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Author(s): Stephen C. Lubkemann

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Migratory Coping in Wartime Mozambique: An Anthropology of Violence and Displacement in 'Fragmented Wars'*

STEPHEN C. LUBKEMANN

*Anthropology Department, George Washington University; and Watson
Institute, Brown University*

Current frameworks for analyzing conflict in developing nations usually focus on the agendas of national-level parties to conflicts. This article draws heavily on the author's own ethnographic work in central Mozambique to demonstrate how political alignment during the Mozambican civil conflict (1977–92) was regarded by local actors as a tool for engaging in family- and community-level political struggles. Comparing findings from his own work in the district of Machaze to that of other ethnographic researchers who focused on wartime experiences elsewhere in Mozambique, he shows how the means of violence of national-level parties during the civil conflict were appropriated by local actors in service to local forms of social struggle. He proposes the concept of 'fragmented war' to describe such contexts in which national 'civil wars' take on a large degree of local character and in which there is considerable variation in that local character as a result of sociocultural and ethnic diversity within a country. The article then documents how wartime migration – as one of the most visible and consequential strategies for reacting to violence – was organized primarily as a response to such micro-level political struggles rather than merely to the state of hostilities between national-level political actors. Different local 'logics of violence' thus produced different patterns of wartime displacement throughout Mozambique. Some of the key historical conditions that made wartime violence in Mozambique susceptible to 'fragmentation' are reviewed, in order to reflect more broadly on what general conditions might produce 'fragmentations of violence' in other war contexts. The article concludes with a discussion of how anthropological approaches can contribute to the demographic analysis of forced migration in culturally diversified war zones.

Introduction

Processes of prolonged conflict and consequent displacement have assumed mounting importance in the political, social, and demographic reorganization of many developing countries, particularly in Africa. Current frameworks for analyzing conflict in developing nations usually focus on the agendas of national-level parties to conflicts. In this article, I draw heavily on my own

ethnographic work in south central Mozambique to demonstrate how political alignment during the Mozambican civil conflict (1977–92) was shaped largely by family- and community-level struggles rather than national politics. Through a comparison of my own findings to that of other ethnographers who have researched wartime experiences elsewhere in Mozambique, I demonstrate how the means of violence of the two national parties to the civil conflict were appropriated by local actors in service to their own agendas. I propose the concept

* E-mail: Stephen.Lubkemann@gwu.edu.

of 'fragmented war' to describe such contexts, in which national civil wars take on a large degree of local character, and in which there is considerable variation in that local character as a result of sociocultural and ethnic diversity within a country.

This article then proceeds to document how Mozambican wartime migration was organized primarily as a response to such micro-level political struggles rather than merely to the state of hostilities between national-level political actors. I detail how specific forms of social antagonism and cultural beliefs in the district of Machaze significantly shaped wartime violence, assessments of risk, and consequent migratory reactions during the conflict. By then comparing Machaze to other areas of Mozambique, I demonstrate how different forms of local social conflict ultimately produced very different patterns of displacement throughout the country. Thus, in Gaza province, displacement was organized along ethnic lines that pitted the Ndaus against the Shangaans; in Manica and Sofala provinces, intra-familial conflict led to the dissolution of family units; while in Nampula province, ethnic tensions between the Erati and Macuane resulted in entire villages migrating together.¹ I briefly outline some of the critical historical conditions that allowed wartime violence in Mozambique to become fragmented.

In conclusion, I hypothesize what general conditions might produce 'fragmentations of violence' in other civil war contexts and suggest that these are worthy of further empirical and comparative investigation. I also outline key premises that should inform the demographic analysis of forced migration

in 'fragmented war' contexts. Finally, I discuss how anthropological approaches can inform such analysis.

Theorizing Wartime Violence

As a form of 'political violence', war is typically understood and analyzed as a phenomenon that is organized by the interests and agendas of state-level actors – that is, governments and/or insurgencies that are contesting state power. In such formulations, violence is understood as an instrumental expression of the interests of those who have the means to technically perpetrate it. There is consequently a tendency for analysts of conflict to explain the specific ways in which violence is organized (its forms, its timing, who enacts it, who suffers from it) in terms of the interests of those who control the means for violence. Such assumptions have certainly informed much of the analysis of the Mozambican conflict.

Thus, in the Mozambican case, several analysts have attempted to explain the savagery of RENAMO's wartime tactics against civilians in certain parts of the country as tactics for controlling local dissent (Geffray, 1989; Vines, 1991; Finnegan, 1992). In other cases, such savagery has been explained as an attempt by a nominally weak military force to use terror in order to gain influence it could not achieve on the battlefield (Africa Watch, 1992; Gersony, 1988; Hanlon, 1984; Wilson, 1992; Nordstrom, 1997).

Similarly, it is generally assumed that those who experience or suffer from violence also understand it to be a direct and unmediated expression of the political interests of the military forces and political factions that perpetrate it. In other words, when a rural Mozambican who refused to comply with the government's (FRELIMO) demand that locals resettle in fortified villages was confronted by a government patrol that burned his house, killed or forcibly recruited his

¹ It bears mentioning, for those unfamiliar with the social and cultural geography of Mozambique, that there are at least 16 major ethno-linguistic groups in Mozambique; a variety of matrilineal systems in the north, and patrilineal ones in the south; all manner of religious persuasions including Islam, a broad gloss of Christian beliefs, and many variations in local forms of ancestral veneration (Newitt, 1995).

sons, and moved his family to the village by force, it is assumed by many analysts that he understood his suffering to be the consequence of his violation of the government's publicized interests (Lubkemann, 2000a). In such frameworks, violence is seen as perpetrated in service to, and given its particular form by, the interests of the parties who have military forces in the field, and who generally are contesting state-level power. Similarly, such approaches assume that individuals expect to be targeted for violence primarily if they challenge or oppose the interests of one of these parties to the conflict (though they may clearly expect to suffer inadvertently if caught in the crossfire as well).

In contrast, this article demonstrates how wartime violence in the district of Machaze, in the central Mozambican province of Manica, was significantly shaped by local-level social tensions and micro-political goals, defined and operating at the community and even family level. I demonstrate how residents of Machaze managed to appropriate the means of violence of the government (FRELIMO) and the insurgency (RENAMO) – the two national parties to the civil war – in their pursuit of local social struggles whose dynamics were defined by culturally distinct logics. By and large, these micro-political objectives were entirely unrelated to the contest for state power. Understandings of wartime violence, assessments of risk, and consequent migratory reactions thus often had very little to do with the political programs or pretensions of either of the national parties to the war. Rather, residents of Machaze calculated risk and reacted to it primarily in terms of the logic of local social conflicts.

The Mozambican Civil War

Mozambique gained independence from Portugal in 1975, after more than a decade of anti-colonial struggle. Shortly thereafter,

Mozambique closed its borders with Rhodesia to support the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) led struggle against Ian Smith's apartheid regime in Rhodesia. Reacting against such support, the Smith regime drew on Mozambican political dissenters to establish a military movement that would support Rhodesian efforts against ZANLA guerrillas based in Mozambique and help to destabilize Mozambique politically and economically. That military movement later came to be known as the Mozambique National Resistance Movement, or RENAMO (an acronym for the name in Portuguese). When the Smith regime capitulated in 1980, South Africa's apartheid regime took over the role as RENAMO's patron. Foreign support remained vital for RENAMO and greatly influenced its early strategy and operations (Hall & Young, 1997).

However, RENAMO's eventual success in extending the insurgency to the whole country and in prosecuting a civil war that lasted until 1992 ultimately depended on more than its initial external backing. Most specifically, the policies pursued by the post-colonial FRELIMO government after independence from Portugal was achieved in 1975 amplified deeply ingrained sentiments of mistrust against any and all forms of central political authority in many areas of the country.

Within the first two or three years that followed independence, rural populations in areas such as Machaze quickly became disillusioned with the new post-colonial government, largely as a result of a significant decline in their economic well-being and standard of living. This decline resulted in large part from government policies designed to recast Mozambique's economy in a socialist mold (Wuyts, 1984, 1985). In Machaze, FRELIMO's policies raised new obstacles to long-established patterns of international labor migration by establishing new pass laws that restricted movement (Lubkemann,

2000a). The war with Rhodesia also restricted migration trip options for young unmarried men, who traditionally undertook one or two shorter trips to work on the plantations in Rhodesia in order to earn the money needed for beginning a migratory career to more distant destinations in South Africa (Lubkemann, 2000a). FRELIMO also imposed unpopular mandatory collective agriculture programs, instituted price controls and a state monopoly on the sale of local agricultural surplus, and nationalized the rural shop network. These measures reduced local earnings and restricted the availability of commodities for purchase in rural areas. The new post-colonial government's drastic social engineering policies disenfranchised local social elites, particularly the traditional authorities who played an important role in land distribution and local governance in rural areas such as Machaze. FRELIMO's policies also placed many of those who had been socially and economically marginalized in new positions of power and influence in local government (Lubkemann, 2000a; Alexander, 1994).

Machaze is a district in Manica province, not far from the district of Manhica, where RENAMO made its first appearance in 1977. By early 1979, Machaze had witnessed its first incursions by RENAMO forces. RENAMO's early actions in Machaze were directed against visible and unpopular symbols of the government's policies – such as the government-run *lojas do povo* (people's shops). Through visible public actions such as the burning of these *lojas* and through its propaganda, RENAMO articulated a simple political agenda: the expulsion of FRELIMO and the demise of the unpopular social and economic changes the FRELIMO government had instituted after decolonization. The fact that it articulated no alternative national program did not prevent it from garnering considerable local sympathy.

The arrival of RENAMO in Machaze led

the FRELIMO government to pursue draconian measures meant to prevent RENAMO from benefiting from any popular support. Taking a page directly from the politico-military strategy of the Portuguese during the recently ended war for independence, FRELIMO sought to forcibly move all the residents of the district into guarded communal villages (Coelho, 1998; Hall & Young, 1997; Lubkemann, 2000a). Few residents of Machaze complied willingly with this directive for a variety of reasons. Many did not trust the FRELIMO government and wished to avoid unnecessary contact with central authorities. Most importantly, subsistence in Machaze was dependent upon a pattern of slash and burn agriculture that required relatively large parcels of land for each household and thus had long been characterized by a highly dispersed settlement pattern (Lubkemann, 2000a).

Most district residents resisted the government's resettlement scheme for these reasons rather than because they were active supporters of RENAMO. However, the generalized reluctance of the population to resettle was interpreted by FRELIMO as default evidence of support for RENAMO. This interpretation led FRELIMO to even more violent measures against those who did not obey this order. At one point, FRELIMO began to systematically lob long-range mortar and artillery fire into the bush areas in an effort to drive the population into the 'safety' of the villages. Patrols began to burn houses outside the villages in order to discourage their inhabitants from leaving the communal villages and going home (Lubkemann, 2000a).

It is important to note that although many district residents were sympathetic with RENAMO's agenda and many were highly resentful of FRELIMO's social and economic engineering policies, such sentiments did not translate immediately into

Figure 1. Map of Mozambique.



active mobilization in support of RENAMO. For the most part, Machazians were primarily interested in avoiding *both* military parties and in continuing to practice their traditional forms of subsistence agriculture that presumed highly dispersed settlement patterns. However, by 1980, it had become increasingly hazardous to pursue such strategies. Both FRELIMO and RENAMO soldiers began to treat those who would not resettle into the zones that were securely under their control as supporters of the other side to be targeted for capture or for death. It is in this context that long-

standing forms of local social antagonism increasingly affected the dynamics of military violence in the district.

Local Social Conflict and Wartime Violence in Machaze

Historically in Machaze, local social divisions tended to occur primarily within kinship groups. Ndau cultural beliefs identify social intimates – and especially members of one's own extended household – as the most likely sources of rivalry and jealousy. Elsewhere (Lubkemann, 2000a,b,

2002), I have extensively documented how significant socio-economic changes during the decades prior to the civil war had accentuated socio-economic differentiation, redistributed power inequality within households, and produced a significant rise in witchcraft as an expression of social tension and antagonism.

Specific changes in migration during the two decades before the civil war had generated new intergenerational rifts in Machazian society. Increasingly, labor migration had allowed younger men to challenge the authority of their fathers and senior kinsmen. Differential success in migration – the result of changes in the structure of employment opportunities in the major labor migration destination (South Africa) – had also significantly increased socio-economic differentiation within extended households and local communities (Lubkemann, 2000a). In short, a series of significant socio-economic changes during the two decades prior to the civil war had substantially amplified forms of intra-household and intra-community strife in Machaze.

It is important to realize that particularly early in the civil war, both FRELIMO and RENAMO troops and commanders were unfamiliar with the Machaze area in which they had been deployed. They thus tended to rely heavily on locals to guide them and to identify enemy cadres or collaborators. District residents became adept at using accusations of ‘collaboration with the enemy’ in order to further private agendas. Fairly early on in the war, Machazians figured out that they could further their personal interests by suggesting to one of the warring parties that personal opponents were partisans of the other side in the conflict.

In one particularly illustrative case that was reported to me, a man who had been a particularly successful migrant and consequently had started several grinding mills was the subject of intense jealousy on the

part of older brothers who had not been as successful in their own migratory careers. He actually was a RENAMO sympathizer and had thus chosen to move to a remote area in order to be farther from the FRELIMO villages. However, his brothers convinced RENAMO troops that he was taking grain into the villages and giving it to government soldiers. As a consequence, he was shot by RENAMO troops – ironically enough the very party he actually sympathized with!

In another case described to me, a man and his wife who had moved into the village had been involved in a long dispute with a neighbor over a honeycomb bordering their two homesteads. The neighbor, who was also resettled in the village, actually managed to obtain a landmine through a family member who was a part of the government militia, and planted it near the honeycomb. The other man and his wife were both hit by the landmine when they visited the honeycomb. The man died instantly and the woman was fatally injured. She died later the same day after crawling back to the village.

In a third case, one of two junior wives of a man I interviewed reported to FRELIMO soldiers that the son of a rival co-wife was about to join RENAMO. As a result, the rival wife and her children were forcibly removed to the village and the son in question was detained. He later died under interrogation.

Such accounts were typical rather than exceptional in my in-depth life-history interviews with members of over 120 different Machazian households conducted in 1996 and 1997. Such cases exemplify the way that local social agendas strongly influenced the deployment of violence by FRELIMO and RENAMO from the very outset of the conflict. The violence of the national parties to the conflict was, more often than not, diverted to serve local micro-political, rather than national macro-political, ends. While a small minority of local FRELIMO party

cadres and early RENAMO sympathizers may have been motivated by the political projects of the contenders for national power, most residents of Machaze reacted to the way in which that power itself was manipulated and deployed in local social struggles.

Cultural Shapings of Violence in Machaze

Machazian interest in using wartime violence for private ends was also encouraged by the ways in which Ndaou religious beliefs amplified local social antagonism (Lubkemann, 2002). Machazians believed that those who suffered violent deaths were likely to become *mfukwas*. Among the Ndaou, the spirits of the dead are believed to continue to interact with and affect the lives of the living, in both helpful and harmful ways. Ancestral spirits were believed to be largely benevolent, while those who died particularly violent deaths or who had been severely wronged were believed to take on a vengeful state that made them particularly deadly. Spirits in such a state were called *mfukwas* and were particularly feared.

The death of soldiers who were 'outsiders' and had died violent deaths in the bush raised the specter of a proliferation of dangerous unknown *mfukwas*, who could randomly intervene to cause death. A more predictable, yet also more constant, threat was posed by the intimate relative whose violent death was believed to provoke them to take on the dreaded *mfukwa* state.

Although wrongful death obligated the living to seek redress, the culturally prescribed institutions for pursuing redress had been decimated by post-colonial government policies. Soon after independence, FRELIMO had launched a national campaign that specifically targeted the traditional ritual specialists (in Machaze known as *nyangas* and *nhambossos*) who were

regarded within Ndaou society as intercessors with the spirits of the dead. Initially, FRELIMO had acted against these specialists because it viewed them as obstacles to its vision of socialist modernization (Hall & Young, 1997). However, as RENAMO became more active, the government began to view these ritual specialists as the segment of the population most likely to aid and abet the insurgency. FRELIMO therefore instituted even more focused and repressive measures against these ritual specialists. While many were imprisoned or fled from FRELIMO-held areas, those who remained in the government's communal villages were forbidden (or simply too fearful) to practice their ritual specialization.

Consequently, those Machazians in the communal villages often felt they had no effective means for peacefully interceding and negotiating with angered ancestral or other spirits. Moreover, the impossibility of interacting with the guilty parties (often unknown or else unreachable in the opposing force's area of control) made the negotiation of a settlement with a *mfukwa* all the more difficult if not impossible, even if a ritual intercessor could be found. Sometimes even proper burials were impossible – another ritual failure thought likely to provoke ancestral virulence. Not only did Machazians believe that a *mfukwa* could threaten its own family members, but a *mfukwa* in the family could place relationships in the broader community at risk as well. Any form of conflict with a family plagued by a *mfukwa* was believed to be particularly dangerous.²

Lacking the possibility for redress, revenge was upheld as the very lowest level of action believed capable of deflecting the ancestral wrath of those violently slain in war. This belief in conjunction with the

² For example, individuals might be very reluctant to choose a spouse from a family believed to be plagued by a *mfukwa*.

crippling of 'peaceful' forms of resolution led many Machazians to perpetrate radically violent actions of revenge in what amounted in part to a form of 'socio-spiritual defense'. Each act of violence inevitably gave motive for reactive acts of at least the same magnitude, thus multiplying the number of accusations and violent deaths in a viciously escalating and ever more socially inclusive spiral.

Such analysis (see Lubkemann, 2002, for more details) shows how the social antagonism that shaped much of the wartime violence in Machaze was related to social processes and cultural logics that predated the war itself. These antagonisms were largely unrelated to the larger political agendas of the national parties to the war. The prosecution of these social struggles was dictated by cultural logics rather than strategic military ones.

Mozambique as a 'Fragmented War'

Comparative analysis of ethnographic work in different areas of Mozambique clearly demonstrates the degree to which the war itself was interpreted and constructed in highly variable and culturally specific terms throughout the country. The means of violence were shaped to serve the ends of specific forms and expressions of local conflict. Consequently, from the perspective of those actors embroiled in the day-to-day violence of the Mozambican civil conflict, what the war was about in one area was often something that was entirely different from what the war was about elsewhere.

For example, in the northern province of Nampula, the anthropologist Christian Geffray (1989) reported on how forms of social tension very different from those that shaped violence in Machaze informed wartime political alignments among the Macuane and the Erati ethnic groups. The Erati and Macuane had a long history of

warfare and antagonism that predated colonial conquest. The politically centralized Erati had been more readily co-opted into the Portuguese system of indirect rule. Consequently, they came to occupy an intermediary position of privilege between the Portuguese and the subordinate Macuane during the colonial era. When independence arrived in 1975, the Erati continued to occupy most bureaucratic positions in local government, while the Macuane remained marginalized.

Meanwhile, the Macuane had retained a generalized stance of distrust and disengagement with central authority throughout the colonial period. They had also suffered from the post-colonial governments' attempts at forced villagization and to divest traditional authorities of legitimacy. They thus proved receptive to the anti-government insurgency when it arrived in Nampula in the mid-1980s. In particular, the Macuane saw in RENAMO a way to simultaneously restore local autonomy vis-à-vis the central state, and to simultaneously react against the perceived and resented ethnic dominance of the Erati.

In response to the almost universal adherence of the Macuane to RENAMO, the Erati then reacted by seeking support from FRELIMO. Thus, in Nampula, the war took on ethnic characteristics quite different from those evidenced in Machaze. In Nampula, entire communities tended to align as a whole with either FRELIMO or with RENAMO (Geffray, 1989). This pattern of community cohesion and inter-ethnic violence contrasts sharply with the patterns in Machaze, where ethnicity was irrelevant in the shaping of wartime violence. Rather than violence occurring *between* communities as in Nampula, in Machaze violence primarily occurred *within* communities and quite often among actual household members.

In yet an entirely different area of the country – the southern province of Gaza –

local social tensions were primarily structured by yet another ethnic dynamic with its own particular history (Roesch, 1992). The atrocities committed by RENAMO troops (who in this area were predominantly Ndaus) against civilians (who were predominantly Shangaans) were particularly noteworthy for their savagery (Gersony, 1988; Roesch, 1992; Hall, 1990; Minter, 1994). RENAMO originated in the Ndauspeaking center of the country, and its leadership was initially largely Ndaus. In contrast, much of the leadership of FRELIMO was originally from the Shangaanspeaking south.

There has been a long history of contention between Shangaans and other ethnic groups from north of the Save river. This rivalry predated the advent of colonial rule, extending back to the late 1800s and the northward military expansion and domination of the Gaza empire first under Shoshogane and later under Gungunhanna (Newitt, 1995). Antagonism between Shangaans and Ndaus persisted throughout the colonial period as a result of labor migration policies that attempted to prohibit those from north of the Save from engaging in labor migration to South Africa. Such policies forced many Ndauspeakers from the central provinces of Manica and Sofala to attempt to 'pass' as Shangaans from the southern province in Gaza in order to work in South Africa. Ndauspeakers often had to enter into subordinate relations with local Shangaan chiefs or individuals in Gaza that involved payoffs in order to succeed in this strategy. Many Ndaus labor migrants resented this form of exploitation as well as what they perceived to be a Shangaan sense of superiority (Lubkemann, 2000a). It is thus not surprising that Ndaus combatants in Gaza, many of whom had most likely previously been Ndaus labor migrants passing through Gaza, sought violent redress for grievances that stemmed from the subordination they experienced before the war.

What such comparisons suggest *when viewed together* is the degree to which local social tensions, rather than national political projects, shaped the deployment and understanding of violence in the Mozambican civil war as a whole. Such conflicts can be described as 'fragmented wars'. Such wars are 'fragmented' in that violence is likely to be organized in service to very different, largely local rather than national, agendas throughout a country suffering from civil strife. What the 'war is about' is likely to vary widely throughout the country, as very different forms of culturally informed social antagonisms inform the ways in which local populations appropriate, assess, and react to violence.

Wartime Migration in Fragmented Wars

The notion of 'fragmented wars' is significant to theorizations of demographic change in conflict environments, most specifically to the theorization of wartime population movements. Migration is perhaps the most dramatic response to violence or the threat of violence in wartime. In fragmented war contexts, in which the violence of military actors is appropriated and deployed in the service of local-level social conflicts, reactions to violence – migratory or otherwise – will tend to reflect the logic of those social conflicts. In short, wartime migration behavior in fragmented wars will be primarily a reaction to the use of violence in struggles with local social and cultural logics.

By extension, variation in the social organization of forced migration will occur to the degree that the national space of a civil war is fragmented by different primary forms of local social organization and micro-political conflict. Within a single national space, different local 'conflict logics' will result in different patterns of violence and thus in different patterns of migratory reaction to

violence, producing in turn different demographic outcomes with respect to wartime population redistribution.

In the Machazian case, cultural logics of local social conflict clearly shaped the social organization of wartime migration – namely, with whom individuals fled, when they chose to flee, and where they chose to go. As the war intensified in Machaze, more and more people opted to flee from their homes, not when they themselves were targeted for violence but soon after hearing that a significant social rival had been captured or targeted by one faction. Upon hearing that a social rival had been captured by one faction, individuals or households often chose to move in exactly the opposite direction into areas controlled by the other faction. Such moves were pre-emptive measures, since it was feared that under duress those who had been forcibly relocated would readily identify their own social rivals to their captors as sympathizers with the ‘other side’. Similarly, when a social rival was known to have suffered violence, it was often deemed wise to relocate. The assumption was that the one’s social rival would seek to identify the perpetrator of the witchcraft believed to have caused or permitted the violent episode. That search could be expected to focus on the victim’s known social rivals, who would then be likely targeted for revenge in turn. Under such an assumption, movement to a new, and if possible undisclosed, location made good sense.

By contrast, in Nampula migration did not generally involve the fragmentation of households into individuals or small groups. Rather, migration tended to occur in large groups, as entire communities moved all together or in large factional groups. Thus, Erati villages moved primarily into FRELIMO areas and Macuane communities into RENAMO ones (Geffray, 1989). Such patterns of wartime migration contrast sharply with those witnessed in Machaze,

where displacement typically involved the atomization of families, domestic units, and communities.

Wartime migration patterns in Gaza also reflected the ways in which local ethnic tensions structured wartime violence. Whereas in Machaze, an ethnically Ndaou area, a majority of civilians fled from the government forces into RENAMO-controlled areas, throughout rural Gaza (a predominantly Shangaan area) the reverse pattern held true (Roesch, 1992; Hall, 1990). This difference can be attributed to the fact that in Machaze RENAMO was primarily identified as simply an ‘anti-central government force’, whereas in Gaza it was perceived as an ‘ethnically Ndaou force’. In each of these three cases, very different patterns of wartime migration resulted from the way in which local social struggles shaped the interpretation of wartime violence. Resulting differences in the social organization of wartime migration thus reflected the highly differentiated dynamics of local social strife throughout war-torn Mozambique.

‘Local Political Cultures of Disengagement’

It is worth briefly considering both the historical trajectories and the more immediate political and economic conditions that rendered the Mozambican conflict susceptible to ‘fragmentation’. In large part, the fragmentation of the Mozambican conflict’s meaning and the capacity of local social dynamics to ‘hijack’ and redirect the means of violence of national parties to the war can be traced to a history that created a pervasive culture of local ‘disengagement’ (Azarya, 1988) from central political authority. In Machaze, central government strategies for articulating local power exhibited strong similarities throughout pre-colonial, colonial, and immediate post-colonial eras. These strategies of central governance relied

primarily on periodic intrusive action based on shows of force and less on more systematic and more comprehensive bureaucratic means. The primary local 'political logic' that was produced by this history was governed by the desire to minimize involvement with and the interference in everyday life of central authorities.

Throughout much of the 20th century, the weakness of the Portuguese colonial authorities throughout significant parts of Mozambique – both in administrative and financial terms – led to practices of governance at a local level that were sporadically intrusive and heavy-handed (Lubkemann, 2000a; Isaacman, 1983, 1996; Newitt, 1995). Consequently, the central state's actions and intention came to be seen by local actors as suspect by default. The state was thus viewed as a source of unwanted attention to be evaded (Lubkemann, 2000a; Chingono, 1996; Geffray, 1989; Baptista-Lundin & Machava, 1995; Hall & Young, 1997).

Rather than employing overt resistance or forming grassroots political movements to change the state's policies, rural Mozambican reactions to colonial rule were characterized by less overt yet nevertheless highly effective forms of resistance. These included mass illegal labor migration across international borders, flight from forced labor, evasion of tax collectors, and a multitude of other strategies of passive resistance including non-compliance, absenteeism, and petty vandalism (Isaacman, 1996). These strategies proved highly effective in defending local interests against the far more powerful colonial state, particularly since that power was not so great that it could be exercised in a sustained and uniform manner across space and time.

Thus, throughout the colonial era, a political culture of 'disengagement' (Azarya, 1988) developed throughout much of rural Mozambique, in which the primary objec-

tive became to minimize the presence of the state in everyday local life. This very same historical trajectory simultaneously strengthened the legitimacy of many local social institutions in locations such as Machaze, some of these precisely because they allowed for the more effective evasion of the central state's presence in everyday life.

In the immediate colonial aftermath, FRELIMO's own radical attempts to create a centrally planned and managed economy and its efforts to institute a 'command society' arguably intensified the alienation of large portions of the Mozambican population, particularly in rural areas. FRELIMO's policies not only reinforced an already established culture of disengagement from central authority, but also significantly amplified local forms of social antagonism by challenging the established local sociopolitical order and contributing to economic crisis. Despite its pretensions to broad social change, FRELIMO's governance capacity remained highly circumscribed and dependent upon those locals it co-opted into its own program. Many of these locals had been previously marginalized and were not drawn from already locally legitimized authority (Hall & Young, 1997; Lubkemann, 2000a, 2001).

Under these circumstances, a majority of Machazians eventually proved receptive to RENAMO after it arrived in the district in 1979. However, this was not because RENAMO articulated any positive alternative vision (to FRELIMO's) of how central authority or the 'nation' should be constituted. Rather, RENAMO attracted a following because it directed its violence against the most onerous symbols of central authority's presence in local lives. The fact that RENAMO also did not articulate an alternative vision that included any significant presence of central authority in local lives resonated resoundingly with the local terms of 'legitimacy' that had been historically forged in Machaze.

It is important not to overgeneralize the character of local political culture, much less views of FRELIMO or of RENAMO that may have prevailed in Machaze, to all of Mozambique. Clearly, in certain areas of the north where the anti-colonial struggle had been most successful, in larger urban areas, and among certain educated elites (Isaacman, 1996), political consciousness may have been formulated with greater reference to the 'national order of things' (Maalki, 1995). However, in the light of a long history of central power's uneven reach, yet frequently coercive projection, it is perhaps even more problematic to assume that local political imaginations throughout Mozambique were organized around the assumption that 'engagement' (Azarya, 1988) was the best, inevitable, or most desirable strategy for coping with national-level central authorities. At the very least, there is sufficient ethnographic and case-study evidence available (Roesch, 1991; Geffray, 1989; Wilson, 1992; Alexander, 1994; Wilson & Nunes, 1994; Baptista-Lundin & Machava, 1995; Englund, 1995; Nordstrom, 1997; Chingono, 1996; Gengenbach, 1998; McGregor, 1998; West, 1998) to suggest that the Machazian tendency towards disengagement was a widely subscribed strategy throughout the country prior to and during the war.

Theorizing Fragmented Wars and Their Displacement

In most social science and policy analyses of displacement, and of the conflicts that produce it, violence is generally analyzed and understood as a phenomenon organized by the principles and agendas of the highest level at which political legitimacy is being militarily contested. Typically, this involves a focus on the actions and agendas of parties with national-level political aspirations. However, the empirical evidence from

Mozambique indicates that the violence experienced in the conflict was not solely, or perhaps even primarily, shaped by the two national-level parties (FRELIMO and RENAMO) who were contesting political legitimacy at the national government level.

Comparative ethnographic analysis of conflict and forced migration in Mozambique demonstrates that 'violence' was an experience problematized and fundamentally shaped by the social formations and micro-political matrixes in which it took place. Violence was thus not a singular phenomenon whose meaning was pre-established by larger forces and brought unaltered into local contexts. Rather, violence was significantly reshaped by a highly differentiated terrain of local social tensions and cultural currencies. In this sense, it can be argued that there was no singular war – no monolithic experience or understanding of violence – in Mozambique. Rather, as seen from the perspective of the local actors who had to formulate strategies for reacting to conflict – what the war 'was about' in one area of the country had little to do with what it was about elsewhere.

Based on the Mozambican case-study, I offer the following as hypotheses about which historical and precipitating conditions may more generally lead to the susceptibility of wartime violence becoming 'fragmented':

Historical conditions:

- (1) a national context characterized by significant sociocultural and socio-economic variation;
- (2) in which historical conditions have produced a generalized political culture that revolves around efforts at local disengagement from central authority;
- (3) in which local forms of social authority are regarded as more legitimate than supra-local forms of national central authority;
- (4) in which national strategies of governance are sporadic, based on coercive

force, and involve dependence on local agents (in former colonial contexts we may speak of a form of perpetuation of 'indirect rule') – a result of the central government's lack of instrumental power;

Precipitating conditions:

- (5) an environment in which economic policies or conditions amplify already existing forms of local social antagonism and competition;
- (6) the implementation of policies of governance that directly challenge the established local sociopolitical order;
- (7) the emergence of political movements whose primary political agenda is the articulation of grievances against central authority (rather than stating an alternative vision of it), and that have access to sufficient means of violence (weapons) so as to mount a publicly credible challenge to the government's exercise of power at the local level.

Drawn from the limited Mozambican experience, these conditions are primarily suggested as hypotheses worthy of testing through further empirical case-based comparative investigation and analysis. Conflicts such as Afghanistan (Marsden, 1999; Donini, Niland & Wermester, 2004), Somalia (Besteman, 1999; Brons, 2001), and possibly Liberia (Sawyer, 1992; Ellis, 1999) may be particularly promising cases in which to explore and test whether these conditions produce a 'fragmented war' dynamic.

The dynamic of 'fragmented wars' is hypothesized to be quite distinct from that of 'ethno-nationalist' wars (such as those in Eritrea, Kosovo, or Chechnya), in which ethnic minorities aspire to the creation of independent states. The dynamics of 'fragmented wars' are also hypothesized to be distinct from that of 'ethnic civil wars' (such as in Rwanda, Burundi, Ivory Coast, and Sri

Lanka), in which different ethnic groups are contesting state-level power and political predominance. By contrast, in the environments in which the conditions listed above predominate, the 'political logic' that organizes violence may be characterized as 'localist'. It is 'localist' in the sense that local actors are unlikely to be animated by projects that aim to replace one set of central authority actors with another. They are, however, likely to mobilize around projects that resist all forms of central authority presence in local affairs. In such environments, the primary objective may not be to capture or control the state, but indeed to minimize its everyday presence in local lives.

In contexts in which the notion of the state is not the predominant trope for organizing the political imagination, analytical approaches that assume wartime violence and migration are primarily shaped by state-level political processes and agendas are likely to require revision. An understanding of strategies for coping with violence (be they migratory or otherwise) is likely to require a much more fine-grained analysis of how local-level social organization and ideologies shape violence itself. Other social agendas, relationships, and formations, largely unrelated to those of national parties, may play a far more central role in the organization of violence and reactions to violence in such 'fragmented wars'.

Anthropology and the Analysis of Displacement in 'Fragmented Wars'

In conclusion, it is also important to consider what analytical approaches may prove most fruitful for analyzing forced migration in 'fragmented wars'. As this study shows, displacement in 'fragmented wars' is affected by many local forms of social struggle, each potentially informed by very different cultural logics. Consequently, many of the specific variables that shape forced

migration decisionmaking in one location may not apply in other corners of the same theater of war. Elsewhere (Lubkemann, 2004), I have suggested that approaches to analyzing forced migration that take cultural processes seriously should avoid attempting to explain migratory behavior solely through reference to universally applicable variables. The social factors and logics that shaped wartime violence and migratory reactions in Machaze were clearly not the same ones that operated in Nampula, despite the fact that these were both contested theaters in the same civil war. In Machaze, the jealousy of one's own kin had to be monitored and guarded against, while in Nampula it was the 'ethnic other' in the village down the road whose intentions and actions were feared. The religious beliefs that led people in Machaze to interpret, participate in, and react to wartime violence in particular ways were not the same beliefs or social dynamics that shaped violence and migration in Gaza and Nampula.

In anthropological approaches to studying demographic outcomes, the determination of the range of sociocultural variation within the field of study (in this case the theater of war) is the standard point of departure for analysis. Thus, the necessary first task of analysis becomes the identification of the terms by which local actors formulate their life projects and understand their social world. By extension, the study of wartime migration and population redistribution must be embedded in, and merely a part of, a broader study of the culturally defined social processes that give migration meaning as an effective strategy in social struggles.

Such an approach will allow analysts of displacement to avoid the fallacy of acting as if the demographic consequences of behavior (such as migration) were the ultimate ends of that behavior itself. After all, people do not move in war just to move, but rather they

migrate in order to accomplish other goals. Wartime migration is thus ultimately a 'side-effect' of other projects undertaken by agents whose goals and aspirations are shaped by culturally specific worldviews rather than universally uniform utility functions. It is this range of specific social projects and their cultural milieus that anthropological demographers take as the prerequisite object of inquiry in wartime migration research. By carefully examining how complex patterns of social and cultural variation inform uses, experiences, and understandings of violence, anthropological approaches may provide particularly illuminating analysis of wartime migration and population redistribution in culturally diversified warsapes.

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- STEPHEN C. LUBKEMANN, b. 1968, PhD in Anthropology (Brown University, 2000); Assistant Professor of Anthropology (2002–) and International Affairs (2004–), George Washington University; and Assistant Professor of Research, Watson Institute, and of Portuguese and Brazilian Studies (2001–), Brown University. Current research: Liberian diasporic politics and indigenous humanitarian action; transgenerational displacement and urbanization in Angola, Mozambique, and South Africa. Recent articles in *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *Diaspora*, and *Canadian Journal of African Studies*.