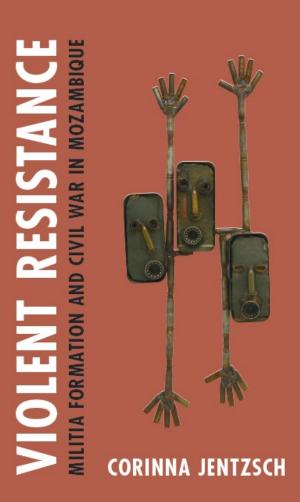
## Violent Resistance: Armed civilian protection in Mozambique's civil war

Corinna Jentzsch, Leiden University UNU-WIDER The Puzzle of Peace Conference Helsinki, 16-17 May 2022



### Militias in Mozambique's Civil War (1976-1992)

NATIONAL MOZAMBIQUE

## Antonio's triumph of the spirits

An unlikely rustic seer and his followers turn the tide against Renamo

#### RACHEL WATERHOUSE

ZAMBEZIA

n a village clearing near Nicoadala in Mozambique's central province of Zambezia, "Barama" troops are preparing for battle: six or seven commanders, distinguished by guns and combat fatigues, form a line opposite rows of roughly clad "soldiers," mostly youths from the village.

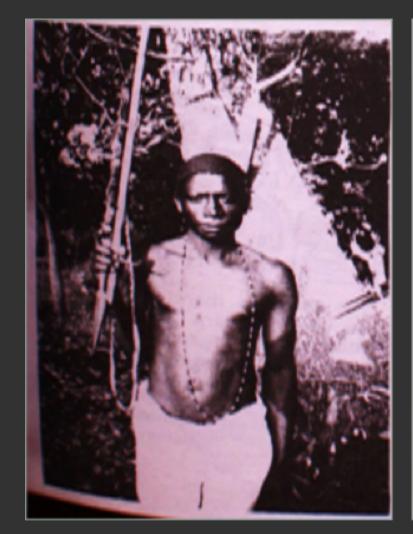
Chanting songs denouncing Renamo rebels "who make people suffer," traditional header Manuel Antonio leads his troops in a call for spirits to protect them. Then, mouning a funeral dirge, Antonio is lifted, placed in a shallow grave and covered with blankets, Earth is piled over him as a sermon is read, promising God will send saviours from evil.

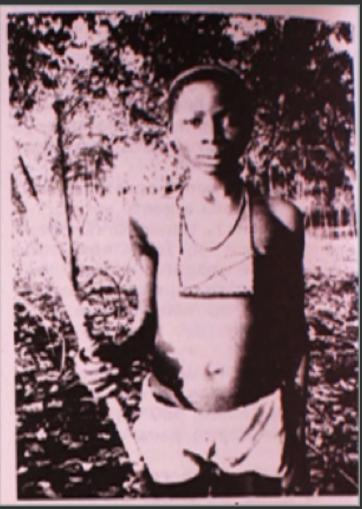
Five minutes later, spitting dust, the



Manuel Antonio (left) with his military commander: Freimo's fortunes rise again

Militias in Mozambique's Civil War (1976-1992)

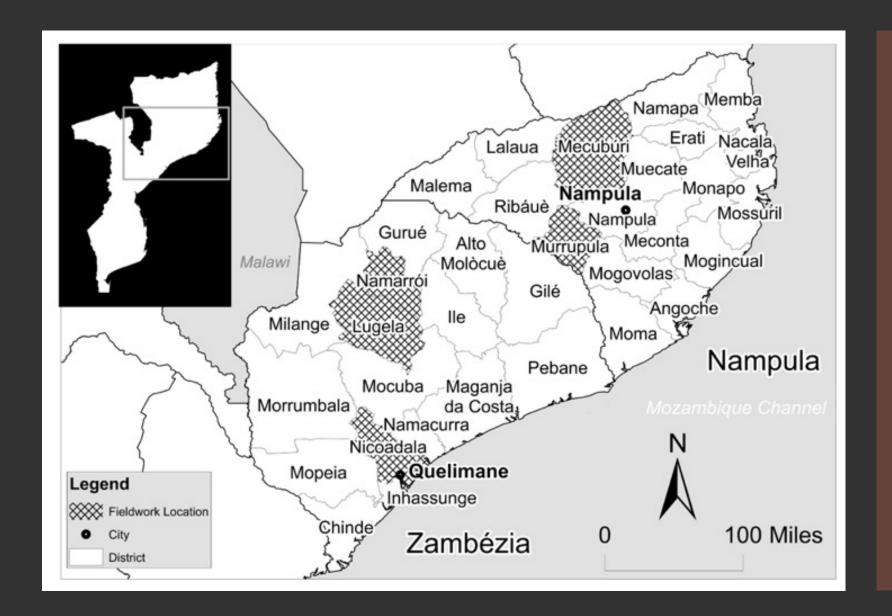




Naparama in Namapa, Nampula, Vida Nova, November 1991

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Militias in Mozambique's Civil War (1976-1992)



## Origins of Militias in Civil War

### Militias

- Armed organizations that exist outside of the regular security apparatus of the state and emerge as a countermovement against insurgents
- Active in 2/3 of civil wars between 1989-2010
- State-initiated vs. community-initiated militias
- Community-initiated militias in Mozambique
  - When: Expression of civilian agency during military stalemates
  - Where: Adoption of militia through inter-elite collaboration
  - How: Re-invention of prior practices mobilizes members

# Effects of armed civilian protection in Mozambique

- Protection of civilians
  - Village patrols
  - Information about immediate attacks
  - Returning abducted community members
- But protection effect is temporary
  - Revenge attacks by the rebels
  - Counter-force by rebels
  - Killing of the militia's leader

### Conclusions

- Militias as armed civilian protection
  - Civilian agency
  - Emerge during military stalemates & with elite support
  - Importance of social embeddedness of militias
- Protection effects often short-term
  - Information & manpower
  - Revenge violence & fragmentation of war
  - Adaptation & learning on part of insurgents



- Thank you!
- Questions & comments: c.jentzsch@fsw.leidenuniv.nl