, and form an effective spy and surveillance network. Minter reports without further comment the important point that:

'The interviewees generally described a situation in which some local chiefs, whether traditional authorities or Portuguese-appointed, as well as traditional healers (*curandeiros*) and magicians (*feiticeiros*), cooperated with RENAMO. A variety of reports have suggested that such leaders, deprived of power by the

FRELIMO government, provided significant support to RENAMO in some areas of Mozambique.'

30. The following three illustrations come from Zambezia: Before its recapture in mid-1988 the district around Milange was reportedly earmarked as a logistical centre for RENAMO bases throughout the province. Maize production was carried out on special farms under the direction of former chiefs who under RENAMO enjoyed a resurgence of influence and authority. At Gilé, controlled by RENAMO from October 1986 until July 1988, surrounding villages were also put under the chiefs' authority, and they had the tasks of organising food, recruits and portorage. Morrumbala in southern Zambezia was deserted for the whole nineteen months of RENAMO occupation, RENAMO having marched the entire population of the town off into the bush; all subsequent dealings with them were effected through the intermediary of *régulos*(13) and *mujibas*. Food produced at Morrumbala is said to have been distributed to RENAMO bases in Manica and Sofala to the south.

31. A significant RENAMO-eye view of the guerrilla/civilian relationship was provided by Secretary General Fernandes in 1985 and is quoted here at length:

'Administration doesn't have anything to do with the military. We are based on the traditional system: the administrative system depends on the area the chieftain has. There are the lower chieftains, but we also have what we call *mujeebas*...What happens then if a military unit needs new bases? We ask the chieftains where we can settle a base in their area. Then they say such and such a place is better because there is water there, and a nice, thick forest. The *mujeeba* is our representative at the village level. He knows everybody in his village. Nobody can come without being known. Then nobody also can betray us because he surveys the area. He has a weapon - not an automatic weapon but a Mauser or something.... . . .these chieftains, if they don't live too far away from military units, are in mobile connection with us because they are involved in some military activities. For instance, if we need to haul captured ammunition from a cache, we call people to come and carry it. And we have specific bases only for receiving food from the people. They come to give it to us every time, and nobody forces them.'

He refers in the same interview (see bibliography) to health, education, and economic officials, but there appears little corroboration for this, although RENAMO does establish schools in some areas under its control. Evidence for these, and for the medical treatment of civilians by RENAMO male nurses and first-aid orderlies, appears to come especially from the Gorongosa region.

PART II - Dynamics of the War.

Regional factors.

32. In seeking an answer to the question of how RENAMO achieves the measure of 'success' against the Mozambican state indicated in Part I of this paper, it is first worth examining the nature of that state, for

like a weak patient prey to many infections, its natural resistance to attack is low:

33. Culturally, as well as geographically, Mozambique is divided into three broad bands by the Save and Zambezi Rivers, with matrilineal groups in the northern portion historically linked to the Islamic influences of the East African coast. A diverse cultural border zone along the Zambezi Valley divides the north from the patrilineal Shona-speakers (Manyika, Ndau, Teve) of the centre, akin to the majority in neighbouring Zimbabwe. Below the Save River, the Thonga and related peoples form part of a southern cultural world, linked to the Swazi and the peoples of South Africa. Neither were these different ethnic and social worlds integrated economically, nor until Salazar's dictatorship established a single government for the territory in 1948 was Mozambique an administrative unit, and Portuguese rule a unifying factor. The fragmented nature of the modern state is therefore a legacy of the colonial past. Thus the south provided labour and services for South Africa, whilst the centre was more closely linked to Rhodesia than to the rest of the country and the neglected north languished under a harsh regime of forced cotton cultivation.

34. Newitt has aptly described the country as essentially comprising corridors of communication linking Central and Southern Africa to the coast. The country's size and shape alone render effective control difficult, compounded by the lack of north/south communications (the important arteries bisect the country laterally), and the existence of several natural regional centres, but with all power concentrated in the capital, 1,900km from Mozambique's northernmost border, but only 102km from South Africa. In addition to the difficulties of integration associated with geographical and cultural diversity, Mozambique exhibits all the structural weaknesses of the African state to an extreme degree. Thus it suffers an acute lack of qualified cadres (illiteracy of 92% at Independence, dropping to 70% today), weak infrastructure, and consequent poor administrative grip. These factors interact with, and reinforce, the regional and ethnic fragmentation mentioned earlier. So, for example, the colonial authorities permitted Protestant missions to operate only in the south, giving that area an enormous advantage in higher education over the rest of the country, reserved to the Catholic Church. This was reflected in the south's monopoly of posts in the administration, to the consequent resentment of other regions.

35. With Independence in 1975 after a long guerrilla war, but actually following the collapse of the metropolitan power in Lisbon, FRELIMO had still to establish a presence over large areas of this massive country. The conflict in neighbouring Rhodesia meant that in much of central Mozambique, it had little opportunity to do so. Indeed inasmuch as RENAMO can be said to have developed a regional base, it would seem to be located here in Manica and Sofala where the insurgency began, and where RENAMO has been able to count on some support from the peasantry - if only tacit. During the early 1980s it was able to attract some voluntary recruits from the area (though most were forced) by propagating that FRELIMO was southern dominated. Minter's material suggests that still holds good today. In particular, Gorongosa in northern Sofala has long been the site of RENAMO's shifting

headquarters. It is regarded as a centre of support for RENAMO, which harbours many *mujibas*, as well as being an area where the connection between RENAMO and the Shona spirit cult is particularly strong and close. (14) The association with this extensive area of mountain and game reserve also has its established economic significance, as a centre for ivory poaching and smuggling. (15)

The question of violence.

a. Instrumental terror.

36. RENAMO's reputation for brutality requires examination, in view of the organisation's success despite a common assumption that such violence is counter-productive to any rural insurgency. In reality, RENAMO's violence achieves certain goals, notwithstanding a current overworked metaphor which has 'the people' as the water amongst whom the guerrillas must swim. This view wrongly equates effective guerrilla warfare with political worth and popular support. It ignores the importance of accurate intelligence to insurgents and counter-insurgents alike, with consequent pressures on the peasantry from both sides. Targetted, often extreme, brutality against suspected informers seems a typical accompaniment to guerrilla campaigns worldwide. But it is the degree and extent of the violence employed, which goes far beyond deterring or punishing 'traitors', that arguably marks out RENAMO as exceptional in Southern African terms.

37. On even a sceptical reading of press reportage of the war in Mozambique, RENAMO 'terrorism' - interpreted here as a conscious strategy, designed to inspire dread - seems undeniable. Over and above the exemplary dimension, RENAMO violence against civilians is directly instrumental. Officials of FRELIMO, and of the administration, are priority targets. In rural areas, their physical elimination serves to isolate communities and remove them from the rival authority of the central power. It complements the destruction of the economic infrastructure and the severing of communications. Essentially, it works to 'disarticulate' the State. Within rural communities thus atomised and reordered to support a semi-permanent RENAMO presence, exemplary violence serves to cow the population, and maintain control.

38. Methods of retribution and intimidation include public mutilation (as in the case of nine men castrated in an incident in Inhambane Province in June in which fifty other people were murdered). Attention is paid to visual impact, and bodies may be displayed. Axes, knives and machetes are often employed to kill, in preference to firearms, even where the latter are carried. Grotesque methods of execution have been reported, including crucifixion. Killings and mutilation have also been directed against children. (16) Thus there seems little doubt that RENAMO's fearful reputation is well-based, and probably consciously cultivated.

(for local, not internat'l, consumption)

b. Violence & contrbl.

39. The significant difference from most other recent insurgencies in Southern Africa is that RENAMO lacks substantial rear-bases in neighbouring countries - in contrast, for example, to FRELIMO itself, which operated from across the border in Tanzania before establishing 'liberated zones', or ZANLA, which had bases in Manica Province, Mozambique. It must therefore extract food and labour from the Mozambican peasantry on the spot, whilst trying to prevent escape of manpower from areas under its control. Much RENAMO violence seems directed towards these ends and does not lend itself to interpretation as the product of indiscipline. In his report to the US State Department, based on extensive interviews with Mozambican refugees in several countries, Gersony observed that:

'...the level of violence reported to be conducted by RENAMO against the civilian population of rural Mozambique is extraordinarily high... That the accounts are so strikingly similar by refugees who have fled from northern, central and southern Mozambique suggests that the violence is systematic and co-ordinated and not a series of spontaneous, isolated incidents by undisciplined combatents...' (17)

40. Gersony, therefore, does not admit of regional variations, as such, although he does differentiate between three areas of RENAMO operation. These - in ascending order of oppression - he terms 'tax', 'control', and 'destruction' zones. The last category is self-explanatory. 'Control' areas near RENAMO bases suffer onerous forced labour, especially involving portage duties, and other abuses. The inhabitants of the more sparsely populated 'tax' areas escape with tributes of food to guerrillas whose local presence is not a continuous one. A majority of Gersony's interviewees who had resided in a control zone (18) had personally witnessed severe punishment or death inflicted on captives apprehended while trying to escape, and reported that when individuals made successful escapes, any dependents left behind might be executed in retribution. In general, these punishments were conducted publicly, as a deterrent. The effect of this violence may have been to induce passivity - and a sense of fear, anxiety and helplessness - in the populations concerned. (19)

41. If the violence directed against civilians is purposeful and instrumental, as suggested, then logically it should lessen where RENAMO's goals have been achieved, namely, where the local FRELIMO influence and presence has been eliminated, RENAMO is relatively well-established, and civilian compliance reasonably assured. Some eye-witness reports from central and northern Mozambique indicate that such a situation may indeed prevail, in some localities. Such evidence, however, is mainly impressionistic, and apparently at variance with Gersony. Yet the significantly high incidence of atrocities in southern Mozambique (for example, the burning alive of busloads of civilians in road ambushes, and a number of notorious massacres) may provide evidence in support of this view: FRELIMO has a strong base in the southern Provinces, where by virtue of the numbers involved, the elimination of its supporters cannot be achieved by simply picking off a handful of local Party officials. A similar situation occurred in the Fulani conquest of northern Nigeria. Rape and pillage gave way to a more

settled order and passive acceptance of the new rulers away from the recently conquered areas.

c. Initiation and conditioning to violence.

42. If violence helps to impress, and to maintain control through fear, then the perpetration of acts of violence also serves as a form of induction into full guerrilla ranks. This is a crucial *rite de passage* for forced recruits. John Burleson, a British ecologist held prisoner by RENAMO for several months in 1982, reported seeing hundreds of recruits who were kept under armed guard until they committed their first attacks, whereupon they were warned that if they fled and were captured by government troops, they would be executed as terrorists. The Argentinian death squads operated on similar lines. There are also parallels between cases where RENAMO recruits have been compelled to kill fellow villagers, or even relatives, to bind them to the movement through guilt and fear of retribution, and practices on Crete in the Greek civil war by the communist party.

43. In the perpetration of the more extreme cases of exemplary violence, involving especially young guerrillas, some 'battle hardening' process may also be suspected. Indeed, the psychological aspects of violent conditioning within the context of large-scale forced recruitment seem to cry out for further enquiry. In practice, increased reliance on these methods, which were employed right from its beginnings, has been dictated by the size of RENAMO's field of operations, and the narrowness of its support-base. In the absence of any rewards in the leadership's gift - other than the guerrillas' access to a gun, loot, and a relatively well-organised system of first-aid, as Minter notes - violence is probably the most effective and cheapest means to obtain obedience within the ranks, and outside it.

44. The *ex-flecha* and mercenary tradition in the senior ranks may also contribute to RENAMO's brutality. Some of Minter's interviewees made special reference to *grupos limpa* ('clean-up squads') of battle-hardened veterans, whom they alleged were responsible for most of the massacres and for internal executions within the RENAMO forces. Like the British mercenaries recruited to fight in the Angolan civil war, it is probable that RENAMO's core group contains a large number of psychopathic personalities. (20) The organisation's 'macho' image presumably also holds an appeal for some, with its opportunities for personal pillage and rape, especially where the local tradition may already place value on 'warrior' attributes. This certainly contributes to the intractability of security problems in the Karamoja district of North-East Uganda, where modern weapons magnify a traditional cattle-raiding complex. Elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, 'warrior' ideals, alone or together with traditional ethnic rivalries previously played out at a containable low-level of physical damage, and local availability of efficient modern firearms, have combined within the context of a weak central State to create violent instability. It would be astonishing if these factors were entirely absent from the Mozambican conflict.

45. RENAMO's violence is particularly striking because the organisation's brutal reputation is damaging internationally. It denies RENAMO respectability and inhibits support, especially in the US, where the Gersony Report has had its impact on circles potentially sympathetic to RENAMO. But even if the military leadership is sensitive to the international dimension of their poor image, it is far from certain that they would be able to alter ingrained patterns of behaviour despite RENAMO's apparently centralised system of communications, and possibly command and control. Reis has reported that mutilation was indeed official policy in its early days of operation out of Rhodesia. Then there was a period in which orders were issued for it to stop, 'but it had been official policy since the beginning of the war and it just continued'. Wheeler, a supporter of RENAMO, gives an eyewitness account of the display (on a stake) of the severed head of a peasant freshly executed on suspicion of spying for FRELIMO. This was at the direct order of the local RENAMO base commander, who explained to Wheeler that his action in fact contravened directives from Dhlakama.

RENAMO penetration.

46. FRELIMO policies have also provided a lever which RENAMO has been able to use to establish itself. The Party's approach to creating a nation-state from scratch was to attempt to throw out the old, root and branch, and replace it with new structures. It reconstituted itself as a vanguard Party in February 1977 and adopted a development strategy taking as its keystone the grouping of the peasantry into Communal Villages (CVs). (21) Its overambitious programme of 'socialising' the countryside proved disastrous in a state with a structural food deficit of 150-200,000 tons and a dire scarcity of trained manpower, yet which was supposed to be in control of all economic activity. National production fell by 30% between 1981 and 1986, per capita income halved, and exports fell by 60%

47. As all traces of the distribution and commercialisation network were disappearing throughout rural Mozambique, so RENAMO was expanding. In so doing it was destroying the development infrastructure linked to the Villages which FRELIMO had created (health-posts, schools). Whilst deeply rooted rural structures of authority, secular and religious, were suppressed, the new political structures installed by FRELIMO remained fragile and contested. In the centre and north of the country, those structures were all too often erected by administrators from the south, who were unacquainted with local conditions, and lacked close understanding of local culture and beliefs. RENAMO penetrated this situation almost from without, profiting from, and contributing fully to, the prevailing social crisis and economic collapse in the rural areas. This allowed it to establish roots. Two case studies will illustrate this process, both taken from Macua areas in the north. (22) In each case forced villagisation was clearly an important ingredient in the situation, though special parochial factors, including a tradition of resistance to central authority, were also at play.

a. *Erati*.

48. This description derives from anthropological fieldwork by Geffray. Situated in a province (Nampula) known neither as a FRELIMO stronghold, nor as a centre of anti-FRELIMO dissent, Erati district does lie in an area of intense forced villagisation since 1984. (23) Lineages displaced from dispersed settlements and outlying fields have been brought - forcibly - under the *de facto* political and economic hegemony of others, on whose land the Communal Villages were constructed. Since the latter also came to dominate key leadership positions in the CVs, whether in the form of the local Party apparatus, the administration, or the presidency of the consumers' cooperative, they represent both the State and FRELIMO in the eyes of the progressively impoverished losers. RENAMO's injection of modern weapons and a guerrilla infrastructure into this situation hence offers them the opportunity to free themselves of the CV and FRELIMO control. Further potential support for the movement comes from the disenchanted and delinquent young, and Chiefs stripped by FRELIMO of their authority.

49. The first persons to be slain in any RENAMO attack are the officials of the Village and of the Party, and these are either members of, or allied by marriage to, the dominant lineages. Thus the killings represent a double rendering of account - RENAMO versus FRELIMO and the State, and also certain members of the social strata in crisis and in revolt from within the CV, versus the representatives of the newly dominant families. RENAMO profits thereby from conflicts internal to the peasantry, and by eg. promising the restoration of power to former notables, or inciting the people to leave the CV and return to live on their old lands. According to Geffray, the situation is particularly perilous for FRELIMO when humiliated and popular ex-Chiefs are simultaneously the leaders of underprivileged outsider lineages in the CVs.

b. *Meloco*.

50. A surprisingly similar picture arises from a series of Mozambican press articles on Meloco district, in the northernmost province of Cabo Delgado. (*Notícias*, 29 Oct-2 Nov. 1985) Until shortly before the reports were written in 1985, it existed as an isolated outcrop of RENAMO activity in this traditional FRELIMO stronghold. We are told that the population of the area had been grouped into just 14 CVs, and there are hints that it was again forced villagisation which created opportunities for a RENAMO presence to take hold. (24) But the process was further enabled by the effective absence of FRELIMO and the dismal economic situation: According to the FRELIMO First Secretary and Administrator, Meloco frequently received no supplies of any description for a year on end, so that for want of cloth, people went around naked - and this despite being the administrative headquarters for the Locality. When RENAMO moved in, it was into a virtual administrative void.

51. RENAMO guerrillas (who were foreign to the region) first arrived at the invitation of former Chief Muikho Mwene, his subordinate chiefs, and moslem religious leaders (*chéchés*). Muikho actively mobilised cooperation and support. RENAMO, for its part, inaugurated its presence

by totally destroying the CV of Matiquiti, save for its mosque - the reason, presumably, for the invitation. It is strongly implied that this was with at least the passive support of its inhabitants. RENAMO also killed the family of Matiquiti's President, and then supervised the exodus of the population back to their old dispersed settlements, which they returned to the authority of the Chiefs. *Ex-sipaios* ('native' police during the colonial era) were appointed *mujibas*. A similar fate befell the CV of Khatapwa nearby, which had actually been built on the site of the very community where Chief Muikho once lived, and which in colonial times used to bear his name. Muikho personally ordered the killing of at least 14 people in Khatapwa who refused to return to their former homes.

52. Organised by the Chiefs, local peasants kept the guerrillas provisioned with food in their separate base nearby, and provided auxiliary labour and support in military operations - such as by digging 24 holes to the depth of a man along an 8km stretch of the approach road to the site of Matiquiti CV. According to local informants, the guerrillas promised that 'the whites for whom they worked' would return to govern Mozambique, bringing with them clothes and other basic necessities for the people - shades of cargo-cult in conditions of absolute material deprivation. But as time wore on, no-one came, and things took a turn for the worse rather than the better. Some began to escape from RENAMO control, into the bush. It was at this point that the guerrillas ordered the *mujibas* to start searching out and killing defectors, like one woman and child whose axed bodies lay on the road outside Matiquiti. Around this time, too, RENAMO stopped making promises, and started to organise participation in rituals of an alien nature, directed towards mysterious ancestral spirits (at least to the local moslem peasants). Led by the senior RENAMO commander they called on God to kill all the soldiers of FRELIMO, or at least change their bullets on firing into water. But this did not prevent the FPLM reoccupying Meloco.

c. General comments.

53. On the above evidence, therefore, RENAMO penetration of an area has its own dynamic, which one is tempted to describe as organic, but also pathological, growth. It is a process which is inadequately defined in one-dimensional terms as the simple result of externally sponsored destabilisation, although that is certainly a central element of it. It is also intrinsic to Mozambican society, but Mozambican society in a state of acute crisis. It is rather like a cancerous growth, in which abnormal cells proliferate and spread throughout an already debilitated system. In both areas, social tensions associated with the Communal Villages appear to have provided an original stimulus for RENAMO 'cells' to form. Inasmuch as deteriorating security conditions have in places encouraged FRELIMO to proceed even faster with compulsory grouping of the rural population into Villages (now virtually abandoned in practice as a social and economic policy) but for essentially defensive purposes, the system's natural reaction to attack could be said to have accelerated the spread of the disease. In the same way it helped RENAMO to establish itself in Manica Province in the early 1980s, where there

were reports of people tipping RENAMO off about the best time to attack, or burning their own villages and blaming this on RENAMO.

54. There is, however, no simple correlation between level of villagisation in a province and intensity of RENAMO activity, as Zambezia Province, with its weak development of CVs amply demonstrates: Other factors at play here may include on the one hand the region's special traditions and idiosyncratic social and cultural fabric(25), and on the other the military effort RENAMO is willing to make for this strategically placed and naturally fertile area. (Samora Machel has referred in speeches to disaffection with FRELIMO in Zambezia). Conversely, Cabo Delgado is the province least affected by the insurgency, but where villagisation has had its greatest expansion. No doubt the strong tradition of support for FRELIMO in some areas, as well as remoteness from the main theatres of conflict and lack of enticing strategic targets, are all relevant. Nonetheless, peasant discontent with the CVs has been manifest even here, and even in Mueda district, the historical cradle of FRELIMO's struggle for Mozambican Independence. Rudebeck relates how the Makonde peasants of Ngapa near the Tanzanian border(26) withdrew from the CVs to set up autonomous villages of their own, which they called cooperatives, in the middle of a forest. Many of the conditions for RENAMO penetration seem present in the situation he describes, but in latent form, emphasising the importance of the local and the particular in analysing the progress of this war.

RENAMO tactics.

55. RENAMO documents captured at the Casa Banana headquarters in late 1985 and known as the 'Vaz' diaries set out under an entry for 24 February 1984 the following targets:

'Railways; Cahora Bassa; cooperantes, and other targets of an economic nature, SADCC'.

These were presumably agreed with the South Africans the previous day (23 February) when a meeting took place in Pretoria between Dhlakama and named officials of South African Military Intelligence. The diaries elsewhere note a 'General Plan no.1 of 24 February 1984', viz.:

1. Destroy the Mozambican economy in the rural zones.
2. Destroy the communications routes to prevent exports and imports to and from abroad, and the movement of domestic produce.
3. Prevent the activities of foreigners (*cooperantes*) because they are the most dangerous in the recovery of the economy.'

56. Destruction is certainly the keynote. The problem, however, remains one of ascertaining which military actions RENAMO has engaged in at South African behest, and which on its own account. Many aspects of RENAMO activity superficially interpreted as externally directed destabilisation can also be viewed as normal guerrilla tactics, aimed at isolating the rural areas and weakening the power of the centre. It is arguable, however, whether RENAMO's persistent and repeated sabotage of the international rail corridors (crucial to Mozambique's neighbours if they are to reduce dependence on the routes through South Africa) can be interpreted in this sense, at least, initially. Reis claims to have seen

documentation suggesting that the decision to attack the Beira oil-pipeline and the Beira-Malawi railway originated with the South Africans, and was imposed on an unwilling Dhlakama, who feared that the losses in men would outweigh any tactical gains.

57. This targetting of the communication corridors was not an obvious military option for RENAMO to choose in the early 1980s (even though the military leadership may by now have come to appreciate its efficacy in weakening FRELIMO economically and complicating the FPLM's logistical problems). It may indeed be indirectly responsible for some of RENAMO's more unusual organisational features. Those corridors are spaced across the great length of Mozambique, from the Nacala line in the north, through the Beira corridor, to the Limpopo line in the south. To bring them all within operational range must have imposed an artificially wide theatre of action on the young movement, necessitating an equally artificial dynamic of growth. (And the important road artery for Zimbabwe and Malawi running through Tete Province will, for good measure, have stretched the organisation westwards). It is probably no coincidence that RENAMO is estimated to have almost doubled in size in 1981/82, at a time when rail-lines and ports in central and southern Mozambique (especially Beira) began to come under persistent attack. Subsequently RENAMO crossed the Zambezi northwards, bringing the Nacala line within reach.

58. This surprising dynamic of growth has been sustained by forced recruitment, and has contributed to the employment of instrumental terror to impress and control new civilian populations. Unlike other Southern African guerrilla movements, RENAMO has not been able to establish a firm territorial base and work out from there gradually, developing its own characteristic set of aims and beliefs, and regional support base, as it went. Left to itself, this might have occurred in central Mozambique, but RENAMO's rapid expansion after its change of patron from Rhodesia to South Africa dissipated any constructive energies along a determinedly destructive path.

Problems of interpretation.

59. RENAMO, however, is more than just a creature of outside interests and tool of regional destabilisation. Its territorial spread also encompasses elements of genuine peasant revolt. In particular, there seems little doubt that where RENAMO targets Communal Villages established forcibly by FRELIMO, they may even attract local approval and collaboration. RENAMO violence can thereby supply the means for 'civil society' to reassert itself against the imposed structures of the State. But RENAMO destructiveness has now progressed beyond any reasonable strategic goal and reduced the rural areas to economic devastation and social breakdown.

60. The extreme lengths to which RENAMO takes its strategy of destruction also poses acute problems of interpretation. For example, its elimination of rural schools and health-centres is superficially explicable as in general manifestation of 'destabilising' Mozambique. But it can more precisely be regarded as in pursuit of weakening the hold of the centre, and striking at FRELIMO popularity (for whatever its

economic failures, the Mozambican Government introduced real improvements in the fields of health care and education). Such attacks are all the more explicable, then, when the schools and health posts concerned form part of a Communal Village complex, which stands as the very symbol of the local FRELIMO presence. In addition, in areas within portage distance of Malawi, the stripping of such installations for anything remotely saleable at markets over the border, has its obvious economic motivations. But beyond this, certain aspects of RENAMO behaviour appear to have no rational explanation. Attacks on clinics, for example, have not only included the blowing-up of X-ray machines and other high-technology equipment, but also the dismantling and elaborate crushing of each part of that equipment.

61. One author has described the destruction at the town of Morrumbala in the following terms:

'annihilative frenzy: each tile of a mosaic smashed, each pane of a glass block wall painstakingly shattered...systematic, psychotically meticulous destruction.' (Finnegan, p48)

US Ambassador Wells has labelled the destruction she saw on a visit to Zambezia as 'maniacal', 'methodical' and 'meticulous'. Evidence of such destructiveness has led some writers to make loose comparisons with the Khmer Rouge, and still others to allege the influence of black magic. Indeed, given RENAMO's other strange features - the extreme violence, the forced recruitment, the fascination with religion, the habit of destruction - suspicions must arise that the organisation has been tapping the 'darker side' of traditional beliefs, in the absence of alternative overarching ideologies, and in so doing has become locked into a negative culture of evil. Put another way: destruction may no longer be merely a tactic, but an end in itself, and explicable more in psychological, than in political, social, or military terms.

CONCLUSIONS

62. RENAMO is interesting for a number of reasons. It is without parallel in modern Africa as a successful guerrilla movement actually formed by an external power. Despite this origin as an entirely artificial creation of foreign interests, it has over the years taken on an undeniable life of its own, however unconvincing its formal political structures, deficient its ideology, and brutal its behaviour. Though RENAMO lacks the military capacity to take the cities, or apparently the strength to retain towns in the face of conventional military assault, it can continue to destroy Mozambique - to reduce its population to further misery and the State itself to impotence. It has been enabled to flourish by rural crisis engendered by earlier FRELIMO policies, and by the very weakness of the state under attack. These factors in combination with its ruthlessness have been sufficient to compensate for its lack of credible political ideology or leadership.

63. In response to the crisis confronting them, and to meet many of the justified grievances of the peasantry, FRELIMO has radically adjusted its policies over the past few years. Where once the slogan was 'for the nation to live, the tribe must die', the emphasis is now on organic - rather than imposed - national unity and on respect for

cultural tradition. The breach between government on the one hand, and the Christian Churches, and Islam, on the other, has been largely mended. However, the sufferings of the countryside cannot be redressed unless the Government's economic reforms - which do now include a realisation of the crucial importance of independent peasant production - can take effect across the whole country. And for this to happen, a cessation of the war is required.

64. RENAMO's leader, Afonso Dhlakama, has expressed the desire for reconciliation with FRELIMO on several occasions. A key question is the form such reconciliation could take. RENAMO is tainted not only by its South African connection, but also by its extreme violence: only hours before RENAMO leaders were due to open peace talks in Nairobi with Mozambican bishops, RENAMO guerrillas carried out a premeditated massacre of more than fifty peasants near Xai-Xai, in Gaza Province. Yet without a political accommodation with RENAMO of some kind, future prospects for Mozambique are extremely bleak. Further social disintegration in the rural areas is probable, and in the worst case, eventual long-term breakdown of the countryside into ex-RENAMO rival warlord fiefs, but with FRELIMO remaining the lawful and internationally recognised Government, in continued control of the capital, Maputo, and its power-base in the south.

65. RENAMO demands political recognition on a par with FRELIMO. Perhaps the degree to which it is accorded any such respect should be contingent on a reversal of its strategy of destruction and terror, within the context of some structured system of workable democratic institutions which link civil society to a responsive and accountable Mozambican State. This would allow RENAMO, by contributing through a system of grassroots democracy to the remaking of a country it has done so much to destroy, the opportunity to earn credit as a genuine local political force. Nevertheless, on present evidence, it would have a very long way to go to attain credibility as a political party.

66. In the aftermath of the successful negotiation of the Angola/Namibia Accords, there is an interest in international cooperation to solve regional problems. Both FRELIMO and RENAMO have tentatively embarked on a process of indirect, exploratory, contacts, and have signified their desire for peace and acceptance of mediation. Any such mediation should, however, take account of the realities on the ground. Regretfully, the nature of those realities suggests that any resolution of the conflict could only begin with a winding down of the fighting: difficult enough in itself to achieve in the prevailing climate of rural anarchy. There would then remain all the psychological wounds of mass brutalisation and - in places - vicious local level civil war. The costs of destabilisation are indeed great, and, in terms of a traumatised population, probably also longlasting.

NOTES

1. Well-established because of the testimony of Ken Flower, former Head of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) in Rhodesia, and later independent Zimbabwe, who was instrumental in its creation.
2. A white Portuguese ex-PIDE agent, Orlando Cristina formed RENAMO in Rhodesia in 1976; he was assassinated at a farm outside Pretoria in 1983.
3. In an interview published in *Defense & Diplomacy* of September 1985, Evo Fernandes described the National Council as coming in third place in RENAMO's political structure, after the President and Secretary General. He said it comprised 'chiefs, military people, civilians and so on', who are 'proposed by the Secretary General and then nominated by the President'. This appears to enhance the position of Secretary General, still held at that time by Fernandes himself.
4. Including the murders of Secretary General Cristina (1983), spokesmen João Ataíde and Mateus Lopes (1987), former Secretary General Evo Fernandes (1988), plus the defection to FRELIMO of former Chief Representative in Portugal for Europe Paulo Oliveira (1988).
5. Half of whom were prisoners of FRELIMO, and half of whom had taken advantage of the Government's amnesty.
6. On the evidence of Mozambique's 1980 census results for home language by province, Shona-speakers form only about 8-9% of the total population of Mozambique - the great majority being in Manica and Sofala Provinces. The Ndau are the largest Shona-speaking grouping inside Mozambique and, like the Manyika also, straddle the border with Zimbabwe, where the Ndau form an estimated 6% of the much larger Shona population of that country.
7. He also observes that only interviewees from central Mozambique differentiate between Shona dialects, the tendency elsewhere being to lump all Shona-speakers together as 'Ndau'. This factor may distort descriptions of RENAMO's ethnic composition.
8. However, Moorcraft believes that RENAMO's simple 'hearts and minds' campaign, albeit couched in crude anti-Marxist rhetoric, is not without popular appeal. Jack Wheeler, an American right-winger writing in a publication interestingly entitled *Reason*, December 1985, opines that RENAMO soldiers, though ill-educated, 'have an intuitive grasp of the necessary connection between political and economic freedom.'
9. The Mozambican press has commented on the apparent paradox of this, set against the cruelty of RENAMO's behaviour, cf. '*A religião dos bandidos*', *Tempo*, 4 December 1988, p.29.
10. At a central base visited by Jack Wheeler and housing 575 men: 'religion was much in evidence: pictures of Jesus, Bibles in huts, an Islamic mosque, and churches for Ethiopian Copts, Seventh Day Adventists, and Catholics'. *Reason*, December 1985, p.38. A cynic might also associate an ostentatious display of bibles with a desire to favourably impress certain missionary sects who render RENAMO other more practical assistance.
11. Quoted by Finnegan, p94. The role of the *curandeiro* (Portuguese), or *nyanga* (Ronga) in this area is discussed by Junod on pp.414-418 of *The Life of a South African Tribe*, New York (1962).

12. *Mujibas* are civilian collaborators of the guerrillas, often young, who provide auxiliary services. They were also a feature of ZANLA's campaign in Zimbabwe.
13. Former Chiefs who owed their appointments to the Portuguese colonial authorities.
14. Eg. '*O significado de Gorongosa*', *Tempo*, 22 September 1985, pp.10-12.
15. This significance was obscured until recently by Gorongosa's status as a war zone, but as far back as 1979 game rangers attributed new, destructive poaching techniques in local use to RENAMO tutelage. Reis alleges Cristina's involvement in ivory smuggling at the time of his death in 1983, together with Evo Fernandes and South African military officers. RENAMO is now integrated into the world ivory smuggling network: 19,700 ivory tusks worth \$13m. were discovered in 1988 in RENAMO bases overrun by the FPLM, suggesting that the trade is a major 'independent' source of finance for arms purchases and funding for RENAMO's external offices.
16. Gersony Report, 1988, p.20: Informants related a small number of cases of 'targetted retribution' involving the mutilation and subsequent killing of young children in retaliation against parents who had escaped. Other egs.- the *Malawi News* of 27 May-2 June 1989 related accounts by Mozambican refugees to Likoma island on the Lake of RENAMO guerrillas taking babies off their mother's backs and hurling them into the water to drown, whilst their parents were threatened with death if they mourned. In a memorable throwaway line on a refugee influx to the vicinity of ZNA posts in the Beira corridor, the Zimbabwean *Sunday Mail* of 4 October 1987 attributed this to a local upsurge in RENAMO 'crucifications (sic.), castration, mutilation, and child roasting'.
17. Gersony, p.25. The findings were based on 196 individual interviews with refugees in 25 locations, in five countries.
18. Former residents of 'control' areas were one fifth of his sample.
19. Such, at least, was the effect of violence in Uganda, on the evidence of C.P. Dodge & M. Raundalen (eds.), *War, Violence, and Children in Uganda* (Oslo, 1987).
20. *Firepower* by Chris Dempster & Dave Tomkins (London, 1978) gives an insight into Col. Callan's group and the workings of the mercenary 'mind'. What is interesting is the arbitrariness and pointlessness of much of their violence, and the dominance of the most unpredictably violent amongst them.
21. This aimed to concentrate the rural population in Villages where basic social facilities would be made available, and was linked to the modernisation of the countryside through state farms and producers' cooperatives.
22. Mozambique's largest ethnic group, the Macua have in general maintained an attitude of passivity and reserve towards the FRELIMO regime, rather than one of support or of opposition.
23. According to Geffray, in Nampula Province as a whole, the number of Communal Villages increased overall by about 400% between 1981 and 1985.
24. Whilst this series of articles conveys the impression of good, investigative journalism, concerned above all to tell the truth, the writer expresses himself circuitously on some sensitive issues. Nonetheless, they are examples of the frankness and honesty with

which in recent years the Mozambican authorities and media have been confronting the terrible problems of the country.

25. In the 19th century powerful military states grew up in the Zambezi Valley under ruling elites generally of mixed African and Goan ancestry. They depended upon a substantial force of professional soldiers armed with European weapons who adopted the historic name *achikunda* - see Isaacman, 1976 (Ch.2).
26. The Makonde, who straddle the Mozambique/Tanzania border, formed the backbone of FRELIMO's guerrilla forces in the war of liberation. In general, the Mueda plateau continues to be regarded as an area of staunch support for FRELIMO.
27. As Saul points out (p.135), the Mozambique war remained relatively invisible to the outside world for so long because it has been less a matter of dramatic military engagements than a slow attrition - and the gradually compounded vulnerability - of the Mozambique state itself.

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