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Border Crossings:

Life in the Mozambique/ South Africa Borderland since 1975

by

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Abstract

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The southern Mozambique/ South Africa borderland is a landscape epitomised by fluctuation, contradiction and constant transformation. It is a world betwixt-and-between Mozambique and South Africa. The international border, imposed on the landscape more than a century ago, gives life to a new world that stretches across and away from it. The inhabitants of this transitional zone constantly shape and reshape their own identities vis-à-vis people on the opposite and same side of the border.

This border, which was delineated in 1875, was to separate the influence spheres of Portugal and Britain in south-east Africa. On the ground it divided the once strong and unified Mabudu-Tembe (Tembe-Thonga) chiefdom. At first the border was only a line on a map. With time, however, it became infused with social and cultural meaning as the dividing line between two new worlds. This was exacerbated by Portuguese and British colonial administration on opposite sides of the border, Apartheid in South Africa and socialist modernisation and war and displacement in Mozambique.

All these events and factors created cultural fragmentation and disunion between the northern and southern sides of the borderland. By the end of the Mozambican War in 1992 the northern side of the borderland was populated by displaced refugees, demobilised soldiers and bandits, as well as returnees from

neighbouring countries. Many of these people did not have any ancestral ties to the land nor kinship ties to its earlier inhabitants. Whereas a common Thonga identity had previously united people on both sides of the border, South African policies of Apartheid increasingly promoted the Zulu language and culture on the southern side of the border.

The end of warfare in Mozambique and of Apartheid in South Africa facilitated contact across the border. Social contact between the inhabitants of the borderland is furthermore fostered by various economic opportunities offered by the border, such as cross-border trade and smuggling. The increase in social and economic contact has in turn dissolved differences between the inhabitants of the borderland and promoted homogeneity and unity across the political divide.

Fragmentation and homogeneity characterises daily life in the borderland. Inhabitants of the frontier-zone play these forces off against each other, now emphasising the differences across the border, later emphasising the similarities. The borderland is a world of multiple identities, where ethnicity, citizenship and identity, already fluid and contextual concepts in their own rights, become even more so as people constantly define and redefine themselves in this transitional environment.

Keywords: borders, boundaries, borderland culture, citizenship, cross-border trade, displacement, ethnicity, illegal border crossings, refugees, smuggling, spirit possession, Mabudu-Tembe, Maputaland, Mozambican War.

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ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation
EKZNW	Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife
FRELIMO	*Frente da Libertação de Moçambique* (The Mozambican National Liberation Front).
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
LSDI	Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative
MNR	Mozambique National Resistance
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ONUMOZ	*Operação das Naçãoes Unidas para Moçambique* (The United Nations Operation in Mozambique – instituted after the end of the Mozambican War in 1992)
RENAMO	*Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (The Mozambican National Resistance, also known by its English abbreviation, MNR)
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SAPS	South African Police Services
SARS	South African Revenue Services
UNHRC	United Nations High Commission on Refugees
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union

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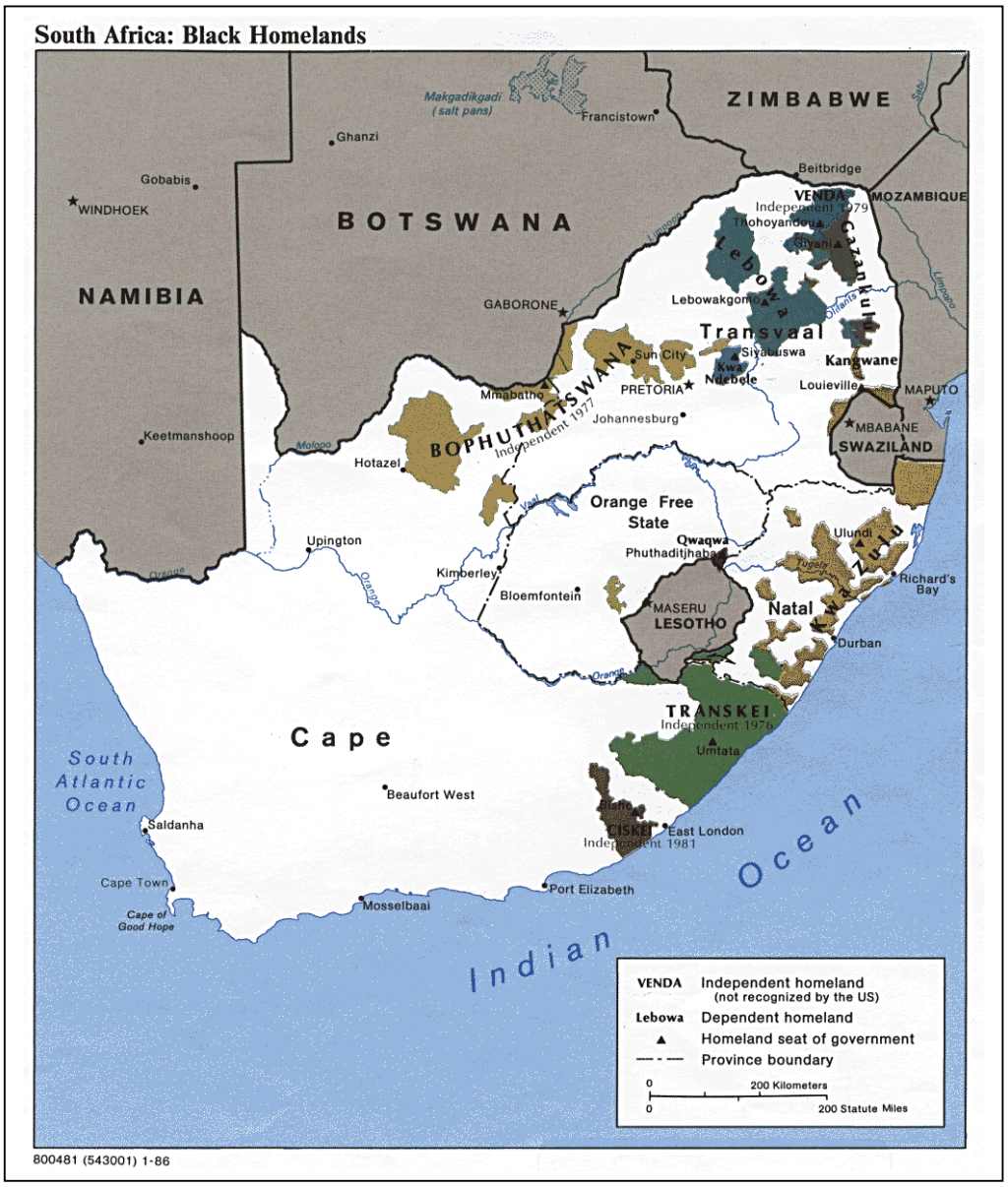

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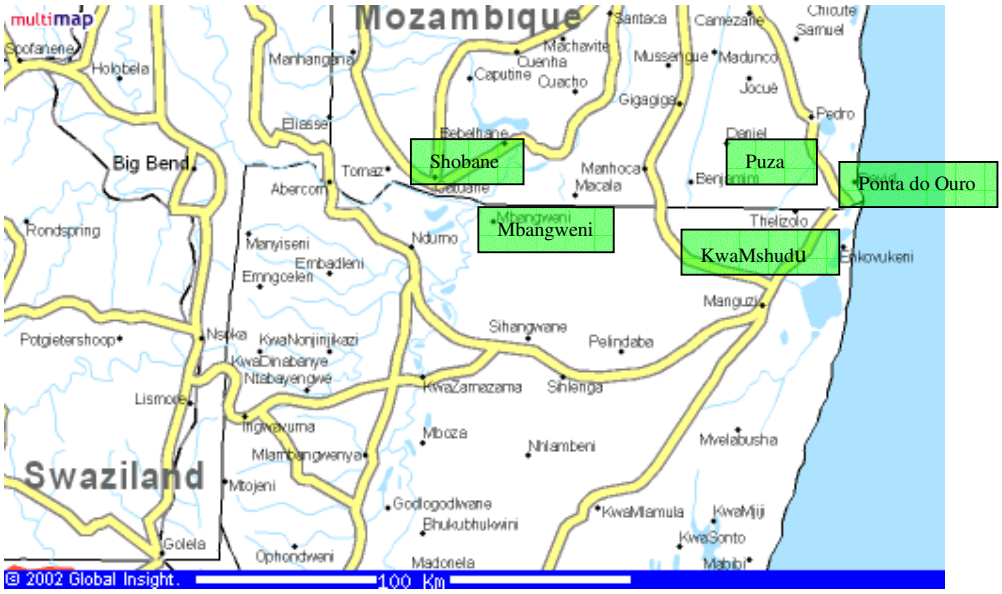

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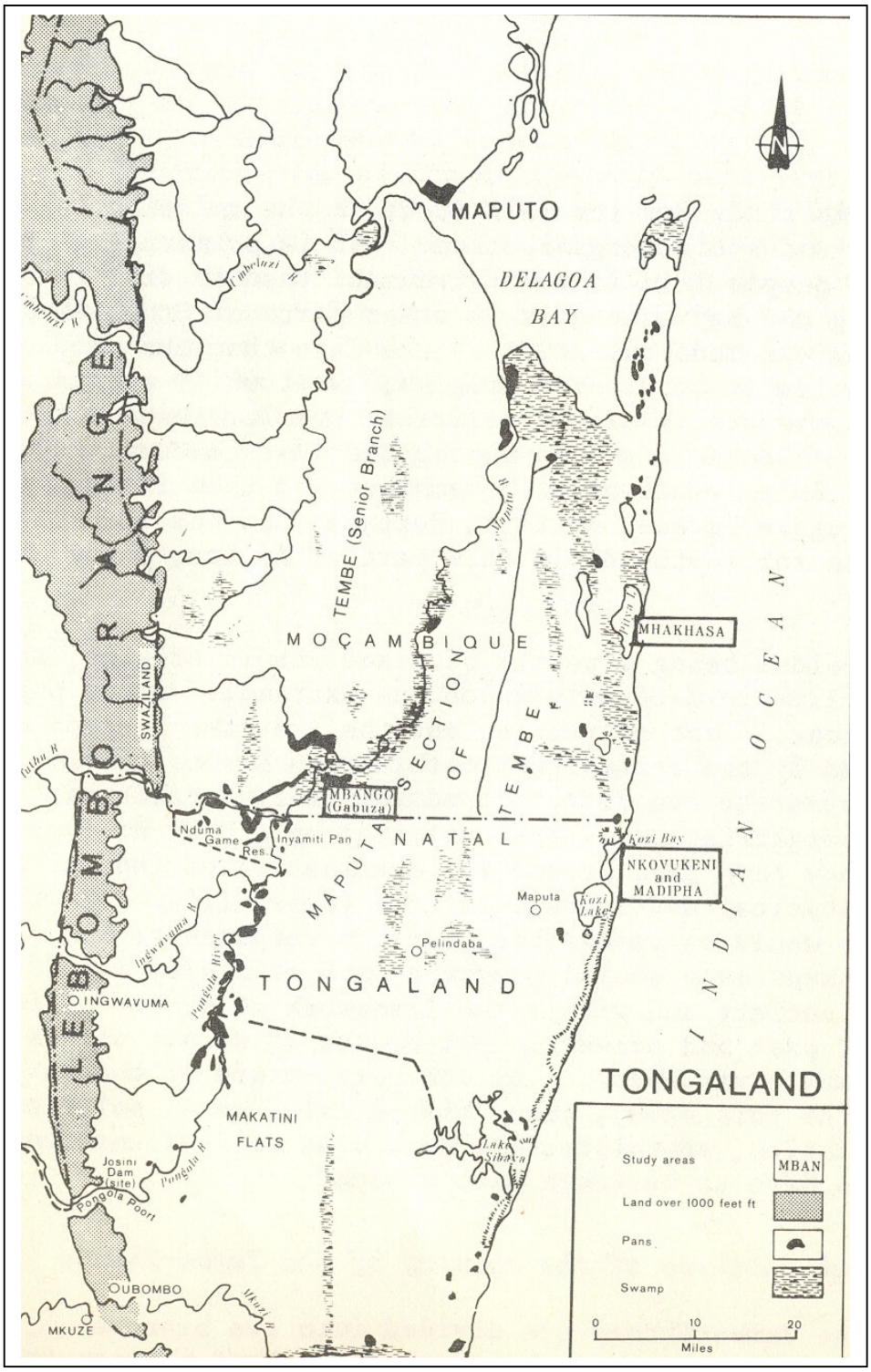

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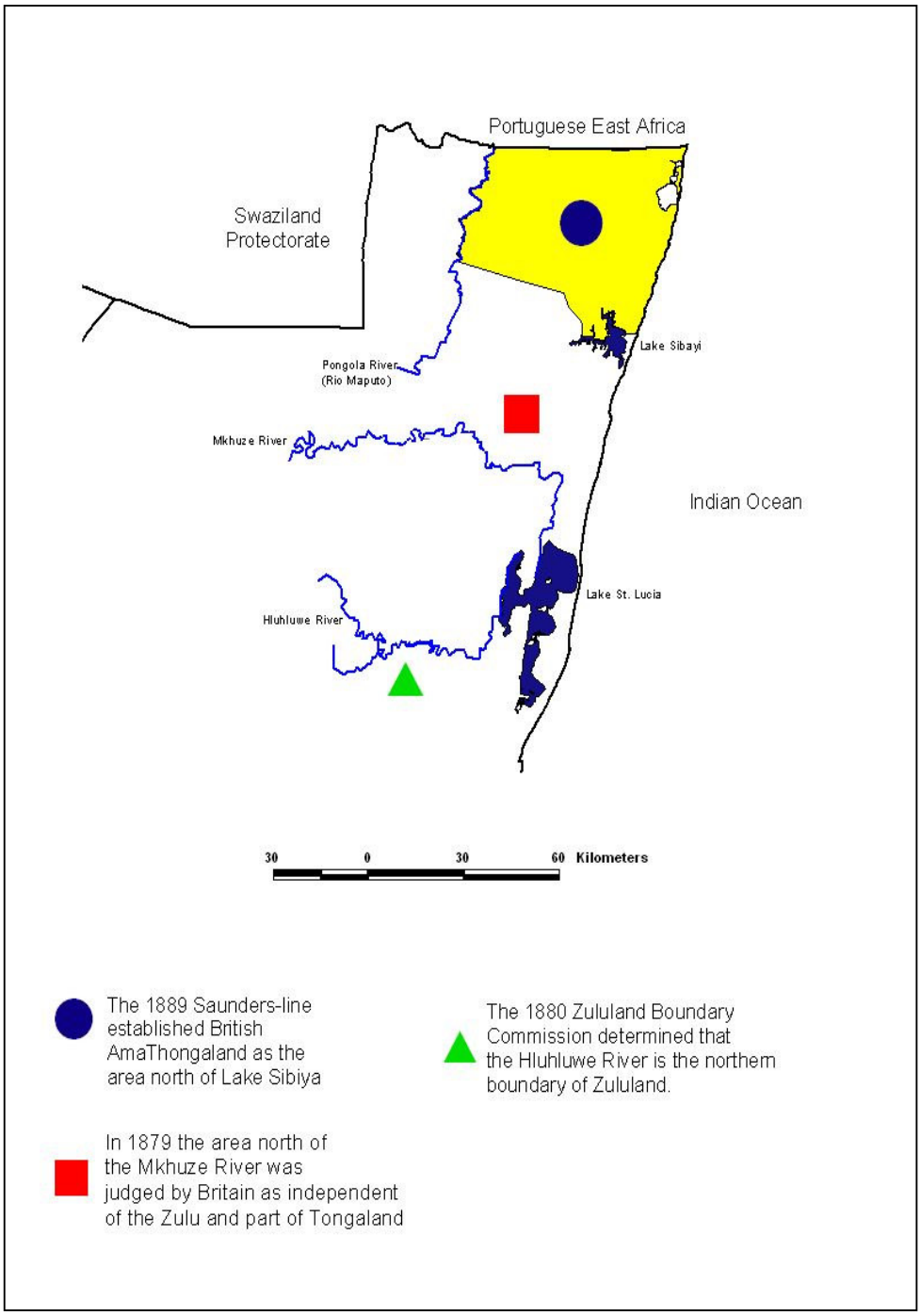

Source: Map compiled by J. L. Jones, Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Pretoria.

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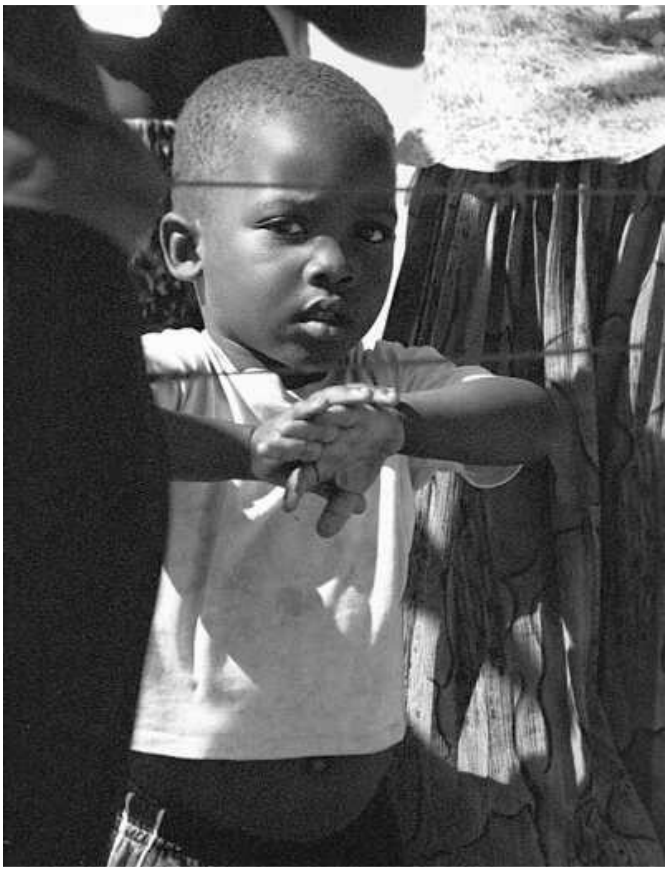

Photograph by Hannie du Plessis

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This thesis details the lives of ordinary people who live at the frontiers of modern nation-states. It is a history and ethnography of life in the borderland. It is about the partition and fragmentation of unified ethnic and cultural polities through the creation of borders. Also, it is an analysis of the processes that transpire when territorial borders become infused with social and cultural meaning to become lines of division between discrete groups. However, it is also about the survival of ethnic, cultural and historical bonds, despite the imposition of territorial boundaries. In essence, this study deals with the creation of new social groups with distinct identities, related to experiences shared in the bi-national environment of the borderland.

With reference to the southern border between Mozambique and South Africa this thesis investigates how people react to enforced territorial (national) boundaries. The question I ask is, 'Do these imposed divisions gradually become accepted as the social lines between distinct groups, or are the ties between and within ethnic, social and cultural communities so strong as to resist the new borders and the programmes of states to entrench them as social boundaries?' I conclude in the end that, along the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border, both and neither of these scenarios developed. Instead, a community that is in a state of constant fluctuation and change developed along the borderline. In the borderland, people simultaneously emphasise both their differences and similarities. The international border is both bridge and barrier. It has become a dividing line between different ethnicities and cultures and,

at the same time, it has become a knot tying together people on opposite sides of the border with shared ethnic loyalties, customs and cultural forms.

The southern border between Mozambique and South Africa - along the provincial boundaries of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa and Maputo in Mozambique - was imposed on the southern African landscape in 1875 (see Map 3). It is an artificial line, following a river for a short while, but for the most part following a straight line that cuts through the landscape not resembling any natural frontier. The border was drawn on a map in France to separate the influence spheres of Portugal and British control in south-east Africa. On the ground it divided, although only with a partial degree of success, a unified political community with a shared sense of identity and culture.

At first the border had no real impact on the lives of the Mabudu-Tembe[1] people whose chiefdom it divided. The old authority structures of chieftainship remained on both sides of the new border, despite efforts by the Portuguese north of the border to eliminate them and to assimilate her colonial subjects into the Portuguese culture. Ironically, the colonial border only became a real obstacle to transnational contact after the withdrawal of the Portuguese in 1975. Whereas the colonial government in Mozambique supported South Africa in stemming the tide of African liberation in Southern Africa, the new Mozambican government publicly opposed South Africa's minority government and lent active support to South African liberation movements. South Africa, in turn, supported an insurgency movement in Mozambique. A long and devastating war ensued in Mozambique that saw the displacement of millions of people, many of whom crossed the border and settled in

[1] The Mabudu-Tembe is the junior branch of the Tembe-Thonga (Felgate 1982:1). They are also referred to in the literature as the Maputo, Tembe and Ronga.

South Africa. Under these circumstances the borderland became a militarised zone, where access across the border and contact along the borderline was prohibited.

The Mozambican side of the borderland became almost completely de-populated during the war. When the war ended in 1992, displaced soldiers and refugees, with no ties to the land, settled in the area. This trend continued after 1994 as Mozambique became a corridor for thousands of people wanting to enter South Africa. As a result, the northern or Mozambican side of the borderland became ethnically and culturally dissimilar to the south, despite the fact that many returnees to the area had moved there from KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa.

At the same time, the Apartheid system of ethnic 'homelands' changed the ethnic landscape on the South African side of the border. Local ethnic alliances and identities changed after people living south of the border – whom had previously identified themselves as Mabudu-Tembe (Tembe-Thonga) – were incorporated into the Zulu 'homeland' of KwaZulu. According to its plan of social engineering, the South African government imposed a Zulu identity upon the Mabudu-Tembe people. People from the area could no longer choose to identify themselves as Thonga in their identity books and Zulu became the official language in the schools and administration. This intensified in the 1980s when the South African government revealed a plan to cede the Ingwavuma District[2] to Swaziland, on the grounds that the inhabitants of the area were ethnically and historically Swazi. In response, the Zulu political and cultural organisation, Inkhata, launched a forced recruitment programme in the Ingwavuma District that led to an almost complete Zulu cultural and political dominance in the area. Thus, when the international border was re-opened in 1994 it

[2] The Ingwavuma district was the most northern municipal district of Natal and later of KwaZulu. The Mabudu-Tembe chiefdom lay within the boundaries of the Ingwavuma district. The name of the district has recently been changed and the boundaries have been redrawn. Today the Tembe Traditional Authority lies within the Umhlabuyalingana local municipality of the Umkhanyakude district municipality.

came to separate in many peoples' eyes, the Zulus in the south from a mix-match of ethnicities in the north, commonly labelled as Shangaans or Makwerekweres by the people in the south.

Despite the history that divided people along the line of the imposed border, there were also processes that unified people into a common borderland community. With the end of the Mozambican war and Apartheid people in the borderland are increasingly coming into contact with one another, spurred on by social and economic push and pull factors from both sides of the divide. They share a way of life different from other people in the states in which they live. They share a way of life that ties them closely, even if not always ethnically or culturally, to people across the fence. This thesis aims to illustrate how these processes work. It is the narration of life in the borderland, a landscape created by an imposed political boundary, with a society that stretches across and away from its territorial bounds.

Borders, boundaries and borderlandscapes: a literature review

Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition (Anzaldua 1999:25).

This literary review has two aims. Firstly, to clarify the concepts of borders, boundaries and borderlands as used in this thesis. I briefly discuss the growth of anthropological investigation into territorial boundaries and borderlands. This discussion leads to an introduction of the concept of borderland-*scapes* as a way of analysing and understanding territorial landscapes that stretch across and away from nation-state borders. Secondly, to show how borderland literature describes three

socio-cultural scenarios or impacts that result from the forced imposition of political borders. In some cases imposed territorial borders became social, ethnic and cultural boundaries. In other cases imposed political borders remained devoid of social and cultural meaning, while in a third scenario imposed territorial borders have created new landscapes infused with their own cultural meanings and ideas of ethnicity and social belonging.

According to Berdahl (1997:3), boundaries are 'symbols through which states, nations, and localities define themselves.' 'They define at once territorial limits and socio-cultural space.' Classical studies of boundaries in anthropological literature tend to focus more on social boundaries (Barth 1969 and Cohen 1986, 2000). Although some anthropologists have investigated geographical boundaries (Cohen 1965; Aronhoff 1974; Cole & Wolf 1974), the study of geo-political boundaries has only recently gained more serious scholarly attention (Alvarez 1995; Berdahl 1997; Borneman 1992 and 1998; Donnan & Wilson 1999; Englund 2002; Martinez 1998; Nugent & Asiwaju 1996). Indeed, Rosler and Wendl (1999:1), suggest that geographical borders and borderlands have become a 'crucial key' to understanding the predicaments of culture at the beginning of the 21st century.

In the past, borders where merely seen as a 'backdrop' to some other line of inquiry. Donnan and Wilson (1999) illustrate clearly how anthropologists like Frankenberg (1957), Cohen (1965) and Harris (1972), who worked in border communities in the 1960s and 1970s, paid scant regard to the significance of the border on the people they studied. In these studies the border was 'often no more than an analytically distant presence with a vague influence on whatever the topic in hand' (pp.26-27). However, in more recent studies borders have become a subject of investigation in their own right. In a similar manner, recent approaches in landscape

theory problematise the social and cultural significance of place and space (Abramson & Theodossopoulos 2000; Bender 1993; Pugh 1990; Hirsch & O'Hanlon 1995; Rodgers 2002). This thesis aims to contribute to the 'anthropology of borderlands', which makes the borderland, the landscape that stretches across and away from international borders, the primary subject of investigation.

Due to the amount of work that has been done along the United States/ Mexican border (Alvarez 1995; Martinez 1998), the term borderlands is sometimes narrowly applied to refer only to this specific stretch of space, as if it were the only geographical and cultural borderland that exists. In truth, borderlands are found along all spaces bisected by geopolitical or nation-state borders.

Greverus (1999) has even theorised that islands can become borderlands and Driessen (1998) has shown how the Mediterranean Sea functions as a borderland between Morocco and Spain.

Borderlands are human-made places, imposed on the landscape through various historical processes. Their territorial limits depend, according to Martinez (1998:5) on the 'geographic reach of interaction with the other side'. Some borders seem more natural than others, being lines that separate unified political, ethnic and cultural groups. The territorial boundaries of the states of the old world, in particular, are usually argued to be the exact territorial limits of distinct ethnic and national groups. However, as P. Sahlins (1998) has shown in the case of the borders between France and Spain, territorial borders were imposed from a political centre on the territorial periphery. 'Peasants, artisans and notables on both sides of the political boundary shared a common language and ethnicity other than French or Spanish: they were Catalans' (Sahlins 1998:33). The artificial or arbitrary nature of state borders, supposed to be the limits of discrete nations, is especially evident in the world that

was colonised by European powers between the 1600s and the middle 1900s. In Africa particularly, the territorial boundaries that were agreed upon at the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885, cut straight across old lines of political, ethnic and cultural community (Asiwaju 1985:1-11). These imposed lines in effect created borderland communities.

It is however, imperative to bear in mind that borders are only 'artificial' from the view point of the powerless and poor who have no vested interests in their existence. Political elites who benefit from the existence of state borders do not see state borders as artificial. Cooper (2001:209) shows how political elites in the former French colonies tried to use their newfound French nationalities to make claims to the metropolis. Coplan (2001:111) also notes a similar trend with regards to the Lesotho/ South Africa border. Although there are many advocates for the demolition of the border, the elites in that country (Lesotho) do not see the border as artificial at all. Instead, the border provides the elites with power in the form of an

> autonomous defence force, the protection of senior chiefly authority, direct access to foreign development assistance, favoured status for local private and public sector enterprises, and government employment (p. 111).

According to Anderson and O'Dowd (1999:594) every borderland is unique. Their 'meaning and significance can vary dramatically over space and time, as regimes change in one or more of the adjoining states, as borders are "closed" or "opened", or as prices lurch from one side of the border to the other' (Anderson & O'Dowd 1999:594). However, whilst every borderland should be analysed by looking at the particular history and circumstances thereof, there are certain experiences shared by all people living in the borderlands of nation-states. All borderlands are located along the territorial limits of modern states. Borderlands move across and stretch away from the lines along which states control the flow of

people and goods into and out of their territories. Borderlands are sites and symbols of power. Borderlands are places where different ethnic, cultural and national groups meet, they are places where political, ethnic and cultural communities are bisected and joined, and, where new cultures, ethnicities and loyalties are created[3]. Therefore, although every border region is unique with its own history, borderlands all share certain similarities and should be studied as particular places or landscapes.

Nordstrom (1997:37-39), in her study of the war in Mozambique, argues that anthropologists can no longer see their 'subject matter in terms of isolated, self-contained cultural communities.' Instead, she argues, anthropologists 'must write to a contemporary world, and that world is a tangled web of transnational linkages' (Nordstrom 1997:37). Nordstrom (1997:38) describes her study as ethnography of warfare in general, rather than of the war in Mozambique. Nordstrom (1995:139) calls her approach the 'ethnography of a warzone.' She further remarks that 'the theme of war, rather than a specific locality, situates the study.' 'Process and people supplant place as an ethnographic "site"' (Nordstrom 1995:139). Building on Appadurai's (1996) concept of an ethnoscape, Nordstrom (1997:37) introduces the idea of a war-*scape*. Appadurai (1996:48) writes that 'As groups migrate, regroup in new locations, reconstruct their histories, and reconfigure their ethnic "projects," the *ethno* in ethnography takes on a slippery, nonlocalized quality.' Appadurai (1996:33) also introduces other new landscapes for anthropological inquiry, divorced from particular spaces, places and time, which are the building blocks of what he calls (extending Anderson 1991) imagined worlds, that is, 'the multiple worlds that are

[3] According to Martinez (1998:19), tolerance of ethnic and cultural difference is a major trademark of borderlands, since they are 'constantly exposed to foreign values and attitudes. This contact fosters open-mindedness and cosmopolitanism, impelling borderlanders to understand and appreciate the perspective of their neighbours much better than people in the interior zones.'

constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe.'

Building on Appadurai (1996) and Nordstrom's (1997:37) work on ethno- and war-*scapes*, I would like to use the concept of a borderland-*scape*. A borderlandscape is a particular landscape of anthropological inquiry. The concept illustrates the similarities in experience people have who live, and have lived, in the border regions of the world. It highlights that, although every border region in the world may be unique (Anderson & O'Dowd 1999:549), there is a web that ties people in all the border regions of the world. There is a similarity in way of life - a border culture. Boundaries both:

> make possible certain kinds of transactions and prohibit others. Theft, *chicane*, refugees and refugee 'problems', 'external' guerrilla bases and 'internal' political opposition movements are all made possible by boundaries, however arbitrary. Around these develop considerable economical and political interests that seek to maintain them. In time, deeply held emotional attachments and identities may also arise (Thornton 1994: 11).

Throughout this thesis I make use of ethnographic material from various borderlandscapes all over the world, comparing life and culture in those areas with life in the southern Mozambique/ South Africa borderland.

This thesis deals with social and cultural reactions towards imposed territorial borders. In particular, it deals with colonial borders that have become infused with cultural meaning. This is particularly notable in Africa where the process of border-making was the result of imperialistic power struggles between European states. Whereas state borders in Europe reflect the boundaries between homogenous, even if 'imagined' national communities (Anderson 1991), state borders in Africa arbitrarily

cut across ethnic, cultural and family groups.[4] As Thornton (1994:9) notes 'most African countries today are *countries*, not nations, states or ethnic groups.' They are:

> named areas of land demarcated by international boundaries, but not necessarily possessing comprehensive state apparatuses, full administrative or fiscal coverage of the area so named, or even a coherent self-identity as such… most of Africa is countries, not nations or nation-states. Countries seem to exist as a form of nominalism: they are named, therefore they are… Unlike Europe's countries… Africa's countries exist because of their boundaries and not vice versa! (Thornton 1994:9, 11, italics in original).

Furthermore, as Nugent (2002:4) notes, in 'most of Africa, boundaries were not an organic development, but neither were they the product of rolling frontiers[5] of colonial settlement. Instead they arose as discrete decisions on the part of European powers to divide African space between themselves.'

The colonial borders of Africa remained largely in place after decolonisation. The Organisation for African Unity (now the African Union) made a resolution in 1963 to maintain the territorial boundaries of the new states of Africa. Through various processes of nation building, Africa's new leaders tried to entrench the borders of their states.[6]

A study of the literature of imposed borders reveals, as was stated in the introduction to this section, the development of three scenarios. In the first scenario an imposed territorial border is transformed into a social, cultural and ethnic boundary

[4] Although Europe's borders were also imposed from the centres of power in those countries onto their peripheries, there exists a certain amount of homogeneity (shared history, language etc.) amongst the people living in the area confined by the border. In Africa, on the other hand, borders were drawn straight through the political and cultural centres of pre-colonial communities, thus joining groups of people who do not share a joint sense of history and community. Although the borders of both Europe and Africa are arbitrary, there is a difference in the degree of their arbitrariness.

[5] This was the case in the American model where settler populations continually spilled over fixed colonial boundaries, thereby necessitating the need for new boundaries to be drawn (Nugent 2002:3).

[6] Cooper (2001), arguing in a critique on globalisation theory, highlights the linkages that used to exist across the present political boundaries of Africa and the interconnectedness of various places and spaces on the African continent before colonialism. There historically existed socio-economic and political ties across the African continent. These ties were distorted with the imposition of colonial borders. According to Cooper (2001:190-191), 'historical analysis does not present a contrast of a past of territorial boundedness and a present of interconnection and fragmentation, but a more back -and – forth, varied combination of territorializing and deterritorializing tendencies.'

separating distinct ethnic and cultural groups. In the second the imposed political border remains devout of social and cultural meaning. Finally, in the third scenario, an imposed political border stimulates the growth of a new cultural and ethnic landscape, or borderlandscape, which ties people on both sides of the imposed border together and separates them from people further removed from it. It is this third scenario that is most clearly visible along the southern border between Mozambique and South Africa. A new landscape has been created along this imposed border. The border has not completely been transformed into a social dividing line, nor has it remained devout of social and cultural meaning. Instead, a new landscape has been created with its own social meanings and identities.

One does not find a case-study resembling any one of these scenarios perfectly in the literature. Instead, one finds cases that resemble one scenario more than the other at the time of investigation.

Berdahl (1997) shows how in the years immediately after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the physical boundaries that divided East and West Germany, cultural boundaries were reaffirmed and re-created along an imaginary internal German border. In her study, Berdahl (1997) illustrates the mechanisms used by the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) between 1945 and 1989 to infuse the internal German border with social and cultural meaning. In this period, she shows that the border was transformed from an imposed colonial border, drawn by invading Allied Forces, to an accepted social border separating East Germans, as a new national group, from West Germans. However, despite the efforts of the East German state, people in East Germany kept social and cultural ties with the West

alive throughout the Cold War.[7] This was obviously stronger in certain parts than in others, where people, driven by Marxist-Leninist ideology, took over the new identity of the state. Furthermore, Berdahl (1997) argues that the sudden dismantling of geopolitical borders may be so destabilising as to 'generate new cultural practices and identities' (p.1). Accordingly, once the physical boundary disappeared and contact with the West was gradually re-instituted, people created new social boundaries separating a West from an East that no longer existed in physical space. The physical border thus became a social boundary only after it was dismantled.

On the other hand Phiri (1984), Collins (1984) and Carsten (1998) show how imposed political borders do not become socially, ethnically or culturally ingrained. Anderson (1992:135) also notes that Mozambicans pay scant attention to the borders dividing Malawi and Mozambique, 'mixing as easily with Malawians of their tribe as with Mozambicans of their tribe' (cited in Englund 2002:21).[8]

When an imposed territorial boundary neither becomes a social, cultural or ethnic boundary, nor remains a mere obstacle separating a unified cultural, ethnic and social group, a third scenario develops along the border, which prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. The borderland itself becomes a site of 'creative cultural production' (Rosaldo 1989: 208), where 'displacement and

[7] Berdahl (1997:104-105) illustrates the cultural influences of the West in East Germany during the Cold War through an example of nicknames people in East Germany employed to refer to their neighbours. Famous nicknames derived from American television programmes like *Dallas* and *Dynasty*, which people in East Germany, who lived in the borderland, could watch – illegally – on television sets that received signals from West Germany. Social visits from West Germany to East Germany were also sanctioned by the German Democratic Republic, although it was strictly controlled and disallowed in East German villages close to the border, in the so-called *Sperrgebiet* (August 2000:3).

[8] Englund (2002:21) criticizes this stance. He explains that although on first arriving in the borderland he had similar expectations, he found that 'some villagers… insisted that they belonged to a particular nation-state.' Englund argues that 'local understandings of the crisis (Mozambican war) [were] more complex than [what] the image of tribesmen transgressing artificial borders would suggest' (p.21).

deterritorialization… shapes the identity of the hybridised citizen'[9] (Gupta & Ferguson 1992:18). This scenario has been most clearly observed along the United States border with Mexico (Anzaldua 1999; Alvarez 1995; Bernal 1978; Franz 1978; Garreau 1981; Martinez 1994; Monsivais 1978). Martinez (1996:256-257) refers to the US/ Mexico borderlands as a 'world apart'[10]. It is 'a world of acute contradictions, a place of pungent human drama (p. 256). Its people are 'of one, or more identities, mono or multi – national, ethnic, lingual, cultural' (p.257).

> Yes, *la frontera* has them all:
> those who live behind their cultural wall,
> and those who wish to see it fall;
> those who would keep foreigners out,
> and those who want them all about;
> those inclined to alienate,
> and those who prefer to ameliorate;
> those driven by nationalistic bend,
> and those committed to a global tent.
> Martinez (1996:257).

Similarly, Flynn (1997:326) writes that inhabitants of the Benin-Nigeria borderland form a social group with a distinct identity, not related to nationality or ethnicity, but to the ties of kinship and length of residence in the borderland.

However, there is a strong tendency in the anthropology of borderlands to exaggerate the fluidity and liminal condition of the borderlands. As Alvarez (1995) notes

[9] The concept of hybridisation of culture or creolisation is widely used in current debates on the effects of globalisation on culture and identity (Anthias 2001; Henry and Bankston 2001). Amselle (2002:216) argues, in contrast, that the idea of hybridisation of culture is based on the assumption that there exists 'discrete entities that might be called "cultures". In order to avoid such ideas of mixing, Amselle (2002:216) argues, 'we might try starting from the opposite position, by suggesting that *every society is mixed*; that any "mixing" one can observe is the product of the mixing of already mixed entities; and that this continuous process of cultural exchange is as old as culture itself' (own italics).

[10] The US news magazine, *Newsweek* published an article in 1983 entitled, 'A World Apart', in which its states that the US/ Mexico borderland is 'a third very unsovereign nation, not wholly American and not quite Mexican either, with its own customs, mores, values, and even its own language, Spanglish. Family ties, religious roots, and economic interdependence knit the border region in both countries together to the point that [US border cities] have more in common with their sister town in Mexico that they do with most of the United States (p.36).

> a challenge to anthropologists in the borderlands genre is to define a border culture, a seemingly homogenous construct based on political demarcation and shared elements of history, multi-ethnic identity (Indian, Spanish, Mexican, Anglo), and binational economics and politics… As with notions of culture writ large, the notion of a border culture either glosses over or essentializes traits and behaviour, often obliterating the actual problems and conditions in the variation of human behaviour (p. 450).

Along the imposed political border between Mozambique and South Africa the third scenario of how territorial borders become infused with social and cultural meaning discussed above, unfolds. For a long time after its creation, the border was only an important dividing line between the influence spheres of European countries in Africa. Efforts at social engineering on both sides of the border gradually infused it with social and cultural meaning. War and displacement further confused social boundaries that were starting to develop along the imposed border. In the aftermath of the war on the one side of the border and Apartheid on the other side, a culture characterised by difference as well as similarity is evolving at and across the imposed political boundary. New social boundaries are being drawn along and away from the state border, emphasising difference at the border, yet similarity across it.

Research methodology

The idea of writing an ethnography about the southern Mozambique/ South Africa borderland only came to me at the end of 2001 after conversations with my supervisor. At the time I had been living in the borderland for almost two years, having completed research on the impact of Transfrontier Conservation on borderland communities, and was busy writing a history of the Mabudu-Tembe. After devising a research problem and developing a methodology, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork between July 2002 and October 2003.

Following aspects of MacGaffey and Bazenguissa's (2000:16-17) methodology for studying transnational traders in Congo and Paris, I decided to employ a multi-sited ethnology (Marcus 1995:96-111) as opposed to a detailed study of a single location on the borderland (see Berdahl 1997:15-19). Doing ethnography in different sites allowed me to test whether my findings could be extrapolated for the borderland in general, or whether they merely reflected dynamics specific to the local research site. Naturally, as Rodgers (2002:78) also notes, there is always the fear that one loses 'depth' when one follows a multi-sited approach. Rodgers (2002:78) sites Clifford (1997:190) who asks of multi-sited fieldwork, 'multilocale fieldwork is an oxymoron. How many sites can be studied intensively before the criteria of depth are compromised?' (Emphasis removed). My own concerns about losing depth in following a multi-sited approach were partly mitigated by my previous long-term research experiences in the area, including the completion of two MA dissertations in Anthropology and History (Kloppers 2001; Els & Kloppers 2002; Kloppers 2003 and Els, Kloppers and Van Aarde 2004). This present study draws on the results of my previous research. Hence, my doctoral thesis is the culmination of four years of intensive fieldwork in the borderland.

I defined my research area as stretching from the Indian Ocean all along the Mozambican border with South Africa until Swaziland (see Map 3). This is an area of some 80 kilometres. Along this strip I did research in five different principal sites: Mbangweni and KwaMshudu (South Africa) and Shobane, Puza and Ponta do Ouro (Mozambique) (see Map 4). In addition, my research inquiries took me to other locations further removed from the borderland.

Having already worked in the area for more than two years before I started fieldwork on the international border, I had already built strong social relations with

local people and had gained the permission and trust of the local authorities to work in the area. All that remained was for me to inform people of my new subject of investigation, and to get their permission to do fieldwork around that subject. This proved more difficult than I thought, especially on the South African side of the borderland. In Mbangweni, for instance, it took me over three months to get permission from the local chief and his council to conduct interviews in the area. In KwaMshudu I was suspected of working for the police in trying to 'sniff-out' illegal immigrants. Since a large majority of people living in KwaMshudu originally came from Mozambique, it was very difficult to gain their trust and to put them at ease during and after interviews. My problems were exacerbated when medical scientists and students from the nearby hospital started to collect soil samples and hair and nail clippings from local people to test for Mseleni joint disease[11] shortly after I started fieldwork in the area. A common belief in southern Africa is that witches (Zulu: *abathakati*) can harm their victims by using a powerful potion that is manufactured from human bodily substances, such as the victim's own hair, nails, urine and faeces (Niehaus 2001:25). Informants in southern Mozambique related that witches mix the fingernail clippings and hair of their victims with crocodile brains to make a powerful potion that can kill people. Despite all my explanations to the contrary, local residents associated me with these 'practitioners of witchcraft' for the entire duration of my stay in the area.

Fieldwork on covert activities proved even more difficult. I conducted many interviews with smugglers in the back streets of Manguzi, the biggest town in the area, while my guide, Michael, had to keep watch for the police. Once, after an interview with a second-hand clothes smuggler I decided to hand over my notes and

[11] An extraordinary form of arthritis found amongst a large part of the inhabitants of the Mseleni area, which lies just south of the borderland, west of Lake Sibaya in South Africa (De Bruin 1987:12).

the audio cassette on which I recorded the interview, when it became clear that she, despite having agreed to the interview, became nervous and suspicious of my intentions. In some areas I was chased away before I could even introduce myself, while in other areas people accepted me with open arms, eager to tell me of their crafty and sly border crossings.

Research of this nature unsurprisingly elicits some ethical concerns. I had to undertake certain controls to ensure that the research I conducted could be ethically justified. Therefore, before conducting any interview I explained to informants precisely how I would use the information obtained for research and possible publication purposes. I assured them that they could end the interview at any time they wanted to, and could refuse to answer any uncomfortable questions. To ensure their anonymity I did not record any personal names or items of information that could reveal their identities in my notebooks and I made use of pseudonyms in recording data. I also informed my interviewees that I would use these pseudonyms in my thesis and in any publications that may result from it. Since many people I worked with were engaged in illicit activities, such as illegal border crossings and smuggling, I refrained from asking them to sign forms of consent for conducting interviews. Furthermore, since most people I worked with were illiterate, or did not completely comprehend the use of consent forms, I did not get written consent for conducting interviews, but instead relied on verbal consent.

The primary research methodology I used was participant observation. Apart from this, I also conducted unstructured and semi-structured interviews, a census, questionnaire-based interviews and made use of remote sensing methods, especially maps and aerial photographs.

1. Participant observation. According to Bernard (1994:136) the aim of participant observation is 'getting close to people and making them feel comfortable enough with your presence so that you can observe and record information about their lives.' This method is especially valuable when conducting research on topics people do not usually discuss with 'outsiders', such as 'illegal border crossings' and 'illegal cross-border trade'. Once people accepted my presence and understood what it was that I was planning to research, I learnt a lot about life in the borderland simply by being there. I spent long periods of time sitting at official and unofficial border crossing points and at border-markets merely observing rituals of border crossings. As time went by, people started to approach me and initiated conversations about their lives and the difficulties and opportunities the border provides for them. As a result of just being present there, I gained valuable information about life in the borderland.

2. Interviews. Throughout the research period, I conducted informal, unstructured, semi-structured and structured[12] interviews in all the areas I visited. Since I can only speak a very basic Zulu and am not able to communicate in Portuguese and Thonga (the other main languages of the borderland) at all, I made use of various translators and interpreters in the conduct of my research. In South Africa I was aided by Amos Tembe, a young Zulu speaker, George Tembe, an older man, Vusi Vumase, a teacher, and Michael Tembe, a Mozambican refugee who had settled in South Africa during the 1980s. I conducted most of my interviews with the aid of

[12] According to Bernard (1994:209) there is a continuum of interview situations – ranging from informal interview to structured interview - based on the amount of control exercised by the interviewer over the responses of the informant. In an informal interview there is a total lack of structure and control, the researcher merely tries to remember conversations heard during a day's fieldwork. An unstructured interview differs from an informal interview since both interviewer and informant are aware that they are engaged in an interview and not just a casual conversation. The interviewer has a minimal amount of control over the informant's responses in this case. In a semi-structured interview the interviewer employs an interview guide in an interview consisting of a list of questions and topics that need to be covered during the interview. In a structured interview the interviewer has the maximum amount of control over the responses of the informant. Informants are usually asked to respond to as nearly an identical set of stimuli as possible.

Michael who was fluent in both Zulu and Thonga (as was the case with Amos, George and Vusi), and also spoke Portuguese. In Mozambique I was assisted by Osvaldo Perreira, Nkosana Machisa and Raphael Fakude.

The majority of the unstructured and informal interviews resulted from chance meetings with informants at border crossing points, or at markets and at other places in the communities. The aim of unstructured interviews was to gain an *emic* insight into the lives of the borderlanders and to discover the issues regarding the border and borderland they saw as important. The 'clear plan' that I constantly kept in my mind (Bernard 1994:209), was merely to converse about the border, the borderland and the people on both sides of the divide. In most cases informants themselves led the interviews and determined the direction they took. Since I spent a substantial amount of time in the borderland and knew that I would see most informants again, I did not need to exert much control over the interviews and could patiently wait for informants to relate information to me in their own time. Over the course of the research period I interviewed over four hundred informants.

I followed a more structured interview schedule in the cases where I knew I would not be able to meet up with informants again or when following up previous informal interviews. This was especially the case when I met with cross-border smugglers who allowed me only brief meetings, during which I had to elicit as much information as possible. For instance, I had to interview a craft smuggler in my car, while giving him a ride from the border to the nearest town. I had to make it clear that I would still provide transport even if he would not speak to me to ensure that he did not feel forced into the interview. What made the interview more difficult was driving on the sandy roads while trying to write down what the informant said, since he would not allow me to make use of my voice recorder. It also proved to be

extremely difficult to follow the interview guide while driving, but I managed for the most part. Soon after I dropped him off in the nearest village I rushed to a place where I could sit down and record everything that I had been told.

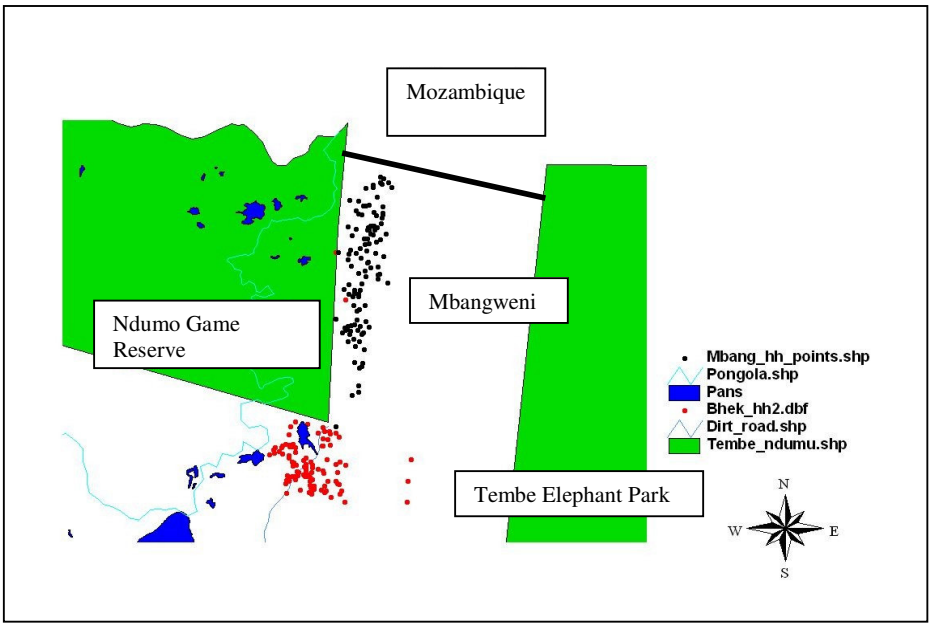
I also collected life histories from sixty of my better-known informants. Here I used interview guides to document standard details about their lives and to collect more detail, especially dates, of certain events that took place.

Finally I conducted structured interviews in two adjoining borderland communities. Using an interview schedule I conducted random interviews with one hundred interviewees in South Africa and a hundred interviewees in Mozambique. I asked informants on both sides of the border identical questions to enable me to compare the results. The aim of these interviews was to gather quantitative data on kinship ties across the border (i.e. how many people on one side of the border have kin on the other side), the extent and frequency of cross-border social interaction, as well as perceptions of the border and of those who reside on the other side of the border. I also made use of the structured interviews to test the validity and distribution of qualitative data gathered through participant observation and interviews.

3. Census. In Mbangweni, a village in South Africa (see Map 4), I did a complete census of all the homesteads. The census was conducted as part of a larger programme on rural livelihoods by the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge of the University of Pretoria. Fortunately, I was able to include some of my own research questions into the census and to gain valuable information from it. In this census I asked similar questions to those asked in the structured interviews in the census. All interviews were conducted at the homesteads of informants and a GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) reading was taken of each homestead. This presented a visual

and spatial analysis of the Mbangweni borderland community, illustrating the proximity of people to the border (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Positioning of homesteads in Mbangweni



Map compiled by J.L. Jones, Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Pretoria.

In addition to the material that I obtained from the structured interviews and the census, the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) provided me with information on the number of immigrants, stolen vehicles, drugs, weapons and other contraband articles that came across the Mozambican border into South Africa. The Superintendent in charge of the police station at Manguzi allowed me to access the cell registers from which I could determine the amount of immigrants crossing the border as well as their countries of origin. I only conducted research at the police station and at the SANDF headquarters towards the end of the research period as I was afraid that local people might

associate me with the police if they had seen me there before I visited their communities.

4. Remote sensing. I made use of aerial photographs and topographical maps as remote sensing methods. According to Jones and McCusker (2004) 'visual media, such as maps and aerial photographs are versatile techniques that allow numerous types of data and issues to be presented in a variety of ways. A unique strength of visual media is the ability to draw people into discussion, often referred to as "speaking to the map"'. I obtained aerial photographs[13] from the South African Chief Directorate: Surveys and Mapping of the southern Mozambique/ South Africa borderland for 1942[14], 1960[15], 1975[16], and 1991[17] (Appendix A, B, C and D). These maps provided a visual representation of the changes the borderland has undergone since 1942. What is especially interesting is the manner in which these photographs highlight how the Mozambican side of the borderland became de-populated as a result of the war between 1975 and 1991 and how it is now gradually becoming re-populated after the war's end.

I made use of these aerial photos, together with 1:50 000 topo-cadastral maps[18] obtained from the Chief Directorate: Surveys and Mapping in South Africa and from the Survey General (*Direcção National de Geografica e Cadastro de*

[13] The benefits of using aerial photographs in conducting social research include 'consistency of information, non-literate media, authenticity and facilitation. Although they have traditionally been more used in gathering quantitative information, they have gained attention as tools that 'solicit qualitative spatial information about events on the ground' (Jones & McCusker 2004).

[14] Job 470, strip 3/ 019, 021, 023, 025, 027, 029.

[15] Job 167, strip 2/ 745, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 65, 66.

[16] Job 751, strip 1/ 1288, 89, 90, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 1301.

[17] Job 942, strip 2/ 027, 028, 029, 030, 031, 033, 035, 037, 039, 041.

[18] Topographic maps have, like aerial photographs, recently become more used in the collection of qualitative data. According to Jones and McCusker (2004), topographic maps are especially useful in allowing people to relate their knowledge, identify issues and to mark places and ideas on the map.

Mozambique) in Mozambique in two ways. First, I used it to create a visual landscape, drawing a picture for myself of what the borderland used to look like, where people used to stay and how the Mozambican War affected this. I used this information in interviews with informants, asking them to explain in more detail the patterns and trends I could see on the aerial photographs and maps. Second, I used the aerial photographs and maps directly in interview situations as a tool to elicit conversation and responses to questions. For instance, I would first orientate people and explain to them where things were on the aerial photographs and once they became familiar with the photographs, I would ask them to show me places of interest. For example, I asked refugees to show me where they used to life in Mozambique before they fled from the country. Then I would gradually trace the route they took with them from Mozambique to South Africa on the photograph. This in itself elicited new conversations as informants started to remember important places and events that took place. In this way I found remote sensing an invaluable research tool in researching border crossings.

Organisation of this study

This thesis is essentially about the creation of social boundaries along imposed territorial borders. It is both a history and ethnography. It tells the story of colonialism and the partition of African ethnic, political and cultural groups, of de-colonisation and destabilisation in south-east Africa and of how these events have impacted on the lives of people living on the borderland. The organising metaphor of this thesis is borders, boundaries and borderlandscapes: their creation and their destruction.

In the next chapter I discuss the history of the borderlandscape. Starting in the seventeenth century, I illustrate how the Tembe-Thonga clan established control over the wider Delagoa Bay hinterland and forged new ethnic identities, ties of kinship and allegiance and new cultural forms. The chapter follows the fragmentation of the Tembe chiefdom in 1875 and the establishment of Portuguese control north of the border and British control south of the border. I suggest that throughout the following century the imposed border gradually became a social and cultural divide. Portuguese efforts at assimilation north of the border clashed with British and later South African efforts at indirect rule and Apartheid south of the border. North of the border Tembe people assimilated Portuguese language and culture, thereby setting them apart from their former clan members to the south, who increasingly became subject to Zulu influence and domination. The aim of the discussion is not only to provide the necessary context for the following chapters, but also to illustrate how historical forces led to the creation of social and cultural differences between the Mozambican and South African sides of the borderland.

In chapter three I examine changes in the borderland milieu as a result of the Mozambican war between 1975 and 1992. The chapter provides a macro context of the Mozambican war and the international relations between South Africa and Mozambique during this period. I argue that a macro-analysis of the war suggests that in the aftermath of Mozambican independence the borderland changed from a typical integrated borderland to an alienated borderland. This had a dramatic effect on social relations across the border as it hampered contact between people on opposite sides of the divide. The chapter illustrates the effect relations between the centres of power in neighbouring states have, on people who live at the territorial periphery of the modern nation-state.

In chapter four I consider the micro-context of the Mozambican war. Life histories of people who lived in the borderlandscape during the war are analysed to present a history of the borderland between 1975 and 1994. The cases studies illustrate how Mozambicans utilised old ties of kinship to gain refuge across the border into South Africa. It also depicts the misery and tragedy of the war and the effect it had on the wider borderlandscape. The micro analysis illustrates the vibrancy of the borderlandscape in the fact that cross-border contact continued despite the alienated environment created by the war.

In the fifth chapter I discuss the return and non-return of Mozambican refugees in the aftermath of the war. I argue that refugees do not necessarily wish to return home after a period of exile and the establishment of peace. I show how the majority of refugees in KwaZulu-Natal stayed behind after 1992 and only started to return home once economic development in Mozambique enticed them there.

In chapter six I analyse current patterns of border crossings. The end of the Mozambican war in 1992 and the abolishment of Apartheid in 1994 inaugurated a new era in foreign relations between South Africa and Mozambique. These countries were no longer opponents, but became partners in regional development. In 1994 an official border post was opened along the southern border and the movement of people across the border became officially regulated. Despite the fact that some refugees moved back to southern Mozambique, they kept alive the ties with South Africans with whom they had stayed during the war. This trend contributed to the breakdown of social boundaries. People increasingly organised themselves along ethnic and cultural ties rather than loyalty to the nation-state. The end of the war also saw the influx of hundreds of displaced soldiers and other civilians into Southern Mozambique with no ancestral ties to the land or its people. As tourism development

increases in the borderland, so too does the influx of refugees from northern and central Mozambique and from countries further to the north, such as Tanzania. This creates a new identity and culture on the northern side of the border, breaking with the old unity that existed before the war, which tied the people north of the border ethnically and historically to the people south of the border. Current patterns of border crossings thus contribute to the making and the breaking of social boundaries along the international border.

In chapter seven I focus specifically on the movement of goods across the international border. I argue that cross-border trade enables and fosters social interaction between South Africa and Mozambique. In order to tap the economic advantages offered by the existence of the border, people have to engage in trans-national social contact. This is globalisation on a small scale: economic interdependence creates cultural exchange across state borders. An interesting phenomenon in this regard is the establishment and growth of markets along the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border. The border-markets do not only serve as places where people trade across the border, but also places where relatives and friends from opposite sides of the border can meet and cross the border legally under the supervision of the police and defence force.

The eighth chapter of this thesis deals with the union between people, land and ancestral spirits. I briefly revisit the period between 1975 and 1992 when the Mozambican war caused the displacement of refugees south of the border. I consider how this physical displacement disturbed the relationship between people, their ancestors and their land and how this was exacerbated by the impermeable nature of the international border. I try to illustrate how the international border created disunity, not only between the living members of society, but also between the living

and the dead. In this context, alien (*ndau*) spirit-possession was used to demonstrate a shared kinship between people north and south of the border.

In the penultimate chapter I investigate ethnicity along and across the international border. This chapter could almost act as a conclusion to the study, since I illustrate what the effect of the factors discussed throughout the thesis have been on peoples' views of their own identity and on the identity of others across the border. I seek to illustrate the effect that colonialism, socialist modernisation, the Mozambican war and South African Apartheid has had on peoples' ethnicity. I argue that in the liminal borderland, where life is constantly in a state of transition, ethnicity itself is fluid and contextual. Ethnicity is constantly manipulated as people move from one side of the border to the other.

In the concluding chapter to this thesis I summarise the events and processes that have led to the creation and destruction of social boundaries along the imposed colonial border. I show that these processes are still at work and that their affects can still be seen. The imposed political border has not become a social boundary separating Mozambicans from South Africans or Shangaans from Zulus, neither has it remained without cultural meaning as some people do in fact typify the border as an ethnic, social and cultural divide. The border symbolises both social division and the lack thereof. In the frontier-zone, stretching away and across from the border, people share, to a greater and lesser extent, a sense of identity, community and culture that is both similar and different from that found on either sides of the divide.

Figure 3: Ruins of the old Border Post at Manhoca, 2003

Photograph by Wayne Matthews

University of Pretoria etd – Kloppers, R J (2005)

CHAPTER TWO

FRAGMENTATION, COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND HYBRIDISATION OF THE BORDERLAND

> Actual borders are often determined by factors that have little to do with any real *political* process: the course of rivers, how far a horse can be ridden, or illegible or imaginative treaties implemented by guesswork, where one frightened army happened to catch up with another, and so on. These are the events in the histories of *countries*. It is otherwise for nations. Countries are distinguished from nations, tribes and ethnic groups by the kinds of narratives that define them, and by the rhetoric which evokes them.
>
> Thornton (1994:9).

The most southern border of Mozambique with South Africa was established in 1875. For a century the borderline was nothing more than a row of beacons demarcating the boundary between a Portuguese colony and an area that changed, in constitutional status, from a British colony to a Union in the British Empire, to an independent Republic. However, when Mozambique gained independence in 1975 the nature of the borderline, and with it the borderland milieu, changed. Whereas the borderland could have been typified as interdependent,[1] it now became a militarised and alienated environment separating two countries practically at war with one another.

In this chapter I aim to accomplish two goals. Firstly, I wish present the necessary historical context of the borderland up to 1975, which is crucial for understanding the following chapters. Secondly, I aim illustrate how historical

[1] Here I use Martinez's (1994; 1998) typology of borderlands. Martinez (1998:6) discerns four models of borderland interaction, based on the level of interaction across the international border. When there is the least amount of contact across the borderline, the borderland is typified as *alienated*. At the other end of the continuum is an *integrated* borderland and in between these two extremes lie *coexistent* and *interdependent* borderlands.

processes contributed to the creation of a hybrid borderlandscape along the southern Mozambique/ South African border.

Whereas the borderlandscape could have been described as relatively homogenous at the time when the border was drawn, it had a much more diverse culture by 1975. North of the border the Portuguese advocated a system of political centralisation and cultural assimilation, forcing local people to adopt Portuguese culture. However, the Portuguese colonial administration gradually developed a system of indirect rule. South of the border, on the other hand, the British implemented a system of indirect rule, allowing local people to continue their own customs and political systems. However, during the period of Apartheid the South African government incorporated the remnants of the Mabudu (Tembe) chiefdom into their Zulu 'homeland', KwaZulu. Hereby it promoted a Zulu identity and culture throughout the area.

The landscape before fragmentation (1600-1875)

When the border was drawn in 1875 it bisected the Mabudu-Tembe or Tembe-Thonga chiefdom. According to Junod (1962:23), Tembe, the founding ancestor of the Tembe-Thonga[2], migrated from Karanga[3] to the area surrounding Delagoa Bay[4] in the middle of the seventeenth century. Tembe and his followers gradually established their authority over the people who lived in the Delagoa Bay hinterland.[5] Due to the

[2] The Mabudu-Tembe, who is the subject of this chapter, is the junior branch of the Tembe-Thonga. They are also referred to as the Maputo, Tembe and Ronga.

[3] In present-day Zimbabwe

[4] Present-day Maputo.

[5] The theory that the African societies of south-east Africa migrated there in fixed ethnic units, as in the case of the Tembe-Thonga, has been questioned by archaeological research and recent research on oral

abilities of their strong and charismatic leaders, the Tembe-Thonga remained a unified chiefdom and gradually extended their influence in the Delagoa Bay hinterland. This unity was upset in the middle of the eighteenth century when a split in the ruling lineage led to the fragmentation of the chiefdom. The division came after the death of Silamboya in 1746 (see Appendix E). The descendants of Silamboya's oldest son, Muhali, settled west of the Maputo River and north of the Usuthu River. This group, the senior branch of the Tembe-Thonga, became known as the Matutwen-Tembe. The other part of the Tembe-Thonga followed a junior son of Silamboya, Mangobe, and settled east of the Maputo River (see Map 5). This branch would later become known as the Mabudu or Maputo (Bryant 1965:290). The imposed international border of 1875 bisected the area where the Mabudu branch settled.

Being unable to control the vast area under his control, the chief of the junior branch, Mangobe, placed his sons in strategic positions so as to ensure his control.[6] When Mangobe died, his first son, Nkupo, was named chief. However, his younger son, Mabudu, soon established himself as the stronger leader and took the chieftainship from his older brother (Hedges 1978:137).

Mabudu is known as the chief (*ihosi* or *inkosi*) 'who lit the fire' (Hedges 1978:137). Mabudu's rise is attributed to his own leadership skills and his ability to

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traditions of Zululand and Natal (Maggs 1989). Instead of migrating there in fixed ethnic groups, it is now argued that the African societies of south-east Africa emerged locally from long established communities of diverse origins and diverse cultures and languages. Nevertheless, whether the Tembe came from Karanga to establish their authority over the people of south-east Africa, or whether they emerged locally, reports from Portuguese sailors indicate that a chief Tembe was in control of the ruling chiefdom in the Delagoa Bay hinterland in the mid-1600s (Wright & C. Hamilton 1989:46-64 and Kuper 1997:74).

[6] His eldest wife, Mitshydyhlwate, had three sons. Her eldest son, Nkupo, was placed in control of the northern part of the chiefdom, bordering Delagoa Bay. Mpanyela, her second son, was placed in an area called Matutuine, while her youngest son, Mabudu, was placed in the area south and east of the Maputo River. Ndumo, a fourth son of Mangobe from one of his junior wives, was placed in the area near the confluence of the Maputo and Usuthu rivers (Hedges 1978: 137).

have transformed the age regiments (*amabutho*)[7] from initiation schools into military regiments. His control over the age regiments gave Mabudu control over both production and reproduction within the chiefdom, since the chief now decided when a man could get married. In some cases the chief also provided bride wealth to the affines of warriors from the regiments, thus increasing their own power at the expense of lineage heads who traditionally provided these goods (Wright & Hamilton 1989:63).

With the army now at his disposal Mabudu was able to dominate all trade between Europeans who landed at Delagoa Bay and local people living in the hinterland. Through this domination the Mabudu became, by the middle of the eighteenth century, the strongest political and economic unit in south-east Africa (Smith 1972:178-184). The people under his authority, which gradually increased, became known as the *abakwaMabudu* or the people of Mabudu's land (Webb and Wright 1979:157). By the early 1800s the Mabudu chiefdom stretched from the Maputo River in the west to the Indian Ocean in the east, and from Delagoa (Maputo) Bay in the north to as far south as Lake St. Lucia (see Map 5) (Felgate 1982:1).

During the early 1800s similar processes of political centralisation were taking place amongst the Mthetwa, Ndwandwe and later the Zulu chiefdoms. The Zulu eventually defeated the other groups and established themselves as the dominant power in south-east Africa (Wright & Hamilton 1989:67 and Laband 1995). The Mabudu were never attacked by, nor directly involved in any war with the Zulu. They were, however indirectly affected by wars of conquest the Zulu waged in the northern part of Zululand in the first half of the nineteenth century (Omer-Cooper 1975:57). Various groups of refugees passed through the Mabudu chiefdom during

[7] Traditionally boys who have reached puberty would gather at the house of the chief. There they would go through an initiation ritual during which they were temporarily under the ritual authority of the chief. Mabudu transformed the system, using the *amabutho* to wage wars and to hunt on his behalf.

the reign of Shaka. Many of them settled among the Mabudu. The people who crossed the southern boundary of the Mabudu chiefdom brought with them languages and customs foreign to the Mabudu. Over time, Mabudu identity became less distinctive as people adopted many customs of those living south of them (Bryant 1964:292). As more and more people from the southern chiefdoms crossed into the Mabudu chiefdom, an increasing amount of prestige was attached to being Zulu and speaking isiZulu, since the Zulu were the dominant force.

However, the Zulu cultural influence in Maputaland was not complete. People who fled the onslaught of the Zulu only stayed in Maputaland for a short period before they moved on, largely due to the ecology of the region which makes it unsuitable to keep cattle (Felgate 1982:11). Furthermore, in exchange for tribute paid by the Mabudu, the Zulu recognised them as leaders of a vast territory. This, to an extent, secured their sovereignty (Bradley 1974). The relationship between the Mabudu and the Zulu differed markedly from that which the Zulu instituted with other chiefdoms. Ballard (1978) states that although the Mabudu 'paid tribute to the Zulu kings and co-operated on a military and economic level (p.36)'; they enjoyed much greater independence than the chiefdoms south of St. Lucia.

Despite the Zulu influence, Maputaland remained politically and culturally distinct from areas to the north, south and west. The people of Maputaland spoke a unified language – xiRonga (Thonga). With some exceptions, notably the Ngubane and Khumalo, they accepted the rule of Mabudu chiefs (Felgate 1982:11). They practised customs that were unique to the area and differed from those of their Zulu, Swazi and Tsonga neighbours (Webster 1991:250). When the border was drawn it thus separated a largely unified political and cultural community.

MacMahon and the drawing of the border

The Portuguese and British had long disputed each other's rights to the territory south of Delagoa Bay. The conflict between Britain and Portugal came to a head in 1868 when President Pretorius of the South African Republic, issued a declaration extending the eastern boundary of the Republic to the sea. The British government immediately informed the South African Republic that Britain claimed authority over the territories on the banks of the Pongola (Maputo) River, while Portugal in turn objected to the British claim (Felgate 1982:18).

In 1875 Portugal and Britain agreed to put the matter in front of the French President, Marshal MacMahon, for arbitration. MacMahon drew a straight line along the 26º 30' S that divided the Portuguese and British spheres of influence in south-east Africa. Since he awarded the disputed area south of Delagoa Bay to Portugal, MacMahon's decision came to be known as the MacMahon Award (Felgate 1982:18).

The Mabudu were neither consulted nor informed about the fact that the largest part of their country had been awarded to Portugal. According to Bulpin (1969):

> The effect of the MacMahon Award on the Tonga people themselves would have been comic if it wasn't pathetic. Far away in Paris a politician in striped pants sat down and drew a sharp line straight through their tribal possessions while they sat drinking lala wine, quarrelling over women and scratching themselves in the sun. Nobody took the trouble to inform the Tongas of the profound change in their territorial possessions. Accordingly, when the Portuguese, after a few years of enertia, started demanding taxes on account of the Tongas now being their subjects, there was a certain amount of surprise (p. 359).

In 1887 the regent queen of the Mabudu, Zambili, asked for British protection over the entire area under her control, which she defined as stretching northwards from the Mkuze River to the Portuguese border and east of the Swazi border.

Arguing that they had always been tributaries of the Zulu, the Mabudu asked to be placed under British protection, since Zululand was now under British authority (De Bruin 1987:5).

A preliminary treaty was signed on 6 July 1887. The treaty acknowledged the request of the Mabudu to be British citizens without actually granting them that status. The treaty also stipulated that the Mabudu were not allowed to sign treaties or engage in correspondence with any other European powers, without British consent. In return Britain guaranteed 'peace and friendship' (Bulpin 1969:396).

A British deputation, under C.R. Saunders visited Maputaland and officially signed the treaty at Emifihleni, the royal homestead, in October 1887. The Saunders treaty stipulated that 'Thongaland' included the entire area north of the Mkhuze River, between the Lubombo Mountains and the Indian Ocean (see Map 6) (De Bruin 1987:5). In 1888 Britain shifted the boundaries of 'Thongaland', marking Lake Sibayi, some distance north of the Mkhuze River as the northern boundary of Zululand (Bulpin 1969:402) (see Map 6).

The Mabudu complained that the Mkhuze River had traditionally been the southern boundary of their chiefdom. In April 1889 Queen Zambili sent a deputation to Pietermaritzburg to complain about the new boundary between Zululand and Thongaland (Maputaland). The deputation complained about the way in which Maputaland had been cut in half, and asked that the Mabudu be freed from their treaty with the British. The request was rejected. A similar deputation was sent to the Portuguese Government. The deputation arrived in Lisbon in May 1889, but met a similar fate. The queen appealed to Portugal to annex the entire chiefdom, rather than sharing it with Britain. However, Portugal's answer was that the matter had already been resolved (Hedges 1978:135).

In order to settle the boundary dispute the British government sent Saunders to Thongaland on 22 July 1889. He visited the smaller chiefdoms between Lake Sibayi and the Mkhuze River, and set up beacons to delineate the boundaries. The Mabudu sent an official complaint, but were ignored.

On June 11 1891, Britain and Portugal fixed the international border on the parallel of the confluence of the Pongola River with the Usuthu River to the sea. This is where it lies today, some 40 kilometres south of the MacMahon line. On 30 May 1895 Saunders formally annexed Thongaland as a British Protectorate. British AmaThongaland was officially declared a British Protectorate on 29 June 1896 and on the 28th of December 1897, British AmaThongaland and Zululand were incorporated into Natal (Bulpin 1969:402-405).

Colonialism, Apartheid and the creation of diversity in the former unified chiefdom

Felgate (1982) states that during 'the early years of the previous century the control the Portuguese exercised over southern Mozambique was ineffectual (p.21).' Ngwanase, the Mabudu chief, and his successors still appointed headmen (*izinduna*) in southern Mozambique, collected taxes from the people and heard court cases arising out of disputes between people living in Mozambique. However, from the 1940s onwards the 'border has become a reality for the Thonga (ibid.).'

Britain and Portugal implemented two vastly differing systems of colonial administration in their African colonies. These contradictory systems of political and social control left its mark on Maputaland, creating political and cultural divisions between the two parts of the former unified chiefdom.

Britain implemented a system of indirect-rule, using established systems of chiefs and chiefdoms to administer its colonies. The British favoured separate development for African people and European settlers. As Mamdani (1996) notes, the British system of indirect rule, as implemented in Natal, was based on 'aggregating the natives in separate locations and administering their day-to-day activities under a "system of justice" that "should conform as much to their own law as is compatible within the principle of ours"' (p.63). In terms of the British system of 'indirect rule' indigenous authorities continued to exact control and colonial subjects were allowed to practice their own customs and ways of life, provided they paid homage to the British crown (Mamdani 1996:62-71). Mamdani (1996) describes indirect rule as 'decentralised despotism', since African chiefs governed their people, 'not as independent but as dependent Rulers' (p.78). British colonial policy in Africa was mediated through 'native chiefs working through native institutions' (p.77). However, as Mamdani (1996:77) notes, neither the personnel nor the institutions desired for the implementation of indirect rule were necessarily in existence. Furthermore, in cases where chiefs with large territories existed, they were oftentimes independent and not readily willing to become 'dependent rulers'. In reality, as Mamdani (1996) aptly explains, 'native institutions were given life and substance through a policy that combined a recognition of existing facts with creative modification and even outright fabrication' (p.77). The belief was that the peoples of Africa were organised into neat tribes, each with its own 'territory, customs and leadership.' The British merely had to control the leadership to control the 'tribe'. Britain exacted this through a system of alliances with the chiefs, devolving power to the chiefs to collect taxes and to rule over specific territories on authority of the British monarch (Mamdani 1996:77-79).

Under the colonial government of Natal, the southern portion of the once unified Mabudu chiefdom became known as British Amathongaland or Reserve 14, and was administered as part of the Zululand Native Trust until 1910 when Natal became part of the Union of South Africa (Bishop 1998:9). On 5 November 1926 Tongaland became known as the Ingwavuma district of Natal and was administered, like all the other districts of Natal, as an integral part of the Province (Tomlinson *et al.* 1982: 23).

From 1910 until 1948, South Africa's Union government implemented a system of separate development for Europeans and Africans, which largely correlated with indirect rule, although 'native policies' of the four provinces of the Union differed. This changed in 1948 when the National Party won the general election in South Africa.

The new South African government decided unilaterally, that the black population of South Africa consists of a group of 'nations' each of which is entitled to a separate nation-state or homeland (Butler *et al.* 1977:1). Accordingly, the population of South Africa was divided into ten black 'nations' and three 'non-black nations'. Each black nation was to have its own Bantustan, later to be called Homelands, with its own language and bureaucratic structure (Dlamini 2001:198).

The National Party government passed the first laws with regards to the self-government for black people in South Africa in 1951 (Vosloo *et al.* 1974:58). In accordance with the Bantu Authorities Act (Act 68 of 1951), the Tembe Tribal Authority[8] was instituted in the Ingwavuma district (Thongaland) on 18 April 1958. In 1959 the system of indirect representation of black people in the 'white' South African legislature was amended with the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act

[8] Presently known as the Tembe Traditional Authority (TTA).

(Act 46 of 1959) (Breytenbach 1974:7). Official recognition was given to eight 'Bantu nations' who would live in nine 'nation-states'.[9] This was followed in May 1960 with the institution of the Ingwavuma Regional Authority comprising of the three tribal authorities.[10]

Portugal, on the other hand, implemented a more centralised system of administration, particularly in southern Mozambique. Two charter companies ruled the northern areas of the country in a largely autonomous manner until 1929 and 1941 respectively. The central areas, corresponding roughly with the Zambezi Valley, were divided between plantation companies, which were also largely autonomous. By contrast, the area south of the Sabi River was placed under direct government control. It was predominantly in this southern region of the country that the Portuguese government exerted the most control, and started to implement its colonial policy of centralisation and assimilation (Newitt 2002:187 and Smith & Nöthling 1993:287).

The Portuguese divided Mozambique into ten districts (see Map 1) that were in turn divided into *concelhos* and *circumerições*. A *concelho* was a relatively developed area with a measure of local governance. A *circumerição* was a rural area not yet developed enough to qualify as a *concelho*. At the head of the *circumerição* was an *administrador*, responsible for the development (assimilation) of the indigenous people. Those areas that were the least developed were further divided into *postos administrativos*, with a *chef do poste* in charge of every *poste*. These areas were mostly black-dominated areas where few Portuguese had settled. To facilitate administration, the *postos administrativos* were further divided into

[9] The Xhosa were granted two 'nation-states'.

[10] The Tembe Tribal Authority, the Matenjwa Tribal Authority and the Nyawo Tribal Authority.

regedorias under the leadership of a *regulo* or under a traditional leader (Van Aswegen & Verhoef 1982:18-19 and Seegers 1977:65).

The southernmost district of Mozambique was called Maputo and the southernmost district of Maputo, bordering Natal, was called Matutuine. The former area of the Mabudu chiefdom situated in Mozambique lay entirely within the boundaries of Matutuine, which covered approximately 5, 403 square kilometres. The administrator for Matutuine was based at Bela Vista. Four *chefs du postos*, controlling each of the four administrative areas in the district, assisted him. This system remained in place in the Mozambican part of Maputaland throughout the colonial period and is still in place today (Els & Kloppers 2002: B-6).

On the social level, the Portuguese saw their God-given task as bringing 'civilisation' to Africa, and to foster the social integration and cultural assimilation of Africans. On the basis of this policy, the inhabitants of Mozambique were divided into two groups, namely the *indigenas* and the *não-indigenas* (or *civilisados*). The *indigenas* were that part of the indigenous population who had not yet, according to the Portuguese, reached a high enough standard of civilisation. This group, comprising some five thousand people in Mozambique by 1950, were the proper concern of native policy, systematized as the *Estatuto Polico Civil e Criminal des Indigenas* in 1929. According to this statute, native people were not viewed as individuals, but 'as part of a community ruled directly by a chief, and subject in the first instance to African customary law' (Mamdani 19996:87). This system recognised African peoples' rights to communal land, in exchange for certain 'native taxes.' This system was thus very close to the British system of indirect rule. However, the difference in the Portuguese colonies was that Portugal actively encouraged Africans to adopt Portuguese language and customs in exchange for

certain social and financial rewards. Britain, on the other hand turned its back on the educated African elite in favour of traditional chiefs. As Mamdani (1996) explains, 'as the link with traditional authorities was forged, so the alliance with the educated strata was severed' (p.77).

Africans in Mozambique who assimilated the Portuguese lifestyle were known in administrative circles as the *não-indigenas.* This group comprised all white Portuguese, assimilated black people and *mestiços* (people of mixed origin), were governed by Portuguese laws (Van Aswegen 1980:362). The difference between an *indigena* and a *não-indigena* could be changed by law if a black person had proved himself/herself worthy of the Portuguese culture. In this way, people could achieve the status of *assimilado*, which excused them from various taxes and allowed them extra privileges (Van Aswegen & Verhoef 1982:36). Mamdani (1996) explains that, 'accompanied by a certain measure of education Christianity qualified a native to be treated as civilised, and was considered sufficient qualification for equal political and judicial rights' (p.87).

There were no laws in the Portuguese colonies that prohibited racial integration, and the law was not constituted along racial lines, but along cultural lines. Any person, white or black, could become a Portuguese citizen. Much status and many privileges were attached to being an *assimilado*, people strove to attain this status, which further strengthened cultural assimilation (Van Aswegen & Verhoef 1982:37).

There was therefore a huge difference in social administration south and north of the imposed southern Mozambique/ South Africa border. While north of the border people adopted elements of the Portuguese culture, most notably Catholicism and Portuguese language and customs, south of the border the more traditional

'Thonga' culture and language was retained, although it came under attack through an increase in Zulu cultural dominance in the area (Webster 1986:243-269).

The institution of new governments north and south of the border

From the late 1960s resistance against Portuguese rule in Mozambique started to gain momentum as the resistance forces became more organised. The campaign was championed by FRELIMO (*Frente da Libertação de Moçambique*) under the leadership of Eduardo Mondlane (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:80-81). FRELIMO launched its military campaign on 25 September 1964 with an attack on a Portuguese base in northern Mozambique. It also issued a proclamation of independence and a call to arms of all indigenous people in Mozambique (Van Aswegen & Verhoef 1982:50). From its bases in Tanzania, FRELIMO penetrated Mozambique. The northern provinces of the country soon became a warzone, while many military engagements also occurred south of Maputo (Van Aswegen & Verhoef 1982:50).

The Portuguese gradually became unable to justify the war on the international stage and at home. After a coup in Portugal in 1974, Portugal moved quickly to grant independence to its colonies. A FRELIMO-dominated transitional government was established in Mozambique in September 1974 with full independence promised for June 1975 (Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:190).

While the war was raging in Mozambique, constitutional developments south of the border led to the strengthening of Zulu political and cultural influence in Maputaland. In March 1970 the South African Prime Minister, John Vorster, announced that any homeland was free to ask for complete independence from the Republic of South Africa. This led to the creation of a Zululand Regional

Government on 11 June 1970, which incorporated all the tribes in Natal for which tribal and regional authorities have previously been instituted (Breytenbach 1974:7).

The Zululand Legislative Assembly changed the name of Zululand to KwaZulu on 1 April 1972. Though Zululand previously only included areas north of the Tugela River, the KwaZulu Legislature now also exercised authority in areas south of the river (Kotzé 1975:31-50). On 28 January 1977, by Proclamation R11 of 28 January 1977, KwaZulu was given self-governing status. In deciding which areas and people to include in KwaZulu, the government followed the ethnic paradigm of Apartheid. However, it should be asked whether the South African government adhered to its philosophy of a separate state for every 'nation' in the creation of KwaZulu, especially with regards to the Mabudu-Tembe. Surely, if the government viewed the Mabudu as a 'nation', it should also have been granted a homeland and the right to preserve its identity. Initially the Mabudu were indeed seen as a separate 'nation', or at least not as part of the Zulu 'nation'. Previously the government classified the Mabudu as being part of the Tsonga 'tribe'. However, in 1977 the government suddenly accepted the Mabudu to be Zulu, and included the Mabudu chiefdom (Tembe Tribal Authority) into KwaZulu as one of the 203 tribal authorities.

Webster (1986) states that this 'fact needs not confuse us, as the government's attempts at social engineering can change a person's ethnicity, race or nationality at the stroke of a pen. Thus the area that was until recently referred to as "British AmaThongaland" became an integral part of KwaZulu (p.615-616).' However, it was not only social engineering by government that strengthened the Zulu influence south of the border. Due to social and economic reasons, men who migrated from Ingwavuma to work in South Africa's mining and industrial centres gradually

identified themselves as Zulu (Webster 1991:253-255). This process strengthened the social boundaries along the Mozambique/ South Africa border.

The view from the periphery: life in the borderland before 1975

These social and political changes have had important consequences, not merely for life in the borderlandscape, but also for people's ability to cross the border and utilise resources in both countries. Despite being residents of a Portuguese colony, people in southern Mozambique retained important social and economic links to South Africa. The government of Mozambique was extremely dependent on remittances from migrant labourers working on mines and farms in South Africa, and on South Africa's use of the harbour of Maputo for imports and exports (Newitt 2002:186).[11]

Due to the bi-national economic, social and cultural ties that existed between Mozambique and South Africa, the borderland between South Africa and Mozambique during the period before independence can be described as interdependent in nature. In other words, the great flow in economic and human resources across the border structurally bound the economies of the two countries together. However, the relationship was asymmetrical with South Africa playing a dominant role and, although a symbiotic relationship existed between the two countries and their border regions, a number of policies still retained state separation at the boundary (Martinez 1994:4).

Prior to 1975, border crossings were predominantly from Mozambique to South Africa, temporary and driven by economic necessity. According to R. E.

[11] The close economic ties between South Africa and Mozambique were re-enforced in the 1960s when Britain withdrew from Southern Africa, granting independence to its former colonies. This left South Africa, Angola, Mozambique and Rhodesia as the only countries in Southern Africa under white minority rule. Their efforts to aid one another in combating the tide of black liberation drew the countries stronger toward each other (Barber & Barrat 1990:175).

Rutherfoord, whose family owned a chain of stores on the South African side of the border, South Africans would flock across the border to visit stores in Mozambique that sold liquor to black people, since black people were not allowed to buy alcohol in South Africa. Mozambican borderlanders, in turn, would visit stores in South Africa for their food requirements (Rutherfoord 1995:39). McGregor (1998:45-46) states that many of the people living in the borderland in Matutuine had 'relatively strong contacts outside Mozambique; some could get citizenship papers in neighbouring countries, could draw on a Zulu or Swazi identity, and were re-absorbed in other sectors of the South African and Swaziland labour markets.' This was the case of Jonas Tembe.

Case 2.1: Jonas Tembe: A life in the borderland before 1975

Jonas was born at Zitundo in the late 1940s. He grew up in this small village, situated about twelve kilometres north of the South African border. Jonas learned from elders when he was a child that the Portuguese put up stone cairns (many of them still standing today) to mark the border. In the 1940s the South African authorities started to construct a border fence. When Jonas turned sixteen he, like most of is peers, decided to go to South Africa to look for work. Hence, Jonas crossed the border for the first time in the 1950s.

Jonas remembers that there used to be a gate at Manhoca where people were allowed to cross the border. The gate was actually nothing more than a pole barrier with a padlock. This used to be the only border post between South Africa and Mozambique along the eighty kilometres stretch of border. The border post was staffed by members of the South African Police (stationed at Manguze) and members

of the Customs Department. One could cross the border at either sides of the border post since there were no man-made obstacles. The only thing stopping people from crossing at points removed from the border post was natural barriers such as the muddy terrain and the thick bush and fear of being caught by the authorities.

The Manhoca post was about six kilometres north of the actual South African border. People were asked to show their 'papers' to the Portuguese police and thereafter walked southwards to the South African border post at Muzi. There were two buildings at the Muzi post. The border post used to be staffed by the South African Police and mainly served migrant labourers from Mozambique leaving or returning to that country.

The first time he left Mozambique, Jonas went to work in Durban, the second time in Empangeni and the third time in Pietermaritzburg. He never went to the Witwatersrand to work on the mines. Jonas explained that, like him, most Mozambicans used to cross the border many times to look for work, but would always return home after their contracts had ended. No one wanted to leave the area permanently as they were able to make a 'good life' in Mozambique.

Jonas' story is extremely common among older people in the borderland. Most of these older men from southern Mozambique worked in one of the South African cities and most can speak Fanagalo[12] and a bit of Afrikaans.

Although the war of independence was largely confined to the north of Mozambique, fear of the spreading violence reached the far southern parts of the country as well. The mere threat of the Mozambican war of liberation, led to the

[12] The *lingua franca* of the mines. Fanagalo is a mixture of mainly isiZulu, Afrikaans and English words and phrases.

flight of many people from Mozambique to neighbouring countries. Grace Gumede and her family is one such an example.

Case 2.2: Grace Gumede's border crossing

Grace lived with her father and mother in Manhoca in southern Mozambique. She does not remember the exact date that they left Mozambique, but it was during the early reign of Chief Mzimba Tembe (around 1967), the father of current chief of the Mabudu-Tembe. Grace's father had heard rumours that the war in northern Mozambique was going to spread to the south and decided to leave. He moved his family across the border to Bhekabantu, an area some ten kilometres south of the divide. Grace still remembers the dangers of their trip across the Usuthu River, and to this day she has not returned to Mozambique for fear of repeating the frightful journey.

Grace's example is however, uncommon. The southern part of Mozambique did not see much of the hostilities of the war of independence, and it was more the fear that the fighting might spread that led people like Grace to cross the border than the reality of war.

Apart from the examples of Jonas and Grace, there are countless other examples of people moving freely across the border before 1975 to visit relatives and friends. Informants recalled how easy it used to be for them to move from one side of the border to the other. Although there was a fence, the authorities allowed local people, whom they knew, relative free movement across the border. Older informants stated that apart from occasional patrols by the police at Muzi and Manhoca, no real

policing occurred at the border. This made crossings of the border extremely easy for the borderlanders.

Conclusion

The historical events that took place in south-eastern Africa between the early nineteenth century and the late twentieth century had a remarkable effect on the cultural landscape. However, despite an increasing Zulu influence in the southern parts of the Mabudu chiefdom from 1815 onwards, Maputaland remained a relatively homogenous social, cultural and political zone. As Bruton and Cooper (1980) remark:

> The amaThonga settled some centuries ago in an area which was, on the whole, low-lying, inclement and unhealthy, and not well-suited to stock farming or extensive agriculture. As a result, they explored other ways of making a living. They hunted and snared wild game, made extensive use of indigenous fruits and vegetables, and fished extensively in the coastal lagoons, lakes and rivers, which is unusual amongst the southern Bantu. The fabric of their society is therefore closely interwoven with the seasonal and diet availability of natural resources, and they have developed a remarkable knowledge and understanding of natural principles and processes (p.508).

The political unity and cultural homogeneity that existed within the Mabudu chiefdom was disrupted with the creation of the Mozambique/ South Africa border in 1875. This homogeneity was further disrupted through the implementation of greatly contradictory plans of social engineering north and south of the border. Portuguese centralisation and assimilation, British indirect rule and South African Apartheid all contributed to the creation of a hybrid community in the borderland that did not reflect, as clearly, the historical unity in culture and society that existed across the imposed border.

However, continued social and cultural contact across the imposed border, as well as the natural environment of the borderland have worked against the processes of disunity in the borderland and have been able to maintain a certain amount of homogeneity within the borderland. This was greatly disrupted during the Mozambican war that started almost immediately after independence. The war led to the displacement of millions of people and to an almost complete de-population of the Mozambican side of the borderland. When the war ended, demobilised soldiers, returning refugees and displaced people from all over the country inhabited the borderlandscape. Returning refugees and displaced people have brought with them foreign languages and cultures. In this manner the war and the deterritorialisation it brought on, led to the creation of a far greater degree of cultural diversity in the borderland than colonialism and Apartheid could master. Therefore, in the next chapter, I discuss the Mozambican war and its impact on the borderlandscape.

CHAPTER THREE

TOWARDS AN ALIENATED BORDERLAND: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE MOZAMBICAN WAR, 1975-1992

This chapter presents the reader with a macro-context of the Mozambican war. This analysis suggests that the border became an alienated, no-man's land during the war and that all social and cultural ties along the border were broken as cross-border contact became impossible. In the next chapter I illustrate how a micro-analysis of the war gives lie to this perception. Whereas a more traditional interpretation of the war creates a picture of a barren no-man's land, an 'on the ground' study of local actors and events illustrates that the border became a vibrant landscape traversed by refugees, weapons smugglers and militant political groups during the war.

Borderland milieus are determined by two factors: the relations between the centres of power of two neighbouring states and the multitude of relations between people living within the borderlandscape. In this chapter I examine the first factor. I argue that the militant stance taken by the governments of South Africa and Mozambique toward one another after 1975 changed the borderland milieu from *interdependent* to *alienated* (Martinez 1998:6). This had a detrimental effect on the free movement of local people across the international border and so increased disunity within the borderlandscape.

FRELIMO (*Frente da Libertação de Moçambique*), the party who took control of Mozambique after independence in 1975, openly contested South Africa's Apartheid policy and provided operative bases for South African liberation movements. Angered by this, South Africa followed Rhodesia in supporting an

insurgency movement – the MNR (Mozambique National Resistance) – that unleashed a brutal war in Mozambique. Strong restrictions were placed on the free movement of people and goods across the border between South Africa and Mozambique and contact along the borderline was discouraged. This complicated social and cultural contact and exchange across the borderline and so fostered disunion.

Furthermore, the Mozambican war led to the displacement of millions of people, many of whom settled across the border in South Africa. Once settled in South Africa, these refugees adopted the local language and customs - by this time strongly under Zulu ethnic and political influence - to protect them from prosecution and repatriation by the South African Police and Defence Force. In the 1980s the Mozambican side of the borderland became almost completely de-populated as a result of the fighting there. When the war ended, demobilised soldiers, displaced refugees, immigrants from neighbouring countries and returning refugees inhabited the northern side of the borderlandscape. These people spoke languages and practised customs foreign to the area and infinitely different from the people south of the border. In this way, the war has created cultural diversity in the borderland.

In this chapter I examine the macro context of the Mozambican war. The war in Mozambique was more than just a civil war (see Fauvet 1984; Cammack 1988; Morgan 1990:605-507). Its roots lay in the colonial legacy of Mozambique and the war itself was part of a global and regional war fought between the forces of communism and capitalism and between white supremacy and black liberation. Although the war was fought in Mozambique, it was sustained by forces outside Mozambique, most notably, the South African government (Chingono 1996:55). In order to understand the war and the manner in which it was experienced in the

borderland, it is necessary to analyse the macro-context of the war, specifically the relations between the governments of South Africa and Mozambique. As Englund (2002:3) notes, any 'account of the war that leaves out the history of colonialism in Mozambique, and the waging of Cold War world-wide, must face the charge of distortion.' The decisions taken by the governments of South Africa and Mozambique had an immense influence on the situation at their territorial periphery or borderlands. This chapter thus provides the necessary context for understanding chapter four that deals with the manner in which the Mozambican war was experienced in the borderlandscape.

'External aggression, internal discontent'

I borrowed the title from Englund (2002:3) who sums up the two main arguments on the origins of the Mozambican war as follows: 'the fundamental dividing line is the question of whether this was a civil war or a national tragedy created by external aggression.' I argue here, along with recent studies (Geffray 1990; Englund 2002:3; Vines 1991:93; and Nordstrom 1997:47-67) that the war was both a result of external aggression and internal discontent. Geffray (1990) shows that, although RENAMO (*Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana*)[1] started as an instrument of the Rhodesian and South African governments (external aggression) it grew from strength to strength because of 'internal discontent' against the policies of the FRELIMO government.

Mozambican independence in 1975 came as a great shock to the white minority governments of Rhodesia and South Africa. Previously southern Africa had formed a bloc of white-ruled settler states, closely, although informally, allied to the

[1] Also known by its English acronym MNR, which stands for Mozambique National Resistance.

United States. The political and security situation in southern Africa had now changed dramatically. It became apparent that military strength and cooperation by the white controlled regimes alone could no longer maintain regional stability (Hanlon 1984:10; Barber & Barrat 1990:179). The collapse of Portuguese colonial rule brought Marxist regimes to Angola and Mozambique and direct Cuban and Soviet intervention in support of the MPLA (*Movimento para a Libertação de Angola*). This encouraged President Machel of Mozambique to support black majority rule in South Africa and Rhodesia. The African National Congress (ANC) was allowed to operate in Mozambique and FRELIMO lent active support to Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) forces (Newitt 2002:208).

In 1974 the Rhodesian government established RENAMO to prevent the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) from establishing bases in Mozambique (Huffman 1992:1). RENAMO was consciously modelled on the *flechas* (arrows), recruited by the Portuguese in Angola during the 1960s (Flower 1987:300-301). RENAMO brought together dissidents who fled Mozambique after independence and sought refuge in Rhodesia. By training and supporting RENAMO, the Rhodesian government could do battle with ZANLA in a covert way and also create pockets of instability in Mozambique. Initially RENAMO was based entirely in Rhodesia and comprised of no more than five hundred men (Barber & Barrat 1990:270).[2]

[2] Initially RENAMO was not seen as having any role independent of Rhodesia and was not considered to represent any serious threat to the Mozambican regime. The majority of RENAMO's leadership and recruits came from the Ndau group of Shona speakers who lived along the borders of Rhodesia. The Ndau had a long history of guerrilla-style resistance against Afro-Portuguese warlords, Ndebele and Gaza impis, Rhodesian settlers and Portuguese colonial authorities. Of particular relevance are the nineteenth century wars of the Ndau against the Gaza. The Ndau's opposition to the 'southerners' (Machel himself originating from Gaza) evoked memories of resistance to Mzila and Gungunhana a hundred years earlier. However, RENAMO's campaign should not be seen as primarily an ethnic conflict. From the outset it was a movement raised and largely directed by the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organisation (Newitt 2002:209-210; Wilson 1992:542).

In the new political climate after 1974 all ties[3] between South Africa and Mozambique were in danger of breaking. Despite its fears of what was happening in Mozambique, the South African government's initial position towards the new government in Mozambique was generally positive. President John Voster made it clear that he wished the new government to succeed and that South Africa wanted to maintain economic and social ties with Mozambique. There was however, from the outset, a different viewpoint in the South African government. A group in the government led by P.W. Botha and the military establishment advocated a less cooperative approach. This group highlighted the dangers of having 'terrorists' in government in a country bordering South Africa. They wanted to use military and economic strength to stop FRELIMO from consolidating their power. Barber and Barrat (1990:181) cite reports that South African forces were mobilised on the Mozambican border to support the coup of the Free Mozambique Movement[4] without the knowledge of President Voster. This was only prevented after Voster learnt of these plans. Initially thus, South Africa maintained a policy of non-intervention in the internal affairs of Mozambique and stopped attempts at recruiting mercenaries to oppose the FRELIMO government among the Portuguese residents of South Africa (Barber & Barrat 1990:181).

FRELIMO, for its part, declared Mozambique a Marxist-Leninist state and adopted 'non-alignment' as the basis of its foreign policy. In 1977 the Soviet President visited Maputo and a declaration of friendship was signed between the two

[3] These ties included investments of South African businessmen in Mozambique and contract workers from Mozambique working on South African mines, who numbered 120 000 by 1974, as well as exports of South African goods at Lourenco Marques and Beira, the Cabora Bassa hydroelectric dam on the Zambezi River, the viability of which was based on South Africa's promise to purchase all the power generated in the initial phases (Barber & Barrat 1990:179).

[4] The Movement for a Fee Mozambique was a white dominated group who attempted a coup in Lourenco Marques in 1975. The coup was crushed, which led to the large-scale exodus of some 200, 000 people of Portuguese extraction from Mozambique (Barber & Barrat 1990:179).

countries. These declarations alienated Mozambique from its immediate neighbours. This was aggravated by FRELIMO's firm declarations of support for majority rule in South Africa, Rhodesia and Namibia (Newitt 2002:206).

However, Mozambique's relationship with South Africa remained ambiguous. Although the Mozambican government supported the ANC, it decided to renew labour agreements with South Africa, encouraged the use of the port at Maputo, and even asked for South African help to operate it. Furthermore, in March 1977 Mozambique started to sell power from Cabora Bassa to South Africa. Despite its opposition of South Africa's race policy, FRELIMO did not implement sanctions against South Africa. Then Foreign Minister, Joaquim Chissanao, argued 'we have to be realistic and realise that we cannot do it ourselves' (Barber & Barrat 1990:215-216 and Isaacman & Isaacman 1983:174).

However, the scale of economic interaction between South Africa and Mozambique did decline. This was partly a conscious decision by the Mozambican government, but also stemmed from the crises posed by RENAMO inside the country (Barber & Barrat 1990:215-216). South African mining companies also changed their labour recruiting policies and made more use of domestic labour. No new contracts were signed with Mozambicans and the numbers of Mozambican mine workers declined rapidly from around 120, 000 in 1975 to only 40, 000 in 1978 (Newitt 2002:205). This meant a great reduction in state revenue for the Mozambican government as well as a loss of income for worker families (Newitt 2002:205). FRELIMO's policies drastically affected the tourist industry. From 1974 to 1977 South African road traffic through Maputo decreased by forty per cent (Barber & Barrat 1990:215-216). After large numbers of Portuguese fled Mozambique, Maputo ceased to be a holiday playground for wealthy South Africans. This was exacerbated

by the closing down of Maputo's sex industry. FRELIMO saw the large sex industry of the capital as one of the worst aspects of colonial corruption. The Mozambican government rounded-up large numbers of sex workers for re-education, closed down bars and stopped the free operation of the sex trade. This closing also adversely affected tourism (Newitt 2002:205).

The demon gains strength: RENAMO and the destabilisation of Mozambique

The election of P.W. Botha as Prime Minister of South Africa in 1978 marked a significant break in South Africa's foreign policy in southern Africa. Botha had been Minister of Defence since 1966 and his experience in that portfolio had the greatest influence on his leadership, particularly in the conduct of foreign policy (Barber & Barrat 1990:247-248).

Botha's view of security as the critical consideration in domestic and foreign policies was expressed in his concept of a total national strategy. This new strategy was a response to what was perceived as a 'total onslaught' on South Africa as a strategic ally of the Western World by communist-inspired forces orchestrated from Moscow. The aim of the total onslaught was 'the overthrow of the present constitutional order and its replacement by a subject communist orientated black government' (Barber & Barrat 1981:254). Since a direct military offensive would be too expensive, Moscow aimed to use indirect methods like propaganda and boycotts amongst the 'non-white' population of South Africa. Accordingly, the ANC, the South African Communist Party and the Pan-Africanist Congress were major drivers in the total onslaught and they were assisted by the neighbouring black states, especially those with Marxists governments, like Mozambique. The head of the South African Defence Force, General Constand Viljoen, identified Mozambique as a

stronghold of communism from where liberation movements could move against Rhodesia and South Africa (Barber & Barrat 1990:254).

Certain trends in post-independence Mozambique had caused concern to Pretoria. Barber and Barrat (1990:270) identify these as 'the close links with the USSR and the Eastern bloc; attempts at socialist modernisation[5]; support given to Rhodesian insurgents; provocative anti-apartheid rhetoric; and particularly the use after 1976-7 of Mozambique as a corridor for ANC infiltration.'

South Africa abandoned the principles of non-intervention in its dealings with Angola and Mozambique. In Mozambique South Africa supported a rebellion against a regime it recognised as legitimate. South African involvement escalated dramatically after the collapse of Smith's Rhodesian government (Hanlon 1984:221-228). RENAMO's main base now moved across the Limpopo River to South Africa. This transfer also included the staff and equipment of RENAMO's radio station and propaganda tool, '*Voz da Africa Livre'*, (The Voice of Free Africa) which claimed to be inside Mozambique, but had in fact been operated by the Central Intelligence Organisation from inside Rhodesia (Barber & Barrat 1990:271; Chingono 1996:31).

The South African Defence Force moved for a larger and more effective deployment of RENAMO. It trained RENAMO recruits and delivered arms, ammunition and logistical supplies into Mozambique. The South African Defence Force also issued orders to RENAMO commanders and enabled the RENAMO radio

[5] According to West (2001:119-121), FRELIMO aimed to dramatically transform Mozambican society and the operation of power within it. This required, the 'liberation of constituent communities and their members – in short, the decolonisation of individual minds and the creation of what FRELIMO referred to as the "new man".' Shortly after independence FRELIMO started to implement Marxist-Leninist principles in Mozambique. All schools, clinics, hospitals, colleges, legal practises, funeral parlours, all land, most privately owned businesses and other property were nationalised (Stiff 1999:155). FRELIMO planned to do away with traditional chiefs, replacing them with Party Secretaries. Hand-in-hand with this went a forced collectivisation programme and huge state farms based on the Soviet pattern, which greatly disrupted traditional systems of land tenure (Newitt 1995:571).

station to continue its broadcasts from inside South Africa (Barber & Barrat 1990:271). RENAMO also opened offices in Germany, Britain, the United States and Portugal to represent its interests and tried to align itself with other non-communist movements, like the Contras of Nicaragua (Newitt 2002:211).

Due to South African support and deteriorating economic conditions in Mozambique, RENAMO became a real threat to the FRELIMO government.[6] RENAMO attacks on the infrastructure and rural areas led to further impoverishment and disaffection with the government. Alfonso Dhlakama, the leader of RENAMO predicted the fall of FRELIMO by 1985 and promised that food shortages would then end because of supplies from South Africa (Barber & Barrat 1990:271).

In supporting RENAMO the main aim of South Africa was seemingly not to destabilise Mozambique, since this would have led to security problems on South Africa's borders much greater than the existence of a communist neighbour. Rather, South Africa wanted to change Maputo's policy towards the ANC. In 1980 Botha sent a diplomatic note to President Machel that warned of counter-action if FRELIMO persisted to support the ANC (Chingono 1996:31). Hereafter, South Africa launched direct attacks on ANC bases inside Mozambique. In 1981 South African troops raided ANC houses in the Matola suburb of Maputo and, in 1983 South Africa launched several air strikes at ANC targets on the outskirts of Maputo (Prinsloo 1997:144). The South African Defence Force claimed that forty-one ANC members and seventeen FRELIMO soldiers died in the attacks. This was followed by a

[6] McGregor (1998:42) has shown that there was indeed strong resistance to the state's policy of creating communal villages and farms. Similarly, Geffray's (1990) main argument in his famous thesis on the war in Mozambique is that, together with FRELIMO's refusal to recognise traditional authority, it's villagisation programme was the main reason why the government lost popular support and effectively handed RENAMO 'the critical mass of rural constituents required to transform itself from an instrument of external aggression into an autonomous, self-reproducing social organism (Dinerman 1994:572). The villagisation programme and failure to recognise the authority of the chiefs may not have been the reasons why RENAMO initially opposed FRELIMO, but as the war gained momentum RENAMO used these factors as a way to garner support for its struggle (Newitt 1995:571).

commando raid on ANC offices in Maputo in October (Barber & Barat 1990:292-293; Stiff 1999:397-405).

The Ingwavuma Land Deal: a South African attempt to create a buffer state with Mozambique

Probably the best example of how the relations between the governments of Mozambique and South Africa between 1975 and 1992 influenced the borderland milieu was the failed Ingwavuma Land Deal of the early 1980s. According to this plan South Africa wanted to cede the Ingwavuma magisterial district in northern KwaZulu to Swaziland. That is, the entire area stretching along the Mozambique border with KwaZulu from the Swaziland border to the Indian Ocean. A strip some eighty kilometres long and fifty kilometres wide (see Map 3). This would decrease the length of the Mozambique/ South Africa border and also the ANC's ability to use Mozambique as a corridor for infiltrating South Africa. The plan, known as the Ingwavuma Land Deal, also included ceding the Bantustan ('homeland') of KaNgwane to Swaziland. The move would have increased Swaziland's population and landmass considerably and would have provided it with an access to the sea. South Africa would not only have had a buffer state, which opposed the ANC, but also would have denationalised a large percentage of its black population. South Africa tried to persuade the Swazi government to ally itself more closely with South Africa. This led to the signing of a non-aggression pact in February 1982 and thereafter, to a major clampdown on the ANC inside Swaziland (Omer-Cooper 1994:269).

The South African government pushed hard to implement the Ingwavuma Land Deal. To justify incorporating the inhabitants of Ingwavuma into Swaziland, the government sought to prove that the Thonga were ethnically closer to the Swazi than the Zulu. A 'Committee of Experts' was set up under the chairmanship of F.R. Tomlinson (1982) to present evidence on the ethnic and historical linkages of the inhabitants of Ingwavuma. The report, as well as an article by a prominent ethnologist at the University of Pretoria, J.J. Van Wyk (1983:58-62), found that the inhabitants of Ingwavuma living west of the Pongola River had ethnic and historic linkages with the Swazi and should rather be placed in the Swazi 'nation-state' than in KwaZulu. The people living east of the Pongola River were dissimilar from both the Swazi and the Zulu. However, Van Wyk (1983:62) argued that they would be happy to be placed with the Swazi. Despite all these efforts at 'ethnic-engineering', successful legal action by the KaNgwane and KwaZulu legislative assemblies blocked the implementation of the Ingwavuma Land Deal, thereby stopping the South African government's plans to create a buffer state between South Africa and Mozambique.

The government's plan of social engineering in Ingwavuma led to an outburst of Zulu jingoism and to mass recruitment into Inkatha, the Zulu 'cultural' organisation. Zulu became the only language of the public sector and the only medium of education in the schools in the area. Chief Mzimba Tembe, who actively supported the Land Deal, was thereafter forced to openly acknowledge subservience of his people to the Zulu and to deny a Thonga identity in favour of a Zulu identity. In this manner the Mozambican war and the South African government's efforts to create a buffer state with Mozambique led to further cultural diversity in the borderland. The Thonga people in the southern part of the borderland increasingly

identified with the rest of KwaZulu, rather than with speakers of the same language north of the border.

Failed attempt to kill the demon: the Nkomati Accord and its aftermath

On 16 March 1984 the governments of South Africa and Mozambique signed a joint security pact. Presidents Botha and Machel met in an open train on the Mozambique/ South Africa border near Komatipoort. According to the Nkomati Accord the two governments undertook to 'respect each other's sovereignty and independence, and in fulfilment of this fundamental obligation, to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of the other' (Prinsloo 1997:145). They specifically agreed:

> not [to] allow their respective territories, territorial waters or airspace to be used as a base, thoroughfare, or in any other way by another state, government, foreign military forces, organisations or individuals which plan or prepare to commit acts of violence, terrorism and aggression against the territorial integrity or political independence of the other, or may threaten the security of its inhabitants (Nkomati Accord, 1984:2, cited in Prinsloo 1997:145).

One of the first practical outcomes of the Nkomati Accords was the signing in May 1984 of a trilateral agreement between South Africa, Mozambique and Portugal regarding the Cabora Bassa Electricity Scheme (Prinsloo 1997:145).

After the signing of the Nkomati Accord, South Africa moved to end the war in Mozambique. In October Foreign Minister, Pik Botha, announced that the Mozambican government and RENAMO agreed to a South African sponsored cease-fire proposal. The plan called for RENAMO to recognise President Samora Machel's regime. Also, South Africa offered troops to monitor the cease-fire and provide technical help for the war- and drought-ravaged Mozambique.

Despite these undertakings, South Africa continued its covert support for RENAMO. With South African support RENAMO launched offensives from Malawi

against the provinces of Tete, Zambezia and Sofala in 1986 (Englund 2002:10). It was also certain that, despite efforts from South Africa, RENAMO was not likely to disband. Evo Fernandes, leader of RENAMO's delegation to the cease-fire talks, declared that his organisation 'will not accept the presence of South African troops on Mozambican territory.' As for the Machel government, he added, 'the war continues, and we may have to escalate our actions' (*Time*, 15 October 1984).

Despite the Nkomati Accord, relations between South Africa and Mozambique deteriorated. FRELIMO alleged that the South African Defence Force and private South African sources continued to support RENAMO. The government of South Africa rejected these allegations. Furthermore, the border area was declared as restricted airspace to prevent private interests from aiding RENAMO. An investigation was also launched to reveal possible RENAMO sympathisers in the South African Defence Force. Despite these pronouncements, evidence suggests continued clandestine South African support for RENAMO.[7] Although FRELIMO did not renounce the Nkomati Accords after this, relations with Pretoria were damaged and the joint security committee, whose task it was to monitor violations of the Accord, was suspended (Barber & Barrat 1990:316-317).

In 1986 tensions between Pretoria and Maputo appeared to ease and Foreign Minister Pik Botha even paid a visit to Maputo. Tensions dramatically resurfaced on 19 October 1986 when Samora Michel died in an air crash a few hundred meters inside South African airspace. The government of Mozambique blamed South Africa, alleging that the South African security forces caused the crash by luring the aircraft of its course by a decoy radio beacon. A South African investigation committee

[7] The most incriminating of these were the so-called Vaz Diaries or Gorongoza documents seized at a RENAMO base in Gorongoza. The documents revealed several flights undertaken by the South African military to transport supplies and weapons to RENAMO as well as details of three clandestine visits by Vice-Minister Louis Nel to RENAMO bases in Mozambique (Prinsloo 1997:301).

found that the Soviet crew of the aircraft did not follow the correct procedures. Neither Mozambique nor the Soviet Union accepted the findings and suspicions of the South African government's involvement persisted. Despite the deterioration of the relationship between the South African and Mozambican governments, labour, transport, trade and energy links between the two countries continued. The contradictory relationship between Pretoria and Maputo is evident in the fact that in May 1986 South Africa granted a R3 million loan to Mozambique for the upgrade of Maputo harbour, while in June General Malan called the Mozambican government 'Marxist lackeys' (Barber & Barrat 1990:317).

Conditions in Mozambique continued to deteriorate. The mid-1980s saw an increase in hostilities between FRELIMO and RENAMO and the continuation of internal and external displacements in Mozambique. As the after-effects of Machel's death receded, working relations between South Africa and Mozambique improved. Despite mutual suspicion, both Botha and the new Mozambican president, Joachim Chissano reaffirmed their commitment to the Nkomati Accord. A joint security committee was resuscitated and agreement was reached on the financing of the Cabora Bassa dam (Barber & Barrat 1990:335).

The death of the demon: RENAMO and FRELIMO sign the Rome Peace Treaty

By the late 1980s FRELIMO had ceased to function as a government outside of the capital of Maputo. Still it refused to talk to RENAMO, unwilling to confer on RENAMO the status of legitimate opponent. RENAMO, for its part, also did not want to talk to FRELIMO, whom it did not recognise as a legitimate government (Newitt 2002:220). However, with the collapse of communism throughout Eastern Europe the ideological differences between FRELIMO and RENAMO diminished.

Still, the battle continued. Soldiers on both sides feared losing their guns. For some, they were the 'implements for enforcing local protection rackets; for others, the only means of getting food.' Fearing that their movement's bloody reputation would not help them win elections, RENAMO's leaders preferred to prolong the war and entrench their own positions (*Economist* 15 August 1992).

FRELIMO started to dismantle the structures of the one-party Marxist state thereby nullifying RENAMO's claim that it fought for democracy and capitalism. Furthermore, the new South African president, F.W. de Klerk reined in the South African military. In 1990 Namibia became independent and peace talks in Angola led to the withdrawal of Cuban troops. The end of the Cold War in southern Africa coupled with a devastating drought in Mozambique in 1990 finally forced FRELIMO and RENAMO to the negotiating table (Newitt 2002:220).

At this stage FRELIMO approached the Vatican and the Italian government to help in the peace process.[8] With the Italian lay brotherhood of Sant'Egidio acting as brokers, a General Peace Agreement was eventually in Rome during October 1992, and general elections were scheduled for 1994 (Newitt 2002:221).

The effects of the ten-year war in Mozambique were catastrophic. The war cost over a million lives (Nordstrom 1995:39-41). The destruction of social and economic infrastructures caused immense devastation and human suffering. But the cost in human suffering was caused by more than destruction of property. Murder, rape, and mutilation were perpetrated on a mass scale. Homes were plundered, land and crops were burnt, and livestock were butchered. The terror that was instilled in ordinary people and the wholesale destruction of homes and land disrupted the

[8] Attempts at mediations between FRELIMO and RENAMO started from 1984 shortly after the signing of the Nkomati Accord. By 1988 pressure from the USA, Kenya and Zimbabwe, who wanted to curtail its military involvement in Mozambique, led to a meeting in Nairobi where both sides put forth proposals. Talks planned for Blantyre, however, failed due to the absence of Alfonso Dlakhama, leader of RENAMO (Newitt 2002:221).

functioning of families and entire communities (see Magaia 1988, Wilson 1992, and Nordstrom 1995 and 1997). The landscape was extremely bleak. A quarter of Mozambique's fifteen million people were made refugees,[9] most major roads and railways were destroyed. Living standards plummeted. In 1992 the World Bank listed Mozambique as the poorest country in the world, with a per capita income of $79 a year, while the United Nations Development Programme's 1994 *Human Development Report* ranked it at 159 out of 173 countries in quality-of-life indicators (Wurst 1994:1).

Within days of the signing of the Rome Peace Treaty the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) began to oversee the peace-process. This included the incorporation of FRELIMO and RENAMO soldiers into civilian life, the restructuring and preparation of government for general democratic elections and the repatriation of millions of Mozambican refugees. Sadako Ogata, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees at the time, called the plan to return the 1.7 million Mozambicans who had fled the country during the civil war the biggest U.N. operation ever in Africa. The three-year, US$ 203 million programme planned to draw refugees from the six countries neighbouring Mozambique.[10] By early July 1993 a total of 800, 000 had already returned, with an estimated 600, 000 expected by the end of the year. On top of these there were the spontaneous returnees who came back without any assistance shortly after the signing of the peace accords (Wurst 1994:1).

[9] Of the approximately 1.7 million displaced Mozambicans who sought refuge in neighbouring countries during the War, an estimated 250 000 had settled in South Africa, mostly in 'camps' in rural areas along the northeast border with Mozambique (Rodgers 2002:1).

[10] Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa.

Conclusion

International relations between the governments of South Africa and Mozambique between 1975 and 1992 had a dramatic effect on the milieu along the territorial boundary between the two countries. South Africa increased its military presence along the Mozambican border and even attempted to create a buffer state between itself and Mozambique. In this climate contact along the borderline was highly regulated and even discouraged. However, it is not only the relationship between the governments of neighbouring countries that determine the borderlandscape milieu. The inhabitants of the borderlandscape play an active role in defining this transitional environment, oftentimes in defiance of the wishes of their respective governments. This chapter presented the reader with a macro-context of the Mozambican war. In the following chapter I present more detail on how the war actually played out in the southern Mozambique/ South Africa borderlandscape. This micro-context is often neglected and local people's actions are regularly seen as mere reactions to 'bigger' historical events. The next chapter shows how local people shaped their own histories against the background sketched in this chapter.

Figure 4: Warning sign at Catuane close to the South African border, 2003
The sign reads: Warning Land Mines!

Photograph by Wayne Matthews

CHAPTER FOUR

DESPERATE CROSSINGS:

THE WAR THROUGH THE EYES OF A BORDERLANDER

> This area has been over the years characterised by the presence of elephants, and the community had learned to live with them, until the civil war broke out in Mozambique. During the war in Mozambique, our neighbours started to harass elephants in Mozambique, and those that escaped fled to join the flocks in Tembe. Whilst we appreciated the increase of elephants in the area, there was a problem in that the most of these *immigrating* elephants were wounded, been harassed, and had narrowly escaped death in many instances. As a result of this, these elephants were unfortunately very aggressive and unfriendly towards the local community, unlike our own herds. These elephants from Mozambique started harassing community members around this area.
>
> Inkosi Israel Mabudu Tembe[1] (italics in original).

This chapter presents a micro-analysis of the Mozambican war as it played out in the southern Mozambique/ South African borderlandscape. I argue that, in contrast to a macro-analysis of the war that suggests the borderlandscape became disunited during the war, a micro-analysis of the war highlights the union that stretches across the border. During the war the northern side of the borderlandscape became de-populated as Mozambicans sought refuge south of the border. Old ties of kinship and shared ancestry were invoked to emphasise the unity between immigrating refugees and their kinsmen in South Africa. In this manner the war strengthened the social ties linking people in the borderlandscape.

[1] This is an excerpt of a speech delivered by Inkosi Tembe at the Integrated Development Plan Workshop held at Tembe Elephant Park in September 2003. Although Inkosi Tembe's speech refers particularly to elephants coming across the border during the Mozambican War, his remarks can be extrapolated to include the feelings many South Africans have for Mozambicans who crossed the border during the war. Compare in this regard Comaroff and Comaroff (2001) who illustrate how fears of alien plant invasion were used in the media and by government as a metaphor for fears of illegal migrants in Cape Town.

Tragedy: the borderlandscape during the war

From the literature it is apparent that borderlandscapes are frequently contested spaces and militarised environments, and are often profoundly affected by warfare (see Donnan & Wilson 1999:63-86). Hence residents of borderlandscapes experience war in a very particular and unique way.

McGregor (1998:38) argues that, in the case of the Mozambican war, operations:

> depended critically on the space provided by the international borders: the border allowed RENAMO to develop international supply networks, and facilitated liaison with the South African military, with supporters in the refugee camps and among self settled refugees, as well as providing access to important informal markets in South Africa and Swaziland.

By the time that war escalated in the southern border regions there was already discontent amongst local people towards the FRELIMO government. RENAMO was able to play on this discontent to garner support amongst the local people. This supports Geffray's (1990) argument that RENAMO, although it was initially a mere instrument of the Rhodesian government, gradually became a popular (peasant) organisation. Geffray (1990) sees an intimate link between the rise of RENAMO and FRELIMO's disregard for traditional authority and custom. FRELIMO's militancy against chiefs and its disregard of local authority structures angered many local people who in return started to support RENAMO.

In the southern borderland district of Matutuine it was especially FRELIMO's villigisation programme that elicited popular opposition. Like other border areas in Mozambique, Matutuine was prioritised for rural socialisation because it was perceived as particularly vulnerable to subversive actions. However, by 1979 Maputo's district and provincial officials recognised that villagisation in this area

would fail because 'Matutuine's sandy soils were readily salinated and often only suited to shifting cultivation. In the villages that were created, officials noted hunger, profound economic problems and cross border flight' (McGregor 1998:42-43).

Southern Mozambique did not escape the cruelties, atrocities and the attacks on civilian populations that are a distinctive feature of contemporary warfare. The interviews I conducted in southern Mozambique show that RENAMO initially embodied popular discontent against the FRELIMO government. However, many informants noted that RENAMO soon began to terrorise the countryside. Most peoples' recollections of RENAMO comprise horrific tales of bandits (*skebengas*[2]) who raped[3] and tortured villagers, stole their food and killed their cattle. Constant fear of attacks by RENAMO became an intimate part of people's lives.

Antonios Ngubande told me how he and his father hid in the forest behind their home while RENAMO soldiers raped his mother and sister inside his father's hut. When they finished raping his mother, the soldiers forced her to kill all the family's chickens and to cook it for them. The soldiers slept in his father's hut that night and repeatedly raped his sister. When they left the next morning, they took with them all the fish Antonios' father had salted and dried, all his palm wine and the little bit of money they had in the house.

Antonios was fortunate to escape the bandits. In other cases, boys were rounded-up by RENAMO soldiers and forced to life with them in their bush-camps.[4] These boys were taught to operate weapons, learned to smoke and drink with the

[2] Zulu word that means criminal or thug.

[3] During the War RENAMO used rape and other forms of sexual violence as weapons of terror and intimidation. Husbands and children were forced to watch soldiers the rape their wives and mothers. People also tell of husbands that were used as mattresses, being forced to lie on the ground, while soldiers raped their wives on top of them.

[4] Recruitment into RENAMO was often far less than voluntary. An estimate suggests that up to ninety per cent of RENAMO's troops were kidnapped and forcefully trained to become soldiers (Nordstrom 1997:50).

soldiers and joined them in their looting campaigns. Petros Zikude, who lived in Matutuine throughout the war, was proud to tell me how he became a *skebenga.* He related that when he was twelve years old RENAMO soldiers took him, his brother and his older sister from their home early one morning. His sister performed domestic duties at the army camp. She cooked food, fetched water and firewood and slept with older soldiers when they became drunk at night. Petros said that his sister, who died within a few months of their capture, always tried to fight of the sexual advances of the soldiers, but she was, 'like a cow caught to be slaughtered… no matter how hard she fought the soldiers always got their way'. Petros also remembers how RENAMO commanders ordered him to kill one of his own relatives during a raid on a small fishing village at one of the bigger lakes in Matutuine. He walked into a house and was stirred when the household head recognised him and called him *mshana* (my sister's son). The old man pleaded with Petros to leave him in peace and to respect his belongings. Petros' commander got angered by the old man's incessant pleas. He told the old man that the only family Petros has are his brothers with whom he fights. The commander accused the old man of being a government informant and ordered Petros to shoot him. Petros was saddened by the experience, but did not give it much thought.

The population of Matutuine were systematically terrorised during the war and forced to leave the area. This was all part of RENAMO's plan to make the area ungovernable and to use the area as a free-movement terrain. In trying to accomplish this they fought a 'dirty war' against the local population, instilling in them a fear of what might happen if they aligned themselves with the FRELIMO government. Some of these atrocities committed by RENAMO are described in more detail below where I analyse the flight of refugees from Matutuine to South Africa.

Flight: escaping the warzone

Comparing aerial photos from 1975 with aerial photos from 1991 confirms oral evidence from informants that the Mozambican side of the borderland became de-populated during the war (see Appendices C, D F, G and H). McGregor (1998:51) states that the borderland areas around Zitundo, which were 'liberated' by RENAMO, became a de-populated no-man's land traversed by armies from both sides. In 2000 I conducted a questionnaire-based survey in the Matutuine district in southern Mozambique. Of the two hundred people interviewed, who currently live in the Mozambican borderland, only fifty-four (twenty-six per cent) lived in the borderland during the war. Fifty-eight interviewees lived in South Africa, thirteen in Swaziland and two in Zimbabwe. A total of 129 interviewees lived in Mozambique during the war, the majority of them, however, in Maputo (see Table 1). This clearly illustrates the depopulation of the southern Mozambican borderland that took place during the Mozambican war. Dominy (1986) states that along the KwaZulu-Natal border with Mozambique,

> cross-border movement has been restricted by both the South African and Mozambique governments and in 1979 several people were killed by landmines[5] laid on the Mozambique side of the border. The South African police and military presence in the areas has also increased considerably (p.91).

[5] Large stretches of farmable land in Mozambique are unusable because of landmines. Human Rights Watch Africa reports that 'perhaps the most devastating use of land mines was the random dissection of mines in fields and along access paths to stop peasants from producing food.' Mines manufactured in 15 different countries were used by both sides in the fighting, accelerating a devastating famine cycle in the 1980s that sent a huge refugee exodus across the borders with South Africa, Zambia, Tanzania and Malawi (UN 2002).

Table 1: Places in Mozambique where sampled individuals lived during the war, Matutuine, 2000.

Place Name	No
Bella Vista	2
Boane	1
Cabo del Gado	1
Catembe	1
Catuane	17
Gala	4
Gaza	8
Inhambane	6
Mahau	1
Manicha	3
Maputo	45
Nampula	1
Ponta do Oura	2
Ponta Malongane	1
Salamanga	18
Xuxa	1
Zitundo	12
Other	5
Total	129

According to South African Police officers stationed in the area at that time, there were even efforts to electrify the boundary fence. This, for some reason, did not work. Instead, the army planted sisal all along the boundary fence to prevent people from crossing (see Figure 5). This is a technique used by local people throughout Maputaland. Sisal planted in close proximity creates an impenetrable wall. However, because elephants, who roamed freely in the area, kept breaking through the sisal wall, the plan never succeeded[6]. The fence remained a mere three-strand, three-foot high wire construction, although the increase in soldiers along the border made it

[6] The last free-ranging elephants in South Africa were only fenced in after 1983 with the proclamation of the Tembe Elephant Park.

difficult for local people to cross. In this period crossings from South Africa to Mozambique came to all but a complete standstill.

Figure 5: Sisal planted along the Mozambique/ South Africa border, 2001

Photograph by the author

Most South Africans who crossed the border, were not residents of the borderland, but were rather members of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, the armed wing of the ANC. According to Hennop and McLean (2001:71), this border contained many of the main transit routes used by the liberation movements for smuggling weapons into South Africa. Weapons and ammunition were smuggled through Mozambique into KwaNgwanase (Manguzi) and from there it was transported to Empangeni and Durban. Until the late 1980s, when armed conflict between Inkatha and the ANC escalated in KwaZulu-Natal, very few locally resident individuals were involved in this form of border crossing. Apart from the ANC smuggling weapons into South Africa, RENAMO also smuggled weapons and other supplies from South Africa into

Mozambique, sometimes with the aid of the South African Defence Force, and, according to certain informants, the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources.[7]

As the war escalated in Matutuine, some people sought refuge at the FRELIMO base at Zitundo. But when RENAMO liberated[8] Zitundo, most people fled south. Their proximity to the international border allowed people an option of escape. Englund (2002) illustrates how people in the Mozambique/ Malawi borderland moved into Malawi during the war for safety, while McGregor (1994) illustrates similar experiences along the Mozambique/ Swaziland border. This option to exit the warzone was not open to people who lived deeper inland and in the more central areas of Mozambique (Magaia 1988; Nordstrom 1997).

Because of their social relationships across the international border, some borderlanders who fled southern Mozambique could rely on ties of kinship or friendship to secure a place to live on the South African side of the border. Others would just cross the border and beg for help. Chief (*induna*) Sigodi Tembe of Mbangweni, a ward on the South African side of the borderland (see Map 4), remembers many families coming from Mozambique asking for land to settle on. Josef Khambule, acting chief at KwaMshudu, an area close to Zitundo on the South African side of the border (see Map 4), gave similar accounts of families and

[7] An informant who claims to have smuggled weapons into South Africa for the ANC in the 1980s, said that the South African government used the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources as a front for getting weapons to RENAMO. This informant also alleges that the South African government used the infrastructure of the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources to train Inkatha youth armies at a base near Mkhuze in Ingwavuma and to procure weapons for Inkatha.

[8] RENAMO claimed that the areas they dominated were 'liberated' since the 'oppressive' government were no longer in control of these areas. In these areas RENAMO forced the local people to provide them with food and water and sometimes took wives from the local population for work and sex, while young men and kids were forcefully recruited. In Matutuine RENAMO 'liberated' areas by depopulating them. According to McGregor (1998:52) 'this "liberated" countryside was inhabited by RENAMO soldiers and captives in mobile military bases together with (in some places) a tiny dispersed civilian population hiding in the forests and fleeing to the bases for protection.' By depopulating areas RENAMO facilitated movement to neighbouring countries where their strongest base of support lay amongst civilians disaffected by FRELIMO's villigasation projects. It also allowed RENAMO to set up supply networks linking bases in Swaziland and South Africa with Mozambique.

individuals fleeing from Mozambique, asking for a place to stay. Josef remembers that people would arrive without money or food. They would ask for temporary work ('piece-jobs') and would look after cattle or cultivate the fields of South Africans in exchange for food and shelter.

A household survey I conducted in KwaMshudu in November 2002, shows that fifty-nine per cent of people there had left Mozambique during the war (see Appendix I). This figure is probably much higher since people are reluctant to admit that they come from Mozambique for fear of being repatriated. Mozambicans chose to settle in KwaMshudu because it was scarcely populated and distanced from Manguzi where the police and defence forces actively sought refugees. Josef Khambule estimates that more than ninety per cent of the people of KwaMshudu come from Mozambique.

Aerial photos of the area from 1975 confirm that KwaMshudu used to be very sparsely populated before the start of the war in Mozambique (see Appendix C). Furthermore, census information from the Department of Health at Jozini in northern KwaZulu-Natal shows that there was a fifty-two per cent increase in homesteads in KwaMshudu between 1981 and 1986. Whereas there were only 729 homestead in 1981, the number of homesteads in the area had risen to 1,531 by 1986. At the same time, the amounts of huts in the area increased by twenty-six per cent, from 1,600 in 1981 to 2,178 in 1986, and the population increased by 433 people from 3,022 people in 1981 to 3,455 people in 1986. De Bruin (1987:18) attributes these increases to influx of refugees from Mozambique.

In contrast to the increase of both homesteads or kraals (collections of huts under the authority of a single household head) and homes in KwaMshudu between 1981 and 1986, there was a small increase in the number of homesteads, yet a

dramatic increase in the numbers of homes and people in Manguzi, the largest town east of Jozini (see Map 3) over the same period. Between 1981 and 1986 the amount of homesteads in Manguzi increased by only nine per cent, but homes increased with forty-eight per cent, and the population with twenty-six per cent (De Bruin 1987:18).

These figures suggest that in KwaMshudu local headmen freely granted Mozambican refugees their own homesteads. In Manguzi, on the other hand, the police and defence force were much more active and Mozambican refugees settled in huts on the sites of friends and family members. This made it more difficult for the police to find them. The different patterns in the increase of homesteads in KwaMshudu and Manguzi between 1981 and 1986 also suggest that Mozambican refugees settled in KwaMshudu in larger groups or family units, whereas more refugees in Manguzi came there as individuals. Informants in KwaMshudu and Manguzi confirmed this deduction.

There were no structures on the KwaZulu-Natal side of the borderland compared to the refugee camps set up at Giyani in the former 'homeland' of Gazankulu in the present-day Limpopo Province (see Rodgers 1996 and 2002).[9] Mozambicans fleeing the war to northern KwaZulu merely settled 'illegally' among the population where they were granted accommodation. It would also appear that, apart from a few cases as in Mahlungulo (see below); there was no sense of unity

[9] Rodgers (2002:14-15) notes that throughout the Mozambican war, the South African government refused to recognise Mozambicans as refugees. Instead, the South African government chose to interpret this mass influx as 'illegal immigration'. Refugees were however allowed to take refuge in the 'homelands' of KaNgwane and Gazankulu, located close to the Mozambican border. These two 'homeland' governments actively encouraged the settlement of Mozambican refugees. However, these rules did not apply in the KwaZulu homeland, where the police acted in line with the South African policy of arresting and deporting refugees who crossed the border. According to Rodgers (2002:16-17) the South African government granted a mandate to the UNHCR to consider these Mozambicans as prima facie refugees in 1992. This was done primarily to attract support for a repatriation programme that was to be funded and managed by the UNHCR. From 1994 to 1995 the UNHCR implemented an organised programme to voluntarily repatriate an estimated 250 000 Mozambican refugees from South Africa. This plan did not, however, concentrate on Mozambicans who had settled informally in northern KwaZulu.

amongst refugees. They did not settle as large refugee communities as was the case in the Mozambique/ Malawi borderland (Englund 2002:84). Out of fear of being deported, people tried to blend in and to hide the fact that they came from Mozambique. Many people I interviewed said that they lost all ties with friends and family from Mozambique. They were not even sure whether those people had left Mozambique or stayed behind.

Amongst the people who crossed the border during the early stages of the war was Jonas Tembe, the man whom we met in the previous chapter. At present Jonas lives in KwaMshudu, on the South African side of the borderland, where I first met him in 2002. In 2002 he was seventy-six years old. When I first arrived at the homestead where he lives, which is on the way to a border market that I frequently visited, he was changing the grass thatching on the roof of one of the huts. I stopped to investigate his work and asked him questions about it. This informal conversation led to a couple of follow-up visits during which I learned more about the war in Mozambique and Jonas's journey from Mozambique to Kwazulu.

Case 4.1: Jonas Tembe's flight from Mozambique

Jonas decided to flee from Mozambique to South Africa shortly after the outbreak of fighting between FRELIMO and RENAMO in the late 1970s. He remembers that the gate at Manhoca was closed and that Mozambicans were no longer allowed to cross the border freely. Jonas and his wife and daughter left Zitundo early in the morning and crossed the border at around mid-day. Every now and again on their way to the border they would see FRELIMO soldiers or RENAMO forces (*bandidios armadas* – armed bandits). They would all quickly hide in the bushes since the soldiers would

catch people and take them to Bela Vista or Maputo, while bandits would abduct women as wives or rape them and force the men to join them, if they did not kill them. After having safely climbed over the border fence, Jonas took his family to live with his uncle's son at Mahlangulo in South Africa - some three kilometres south of the border. Life was good at his relative's house and the family did not have to pay any rent to stay there. They were also given their own field on which to plant crops. They shared a portion of their produce with their relatives.

Mahlangulo, in northern KwaZulu-Natal, became a refuge for many people fleeing Zitundo during the war. Due to its close proximity to Zitundo, many people from Mahlangulo had ties of kinship and friendship with the people of Zitundo.[10]

The refugees included RENAMO soldiers who were driven from Mozambique by FRELIMO. FRELIMO put landmines all over the Ponta do Ouro area and made it impossible for RENAMO to operate there. At Mahlungulo RENAMO set up a large base where they gathered food and weapons from other refugees and sent these to their forces inside Mozambique. RENAMO urged refugees from Mozambique, like Jonas, to grow a percentage of their crops for their soldiers in exchange for residential land in Mahlungulo. Jonas remembers that younger men were sent to work on the mines to get money for RENAMO's war effort. These young men transported weapons from areas like Durban and Johannesburg to Mahlungulo, from where they were sent to Mozambique.

McGregor (1998) writes that these cross-border operations also involved

[10] The local chief of Zitundo, Lucas Michangula, was related to the chief of Mahlungulo and aided people who came from his 'brother's' place. As the war gained momentum, Lucas, who was also the FRELIMO appointed secretary of Zitundo, was himself forced to flee to his 'brother's' place at Mahlungulo. Lucas was apparently involved in a scandal concerning Party funds and was summoned for trail in Maputo. Scared of what might happen to him, he fled to Mahlungulo where he joined RENAMO forces based there. According to McGregor (1998:52) many chiefs associated with RENAMO chose to live outside Mozambique during the War, returning when they were required to conduct traditional ceremonies, or other business.

> linking up with external markets, such as those for weapons, drugs, ivory and rhino horn, (looted) consumer goods and labour. Some trading took place in open border markets which were controlled by RENAMO, but were also used by government soldiers, petty traders of unclear allegiance, labour recruiters and others (p.55).

In the early 1980s Jonas' wife died and soon after that his uncle's son also passed away. At that time his daughter married and moved away. Not having any other relatives, Jonas looked up Jim, an old friend of his who lived at KwaMshudu, the little borderland area in South Africa where I first met Jonas. Although they were not particularly good friends in Empangeni, Jim allowed Jonas to live with him for a trail period - to see what 'type of man' he was. During this time, Jim had to hide Jonas from others in the community and from the chief. He feared that someone might reveal that he housed an 'illegal immigrant'. Jim said that South African soldiers sometimes visited peoples' homes in search of Mozambicans. He explained that one could only introduce a foreigner to the chief after you had known the foreigner for a period of three months and were sure you could trust him. When Jonas first came to live with him, Jim went to his neighbours and asked them not to reveal his stranger. According to Jim, everybody already knew, but acted as if they didn't. During his 'trial period' Jonas had to do most of the agricultural work at Jim's homestead and he also had to look after his cattle. Now that the war is over Jonas says that he has nothing to return to in Mozambique and does not want to go back. All his cattle and all his relatives are dead.

From Jonas' life story we can discern two different resources on which refugees secured safety on the South African side of the borderland, namely ties of kinship and friendship. Although in this case Jim was not a good friend, he was at least someone whom Jonas knew. Although filled with tragedy, Jonas' story is not as depressing as

that of other people who crossed the border during the Mozambican war. The two case studies, below, highlight the brutalities experienced by other border-crossers in Mozambique and links to the discussion above on local experiences of the war.

Case study 4.2: Sam Masinga's tragedy

Sam Masinga lived with his family at Catembe, a village overlooking the Maputo bay (see Map 3). Before the war in Mozambique had started, Sam had already crossed the border on a couple occasions in search of work. He worked for the KwaZulu Bureau of Natural Resources at Kosi Bay, Sodwana, Ndumo and Mkhuze and also at Empangeni and Pietermaritzburg. Before the war had started, he crossed the border at the official border posts at Manhoca and also at Komatipoort/ Ressano Garcia. Everything changed once the war began. Sam remembers that the people at Catembe suffered a great deal during the war. 'Soldiers were not only just killing other soldiers; they were also killing normal people.' 'People got scared', he said. 'Some fled to the cities like Maputo and Beira. Others fled to South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.'

At first Sam stayed on, until RENAMO soldiers came to his homestead one day. The soldiers took Sam's baby boy and stamped the baby to death with a maize mortar, in front of Sam's eyes. They also abducted his wife and forced her to live with them in the bush. Soon after the soldiers had left, Sam fled to South Africa with what was left of his family (his mother and two young sons).

Sam knew a man in Catembe called Matheus who helped refugees to cross the border. Matheus knew where the soldiers and landmines were located and could guarantee a safe journey. Payment of R50 could be made later, after a person had

been living in South Africa for a while and had made some money. Matheus did not offer any transport. Once he had gathered all the people in Catembe who wanted to go to South Africa, Matheus led them on a hiking journey through dangerous terrain to the border. Sam recalls that there were about twenty-five people with him on his journey. Apart from soldiers and landmines on their journey south, people also had to beware of elephants. Many of the elephants were extremely aggressive due to poaching by soldiers. From Catembe they went to Majuba, then to Salamanga and on to Zitundo (see Map 3). The whole time they slept in the bushes on the outskirts of these villages, always on the lookout for RENAMO and FRELIMO soldiers. They crossed the border at KwaMshudu during the night. Matheus stayed behind, returning to Catembe the next day.

Sam found refuge at the house of his brother, who was the first person in his family to flee Mozambique. His brother left only a short while before Sam did and already secured a piece of land to stay and to cultivate. Sam enjoyed his life in South Africa and later married a South African woman. They are currently still living in KwaMshudu in South Africa.

Case 4. 3: Ntombizonke Ngubande's flight from Mozambique

Ntombizonke Ngubande lives in Hluphekeni in South Africa, some fifteen kilometres south of the Mozambican border. She is a relatively frail woman in her early thirties. Like Sam, Ntombizonke was forced to flee Mozambique during the war. Ntombizonke was born at Gala close to Lake Piti, inside the boundaries of the Maputo Elephant Reserve (see Map 3).

Shortly after her eighteenth birthday, RENAMO soldiers visited Ntombizonke's family's home.[11] They killed her father and her mother and abducted her. Ntombizonke stayed with the soldiers at a camp in the bushes close the lake. There she cooked food for them, fetched firewood and water and forcefully slept with them.

Ntombizonke only stayed with the soldiers for about two months. Then she escaped. She fled with another girl of about the same age who had also been caught by the soldiers. They waited until nightfall and then took the dangerous journey. They crossed the border at Ponta do Ouro during the night and went to live with Ntombizonke's brother at Hluphekeni, just south of KwaMshudu. She has married there and still lives there today.

The stories of Jonas, Sam, Ntombizonke and countless others that I collected during fieldwork confirm that border crossings during the late 1970s and early 1980s were predominantly north-south and motivated by the war in Mozambique. Most people fled in groups, made up of friends and family members, to cross the border. Both Jonas and Sam had on previous occasions crossed the border, before the outbreak of hostilities. This provided them with knowledge of what to expect on the South African side. If it is accepted that most men in southern Mozambique used to cross the border before 1975 (see Harries 1994), then it can be argued that for most people, especially men, the act of crossing the border itself was not novel. What had changed were their motivations for crossing the border, as well as the degree of difficulty in crossing the border. It was in these circumstances that people like Matheus could

[11] People at Gala all remember the advent of the RENAMO soldiers there. Induna Tembe, who stayed at Gala during the War, remembers how the soldiers took all his cattle, goats and chickens, leaving him to look for food in the bush. He and other people in the area set up small temporary shelters in the forest, believing it would safeguard them from the soldiers.

make a living. However, in the life histories that I collected, Sam was the only person who employed a guide to cross the border.

RENAMO sometimes provided passes and guides for people wanting to leave the country, and even organised exoduses of people living in communal villages to South Africa or Swaziland before they attacked some villages. Refugees often spoke of their cross-border guides as being RENAMO members. Distinctions between soldiers, refugees, cross-border traders and guides were certainly blurred during the war. The war also created a new traffic in migrants along the old migration routes from the Maputo hinterland to neighbouring countries.

> Guiding became a highly exploitative practice during the war because many people could not afford to pay the guides' inflated fees, and arriving in South Africa in debt, they were sold to employers as servants, workers or concubines, the guides thus receiving their dues (McGregor 1998:50-51).[12]

In all three cases of border crossings related above, people utilised kinship and friendship ties to provide them shelter and safety on first arriving in South Africa. These cases differ markedly from that of Raphael Natalicio who had no relatives or friends in South Africa and who had never even been to South Africa before he fled Mozambique in 1986.

Case 4.4: Raphael Natalicio's border crossing

Raphael Natalicio currently lives in Manguzi in South Africa where he works as an independent building contractor. He is in his late thirties. Raphael and his wife, Khalulu, a Zulu woman from Manguzi, had their second child when Raphael and I

[12] Guides selling their services to border crossers are quite common on the United States/ Mexico border where the so-called *coyotes* make a living of guiding illegal immigrants from Mexico to the United States (Anzaldua 1999:33), or along the Strait of Gibraltar where the wolves (*les coups*) perform a similar function (Donnan & Wilson 1999).

first started working together. During that time his mother, who lives in Catembe in Mozambique, visited Raphael's family to help him take care for his toddler whilst his wife was in hospital. Shortly after the birth of his daughter Raphael's mother returned to Mozambique where she lives with her second husband. Raphael's father abandoned the family during the Mozambican war and went to live in Johannesburg in South Africa where he married a second wife. Raphael had not seen his father since he left.

Raphael left Mozambique during July 1986. At that time he had lived at Catembe, the same village where Sam came from. Raphael decided to leave Mozambique because of what he perceived to be an increase in both FRELIMO and RENAMO's aggressive recruiting campaigns. Many of his friends had been taken by one side or the other to fight in the war. 'Some of them as young as fourteen years old!' Raphael did not understand the war and could see no reason why he had to fight. Shortly after his sixteenth birthday he left his place in Catembe to live in the city of Maputo, where he believed he would be safe from the soldiers. However, RENAMO even recruited soldiers in Maputo. He told me how buses would stop outside schools and how soldiers would force the teachers to send all the kids (boys and girls) to the buses to fight in the war. Sometimes even the teachers had to accompany them.

Raphael found conditions in Maputo to be as unsafe as those in Catembe, and decided to go to South Africa. He took the ferry from Maputo to Catembe where he met and persuaded his cousin, Alex to accompany him. They set off for Zitundo by bus. During that time and for most of the war RENAMO controlled Zitundo. Just before the bus reached Zitundo, Raphael and Alex jumped off the bus and hid themselves in the bushes, where they waited for nightfall. When it was dark enough

they started to walk towards the border. They crossed the border in the vicinity of Kosi Bay, where the official border post is located at present, from where they travelled to Manguzi.

Unlike Jonas, Sam and Ntombizonke, Raphael and Alex did not have any family in South Africa and thus had no place to stay. For the first few nights they slept in the bushes around the area. One morning at a drinking house (*shebeen*) in Manguzi they met a young man called Sihle who had also fled Mozambique because of the war. They asked Sihle if he knew of a place they could stay or of someone who could offer them work. Sihle wanted to know if Raphael or Alex knew how to play soccer. According to Raphael he was a 'formidable' striker, and Alex was a good goalkeeper. After hearing this, Sihle introduced them to a prominent man in the area who managed one of the strongest soccer teams in northern KwaZulu. The manager invited Raphael and Alex to stay at his place, where six other Mozambicans were also staying. In exchange for a place to stay, food and some money, they all agreed to play in the soccer team. The manager of the team became a father to them and they still have very close contact with him although they don't play soccer anymore.

All these cases illustrate options of escape people in borderlandscapes have when these areas are transformed into warzones. Old transnational ties are strengthened and new ones are created in times of war. Historical ties of kinship and friendship remained important organisational lines for people in the borderlandscape. Mozambicans were welcomed and quickly integrated into a society with which they shared a common ancestry and culture. It would only be much later, when people were made aware of new ethnicities and identities, that South Africans would

emphasise differences rather than similarities between themselves and the Mozambican refugees.

Conclusion

A micro-analysis if the Mozambican war in the borderlandscape illustrates how people had to react to dramatic changes in their daily lives and circumstances. Yet, whereas a macro-analysis of the war would suggest a strengthening of the border and an end to contact along the birder line, a micro-analysis illustrates a greater unification as people north of the border were forced to seek refuge south of the border.

The northern side of the borderlandscape became a depopulated no-man's land. Refugees were welcomed south of the border, but were forced to hide their identities and to stop speaking their own language to avoid persecution. In this manner a micro-analysis of the war suggests that the war actually fostered unity in the borderlandscape, rather than disunity. It was only in the aftermath of the war, with the re-population of the northern part of the borderland, that disunity and heterogeneity was again emphasised. Demobilised soldiers, returnees from South Africa and Swaziland and displaced persons from all over Mozambique populated the post-war borderlandscape. Most of these people have no links to the land or to the ancestors of the area. It is to their stories that the discussion will turn in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

REFUGEES WHO STAYED BEHIND AND REFUGEES WHO WENT BACK: RECONSTRUCTING THE BORDERLANDSCAPE AFTER THE WAR

> Real return to the life they left may not be feasible or even desirable. Instead, they [returnees] may see the experience of repatriation as an opportunity to position their social, cultural and economic selves in such a way as to effectively exploit the possibilities afforded in a new era.
>
> Hammond (1999:235)

> The international borders of northeast Africa were established through the nineteenth-century partitioning of Africa by the colonial powers and bear hardly any relation to the subsistence activities, migratory movements of trade, exchange and support networks of the local people. In these circumstances, deciding where (in which country) a person 'belongs' can be an arbitrary and (for the person him- or herself) meaningless exercise.
>
> Allen and Turton (1996:6)

Since the signing of the 1992 Rome Treaty, which effectively brought an end to the Mozambican war, many of the estimated 1.7 million refugees gradually started to return to their home country. Under a United Nations repatriation programme, refugees were returned to Mozambique and assisted in re-settling in the country. The assistance to displaced people and soldiers who decided to enrol in civilian life included food, implements and money. The United Nations transported people carrying extraordinary things, such as disassembled huts, in trains from gathering points and refugee camps in

South Africa, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania to Mozambique (Wurst 1994).

Apart from these official and organised repatriations thousands of people spontaneously returned to Mozambique. All the people who had settled in northern KwaZulu-Natal, who returned to Mozambique, belong to this group, since there were no refugee camps in the area and thus no official government or UN sponsored programmes to repatriate people from this area to Mozambique. The lack of support for people from this area to return to Mozambique greatly hindered the repatriation process. Furthermore, Southern Mozambique was polluted with landmines, many of which were only removed by ONUMOZ (*Operaçãdas Nações Unidas para Moçambique*) in 2000.[1]

In this chapter I analyse the stories of refugees in the wake of the Mozambican war. The ethnography presented here supports the assertion of Rodgers (2002), Malkki (1995) and Hammond (1999) that refugees may not always want to return home after conflict. While they were absent, the concept of 'home' changed from a familiar place to 'a new and challenging environment' (Koser & Black 1999:11). Displaced persons do not necessarily seek emplacement in the environment they were removed from. New ties of belonging are created in time of exile as people position themselves in 'alien' environments. With time the 'alien' environment becomes the 'familiar' and longing to

[1] Minefields have been located in all provinces of Mozambique, but the most heavily mined regions are found in the Manica, Zambezia, Tete, Inhambane and Maputo provinces. Few maps and records were kept of the mines laid during the war. Many of the mines were laid around bridges and culverts, to protect bridges from being attacked and people from blowing them up. Since the war, many of these have simply been demarcated as mined areas. The National De-mining Institute has recorded a nationwide total of 1, 759 mined areas. The Mozambique Land Mine Impact Survey (2000) confirmed that the distribution of landmines and unexploded ordnances in the country is large, geographically diffuse and random. The survey measured in very basic terms the socio-economic 'blockages' presented by this irregular pattern of contamination and calculated that 1.7 million people are directly affected by the existence of landmines (ICBL 2000).

return diminishes. This is especially the case where the economic and other benefits of staying outweigh those of repatriation (Malkki 1995:155).

My discussion of the lives of Mozambican refugees in northern KwaZulu-Natal shows that post-war repatriation has been a slow process that is directly linked to the economic development of southern Mozambique. Mozambicans who had settled in KwaZulu-Natal had, as informants say, also 'made a life for themselves', after having built new homesteads, clearing new fields for cultivation and acquiring livestock in South Africa. Many of them had married men or women from South Africa and have had children who have grown up being South African. These people had more in common, socially and culturally, with people south of the international border, than with people north of the international border after the war.

I present two case-studies of Mozambicans who have adopted bi-national citizenship in the post-war era. While, according to informants, most refugees stayed in South Africa after the war, some adopted a bi-national survival strategy, constantly moving from one country into the other.

Reason to return: the economic pull of Matutuine

Most Mozambican refugees who returned to the Matutuine district in Mozambique after living in northern KwaZulu-Natal were enticed there by economic prospects. The argument of an economic 'pull-factor' is boosted by the fact that there are two main places on the Mozambican side of the borderland where people from South Africa have returned to after 1994: the Rio Maputo (Maputo River) floodplain and the coastal area

(see Map 3). These are the two most fertile areas in the region and the most abundant sources of renewable natural resources. Due to the abundant natural resources in the coastal and floodplain zones, these areas have traditionally been more densely populated than other ecological zones (see Felgate 1982:1-8 and Appendices A, B and C). Refugees could thus return to these areas because they were able to make a living there from subsistence agriculture and fishing.

The remaining area in Matutuine, between the floodplain zone and the coastal zone, is divided into the sandforest zone and the Muzi/ Futi palmveld zone (Tinley and Van Riet 1981). In the sandforest zone there is a lack of arable land and water and local people living in the area have adapted other strategies of survival such as collecting wild fruits and hunting. The Muzi/ Futi palmveld zone is dominated by swampy areas where local people have traditionally only settled for short periods to tap palm wine (Mountain 1990:47-78). It thus makes sense that people who returned to Mozambique after the end of the war chose to settle in along the Rio Maputo and in the coastal areas.

The responses of informants further substantiate the economic pull-factor argument. Most people interviewed at Ponta Malongane, Ponta Mamoli and Ponta do Ouro, areas along the Indian Ocean (see Map 3), said that they returned to Mozambique after the war to reclaim their land or to find employment. Whereas elders were more interested in land, younger people have mainly sought work. Despite viewing themselves as Mozambicans, many of them have kept their homes in South Africa and also their South African citizenship papers.

Returning to Mozambique to find work is especially common amongst eighteen to thirty year-old men. They did not go back directly after the war, but only started trickling

back from the late 1990s. This coincided with the development of the tourism industry in Ponta do Ouro (Point of Gold). Before 1975 Ponta do Ouro, with its wide open beaches and diving and fishing spots[2] used to be a playground for Portuguese and South African tourists. During the war the area was extensively mined by FRELIMO in a bid to halt RENAMO infiltration. As the war ended, the landmines were taken out and tourist operators flocked back to the area (McGregor 1997:4-7). At first it was small-scale operators, who sought to obtain concessions in the area from politicians in Maputo. Then, in November 1996, James Blanchard, an American businessman was granted a concession for the entire area from the Maputo Elephant Reserve to the South African border. Amongst other things, Blanchard planned to build hotels, golf courses, a marina and a railroad to improve access in the area (Koch 1997). His promise of employment attracted many newcomers to the area. People came from as far north as Quelimane, Nampula and Inhambane, but a large group also came from KwaZulu-Natal. Some of them came with their families, although the majority came alone. In 1999 Blanchard died and with him his promises for employment. But, the gap was soon filled by South African entrepreneurs.

During evenings at Ponta do Ouro and Ponta Malongane some entrepreneurs boasted openly to me about the shady deals they entered with politicians in Maputo to obtain concessions. However, these deals have undermined development in the area. Some concession areas have been granted to more than one concessionaire. There are also disputes between concessionaires and local people about land rights. This problem was evident at Ponta Malongane. The concessionaire, one Gustavo, soon came into

[2] Between 1960 and 1975 European settlement in Ponta do Ouro increased dramatically as the town became a popular tourist destination (INR 1995:80).

conflict with the local chief about the influx of people into the area. Gustavo headed a multi-million rand development in Ponta Malongane and at Ponta Mamoli with plans to re-stock the area with wild animals and also to provide luxury accommodation and horse-riding adventures along the beach. When Gustavo was granted the concession, there were next to no people living at Ponta Malongane. Shortly after he started his camping eco-adventure operations, hundreds of people moved into the area to look for work, thus undermining the exclusivity and remoteness of his establishment. Whilst Gustavo wanted them out, local people claimed the right to settle anywhere they wish.

Figure 6: Photograph taken from dilapidated building of new developments at Ponta do Ouro, 2003

Photograph by Wayne Matthews

People, predominantly young men, who returned to Mozambique on their own, settled on the dunes at Ponta Malongane, and in and around the village of Ponta do Ouro. By 2000 these settlements started to resemble the informal settlements of Johannesburg and Maputo, with people living close to each other without electricity, running water or waste removal. Although the predominantly white, South African owned tourist neighbourhood reflects wealth and luxury, the back streets of Ponta do Ouro, where the newcomers have settled, looks like a shanty-town (see Figure 8).

The *lingua franca* of the area is a mixture of Portuguese and English. Since the ability to speak English can assure one employment, men who gather at drinking houses and bars in the evenings would force themselves to speak to each other in English. They learnt words and phrases from tourists, fishermen and dive-operators who visit or settle in the area. As a result I could conduct most interviews in Ponta do Ouro in English.

The economic pull for Mozambicans to return to their home country is thus directly related to the development of the coastal tourism industry. Informants with relatives in South Africa have made it clear that their relatives too will return as soon as more employment opportunities become available. One can thus expect that, if the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative were to be successful in Mozambique, more refugees who presently live in KwaZulu-Natal would return to their country of origin.

Whereas the majority of Mozambicans who have returned to the undeveloped 'rural' areas of the borderland still claim relation to the people across the border in South Africa, the newcomers to the tourist area do not. They view the international border only as a cumbersome, but nonetheless surmountable obstacle to free movement and economic enterprise.

Tourism development in Ponta do Ouro and its surroundings have not only seen an influx of Mozambicans from KwaZulu-Natal to their former homes, but also an influx into the area from people from other areas in Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Many of the latter immigrants had also been displaced by the Mozambican war. Consequently, many permanent residents of Ponta do Ouro, Ponta Malongane and Ponta Mamoli are no longer the descendants of the Tembe-Thonga, but foreigners. As McGregor (1997) states, many of the people living in the Mozambican borderland do not have historical claims to the land. 'Some arrived during the war and stayed on; others were invited into the country by RENAMO after the peace agreement; still others in-migrated to the area to hunt, fish, or exploit timber or palm wine' (p.5,10).

Displacement is thus one of the major forces that stimulate difference between opposite sides of the border. Displacement has completely changed the ethnic landscape on the northern side of the border. A large part of the area's inhabitants no longer call themselves Thonga or Tembe, but refer to themselves by various other ethnic labels.

Newcomers to the Mozambican borderland have no ancestral claims to the area and are not of the same ethnic group as the people across the border. Yet even though it is easier for them to distinguish themselves as Mozambican as opposed to the South Africans across the border, they too have developed 'transnational social relations' across the border (see Rodgers 2002:4, 8). As Martinez (1994) indicates of an *interdependent* borderland such as this one, economic interdependence 'creates many opportunities for borderlanders to establish social relationships across the boundary as well…' (p.5).

Like tourism, arable land along the floodplain and the fish in the rivers and pans of the area are pull factors into the Rio Maputo area. Historically, the Rio Maputo/

Pongola floodplain was the most densely populated area in Maputaland. The river used to flood naturally. In between these floods people used to plant their crops in the alluvial soil deposits on the riverbanks. However, in 1977 the construction of the Jozini (Pongolapoort) dam by South Africa and controlled flooding has interrupted this natural process. As Derman and Poultney (1987:561) show, the dam meets the needs of cotton farmers on the Makhatini flats rather than those of local people.

However, due to the fertility of the soil in the floodplains and the availability of water people still prefer to settle there. Many returnees have settled in the village of Catuane, west of the Rio Maputo (see Map 2). Like Zitundo this area served as a safe house from attacks by RENAMO soldiers and bandits during the war, but was subsequently deserted by government forces. There are a few small villages around Catuane, most of them situated along the Rio Maputo. Whereas people east of the Rio Maputo have various connections to KwaZulu-Natal, those west of the river have stronger ties to Swaziland.[3] Most people who settled east of the Rio Maputo after the war come from Swaziland. SiSwati is widely spoken in the area and most children attend school in Swaziland. Local residents also cross the Lubombo Mountains to go to shops, clinics and hospitals in Swaziland.

Most Mozambicans who came from KwaZulu-Natal resettled east of the Rio Maputo. They chose to do so because these areas were better watered and therefore more suited to growing crops than areas in KwaZulu-Natal. There were also ample amounts of fish in the pans and rivers and small antelope in the forests. McGregor (1997:16) confirms this. Most people around Shobane are involved in fishing in the Rio Maputo

[3] The reason being that the Usuthu River forms a natural boundary that separates the areas and peoples in Mozambique from areas in South Africa, although the Mathenjwa clan has in the past settled on both sides of the river (Van Wyk 1983:60).

and the pans surrounding it. Some of the fish is used for subsistence purposes, but the largest part is sold at markets in South Africa.

The area east of the Rio Maputo in Mozambique is sparsely populated, in comparison to the South African side of the border. Although some people have gone back to settle permanently in order to use the natural resources in Mozambique, most prefer to stay in South Africa and visit Mozambique temporarily to cultivate fields there, fish, hunt wild animals or to collect water. People prefer to live in KwaZulu-Natal because of the better infrastructure, schools, shops and clinics.

Case studies

The two case studies presented here offer a glimpse into the lives of Mozambican refugees in Matutuine shortly after the war. In both cases the refugees adopted dual-citizenship. In these cases, both Lucas and Luis returned to Mozambique after the war. However, neither of them settled there permanently or gave up their lives in South Africa. This is the case with most repatriated refugees I've met in Matutuine. Although people returned to Mozambique for economic or, as in the case of Lucas, for political gain, they kept the door to South Africa wide open.

Case 5.1. Lucas Michangula returns to Mozambique

Lucas Michangula, who was introduced in the previous chapter, returned to Mozambique shortly after the war to settle political business that remained unresolved during the war.

Lucas was a member of FRELIMO and, due to his relation to the chiefly family in Zitundo, was made secretary of the area in the 1980s. However, when his involvement in a financial scandal came to light, he was summoned to Maputo. Fearing for his life, Lucas fled to Mahlungulo in South Africa. Once there he switched alliances and joined RENAMO, who had a base at Mahlungulo.

When the war ended, Lucas returned to Zitundo and laid claim to the chieftaincy, although he was not legally entitled to it. In Lucas's absence, his mother's brother (*malume*), who was the chief of Zithundo, died. Since his uncle's son was still too young, Lucas' mother (who was the most senior living member of the ruling family) appointed her cousin as regent. The regent however abused his power and did not pay homage to Lucas' mother and other members of his family.

Using a connection he had made with members of the Mabudu-Tembe royal family (who traditionally ruled the entire area), during his stay in South Africa, Lucas demanded that the regent step down. The regent protested, claiming that he was the real and rightful chief of Zitundo. Lucas called on his connections. At a mass meeting at Zitundo four *abaMntwana*, or, as they called themselves, 'Kings of Thongaland', instated Chavier Tembe, Lucas' mother's brother's son as the chief of Zitundo. Lucas maintains his homestead and family in Mahlungulo in South Africa, although he spends much of his time in Zitundo where he has also married.

The intervention by the 'Kings of Thongaland' in the settlement of a succession dispute in the Mozambican part of the old Thonga or Tembe-Thonga kingdom is significant and emphasises similarities in the borderland despite the territorial divide. Rumours are rife that the Mabudu-Tembe royal family tried to re-enforce their authority

over the former territory. There are constant meetings between chiefs in Mozambique acknowledging the Mabudu royal family and representatives of the Mabudu royal council. It is no secret that chiefs, alienated by FRELIMO, were amongst the people who fled Mozambique during the civil war to settle in South Africa. These people were welcomed by the Mabudu royal family. Local people treated them as any other members of the royal family and respectfully addressed them as leaders. Now, after the war has ended, these people are using their connections to the royal family in South Africa to return them to chieftaincy in Mozambique. The Mabudu royal family is currently working to re-establish the authority of the old Tembe chief at Bela Vista, who has been living in Manguzi since 1975, through the appointment of a relative of his to the chieftaincy. According to 'Prince' Teka Tembe, people as far north as Catembe know him and his family as the kings and want to be under the rule of the Mabudu-Tembe once again. There is thus a large group of people in the borderland who highlight the unity that historically existed across the border and who play down ethnic and cultural differences that have developed since the creation of the border in 1875.

Although Lucas returned to Mozambique to settle unresolved political issues he did not settle there permanently. He still has a house in South Africa and regularly moves to and from Mozambique.

Case 5.2: Luis Mandade's return to Mozambique

One of the people in Ponta do Ouro I came to know very well is Luis Mandade. Luis is typical of the young men who had left KwaZulu-Natal and settled in Mozambique after

the war. However, although his main reason for returning to Mozambique was to look for a job, he also left KwaZulu-Natal to escape angry 'in-laws'.

Luis left Mozambique with his mother and father in 1985. They settled in Manguzi where Luis went to school until he was in Grade 7. Life in South Africa was unpleasant. The police regularly harassed his family and his mother was deported as an illegal immigrant on three occasions. In those days, Luis remembers, if the police caught you, they would take you all the way to Ressano Garcia (Komatie Poort), since there was no border post along the KwaZulu border with Mozambique. Once released, you had to walk all the way down from Maputo to Manguzi, and risk your life by crossing the border again.

Luis' parents returned to Mozambique in 1996. His father had set up a small business (*baracas*) in Ponta do Ouro that sold bread, tinned fish, cooking oil and beer to the local people. Luis stayed in Manguzi where he tried to continue his schooling. He had his own little house in Manguzi close to the school. Twice a month he would visit his mother in Mozambique to get food and money. Then his girlfriend in Manguzi, Zodwa Nyembeni, became pregnant. Zodwa's father did not allow her to marry Luis and demanded one cow as payment for reducing the amount of bride wealth (*lobola*) his daughter would one day get from a suitable man. Shortly afterwards, Luis and Zodwa crossed the border and went to Ponta do Ouro. Luis found work first at the dive-camp at *Campo Paradisimo* and later at the Marine Hotel. In holiday seasons jobs are easy to get. Luis has done everything from washing dishes to cleaning diving gear to guarding tourists' tents from monkeys. Then, when there are no tourists coming Luis does 'piece-jobs' or any other thing that can keep him busy and earn him some money. Luis still has

friends and kin in South Africa whom he regularly visits. Using her South African citizenship, Zodwa also crosses the border to collect a child-welfare grant once a month.

Conclusion

According to people I interviewed in the borderland, only a very small minority of Mozambican refugees who settled in KwaZulu-Natal during the war returned to Mozambique after the war. As the two case studies presented above illustrate, even those that went maintained strong ties and even homes in South Africa as the gains of dual citizenship far outweigh those of singular Mozambican citizenship. Refugee studies and repatriation agencies assume, as Rodgers (2002) shows, far too often that the main aim of refugees in a post-war context is return to their 'home' country. Mozambicans who live in northern KwaZulu-Natal benefit from a state social and welfare support programme that is far superior to that which is available in Mozambique. Furthermore, they share more socially and culturally with people in northern KwaZulu-Natal than with the new inhabitants of Matutuine who represent a wide range of different cultural groups and ethnicities. As the quotation by Allen and Turton (1996:6) at the beginning of this chapter indicates, it would be an arbitrary and meaningless exercise to determine in which country these 'Mozambicans' belong. They share a life-world with the South Africans amongst whom they have come to life. For many of these people Mozambique has become a foreign country and South Africa has become home.

With the picture of the borderlandscape now drawn, I discuss in the following chapters the manner in which inhabitants of the borderland engage one another. In the

next chapter I look specifically at patterns of border crossings in the post-war, post-Apartheid era. I show that new social ties are created and old ones are revoked as people engage one another in the bi-national environment of the borderland.

Figure 7: Border Crossing at KwaMshudu, 2002

Photograph by Hannie du Plessis

University of Pretoria etd – Kloppers, R J (2005)

CHAPTER SIX

BORDER CROSSINGS IN A TRANSFORMING WORLD: MOVEMENT ACROSS THE MOZAMBIQUE/ SOUTH AFRICA BORDER SINCE 1994

> There has always been tension between the fixed, durable and inflexible requirements of national boundaries and the unstable, transient and flexible requirements of people. If the principle fiction of the nation-state is ethnic, racial, linguistic and cultural homogeneity, then borders always give lie to this construct
>
> Horsman and Marshall (1995)

In this chapter I argue that the borderlandscape is epitomized by the interplay between forces creating homogeneity across the border and forces creating differentiation at the border. As social contact between the two sides of the borderland increases, in the aftermath of war in Mozambique and Apartheid in South Africa, a landscape is created that is neither homogenous, nor neatly divided by the international border. Instead, the borderlandscape becomes an amalgamation of identities, languages and cultural forms, a transitional zone between one country and the other. In this landscape people have multiple identities and loyalties, which they play off against one another.

The discussion below is divided into three parts. First, I discuss the changes in the international relations between Mozambique and South Africa since 1994 and how those changes affected the milieu of the borderland. I look specifically at the policing of the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border. In the remaining two sections of this chapter I discuss current patterns of border crossings from South Africa to Mozambique and vice versa.

Borderlands initiatives: a new South African foreign policy

In 1994 elections were held in Mozambique and South Africa that dramatically changed relations of power within and between these states. In Mozambique the peace-process led to a general election in which FRELIMO won forty-four per cent of the general vote and RENAMO's thirty-eight per cent. In a direct ballot for presidency, Chissano won fifty-three per cent and Dhlakama, the leader of RENAMO, thirty-four per cent (Newitt 2002:224). In South Africa the ANC had won sixty-three per cent of the votes, the National Party twenty per cent and the Inkatha Freedom Party eleven per cent. The distribution gave the ANC a solid working majority in parliament, but it was short of the two-thirds majority that would have enabled the ANC to write the final constitution as it wished. Mozambique and South Africa were no longer opponents facing each other in a global struggle between communism and capitalism, or white supremacy and African liberation. Instead, they now viewed each other as partners in the future development of southern Africa.

On 13 March 1994 the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border was re-opened with the creation of the Kosi Bay/ Farazela border post. This border post symbolised a new era in foreign relations between South Africa and Mozambique. At the same time the electrified fence along the eastern South Africa/ Mozambique border, between the Kruger National Park and Swaziland, was changed from lethal to detect mode (Kruys 2001:131), symbolising a relaxation in the relations between South Africa and Mozambique.

In the mid-1990s the government of South Africa designed a Spatial Development Initiative (SDI) programme for the southern African region to 'foster regional development, economic cooperation and a regional economy that spans

international borders' (Peberdy & Crush 2001:115). These programmes are also called 'borderlands initiatives', with the principle that 'borders should shift from their traditional role as barriers and points of control to become "bridges" which facilitate the movement of goods and people' (Peberdy & Crush 2001:116).

As part of this programme, a Trilateral Ministerial Committee set up the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative (LSDI) in 1997 to develop various national and international projects. The three countries involved in the LSDI are South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique. The LSDI's area of operation covers the entire coastal strip from Maputo to Lake St. Lucia and from the Lubombo Mountains to the Indian Ocean (see Map 3). The primary goal of the LSDI is to make this area an international tourism destination from which local people must benefit. The LSDI was officially launched in May 1998 and its first major project is the construction of a tar road along the coastal strip to link Durban with Maputo (Jourdan 1998:722-723)[1], and the creation of the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area (De Villiers 1998).[2]

Political and economic integration between the states of southern Africa has also been strengthened by the New Plan for Economic Development (NEPAD), and by the creation of the African Union. Changes in the relations between South Africa and its neighbours after the end of Apartheid have led to a relaxation in the control of international borders and a general transformation of the milieu of the borderland. Whereas the South Africa/ Mozambique borderland milieu in the period between

[1] This road was completed in late 2002.

[2] According to the South African Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, the establishment of Transfrontier Conservation Areas or Peace Parks is 'part of a regional collaboration aimed at the eradication of political fences in the interest of responsible environmental management and conservation with high potential for tourism growth and development' (Kruys 2001:132). The Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area will link the Tembe Elephant Park and the Ndumo Game Reserve in South Africa with the Maputo Elephant Reserve in Mozambique and with Swaziland's Hlane National Park and Mlawula and Ndzinda Game Reserves. It is believed that the Lubombo Transfrontier Conservation Area will contribute to regional socio-economic development by creating tourism-related jobs for local people in the South Africa/ Mozambique/ Swaziland borderland region (De Villiers 1998).

1975 and 1994 can be described as *alienated*, with barriers to the movement of people and goods across the border and minimal contact along the borderline, in the period after 1994 it can be described as *co-existent* and, gradually, *integrated*, where barriers on the movement of people and goods across the borderline is lifted and contact along the borderline encouraged (Martinez 1994: 2-8).

Policing the border

In South Africa the leading institutions involved in border post control are the Department of Home Affairs, which control the entry and departure of people; A Customs and Excise division of the South African Revenue Services (SARS) which controls the import and export of goods; and the Border Police, responsible for policing South Africa's international borders. The South African Police Services (SAPS) also perform functions for Home Affairs with regards to immigration and for the SARS in the roles of Customs and Excise. The South African National Defence Force (SANDF) is responsible for border protection, which is defined as 'the protection of the international borders of the RSA against hostile attacks and actions' (Kruys 2001:125).

If barbed-wire fences, guard towers, tanks and heavily armed soldiers, as found along the Israel/ Palestinian border (Rabinowitz 1998), are symbols of the powers of states, then South Africa and Mozambique are either powerless states, or they do not see the need to display their power along the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border. The four-foot wire fence separating Mozambique and South Africa along the provincial border of KwaZulu-Natal is cut at regular intervals (see Figure 7) This fence looks very meagre in comparison with the NOREX electrical

fence that was constructed in 1984 along South Africa's eastern border with Mozambique and Swaziland, and South Africa's northern border with Zimbabwe (Hennop & Mclean 2001:71)

Figure 8: The southern Mozambique/ South Africa border fence, November 2002

Photograph by author

Despite the weak fence, the SANDF have prioritised the Mozambican and Zimbabwean borders as 'priority one' borders for controlling the influx of people and goods. South Africa's borders with Lesotho and Swaziland are classified as 'priority two', while the borders with Botswana and Namibia are 'priority three'. Borders classified as priority one and priority two are patrolled, whilst priority three borders are unprotected. By July 2002 less than 1, 000 soldiers patrolled South Africa's land borders (Kruys 2001: 122).

There is only one official border post along the southern border between Mozambique and South Africa, called Kosi Bay, Ponta do Ouro or Farazela. In South Africa, this crossing is classified as a 'B' border post because only two of the three

departments responsible for border post control are active there (Kruys 2001:130). On the South African side, the border post is staffed only by personnel of South African Police Service (SAPS) and Home Affairs. Customs and Excise is not present as this border post is not earmarked for the movement of commercial goods (Hennop & McLean 2001:71). Mozambican border police and immigration patrol the Mozambican side of the border. The SANDF describe the climate of the border post as 'moderate', on a scale 'ranging from normal to moderate to tense', because it is characterised by ongoing criminal activities and corruption.

On the South African side, there are only two police officers permanently stationed at the border post. They are sometimes temporarily supported by other detachments of police officers and by two police dog handlers: one trained to find explosives and the other to find drugs. Apart from being understaffed, the police at the border post are also ill-equipped. Due to this lack of personnel and a shortage of vehicles, the border police in northern KwaZulu-Natal tend to leave the actual patrolling of the borderline to the SANDF (Hennop & McLean 2001:79).

In contrast to the South African border post, which is a brick building, the Mozambican border post buildings are pre-fabricated temporary structures. Three immigration officers usually work on the Mozambican side. Their houses are within walking distance. Two of them are in charge of immigration, while the third officer is tasked with issuing third party insurance – compulsory to all vehicles entering Mozambique. Citizens of all countries visiting Mozambique have to obtain Visas prior to entering. Temporary Visas can be bought at the border post for between R160 and R180 (depending on the official on duty). With these 'gate-Visas' one can only travel as far as Salamanga (see Map 3), where another immigration control is

stationed. To travel to Maputo from the south one needs a Visa issued by the Mozambican Consulate in Pretoria or in Durban.

Much traffic passes through the official border post and traffickers who cross use at least sixty-seven alternative paths (Hennop & McLean 2001:79 and Kruys (2002:124). The SANDF identify Mbangweni, Muzi and KwaMshudu as the three major illegal crossing points in the area (see Map 4). Muzi, in particular, is seen as a major transit route for stolen vehicles, and for the smuggling of weapons and drugs.

SANDF soldiers are deployed in two sections along the border. One section of twenty men patrol the area between the border post and the sea, the other section patrols the larger area from the post to the Swazi border. However, Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife is responsible for policing the borders of nature reserves that run along the country's borders (Hennop & McLean 2001:79). The only police officers on the Mozambican side of the fence are at the border post. The borderline is patrolled by the Mozambican military that have bases at Manhoca, Puza, Shobane and Catuane. The Mozambican soldiers tend to be stationary. Since my first visit to the area in 2000 I have never seen any Mozambican soldiers anywhere along the border fence except at the army bases.

Border crossings from South Africa to Mozambique

The dynamics of border crossings from South Africa to Mozambique can be best illuminated through an in-depth analysis of the Mbangweni and KwaMshudu border communities in South Africa (see Map 4). The forms of border crossings experienced in these places are largely due to their locality close to the international border. These

include weekly or monthly visits to friends and relatives and cross-border journeys to purchase food.

1. Crossings from Mbangweni. Mbangweni is sandwiched between the Ndumo Game Reserve in the west and the Tembe Elephant Park in the east (see Figure 2 and Map 4). With the creation of the Ndumo Game Reserve in 1924 residents of Mbangweni lost access to their agricultural lands on the alluvial soils of the Pongola floodplain and to fishing rights in the Pongola River. With the fencing of the Reserve in the 1950s and 1960s, 1, 200 people were forcibly removed from the floodplain (KZN Wildlife 1999:1). Since the creation of the reserve took away the resource base, local people have procured land for cultivation in Mozambique.

The SANDF describes the climate at the border of Mbangweni with Mozambique as 'normal', although it is identified as an occasional point for the smuggling of illegal immigrants, weapons and drugs. According to locals, there used to be an informal border crossing point at Mbangweni. At the main crossing point, a place called Mathekenjeni (see Figure 9); soldiers would inspect people's citizenship papers and allow those with the right identification to cross the international border. On the Mozambican side of the border is Shobane. There was also a soldiers' base at Shobane that would control the movement of people into and out of Mozambique. The people of Mbangweni have recently asked for the re-institution of a border post at Mathekenjeni to enable them to cross. According to SANDF officials, the request is still being considered.

Figure 9: The international border at Mbangweni, 2002

Photograph by author

The problems created by the absence of an official border crossing point are exacerbated by the rotation of SANDF battalions patrolling the borderline. When I started research in Mbangweni the SANDF had set up a camp at Mathekenjeni. According to informants, local people were allowed to cross the border if they paid the soldiers some money or goods. The soldiers demanded anything from R10 to a few fish or a bottle of beer. This SANDF battalion was stationed at Mbangweni for three months. When they left, there were no soldiers in the area for a good two weeks. During that time people freely crossed the border.

Then a new battalion arrived. On the day of their arrival, they halted all crossings, placing soldiers all along the borderline. The soldiers said that people are welcome to cross the border into Mozambique, but if they came back to South Africa, they would be arrested. An angry mob called chief (*induna*) Zigodi to the border post and demanded to be let through. Once tempers calmed down, the soldiers explained that all crossings at this point were illegal and that people should cross at the border

post at Farazela. The trip from Mbangweni to the border post is more than fifty kilometres, if it was possible for a person to travel along the no-man's land, which it is not. Furthermore, even if one could enter Mozambique at the border post, there are no direct roads that link the border post with Shobane. One would have to take a very long detour to travel from the border post to the area in Mozambique neighbouring Mbangweni (see Map 3). Driving in my own vehicle, this journey took me six hours to complete. The logistics of the situation make it ridiculous.

After long discussions the soldiers said that for two weeks from that day local people could cross the border to fetch all their belongings in Mozambique. Thereafter local people would have to obtain permission from the SANDF headquarters at Jozini, to cross the border. A month later, when I visited Mbangweni, people were still crossing, paying 'toll-fees' in crops, fish and money.

According to a census survey I conducted in Mbangweni, personal visits are the predominant method of communication between people and their relatives in Mozambique. Of eighty families with relatives in Mozambique, seventy-six per cent said that they visit their relatives. Twenty-four per cent explained that their Mozambican relatives visit them. These visits occurred at least once a month (see Table 2).

Apart from initiating and sustaining social ties, there are a wide range of other reasons why people in Mbangweni cross the international border. Though only thirty-four families in Mbangweni have relatives in Mozambique, ninety-five respondents to the census survey said that they cross the international border at least once every month.

Table 2: Frequency of visits by families in Mbangweni to relatives in Mozambique, September 2002

Frequency of visits	Number of households
Daily	2
Weekly	5
Monthly	20
Bi-annually	1
Annually	6
Total	34

Since there is no river or pan in Mbangweni, people who live there cross the international border daily to collect water, to cultivate agricultural fields and to fish in the Rio Maputo. The census shows that twenty-eight (twenty-nine per cent) of the ninety-five families who cross the border have cultivated fields (*amasimo*) in Mozambique. To obtain permission to cultivate in Mozambique a person first has to consult Zigodi Tembe, the headman of Mbangweni. He then writes up the person's name in a book. When Zigodi meets with the headman of Shobane, the area bordering Mbangweni in Mozambique, he asks that that person be given a plot of land for agriculture. There is thus no need for people in Mbangweni to have kin in Shobane to be given land for cultivation. Plots of land are awarded to South Africans on the western side of the Rio Maputo. This means that they have to cross the river each time they want to work in their fields. Informants explained that local people are awarded the ground on the eastern side of the river, because 'it is their place'.

Similar rules are in place for fishing across the border. A person from Mbangweni does not need to be related to someone in Shobane to be allowed to fish there. However, since people of Shobane make a living from selling fish at the border market, they only allow people from Mbangweni to fish if they pay money to the chief at Shobane. Even then, informants said, the people at Shobane are opposed to

them fishing there. For this reason, most people in Mbangweni buy fish from fishermen in Shobane. They may also be employed by fishermen in Shobane to fish for them, or to transport the fish to South Africa.

Unlike the procedures that have to be followed to cultivating or fishing in Mozambique, people from Mbangewni are allowed to collect as much water as they want from the Rio Maputo, having to worry only about crossing the international border.

Although there are no rivers or pans in Mbangweni and it is exceedingly difficult to make a living there, local people experience a sense of belonging to the place where their ancestors lived. People prefer to stay in the area and to cultivate crops across the international border, rather than to move to more well watered areas in the south.

Apart from the problems people experience with South African soldiers when they want to cross the border, people from Mbangweni are also harassed by Mozambican police when they fish or cultivate their fields. According to informants, the Mozambican police visit Shobane once every two months. If they find people from Mbangweni working in the fields or fishing they solicit bribes or threaten to chase them away and to take all their crops. People of Mbangweni face these uncertainties every day. Therefore, when soldiers announce that the border will be closed and all crossings stopped, as happened while I was conducting work in the area, it threatens the very livelihoods of the people of Mbangweni. If they are not allowed to cross the border they cannot collect water or the crops they have been cultivating.

People from Mbangweni also routinely cross the border to buy food (mostly maize) attend church, or even to attend adult education classes. The ‘president’ of the

Twelve Apostolic Church lives in Maputo and sometimes holds congregations in Catuane. The church draws attendants not only from Mbangweni, but also from areas further south in South Africa.

2. Crossings from KwaMshudu. Though KwaMshudu is also a borderland area, it differs from Mbangweni in many regards (see Figure 10). It is situated close to Manguzi, and there is regular transport from the Mozambican border to Manguzi, which makes it an attractive gateway for Mozambicans into South Africa (see Map 4). However, South African security forces also consider this location as one of the major points along the border for the transport of illegal immigrants, stolen vehicles and contraband.

Figure 10: The border at KwaMshudu, 2002

Photograph by author, 2002

Markets are held along the borderline at KwaMshudu on Wednesdays and Saturdays under close watch of the SAPS and SANDF. Soldiers and police officers

also regulate border crossings on these days, allowing only local people known to them to cross. On the other days of the week traffic of people and goods also pass at the same point where the market is held, since the only road linking the border with the main tar road to Manguzi leads to the market. Such border crossings usually occur at night.

The area in Mozambique bordering KwaMshudu is called Puza. In many regards Puza and KwaMshudu are the same place, although Puza falls under the authority of its own headman, Ngaleyane Tembe. The area is called Puza ('to drink', specifically alcohol) because of the many *ilala* palms (*Hyphaene coriceae*) in the area. The palm trees are tapped to produce a palm wine called *sura* in Portuguese, *ubusulu* in Tsonga and *injemane* in Zulu.[3] Because Puza is situated in a palm veld it is not ideally suited for agriculture. Therefore, the area is sparsely populated, with people constructing temporary houses to tap palm wine or to hunt wild animals, which are still relatively abundant in the area.

The majority of people at Puza speak both Zulu and Thonga at home. Portuguese and Shangaan are also widely spoken. Sixty-nine of the 100 people I interviewed at Puza viewed the area as their permanent home. It would seem that the area was completely depopulated during the Mozambican war. None of the people I interviewed had lived in Puza before 1996 and thirty-four had only lived there for the past five years. Both permanent and temporary residents of Puza made a living from tapping and selling palm wine and hunting game.

[3] It is also sometimes called *skokiaan* when extra sugar is added during the fermentation process to increase the alcohol content (Van Wyk and Gericke 2000:106).

Unlike in Mbangweni, many residents in KwaMshudu had relatives in Mozambique.[4] This is not surprising since a large majority of people in KwaMshudu originally came from Mozambique and settled there during the war. Most of the Mozambican relatives of the interviewees in KwaMshudu live close to the borderland, although some live further north, which makes contact more difficult (Appendix J).

In KwaMshudu informants used several methods to communicate with their relatives across the border. As in Mbangweni, personal visits frequently occurred (see Table 3). A large percentage of people meet with their kin at the border-market, which plays an important role in the social lives of villagers (see Chapter Six).

Table 3: Methods used by people in KwaMshudu to communicate with kin in Mozambique as related by informants, September 2002

Method of communication	Number of people
We visit each other at the border market	24
We do not communicate	5
I visit them in Mozambique	44
They visit me in South Africa	49
We write letters to each other	13
We phone one another	3
We visit each other at the border gate	1
We meet at Manguzi	1
Total	140

The close contact between the inhabitants of KwaMshudu and of Mozambique, together with the fact that many people in KwaMshudu are from Mozambique, have led to the formation of strong social ties that are not necessarily

[4] The census conducted in Mbangweni shows that thirty-one per cent of the families in the area, have relatives in Mozambique. In KwaMshudu, sixty-five per cent of families interviewed have relatives in Mozambique.

kin-related.[5] Most of these friends (thirty-three per cent) live right across the border in Puza. These are mainly trading partners, hunting companions and people with whom they tap palm wine. Villagers used similar methods of communication with their friends in Mozambique.

Eighty-seven of the hundred people interviewed at KwaMshudu said that they have been to Mozambique. Thirty said that they had visited the country in the past month, seven in the past week and twenty-three in the past year. Only eight of the interviewees said that it had been longer than five years since they had last been to Mozambique. The destination for the majority of people from KwaMshudu who cross the international border is Puza, although they also frequent other areas in Mozambique (see Appendix K). Unlike border crossings at Mbangweni, people at KwaMshudu visit Mozambique to hunt wild animals and to tap palm wine. Although one informant said that he cultivates across the border in Mozambique, the large majority of people have their cultivated fields in South Africa. Since there is no river or pan directly north of KwaMshudu in Mozambique, people also do not cross the border to fish. Fish is, however, transported from lakes and rivers further north and sold at the border market on Wednesdays and Saturdays (see chapter six).

According to informants, there used to be many *ilala* palms in KwaMshudu. When the war in Mozambique started more and more people came to live in KwaMshudu. These people cleared the area to build their houses and opened up land for cultivation. Today there are very few *ilala* palms left in KwaMshudu, but there are literally thousands of *ilala* palms just across the border fence at Puza. The availability of palm wine explains why the majority of people from KwaMshudu who go to Mozambique, go to Puza. Informants I met at Puza explained that, due to the

[5] Of the 100 interviewees, twenty-eight have friends in Mozambique.

'poor economic situation of KwaMshudu' they have started to tap palm wine in Puza for sale on the border market and further south.

Both men and women are involved. Some stay in their houses in KwaMshudu and cross the border daily to tap their palms in Puza. Others set up temporary palm leaf shelters, where they live, sometimes with their families. Although the majority of people at Puza are from KwaMshudu, there are also people from other areas in South Africa and Mozambique. Seventy-two of the hundred people I interviewed in Puza previously resided in South Africa. Thirty-one still viewed South Africa as their permanent home. Only twenty-eight were from Mozambique, although forty-one of the interviewees had originally lived in Mozambique before the war. In total, forty-five interviewees said that they had come to the area to tap palm wine.

During the Mozambican war RENAMO leaders invited people from South Africa to Puza to tap palm wine for them and to develop cross-border trade (McGregor 1997:16). In order to get permission to tap palm wine at present, one needs to talk to the police (*mapoyisa*) of headman Ngayelane Tembe. They will then show a person a specific area where he/ she can tap wine. A monthly payment or *khonza* fee of twenty-five litres of palm wine, or its monetary equivalent of R35, must be made to the *mapoyisa*.

Similar rules apply to people who cross the border to hunt wild animals. Out of the hundred people I interviewed at Puza, twenty-two came there from South Africa to hunt. A small fee, usually a piece of meat, is given to the headman in exchange for hunting rights in Puza and the surrounding forests. Hunters usually make use of dogs and snares, although some have weapons left over from the war and hand-made weapons. The hunters catch mostly small antelope, like duiker, suni, bushbuck, impala, bushpig and cane rat. While most of the meat is sold at the border

market on Wednesdays and Saturdays, some meat is also sold to transport drivers for re-sale in Maputo, where the prices for bush meat are much higher (see TRAFFIC 2000 and Pillinger 2004).

Both those who tap palm wine and the hunters serve as cross-border messengers. When asked how they communicate with relatives across the international border, informants said that they sent messages with the wine tappers or hunters for their relatives to meet them at a certain date along the border. Since these people cross the border daily they are ideally suited for delivering these messages.

The crossings by people from KwaMshudu into Mozambique have led to tensions between the communities of KwaMshudu and Puza. In September 2002 the *mapoyisa* of Puza stopped all hunting of wild animals by outsiders, arguing that there are almost no animals left for the local people to hunt. In response, KwaMshudu residents replied that Mozambicans would no longer be allowed to go to the clinic at KwaMshudu or pass through KwaMshudu to go to the shops at Manguzi. Having reached a deadlock the *mapoyisa* had to step down and allow the hunters from KwaMshudu access.

Residents of KwaMshudu also cross the border to visit ancestral graves, to look for work, to go to church, to visit healers and, in the case of one informant, to receive a grant from the Mozambican government for the poor.

From the discussion presented here it is evident that most temporary crossings from South Africa to Mozambique, from Mbangweni and KwaMshudu are driven by social and economic reasons. People mainly cross the border to interact with friends and relatives or to utilise natural resources not found in their areas.

Border crossings from Mozambique to South Africa

In our analysis of border crossings by Mozambicans it is necessary to distinguish between illegal[6] immigrants and Mozambican inhabitants of the borderland. Illegal immigrants come from areas further north in Mozambique and from other African countries and are only temporary visitors in the borderland. Their primary destinations are the cities and farms of South Africa. They stay only as long as necessary to make enough money to continue their travels. Their reasons for crossing the border differ from those of borderlanders, who regularly travel to and from Mozambique to visit clinics and shops, to go to school, to collect pensions and to visit friends and relatives. Whereas the police allow borderlanders relatively free access across the international border, illegal immigrants are the main focus of the SAPS and SANDF. They are constantly searched for, arrested and deported.

1. Illegal immigrants. In 1997 the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) estimated that there were between three and five million illegal immigrants in South Africa. Between 1993 and 2002 the SANDF and SAPS arrested 89, 121 illegal immigrants coming into South Africa through the borders of KwaZulu-Natal with Mozambique and Swaziland (see Appendix L). In 1998 alone the SANDF arrested 35, 383 illegal immigrants in South Africa (Kruys 2001:124-125)

Figures from the cell register at the SAPS station at Manguzi give a better indication of the amount of illegal migrants entering South Africa, specifically along

[6] The problem is of course how illegality is constituted, one persons' legality is another persons' illegality. I use illegal immigrant here in the same way as described to me by Border Patrol Officers, that is, persons who do not have permission from the South African state to be in South Africa. The Border Patrol Officers distinguish between illegal immigrants and borderlanders. Borderlanders also do not have legal permission to be in South Africa, but are not treated as illegal immigrants. Instead, they are allowed relatively free access across the international border if they are known to the police.

the border between KwaZulu-Natal and Mozambique. Unfortunately, old cell registers have been destroyed and only figures from 1995 to 2003 are available. For some reason, the cell register of 1990 survived. In 1990 a total of 1, 122 illegal immigrants were arrested by the SAPS. Of those, 604 were male and 518 were female. All these people were repatriated by the SAPS in 1990. All the illegal immigrants arrested by the SAPS in 1990 in Manguzi came from Mozambique.

Table 4: Illegal immigrants arrested in the Manguzi area by the SAPS per annum, 1995-2002

Country of origin	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Angola			4	2	4	3	10	4
Bangladesh								11
Brazil		4						
Burundi	4	19	38	79	63	44	57	43
Comores		1						
Congo			7			4	1	40
DRC			31	12	19	56	69	47
Ethiopia		1		6	2			
Ghana		1		1	3			
Guinea			1					
Kenya	10	6	8	3	20	2	6	6
Liberia						3		
Malawi	1	5	10	1		5	4	3
Morocco		2						
Mozambique	2, 480	2, 845	3, 905	2, 488	1, 475	1, 050	566	282
Namibia								1
Nigeria		1						
Pakistan		5						14
Rwanda	9	6	42	16	24	22	6	4
Saudi-Arabia		4						
Senegal						1	1	
Sierra-Leone					2			
Somalia	1	3	5	9	4	7	4	
Sudan		5		1	6	1	1	4
Swaziland	16	15	11	6	1	23	4	1
Tanzania	189	226	166	78	33	41	39	32
Uganda					4	2	4	
Zambia			2	2	1		2	
Zimbabwe	4		1	3	1			
Total	2, 713	3, 470	4, 222	2, 814	1, 824	1, 326	774	492

Source: Cell Register, SAP, Manguzi

People arrested from 1995 to 2002 hailed from a range of countries in Africa and Asia, although the majority of people are from Mozambique. Table 4, above, shows the numbers of illegal immigrants arrested by the SAPS in the Manguzi area and the countries where they came from. This table clearly illustrates two points, namely, that there has been a steady decrease in the number of Mozambicans entering KwaZulu-Natal as illegal immigrants and that there has been an increase in illegal immigrants from other countries entering KwaZulu-Natal (also see Appendix N).

The decrease in Mozambicans entering KwaZulu-Natal is directly related to the end of the war in Mozambique. During the war there was a continual flood of refugees across the border. This ended at the end of the war. Moreover, a careful examination of the surnames (clan names) of Mozambicans who currently cross the border as illegal immigrants reveal that most are from further north in Mozambique. Most of the names are completely foreign to this southernmost part of Mozambique (See Bryant 1965, Felgate 1982 and Hedges 1978). This is the result of many factors. In the first place, since 1994 avenues have been opened for Mozambicans living in the borderland to cross easily into South Africa. Hence there is no need for permanent immigration. Second, the fact that the surnames of those being caught for illegally crossing the border in Manguzi differ so drastically from their southern counterparts, can partly be attributed to the displacement caused by the war in Mozambique.

Refugees from other countries have also been able to use the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border for entering South Africa as a result of the peace, which makes travelling through Mozambique much easier. Furthermore, most landmines have been removed which has made travelling overland easier.

These figures also illustrate the ethnic and cultural diversity that has characterised the post-war borderlandscape. These new immigrants to the borderland,

although most of them only stay temporarily, bring with them languages and customs from such far-off places as the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi. In this way they contribute to the creation of cultural diversity in the borderland.

Since 1994 a new type of border crosser has thus made an appearance along the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border. In contrast to refugees who fled Mozambique in the 1980s, and, other borderlanders, the new border crossers are usually young men who travel on their own and who stay in the borderland only for long enough to accumulate sufficient money to travel to the South African towns. Table 5 shows the average ages of people being caught by the police in the Manguzi area between 1994 and 2002. As the figure shows the average age of the border crossers have continuously decreased.

Table 5: Average age of illegal immigrants caught by the SAP in the Manguzi area, 1994 – 2002

Year	Average Age
1994	27
1995	25
1996	23
1997	23
1998	25
1999	22
2000	22
2001	22
2002	21

Source: Cell Register, SAP, Manguzi.

The main goal of the new border crossers is to get to the South African cities. According to a refugee from Tanzania, the further away from the border one moves the safer it gets, since police in the cities are not on the look-out for illegal

immigrants. Unfortunately, many of the border crossers do not even have enough money on first arriving in South Africa to afford transport fees to the cities. They take on small jobs among the people in the borderland, looking after their cattle or ploughing in their fields, just as the refugees from the Mozambican war did in the 1980s. Only once they have saved sufficient money do they try to move out of the area. It is a very dangerous trip for someone without the necessary paperwork and identity documents, since the SANDF and SAP have regular roadblocks along all the major routes connecting the border with the N2 highway to Johannesburg and Durban. Fortunately for the refugees, officials of the Home Affairs Department in Ingwavuma, the district capital, frequently sell illegal identity documents to people in the borderland who seek to move on to South Africa's main cities. In February 2001 more than eighteen officials of the Department were questioned on suspicion of corruption in the Limpopo Province (Kruys 2002:34).

2. Mozambican borderlanders. An examination of crossings from Mozambique to South Africa highlights the economic interdependence of the borderland. Since so many of the people living in the Matutuine District have lived in northern KwaZulu-Natal during the Mozambican war, a range of kinship and social ties bind them with the people across the border. Furthermore, due to the lack of infrastructure, shops, clinics and schools in Matutuine, the area is completely integrated in the economy of northern KwaZulu-Natal. The international border does not indicate the boundary of one socio-economic system and the beginning of a new one. A singular economic and social system straddles the frontier. Contacts fostered by economic interdependence promote cultural and social integration in the borderland.

However, integration of the borderland does not imply social and economic equality. The Mozambican border is rather like the US/ Mexico border than the internal borders of the European Union 'with capital, products, and labour flowing from one side to the other without serious restrictions' (Martinez 1994:5). Despite obvious signs of poverty, northern KwaZulu-Natal is much more developed than Matutuine. This is perfectly symbolised by the tar road that links Manguzi with the border post at Farazela. Although only recently completed, the road ends abruptly at the border post. From there, to as far as Bela Vista, the only roads are sand tracks that are only traversable with four-wheel drive vehicles. (The only exception is a badly maintained tar road linking Ponta Mamoli and Zitundo).

Most residents of Matutuine frequently cross the South African border. Ninety-five out of hundred people interviewed in Puza said that they had visited South Africa at some point in their lives. Out of this group, sixty had visited South Africa in the past month, and ninety within the past year. Most interviewees said that when they went to South Africa their destination was somewhere in the borderland, where many of them still have relatives.

Due to historical ties with South Africa, most inhabitants of the Mozambican borderland have relatives in South Africa. In Puza alone, eighty-one interviewees claimed that they had family in South Africa. Most people travel to South Africa to communicate with their family. Some also phone, send letters, receive visits from South Africa or meet relatives at the border-markets.

Mozambicans travel to South Africa to visit relatives, look for work, get petrol, shop, visit hospitals and clinics, get identity documents, sell folk medicines, sell clothes and other articles, attend funerals and rituals, and go to church and school.

Shopping is another prominent reason for crossing the border. With the exception of two Portuguese owned shops at Ponta do Ouro the only shops on the Mozambican side of the border are small 'tuck-shops' (*baracas*) selling tinned food, sugar, maize meal and other bare essentials. These tuck-shops are stocked exclusively with goods bought in Manguzi. Given that there are very few commercial products available on the Mozambican side of the border, Mozambicans frequently cross the border to shop.

People in the Mozambican side of the borderland also rely on the South African government's social support, making use of schools, hospitals and clinics in South Africa and collecting state pensions and welfare money. This is the case along many of South Africa's land borders.[7]

In the entire Matutuine District there are no secondary schools and only one upper primary school at Bela Vista. Two upper primary schools were destroyed during the Mozambican war. There are eighteen lower primary schools with a total of thirty-seven classrooms. These schools have no buildings and function in the open air. Elsewhere in the borderland there are primary schools at Catuane, Xuxa, Ponta Malongane, Ponta do Ouro and Zitundo (UNDP/ UNHCR 1997:13-14). A child from the district who wants to attend secondary school in Mozambique will have to move to Maputo. Comparing the costs of living and schooling in Maputo with living and schooling on the South African side of the borderland, it is understandable why children from Matutuine attend school in South Africa.

[7] Along the South Africa/ Botswana border along the North-West province of South Africa in the area of Makgobistad, which divides the Baroleng, people move across freely, with children from Botswana attending school in South Africa every day (Kruys 2002:124). People in neighbouring countries rely on the infrastructure of South Africa and make use of many of the social and economic services offered by the South African government due to the lack of these services in neighbouring countries. This is the case in areas throughout the world where states with well-developed infrastructure and economies border states with poorly developed infrastructure and economy as for example along the German/Polish border (Kruys 2001: 122) and along the U.S.-Mexican border (Herzog 1997:176-187).

Some Mozambicans also rely on old-age pensions paid by the South African government. Once a month the pension money arrives in armoured vehicles at specific pension points all over the Umhlabuyalingana Municipal District in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Pension day is a festive occasion. Informal markets selling everything from meat to clothes to palm wine are set up. During the time that I conducted research, people older than sixty-five years of age received R600 per month as an old-age pension. To obtain pension a person must be in possession of a pension-card, with his or her photograph and identity number. Many people who lived in South Africa during the Mozambican war were allocated these cards. Informants explained that in those days there was no way of knowing who came from where as local people also did not have identity documents. Mozambicans living in South Africa for a certain period of time were also offered citizenship and the benefits that come with it. Although people went back to Mozambique after the war ended, many of them still cross the border monthly to collect South African pension money.

The South African government also pays a maintenance grant for children younger than six years. Any unemployed person with children is entitled to this grant. The child's mother determines his or her citizenship. According to informants at the Manguzi hospital, Mozambican women often bear children in South African hospitals and thereafter collect money to raise them in Mozambique.

Mozambicans living in the borderland are extremely reliant on health care services across the border. In the entire district of Matutuine there are no proper hospitals. The health care network is composed only of primary facilities: including one health care centre in Bela Vista and six health posts at places such as Catuane, Ponta do Ouro and Zitundo. The health care centre has thirty-eight beds and a fixed vaccination post. The health post at Catuane has ten beds, the post at Ponta do Ouro

three beds and the one at Zitundo four beds (UNDP/ UNHCR 1997). Health care services on the Mozambican side of the borderland are thus extremely rudimentary and people are reliant on health care services in South Africa.

Before 1999 official policy stated that Mozambicans were not allowed treatment in South African hospitals or clinics. Yet personnel of the Manguzi hospital often 'turned a blind eye' to these regulations. The Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative led in a new era. After a serious outbreak of malaria in 1999, the Consul of Mozambique and the South African Department of Home Affairs signed an agreement granting Mozambicans living within ten kilometres from the border the same health benefits as South Africans. Mozambicans wanting to make use of South African healthcare facilities can register at the border post where they are given identity cards. On arrival at the hospital they show the card and are then treated in the same manner as South African patients would be treated.

According to Dr. E. Immelman, the doctor in charge of the clinics and community services of Manguzi hospital, three hundred (five per cent) of the approximately six thousand patients admitted annually come from Mozambique. During the outbreak of malaria the percentage of Mozambicans increased to ten per cent of the total in-house patients. Apart from the hospital, there are three stationary and three mobile clinics in the borderland where Mozambicans receive assistance. The three stationary clinics at Mahlungulu, KwaMshudu and Bhekabantu (see Map 3 and 4) admit between one hundred and 120 patients from Mozambique per month. At the mobile clinics of Mbushana, Mbangweni and Muzi, which operate once a week, patients from Mozambique make up ten per cent of the total. According to Doctor Immelman the numbers of patients depends upon the presence of the SANDF along the borderline. People are usually scared to cross when the military is in sight.

Conclusion

In this chapter I analysed the impact of a changing relationship between Maputo and Pretoria on people living in the borderland since 1994. I showed that the international border became more open since the end of the Mozambican war. These changes have impacted dramatically on the lives of people living in the immediate vicinity of state borders. Access across the borders has been facilitated, enabling people to move more freely from one country to the other. Things unavailable in one country but plentiful in the other can be retrieved by simply moving across the border. Old cross-border social relations can be revived and new ones created. The weakening of state control over international borders has also seen an increase in the influx of people into areas with better economic opportunities and better social services. This has in turn challenged the authority of states in deciding what services to provide to whom.

For the people living in the southern Mozambique/ South Africa borderland, globalisation and the opening of the border between South Africa and Mozambique have brought both security and danger. Security in the sense that they are allowed access to resources (natural resources for people in South Africa and social and economic services for people in Mozambique) which they were previously denied. On the other hand, the opening of the borders have increased the dangers of the borderland as it has been opened to infiltration by criminals intent on using the opening of the borders for their own benefit.

The opening of the border has also facilitated social integration and awareness of cultural and ethnic differences that exist on opposite sides of the border. On the one hand, social contact leads to greater social and cultural integration; on the other hand it also makes people more aware of the differences that exist between them.

Contact within the borderland has thus led to both cultural homogeneity and cultural diversity. This is the nature of life in the borderland. People on one side of the border are continuously redefining themselves *vis a vis* people on the other side of the border. In the next chapter I investigate increased economic interaction in the post-war borderland, exploring the idea that economic integration fosters cultural integration that make people more aware of the differences and the similarities that exist between them. In chapter nine I investigate the impact of social contact on identity and ethnicity in the borderlandscape.

Figure 11: Trade at the KwaMshudu border market, 2003

Photograph by Hannie du Plessis

University of Pretoria etd – Kloppers, R J (2005)

CHAPTER SEVEN

SHOPPING THE BORDER:

THE TRANSFER OF GOODS AT AND ACROSS THE BORDER

> Borders – however imperfectly – are significant in the exercise of power relations (especially by the state) over particular areas. They constitute the meeting place of competing territorial systems, and territoriality fundamentally mediates trans-border economic relationships. Borders, as strong barriers to trade, may disadvantage border regions but, if they are permeable, and there are strong complementarities with adjoining territories, they can open up new markets, firm linkages and other positive economic relationships.
>
> Williams, Balaz and Bodnarova (2001:831)

In this chapter I investigate the kinds of economic opportunities created by the existence of the international border. Social interaction necessitated by economic opportunities fosters cultural relations across the international border, as people on one side of the border make their behaviour understood by people on the other side. Similar to the larger forces of globalisation, economic interaction across the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border contributes to the creation of a common lifestyle and common cultural meanings. The economic opportunities created by the international border are one of the major forces creating unity in the borderland in the post-war and post-Apartheid era. Although some cross-border trade is organised along old ties of kinship, new social ties are being created, based on shared interests that unite the inhabitants of the borderlandscape.

Borders: blockades and bridges

Borders are usually defined as obstacles. This is not only true in the case of international borders, but also for many other physical and symbolic borders and boundaries. Borders do not only delineate space, setting apart one area from another, they also regulate the flow of people, goods and ideas into and out of a particular space. Borders create boundaries of belonging and exclusion. The primary function of geopolitical or state borders is to demarcate the territory of the state and to serve as a line along which the movement of people and goods into and out of that territory is controlled. Since states determine access rights across international borders, people with transnational social and economic ties and objectives usually perceive international borders as barriers.

However, because of the nature of international borders as obstacles, or barriers, they are also, simultaneously, creators of economic opportunities. As Donnan and Wilson (1999:90) remark 'the existence of a border is the very basis of smuggling'. International borders create official economic opportunities, such as jobs for customs officials and border police and income tax for governments, but also many unofficial economic opportunities. These opportunities include the smuggling of weapons, drugs and illegal immigrants as well as a wide range of other contraband articles and services across international borders. Such activities are often referred to as components of the 'black', 'hidden', 'shadow', 'second', 'informal' or 'subversive' economy, because they ignore, contest and subvert the ability of state institutions to control their self-interested domain (Donnan & Wilson 1999:78).

People who make a living from selling goods and services on this 'black market' are directly dependent on the very existence of the international border, and

also on the police and military who regulate the border, to make a living. Their 'battle' with the international border can be compared with the struggle between the police and criminals within a state. Crime guarantees employment for the police, as it does for many members of the justice system. If the police were to succeed in erasing crime from society, there would be no reason for the existence of a police force. In the same way that the police constantly battle to eradicate crime, the lifeblood of their existence, people who make money from the subversive economy of the international border constantly fight against the very thing that ensures their livelihoods. For these people the international border is not so much an obstacle as it is an economic opportunity or resource.

This is what makes the economy of a borderlandscape different from economic activity elsewhere. Borderlanders live along a potential resource, which they are able to exploit. In the same way that the economic activities of people who live next to rivers differ from those who live in deserts, so too does the economic organisation of the borderland differ from economic organisation of the centre of the state. People living next to rivers can tap that resource for food, power and transport in ways not possible to people who live further away from rivers. Similarly, people living close to international borders can utilise the border as an economic resource. MacGaffey (1991:119) shows that in the case of the Congo, recourse to cross-border trade is an essential strategy for survival in an otherwise 'disastrous' economy.

The most obvious examples of the use of the international border as a resource is cross-border smuggling of goods, like the smuggling of drugs across the Nigeria/ Benin border (Fadahunsi & Rosa 2002:414-415), and the smuggling of people across the US/ Mexico border (Anzaldua 1999:33 and Andreas 1999:591). Prostitutes and sex workers living on the margins of states also use the border as an economic

resource, attracting, sometimes much wealthier, customers from the other side. Hann and Beller-Hann (1998) describe how prostitution has flourished along the border between north-eastern Turkey and Georgia since the fall of the Soviet Union. Along this border 'some highly conspicuous foreign women, often exaggerating their distinctiveness through their clothes, hair styles and the use of make-up, took advantage of the opening of this part of Turkey to cash in on opportunities to provide services for which men previously had to travel as far a field as Ankara (p.250).'

However, cross-border smuggling and prostitution are rather extreme examples of the use of the international border as an economic resource. A much more common use of the border as an economic resource is apparent in cross-border trade, in which borderlanders evade taxes and levies. This is especially visible along borders where states with strong economies meet states with weak economies, as along the Republic of Ireland's border with Northern Ireland[1], the internal German border[2] and along the United States/ Mexico border[3].

[1] In the 1980s thousands of consumers from the Irish Republic flocked to Northern Ireland where, because of lower value added tax on a variety of products, prices were up to a third cheaper than on the Republican side. By the mid-1980s the Irish Republic was experiencing such a severe loss of revenue that it put in plans to limit cross-border shopping. In order to stop the loss of income the Irish government instituted the so-called forty-eight hour rule, whereby people leaving the Republic for less than forty-eight hours could no longer claim tax-free allowances for goods bought across the border. Despite this rule, shoppers continued to cross the border, lured by the huge difference in prices between goods sold in the Republic and goods sold in Northern Ireland. In the late 1980s the forty-eight hour rule was modified, but due to the weakening of the Irish pound, cross-border shopping has been much more modest than in the mid-1980s. On-and-off Irish Republican Army cease-fires and a continuation of war by splinter republican and loyalist groups has further hampered cross-border shopping (Donnan & Wilson 1999:110; Wilson 1995).

[2] Daphne Berdahl (1999:132-139) illustrates how, shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall, borderlanders from East Germany flocked to the Federal Republic to purchase 'superior' Western commodities across the border.

[3] Along the U.S.-Mexico border Mexicans cross daily to frequent shops in the United States where the goods are of a better quality and much cheaper than in Mexico (Lenderking 1996:191). A plan has even been put forward to construct a footbridge across the international border, linking a shopping mall in the United States with the town of Tijuana in Mexico (Time 2001:17).

Unlike at the centre of states, very different resources exist in the economies of borderlands. Despite the continual trends of globalisation and the making of the 'global village', the state remains an important authority and decision-maker in economic organisation. State mechanisms control taxation, imports and exports, interest rates, currency devaluations and the like. Even the most powerful Multi-National Corporations have to obey the decisions of governments. Borderlandscapes are places where systems of government meet and merge. People living in the borderlandscape have a unique ability, due to their location, of moving from one country to the other, utilising the resources of each to their own benefit. In so doing they come into conflict with the attempts of states to

> control the behaviour of its citizens and subjects, to impose morality, to regulate the movement of people and the flow of commodities, and to define what are and what are not marketable goods (Donnan & Wilson 1999:79).

Thus, in the sphere of economic organisation borderlands are also sites of power and struggle. The cross-border movement of trade-goods and commodities challenges the authority and regulatory power of the state in a similar manner as the cross-border movement of people does.

Along the eighty kilometre stretch of international border between Mozambique and South Africa, where the Matutuine district meets the KwaZulu-Natal province, two different types of subversive economic trans-border activities can be distinguished, namely the smuggling of goods and the trading in goods at the border markets. This distinction is not only based on the location of trade-networks, but also on the legality of the trade and the dangers associated with it. The SAPS and SANDF view smuggling of goods across the border, predominantly from Mozambique for sale in South Africa in an extremely serious light, especially so in the case of weapons, stolen vehicles and drugs. The first section of this chapter

examines these smuggling activities. I discuss the cross-border smuggling of weapons and drugs at the hand of SANDF statistics, and also the smuggling of clothes, crafts and fish.

Although trade in goods at the border fence is just as illegal as trade in goods ten kilometres away, the latter is more likely to propel the police and soldiers to action as it poses a greater challenge to state control. The border markets have become institutionalised and accepted. Although some activities at border markets are illegal, South African police officers and soldiers allow trading to proceed and maintain a presence at the markets. This sanctioning of the border markets has led them to become important sites in the social life of the borderlandscape. Not only are they meeting places for friends and relatives, they are also legal crossing points for borderlanders since the police and soldiers allow people to move across the border freely on market days. The second section of this chapter analyses the economic and social significance of the border markets, especially in the breakdown of social boundaries.

Cross-border smuggling

According to Fadahunsi and Rosa (2002:398) illegal trade exists in three basic forms: (i) trading in goods and services that are normally forbidden by law (for example, narcotic drugs, prostitution, stolen vehicles, illegal firearms and rare wildlife); (ii), trading in legal goods and services in an illegal manner by avoiding duties and taxes; and (iii), using illegal, unfair practises to attain an unfair advantage (for example, insider trading and black market currency exchange). Based on the goods traded across the Mozambique/ South Africa border, two forms of illegal trade can be

identified, namely, the cross-border smuggling of illegal items (weapons, ammunition, stolen vehicles, narcotic drugs and second-hand clothes) and the illegal trade in legal items (crafts, bush meat, cigarettes and alcohol).

1. Weapons, drugs, stolen vehicles and the 'Edgars' trade. Since 1994 international crime syndicates have increasingly viewed South Africa as an easy target for their activities. This has led to a tremendous increase in cross-border drug smuggling, money laundering and prostitution. Nigerian drug syndicates and the Russian and Chinese mafias have all set up bases in South Africa. It is estimated that the illegal importation of goods bypassing the payment of import duties costs South Africa as much as R17 billion per year (Kruys 2002:164).

According to Hennop and McLean (2001:71), the northern KwaZulu-Natal area, bordering Swaziland and Mozambique has been one of the most significant transit routes for illicit firearms entering South Africa. This stretch of border contains many of the main routes formerly used by the liberation movements for smuggling weapons into the country. The former South African government also supplied RENAMO with weapons along transit routes at this border. In the late 1980s and in the run-up to the 1994 South African elections, members of the Inkhata Freedom Party (IFP) and the ANC used these transit routes to procure weapons from Mozambique to use in their struggle. In April 1993 three members of the IFP from KwaNgwanase (Manguzi) were sentenced to twelve years' imprisonment for the illegal possession and smuggling of arms and ammunition from Mozambique into South Africa (South African Institute of Race Relations, SAIRR 1993/1994: 301). One of the men, who were imprisoned in 1993, told me that chiefs and headmen in the

Manguzi area were involved in the weapons trade and that the same people would run weapons for the ANC and the IFP for commercial profit.

The large quantities of weapons not recovered after the war in Mozambique, much of it buried in caches, creates an abundant source of supply to the criminal markets of southern Africa. According to the police the terrain of this area 'could almost have been designed for illicit trafficking.'

It is impossible to obtain accurate information on the quantities of illegal firearms crossing into South Africa. According to Hennop and McLean (2001), the quantities seem to have dropped since the peak at the height of political violence in the run-up to the 1994-election in South Africa. Weapons and ammunition are, however, still entering the country at points along border (p.74).

At present, the SANDF still defines the KwaZulu-Natal borders with Mozambique and Swaziland (especially Muzi and the Sambana pass) as major points for the smuggling of weapons into South Africa. The SANDF have no recorded cases of weapons or ammunition leaving South Africa in the past five years. Due to security reasons the SANDF cannot release detailed information on weapons and ammunition smuggled into South Africa from Mozambique and Swaziland. The only information made available is of weapons and ammunitions found entering KwaZulu-Natal from Swaziland and Mozambique during 2002. Table 6 and 7 show the amounts and types of weapons and ammunition confiscated by the SANDF in that year.

Table 6: Weapons confiscated by the SANDF smuggled into South Africa along the southern Mozambique and eastern Swaziland border, 2002.

Description	Number of weapons
Handmade weapon	6
9 mm shotgun	37
38Spec	5
R1 Rifle	1
AK47 Rifle	5
G3 Rifle	1
Shotgun	9
0.22 Rifle	2
Total	66

Source: South African National Defence Force, Jozini

Table 7: Ammunition confiscated by the SANDF smuggled into South Africa along the southern Mozambique and eastern Swaziland border, 2002

Description	Number of rounds
9mm shotgun rounds	229
38Spec rounds	15
R1 Rifle rounds	21
AK47 Rifle rounds	35
12Bore rounds	12
0.22 Rifle rounds	6
G3 Rifle rounds	4
Total	333

Source: South African National Defence Force, Jozini

Apart from weapons and ammunition, contraband, drugs and stolen vehicles are the main items in cross-border smuggling. Soldiers I interviewed along the border state that the smuggling of illegal firearms is not really a large problem. They rarely seize illegal firearms coming across the border. According to the soldiers, stolen vehicles and contraband are the main smuggled items. All major smuggling points for weapons and migrants have also been identified as smuggling points for drugs. According to Major Nxumalo of the SANDF at Jozini, drugs crossing the international borders of Swaziland and Mozambique are of great concern to the SANDF. Between 1993 and 2002 the SANDF confiscated 151, 654 kg of cannabis (*dagga*) along this stretch of border.

Table 8: Cannabis confiscated by kilogram by the SANDF along the KwaZulu-Natal border with Swaziland and Mozambique, 1993-2002.

Year	Total
1993	24 kg
1994	102 kg
1995	356 kg
1996	354 kg
1997	7, 864 kg
1998	2, 462 kg
1999	12, 713 kg
2000	1, 419 kg
2001	6, 837 kg
2002	38, 643 kg
Total	70, 774 kg

Source: South African National Defence Force, Jozini

Drugs flow from both sides of the border. Whilst cannabis flows from Mozambique to South Africa, mandrax flows from South Africa to Swaziland and Mozambique. However, this is not always the rule, since cannabis also flows from

South Africa into neighbouring countries. According to informants, residents of the South African borderland plant cannabis in between cassava to disguise it. When the SANDF or the SAPS discover the cannabis, people blame Mozambican farmers who cross the border to cultivate fields in South Africa. At present the SANDF focuses all its attention on cannabis. They argue that their personnel are not trained to find other narcotic drugs like heroine, cocaine and LSD, although they are certain that these drugs do enter South Africa through Swaziland and Mozambique. Table 8, above, provides some indication of the extensiveness of this trade.

In the same period, from 1993 to 2002, the SANDF recovered 874 vehicles along the border that were hijacked and stolen in South Africa. In many places, there are tyre tracks on both sides of the border where stolen vehicles have transited recently. Certain paths are used particularly for stolen vehicles and others mainly for smuggling contraband (Hennop & McLean 2001:73).

Table 9: Stolen vehicles found along the KwaZulu-Natal border with Swaziland and Mozambique, 1993-2002.

Year	Total
1993	40
1994	29
1995	87
1996	61
1997	29
1998	103
1999	66
2000	148
2001	117
2002	194
Total	874

Source: South African National Defence Force, Jozini

According to police officers I interviewed, most vehicles smuggled across the border are stolen in Durban. Syndicates that operate from as far a field as Malawi, put in orders for stolen vehicles with organisations in Maputo. Partnerships, comprising Mozambicans and South Africans, orchestrate the actual theft of the vehicles. South Africans, based in Durban, usually steal the cars and then hand them over to Mozambicans to drive to Maputo. Police officers also say that there has been a dramatic increase in vehicles hi-jacked in the Manguzi area, especially during the holiday-season. Table 9, above, shows the annual breakdown of stolen vehicles found by the SANDF between 1993 and 2002.

As can be seen in Table 8 and Table 9 there has been an enormous increase in the amounts of narcotic drugs and number of stolen vehicles smuggled across the international border. There are various reasons for this. In the first place the end of the war in Mozambique has opened this area to the free movement of people. This was made easier with the United Nations Operation in Mozambique's (UNOMOZ) successes in de-mining southern Mozambique. People who have flocked into southern Mozambique from various parts of Mozambique and from neighbouring countries have entered an extremely profitable business transferring goods across this border, which is far less protected than South Africa's other international borders. There is no effective policing by the Mozambican government in the area, the result being that the South African Police often cross the border to pursue criminals on the other side. During 2001, while I conducted fieldwork in the area, South African police pursued a group of criminals with stolen vehicles as deep into Mozambique as Salamanga, which is just south of the district capital of Matutuine in Mozambique. The terrain, with the only police officers stationed at Bela Vista, is thus ideally suited for smuggling activities

Another illegal article that is smuggled across the international border is second-hand clothes. This is not a unique phenomenon in Southern Africa. Hansen (2000:61) illustrates vividly that imported second-hand garments played an active part in the growing African preoccupation with clothes from the early decades of the twentieth century. Although clothes are not 'dangerous' articles like weapons and drugs, it is illegal to trade in second-hand clothes in South Africa and the smuggling of second-hand clothes across the border is taken very seriously by the South African Police.

Figure 12: Bundles of second-hand clothes ready to be carried across the border, 2002

Photograph by author

Manguzi's residents refer to the illegal clothes trade in the back streets of the village as 'Edgars'. However, in contrast with the Edgars of the city, which sells top quality brand name clothing, the Edgars of Manguzi sells second-hand clothing brought to Mozambique from the United States, Canada and other countries to aid the

poor. The clothes are transported from Maputo to Manguzi in huge bundles (see Figure 12). Only women are involved in the trade. Some of them are South African citizens, but the majority are from Mozambique. This corresponds with the trans-border trade via Ressano Garcia, which is dominated by Mozambican women (Peberdy & Crush 2001:116).

In order to buy, transport and sell the clothes, the traders rely on a network of kinship and friendship ties. These ties enable them to survive the journey to Maputo with large amounts of cash in their possession, stay safely in Maputo, and travel back to South Africa and cross the border safely. I conducted interviews with many of these women who stay together in small cottages in Manguzi. The story of one of these women, Catharina Antonio, who was the first person willing to share information on this topic with me, illustrates how the business of smuggling second-hand clothes from Mozambique to South Africa works.

Case 7.1: Catharina Antonio's trade

Catharina came to South Africa in May 2000 after floods destroyed her house in Mahlangaleni, close to Maputo. She was pregnant at the time when she travelled to South Africa and delivered her baby shortly after she settled in Manguzi. The daughter was aptly called Flood. Catherina had no family in South Africa with whom she could stay. She found accommodation in a cottage complex constructed of reeds and mud close to the main road in Manguzi village. There were many women who, like herself, had come from Mozambique. One of the women, Susana, told her about the possibility of making money by 'importing' clothes from Maputo. Needing to pay

her rent and unable to find any alternative employment, Catharina decided to join the trade.

Susana introduced Catharina to a group of eight women who were planning a trip to Maputo. They decided to lend Catharina money for transport and to buy a bundle of clothes to enable her to get started. Transport to Maputo and back again costs R100. Women usually walk from Manguzi to Puza, from where they can get transport to Maputo in a pick-up truck. Apart from the R100 per person, the women pay an additional R50 per bale of clothes. Sometimes, the groups of women pool their money and hire a truck to get them to Maputo. This can cost as much as R1, 000 and makes little sense unless each of the women plans to buy two or more bales.

Although they usually pay for their transport individually, the 'Edgars' women always travel in groups. It is too dangerous to travel alone. Taxi drivers and others whom they meet along the way know they carry money and would not hesitate to rob them if they were alone. The solidarity of the group ends there. Every woman buys her own bale of clothes and keeps the profit to herself. Travelling together for safety also seems to be a feature of cross-border women traders from Botswana and Zimbabwe (see Cheater 1998 and Muzvidziwa 2001).

The first time she arrived in Maputo Catharina stayed with her mother's sister. Since many of the women in the 'Edgars' trade originally came from Mozambique they can easily find accommodation with relatives or friends in the city. Some, like Catharina, incorporate social visits with their trade. Catharina usually travels to Maputo once a month and stays there for three to four days. During that time she visits her relatives and friends. 'Edgars' women who do not have friends or relatives in Maputo usually stay with the people they have travelled with from South Africa. Catharina relates, 'there is always a place for them to stay with one of us.' There is an

immense amount of economic support and social solidarity amongst the groups of women who travel together to Maputo. The same women always travel together. Such support is absent amongst the women traders who travel to Durban to buy clothes for re-sale in Mozambique. These women often sleep in taxi ranks or on the streets if they do not have relatives or friends in Durban.

Some of the other 'Edgars' women prefer to travel to and from Maputo in a single day. They described Maputo as expensive and unsafe. From the border it takes between four and five hours to get to Maputo with a van that is usually overloaded. Once in Maputo women walk to the informal shops and stalls located in and around the *Mercado Municipal* (Municipal Market), to purchase bales of clothes, the same size as 300 litre petrol containers. Some bales have huge red crosses on them. Some are plain white and others are marked with American and Japanese flags. The women can tell where the clothes are from since they usually find loose change in the garment pockets. Catharina has found clothes from Taiwan, Germany, Canada and the USA.

The bales of clothes cost anything from R700 to R1, 200. The bales are closed when the women buy them, which make the whole process a bit chancy. Catharina relates, 'you never know what you are getting.' The bales are filled with a particular article of clothing, either shirts or trousers or shoes, never mixed. One time when she arrived back in Manguzi, Catharina discovered that there were holes in all the clothes she bought from insects eating it. At other times the women are very lucky to open up bales with Levi jeans, Addidas sweaters or Nike sneakers.

Once they've concluded their business in Maputo, the women travel back to South Africa. Those who make a one-day return trip usually arrive at the South African border at dusk. Sometimes there are police officers in the area patrolling the border. The women then hang around and wait for them to leave or for nightfall to

cross the border. On one occasion I met two women on the Mozambican side of the border who had waited from Sunday to Wednesday for the border market to take place, so that the soldiers would allow them to cross (see Figure 12). They stayed along the borderline in a temporary shelter made from *ilala* palm leaves.

Apart from their usual problems with the soldiers and police when crossing the border, the 'Edgars' women sometimes run into trouble when they try to sell their clothes in Manguzi. In September 2002 police raided the women's informal stalls and confiscated all their clothes. In protest the women marched to the Traditional Authority ('tribal') and municipal offices. They alleged that the owner of PEP Stores had tipped off the police since no one bought clothes from them anymore. At the meeting with chief Tembe and all 'Edgars' women, police officers explained that they heard rumours that the women were smuggling weapons and drugs in their bales.[4] This was the second time the police had confiscated Catharina's clothes. On the previous occasion the police told her that she had been selling stolen goods from Maputo. The police took all her clothes and said that she must pay 'tax' to get it. She gave the officer R200 to retrieve the bale.

2. Crafts and fish. The major 'legal articles' smuggled from Mozambique and sold in South Africa are crafts and fish. Most of the craftwork sold in Manguzi comes from Mozambique. Some hats and cups sold in Manguzi even say Ponta Malongane or Ponta do Ouro on them. Young men purchase these crafts and also paintings on the streets of Maputo and sell them at two petrol stations in Manguzi and elsewhere in South Africa (see Figure 13). Joa Fakude, one of the men I spent some time with, could not speak a word of Zulu and forever looked over his shoulder to see whether

[4] Shortly after this incidence the police found five leopard skins in a bale of second-hand clothes smuggled from Mozambique. An investigation revealed that the skins were brought from Kenya and were ordered by a man in Jozini for use in a traditional ceremony.

the police were following him. He has a house and a wife and kids in Maputo and buys his curious at the Xipamanine market. The arts and crafts come from Beira, Quelimane and even from as far as Cameroon and Rwanda. On a regular visit to South Africa, which last about three weeks, Joa says that he makes as much as R500, especially if he goes there during the school holidays when most tourists visit the area. The craft trade in Manguzi is extremely miniscule compared with that of Hluhluwe and Sodwana, further south. Throughout the village there are probably never more than five places where one can buy arts and crafts. Of these, all but one is run by Mozambicans.

Figure 13: Crafts smuggled from Mozambique for sale in South Africa, 2003

Photograph by Wayne Matthews

Fish is the most important source of protein in the borderland.[5] The two most popular sources of fish in the area are the Indian Ocean and the Pongola (Maputo) River. Most fish sold at the borderland markets comes from Mozambique, rather than from the renowned fish kraals at Kosi Bay (De Clercq 1971).

Male Mozambican fishermen and female South African vendors dominate the cross-border trade. These trade-networks between fishing camps in Mozambique and fish-markets in Maputo and South Africa predate the Mozambican war (McGregor 1997:15). Mbangweni and KwaMshudu are the two major points along the border where fish are 'smuggled' into South Africa. At KwaMshudu fish is only brought across the border on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Fishermen from Mozambique transport the fish to the border. Women then purchase it and transport it to Manguzi for re-sale. The fish bought at KwaMshudu comes from as far as Lake Piti and Lake Chingute in the Maputo Elephant Reserve (see Map 3). There are no regulations for the trade in fish at KwaMshudu. Any person can purchase the fish at the border-market and transport it for re-sale in Manguzi.

At Mbangweni, where fish is brought across the border each day, there is a more regulated system in place. Most of the fish bought at the international border is caught at Lake Mandejene. Fishermen there employ South African women, to collect the fish in Mozambique and then to transport it and to re-sell it at KwaSkimelela, a trading centre along the tar road leading to Manguzi. A small group of women are also involved in transporting the fish to Ndumu. The system is not regulated through kinship ties or friendship ties. If a woman wishes to join, she approaches a fisherman

[5] Maputaland was historically disease ridden and unsuitable for keeping cattle. Furthermore, due to nutrient-poor soils the area has a low agriculture potential (Harries 1994:10-11). These factors have led local people to develop a reliance on the natural environment for food. Local people utilise a range of wild fruits and vegetables and used to hunt all sorts of small buck for food. The depletion of fauna in the area due to the Nagana Campaign and hunting has increased local people's reliance on fish as a food source (Minaar 1989:1-3).

at Lake Mandejene and asks him for work. All the woman needs is her own bucket to carry the fish. The fisherman gives her R20 for transport to KwaSkimelela. The woman has to take back all money she makes from her sales to the fisherman and earns a daily amount of between R15 and R25, depending on her sales (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Women traders bringing fish across the border for sale in South Africa, 2002

Photograph by author

Since the end of the Mozambican war, control over fishing resources has become a problem in Matutuine. Demobilised soldiers, immigrants from Maputo and South Africa, returnees and locals all compete for control over this valuable resource. McGregor (1997:15) documented a case in Catuane, close to Lake Mandejene, where local leaders tried to banish independent foreign fishermen from their area. Local

headmen also alleged that the bachelor fishermen demanded sex from the women vendors who came to purchase fish from them. Fishermen explained to McGregor (1997:15) that 'women traders from South Africa or elsewhere in Mozambique often walked long distances to purchase fish. The women would arrive in the evening, and ask the fishermen for a place to stay: "So where are they to stay? We have only one-room shacks," the fishermen argued.'

Border markets

There are three informal markets along the border of KwaZulu-Natal with Mozambique: Puza, Muzi and Mbangweni (see Map 4). The border markets are both economically and socially significant. They are places where people meet to trade fish, palm wine, beer, bread, clothes and a range of other articles. They are also places where one can obtain a range of services, from making a phone call to getting a haircut to consulting a doctor. Relatives living in different countries cross the border 'legally' under SANDF and SAPS supervision to meet at the border markets.

1. Puza: The Drinking Place. As stated in the previous chapter, Puza or KwaPuza literally means the place of drinking and local people say it is the birthplace of palm wine. Due to the sandy roads one has to traverse, it takes almost thirty-five minutes to drive from Manguzi to Puza. This market has been operational since 1992. At first it was held next to the border post at Farazela. But, in 1995 the local people moved the border to KwaPuza. Although it is a bit more difficult to travel to Puza, informants feel it is better to be further from the border police.

Figure 15: Puza market, 2002

Photograph by Hannie du Plessis

The stalls operated by the women vendors all sell the same articles, neatly displayed in and around a cooler box (see Figure 15). Some even hang small packets of chips on the border fence using it as a display for their goods. With few exceptions, vendors buy all goods in shops at Manguzi and re-package it for sale at

the market. For instance, vendors would buy a 30kg bag of maize meal and then re-package it into smaller bags that are sold for R2 each.

The market at Puza takes place on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The first people start to arrive at around eight o'clock in the morning and the market only closes down at around six o'clock at night. The vendors at the market coming from South Africa are predominantly women. In general these vendors sell processed goods, while vendors from Mozambique, both male and female, sell unprocessed goods. The South African vendors set up their little stalls inside no-man's land along the Mozambican side of the border fence (see Figure 16). There are no stalls on the South African side of the border. Here all the space is taken up by transport vehicles, parked in a straight line all along the border fence.

In twenty-five visits to Puza market I have drawn up the following inventory of articles sold by this group of vendors. These goods are: fruit (apples, mangoes, peanuts), vegetables (beans, coconuts, potatoes, sweet potatoes), bottled beer (Castle and Black Label), bread, clothes (new and second-hand), cooking oil, cold drinks (mostly Coca Cola, Fanta and Schweppes), jewellery (earrings, bracelets, necklaces), ladies cosmetics (face cream, soap, make-up), home brewed *amahewu* (a flavoured drink made with maize), maize meal, sugar, potato chips, candy, rice, salt, soup, tea, cell phone air-time and starter packs, 'fats' (similar to *vetkoek*, a ball of dough deep-fried in cooking-oil), coffee, washing powder and Drostyhof wine by the glass.

The South African vendors live in the areas immediately surrounding the border. Although at first sight it would appear that they sell their processed goods to people from Mozambique who do not have access to shops, their customers are predominantly South African. As in Mozambique, there are no shops in KwaMshudu or in its vicinity. The border market brings the shops to the people of the borderland

on both sides of the spatial divide. A survey I conducted on both sides of the international border shows that eighty-seven of 100 interviewees in KwaMshudu regularly attend the market, as do all of the 100 interviewees on the Mozambican side.

Figure 16: Traders at Puza market, 2002

Photograph by Hannie du Plessis

The use of public telephones at the market shows how the market caters for consumers. The phone is run from a car battery and cost much less than normal cell phone rates – only sixty-five cents per unit that lasts about three minutes. People from both sides of the border make use of the phone, although the majority of the clients are from South Africa. The public phone links into the MTN network and makes communication across the border much easier. One can get a signal from South African cell phone networks as far north as Zitundo. The Mozambican network only covers Maputo and its immediate vicinity. People in the Mozambican part of the borderland who own cell phones locked onto the South African networks can buy 'starter-packs' and 'air-time' at Puza. Most people, however, do not have the money and make use of the public phone that comes to the area twice a week.

The market offers many other services. On the South African side of the border is a barber and a mechanic, while on the Mozambican side of the border there is a doctor, a traditional healer, a church and two 'restaurants'.

Recently, a mechanic opened shop at the border market. He makes money from servicing cars, panel beating and selling petrol to Mozambican transport drivers. (While I conducted research petrol at Ponta do Ouro cost almost R2 more per litre than in South Africa). The barber only visits the border on Saturdays. During the rest of the week he has a small stall in Manguzi where he can make more money. A regular haircut costs R10, while his speciality, the Afghanistan, costs R13.

Many people of KwaMshudu told me that they visited the border-market specifically to consult 'the doctor'. I expected him to be a traditional healer or diviner since people told me about his special healing powers, especially when it comes to backaches and pains. I was thus surprised to discover that the doctor was a *mulatto* who had qualified as a physician in Mozambique. The doctor works from a small

reed consultation office on the Mozambican side of the border. At any one time there is usually a queue of at least fifteen people waiting to see him. The doctor uses no special divination techniques or any occult powers. He simply examines his patients, diagnoses them and gives them their medication. A consultation with medication costs R10. This is one of the reasons why the doctor is so popular. There is a clinic in KwaMshudu that serves people on both sides of the border, but treatment seldom costs only R10. It is also more expensive to travel to the clinic than to the border-market, and for that reason informants preferred to consult the doctor at the border.

South African women run the two 'restaurants' at the border, yet they are supplied by products coming from Mozambique, namely bush meat and fish. The women buy fish and bush meat from the Mozambican fishermen and hunters, cook it and sell it to people who have visited the market.

The bush meat sold at the restaurant is cooked with onions and potatoes and served with rice or maize meal. There is no shortage of bush meat at the market of Puza. The 'butchery' is out of sight from the South African side of the border. It is located behind palm trees across the border. Informants explained that although there are no police or soldiers on the Mozambican side, there are conservation officers at the border market and they therefore hide the meat from the public eye. Conservation officers are aware of the restaurants, but prefer it if the meat is kept where they can't see it. The majority of the game sold is small antelope like duiker, suni and impala, while warthog, cane rat and monkey are also occasionally sold. Although the meat is sold in pieces of varying sizes, one can purchase an entire suni carcass for R50. Most of the animals are caught in the areas surrounding the Maputo Elephant Reserve, while some of it is caught in forest areas around the market.

The fish arrives at the market in 'truckloads' from Lake Piti and from other estuaries and rivers in the area. Women eagerly await the trucks and rush with huge twenty-five litre buckets to purchase the best fish (see Figure 17). The fishermen can hardly keep up with the demands of the shouting women crowding the trucks.

Figure 17: Dried fish for sale hanging on the international border fence, 2002

Photograph by Hannie du Plessis

Women dry and sell the fish at the market, though some fish is also sold at Manguzi. Women coat the fish and deep-fry it. Locals refer to this as 'Kentucky' Fried Fish. The fish is very oily and is usually served with peri-peri (chilli) sauce and *pao* (Portuguese bread). The peri-peri sauce and *pao* are the only truly Portuguese products that I have ever seen at the market. It is very difficult to get hold of *pao* since most of it is usually sold the moment it reaches the market. One informant, an old man whom had fled the war in Mozambique and settled in South Africa, told me that, although he likes 'SPAR bread' (store bought white bread), he always prefers *pao*. Michael, my translator who grew up in Maputo, told me that *pao* reminds him of home. After every visit of ours to the market he would take back as much *pao* as he could find on the market. Peberdy and Crush (2001:118) also found that Mozambican bread was a major trade article carried by cross-border traders from Maputo via Ressano Garcia to South Africa. Peberdy (2000:7) writes that the traders carry other Mozambican products like *capulanas* (a traditional cloth), vegetables that are unavailable in South Africa and nuts, such as cashews.

One of the major products of the Puza market is undiluted palm wine or *injemane*, a hallmark of this area (see Cunningham 1985:108 and Tyburski and Van Aarde 2004). Palm wine tappers sell the wine for resale to those who frequent the market. The palm wine is then transported to Manguzi and other areas outside of the palm-belt zone. Those who sell the palm wine are from both sides of the border. Palm wine not transported to Manguzi from Puza is drunk locally under the trees, especially later in the afternoon when many people have gathered at the market.

Apart from the easily observable economic opportunities the border market creates for borderland residents, there are a range of other spin-offs associated with the border market. These include opportunities for taxi drivers who transport people

to and from the market, and also for sex workers who befriend and live with the soldiers who patrol the market.

Transport to and from the market is a lucrative business. On both the Mozambican and South African side people and their goods are transported to the market. Between five and fifteen vans (called *bakkies*) are usually parked in a long row on the South African side of the border, and another eight vans with South African number plates on the Mozambican side. In Mozambique it costs 20, 000M (R20) to get from Zitundo to the border (about fifteen kilometres). Prices are comparable on the South African side of the border. A single trip by van from Puza to Manguzi costs R13 for a local (borderlander) and R30 for an outsider (a person from northern Mozambique or another country trying to enter South Africa illegally). The rules of the transportation business are quite simple. The moment there are two people in front of the pick-up and four people on the back the truck has to leave so that the next one can be loaded.

The border and the border markets also create opportunities for the oldest profession in the world. As Donnan and Wilson (1999:82) state 'border zones have been widely reported as providing opportunities for illicit sex.' At any place in the world where sailors or soldiers are stationed for a considerable length of time prostitution seems to thrive. 'Vice', Martinez (1988:11) remarks, 'is usually found in large doses in border areas and ports throughout the world.' Because of the border market at Puza and the crossings taking place there, permanent army bases have been instituted there on both sides of the border. On the South African side each battalion stays in the area for three months at a time. The Mozambican soldier I met there had been stationed there for three years.

Whilst none of the women in the borderland can be described as 'prostitutes', many women engage in 'survival sex'. The women say they do not practise prostitution because they don't just offer a sexual service in exchange for money. Instead they allow soldiers to 'fall in love' with them for the period that the soldiers are stationed there. They nonetheless receive goods of food, clothes and money. The women see the relationships as real loving relationships, although they understand that these are only temporarily. There is also an aura of monogamy. Should a woman accept the proposal of a particular soldier, she will be off limits to other men for as long as she 'dates' the soldier. Once the soldier leaves the area, the woman will be eligible for another 'relationship'. Sometimes soldiers who arrive at the borderland have already learnt from other workers employed in the area which women make 'good girlfriends'. Women who are willing to become 'girlfriends' for the soldiers are usually widows with families to support. Lyttleton and Amarapibal (2002:50) describe a similar situation along the Tai/Lao border where sexual interaction no longer takes the form of prostitution or brothel-type sex.

Girlfriends do not just perform sexual favours, but also provide soldiers with the 'comforts of home' (Standing 1992:477), such as cooking for them and cleaning their quarters. Grace Tembe is from KwaMshudu, but works for soldiers on the Mozambican side of the border. She says she acts as a domestic worker for the men and is paid with food and gifts. Her proximity to the border affords her a job opportunity, which is different from that of the 'girlfriends' who play the complete roles of 'wives' to the soldiers while they are there. The women say that many of the soldiers are married men and that they are merely looking after them while they are stationed in the area. Similar practises occur all along the borderline. In 1999 in Mbangweni a soldier returned after a year to find that the girl he had been with the

previous year had become pregnant by a soldier from another battalion. Unable to accept it, he shot the girl, jumped the border without his army clothes and was never seen again.

2. Mbangweni. The market at Mbangweni is situated about two kilometres from the border fence on the South African side (see Map 4). The market is much smaller than the one at Puza and takes place everyday. The marketplace is much more like a large taxi rank (see Figure 18). The owners of the taxi rank control all access to the market for outsiders. I had to gain their permission to talk to people at the market and to take photographs there. Because of the sandy roads in Mbangweni the taxis are mainly four wheel-drive vans. This market at the rank has operated since 1988. Drivers remember that during that time people fled the war in Mozambique and used the taxis to get to the main tar road leading to the N2 highway. In those days transport from Mbangweni to the tar road cost only R2, 50. Today it costs R20.

Goods usually sold at tuck-shops are sold at this market. These include small packets of peanuts, maize meal, pens, plastic bags, potato chips, sugar, hair clips, petroleum jelly, tinned food, candles and bread. There are also a few stalls that sell second hand clothes 'imported' from Mozambique, and new clothes from Durban. A significant difference between the goods sold at Mbangweni and Puza is the absence of beverages at Mbangweni. A drinking house at the taxi rank apparently has the monopoly over the sell of all alcohol. Sometimes palm wine is sold, but it is palm wine brought to the market from areas in the palmbelt zone, since there are no *ilala* palms in Mbangweni.

The border markets at Muzi and Manhoca are connected, yet some six kilometres apart from each other. Like the market at Puza, the Muzi market takes

place on Wednesdays and Saturdays. The market is held at the old border gate between South Africa and Mozambique on the eastern corner of the Tembe Elephant Park (see Map 3). The goods sold at Muzi are similar to those sold at Puza. South African vendors, predominantly women, sell processed goods to Mozambicans who in turn sell bush meat, palm wine and fish.

Figure 18: Border crossing at Mbangweni market, 2003

Photograph by author

3. **Muzi/ Manhoca.**[6] The market at Manhoca is located precisely where the Mozambican border post with South Africa used to be (see Figure 19). The market takes place on Mondays. South African vendors gather there from about eight o'clock in the morning. The goods they sell are similar to the goods sold at Puza: sugar, tea, maize, maize meal, bottled beer, cold drink etc. Even though the market takes place in Mozambique all transactions are in South African currency. As is the case with the

[6] Manhoca has traditionally been a trading place. During the colonial era there were four shops in this small village, three of them owned by Indian immigrants (Rutherfoord 1995:69).

vendors at Puza these women usually all have cooler boxes around which they display their goods. The difference between this market and Puza is that all these women have to cross the border and walk the six kilometres to the market. The market services all the small villages south of Salamanga, where the closest shops are located. People from Salamanga visit the markets because it offers superior goods to what is locally available.

Figure 19: Manhoca market on a Tuesday afternoon, 2003

Photograph by Wayne Matthews

Vans transport people from central points at Gebeza, Hucu and elsewhere to the market at Manhoca. Like elsewhere, large quantities of fish are sold or bartered for consumer products at Manhoca. Vendors at the market also import and sell palm wine and bush meat. On the occasions I visited the market I could only see the

carcasses of smaller game like suni and red duiker. My research assistant once bought a cane rat.

There is nothing spectacular about the market at Manhoca. The market is too far removed from the border to double as a crossing point for entering South Africa. The only taxis are the ones taking people from areas in Mozambique to the market. South Africans usually walk to the market. The market appears to fulfil a more limited economic need, with people from South Africa selling consumer goods to people in Mozambique or trading them consumer goods for fish, palm wine and bush meat.

4. Border Markets and the Breakdown of Social Boundaries. The markets on the border between KwaZulu-Natal and Mozambique do not merely serve economic needs. They also provide entertainment to the people in the borderland, serve as legal crossing points and are meeting places for relatives and friends from both sides of the border. Through the establishment of contact between people on both sides of the border, and through the flow of goods, people and ideas across the border, the markets contribute to the breakdown of social boundaries within the borderland.

A survey conducted at Puza and KwaMshudu clearly illustrates the diverse functions of the market. Out of one hundred respondents on the South African side of the border twenty-nine said that they visit the market to sell goods, twenty-four to purchase goods, eighteen to visit relatives, and seventeen to 'see what things people are trading.' Seven South African respondents merely went to the market to enjoy the day, three to visit friends and two to consult the doctor. On the Mozambican side of the border, eighty-seven interviewees said that they go to the market to sell

something, six to visit relatives, three to buy things and two go there merely to enjoy the day.

Although engaging in trade is clearly the predominant reason for visiting the market, people also visit the market for other reasons. A different question in the survey asked interviewees how they communicate with their relatives across the border. To this question twenty-six per cent of interviewees in KwaMshudu with relatives in Mozambique and thirteen per cent of interviewees in Puza with relatives in South Africa answered that they meet at the border market.

Market days are major social events in the borderland. Not only do people get to meet with friends and family, the market also gives them a place to go to. There are very few other forms of social entertainment in the borderland. People usually plough their fields, collect water and firewood, gather wild fruit, hunt animals or tap palm wine. All these are subsistence activities that take up most of their time. The border market provides an escape. It affords women the opportunity of sitting next to each other and to converse while they sell their products. As in the case of pension markets and markets selling curios to tourists, women do not compete with each other in terms of the prices and variety of the articles they sell. The absence of competition between them gives them the opportunity to sit and chat freely under the shade trees at the market. Similarly, the border markets give men a chance to drink beer and eat bush meat (*inyama*) while they sit in a round circle on wooden benches under the trees. It is not only people with relatives across the border that congregate at the border markets to enjoy the day. Others also get together and converse. Hann and Beller-Hann (1998:249) also show how the informal markets that developed along the Turkish/Georgian border after the break-up of the Soviet Union serve as sources of entertainment. These cross-border markets 'provided an occasion to go out and

socialise (*gezmek*)… For all concerned the "Russian market" (*Rus pazari*)… was a source of fun and entertainment (Hann & Beller-Hann 1998:249).

The border markets of Mbangweni and Puza are also important crossing points for locals. It usually costs a great deal of money and takes more than a day for a resident of Mbangweni to cross the border at the official border post and visit relatives in Mozambique. As stated in the previous chapter, prior to 1994 there used to be a border post at Mbangweni. There were no official facilities for customs and immigration. Soldiers manned the post to investigate peoples' passports and allow those with legal papers to pass through. After 1994 Mbangweni residents were compelled to cross at the official border post at Farazela. The impracticality of this arrangement for borderlanders is astounding. As activity at the border market at Mbangweni increased so too did the numbers of soldiers in the area. Through time the soldiers who patrol the markets have allowed borderlanders to move freely across the border on market days.

Similarly, people are allowed to cross the KwaMshudu/ Puza border on market days. On other days border crossing is illegal and transgressors are liable to be arrested by the police. Five or six soldiers usually patrol the border market on motorbikes. Sometimes they abuse their power and demand money from the locals who want to cross, but most of the times they allow them to go freely. In this way the very existence of the border market enables local people to cross the border at other points than the official border post. The border market is thus, in a sense, also a temporary border post.

The border markets enable people from both sides of the international borderland to trade and also to communicate with one another. This movement of people, goods and ideas across the border encourages the development of a common

borderland culture and identity. In order to engage in trade people need to understand one another. For this reason Zulu is the *lingua franca* of the borderland. There is a long history of using a foreign language for purposes of trade. In fact, Tembe-Thonga people first learnt isiZulu to trade with their more numerous Zulu-speaking neighbours. According to Felgate (1982:10) and Webster (1991) the Tembe-Thonga have subsequently also embraced a Zulu identity to facilitate their employment as migrant labourers to South Africa's industrial cities. Because of the contacts the border markets allow and because of the exchange of goods across the border, divisions between the people on either sides of the border become blurred.

Border markets also contribute to the breakdown of social boundaries by supplying goods to shops in Mozambique. Tuck-shop and informal stall owners in southern Mozambique use the border market at Puza as the main source for obtaining their stock. The resulting situation is that one can only find South African products in this far southern part of Mozambique. Apart from the Portuguese shop owner at Ponta do Ouro and the tourist resorts along the beach, no small shops close to the border stock Mozambican products. In the small shops along the border in Mozambique it's all Castle Lager, Sasko bread, Omo Washing powder, Klipdrift brandy, Lucky Star Pilchards and Iwisa maize meal.

The disappearance of the Mozambican beer, Dois M (Two M) – that was named after the French President, Marshall MacMahon (Martin 1999:14) – is symbolic of the South Africanisation of the borderland. Although he did not have the most recognised French surname, he was glorified by the Portuguese because of the 1875 MacMahon Award.[7] In the late 1800s when Britain, Portugal and the Transvaal Republican Government competed for control of the area, President MacMahon laid

[7] The Portuguese also named a square close to the station in Maputo after President MacMahon.

down the line separating the British and Portuguese spheres of influence. Although the exact position of the line was later amended, it became the approximate position of the current border between South Africa and Mozambique. Cervejas de Mocambique advertises Dois M as a symbol of the Mozambican nation. The advertising slogan for the beer reads, *A Nossa Maneira, A Nossa Cerveja* (To our culture/ heritage (way), to our beer) (see Figure 20).

Figure 20: Dois M beer, 2004

Photograph by Wayne Matthews

In the borderland Dois M can only be bought at the tourist destinations of Ponta do Ouro, Ponta Malongane and Ponta Mamoli. Even in these places it is impossible to find Dois M in drinking houses and pubs frequented by local people. The local shops in the tourists' destinations are stocked directly from Manguzi. Pinto, owner of Pinto's Place, the main local hangout in Ponta do Ouro, travels to Manguzi weekly to buy alcohol at the Metro Cash and Carry. Other small shop owners in the

borderland rely on transport drivers at the border markets to obtain their supplies. They usually rent an entire van for R100 to Manguzi and back. They predominantly buy the 'Great South African Beer', Castle Lager, sold in 750ml bottles or quarts. The existence of the border markets have in this way led to the disappearance of the beer that symbolised and glorified the division between South Africa and Mozambique.

This example does not only illustrate the disappearance of the divisions that exists in the borderland, but also the domination and hegemony of South Africa in the borderland. The 'Great South African Beer' has replaced the salutations to Mozambican culture. It is symbolic of local people's perceptions about themselves and the people across the border. All the people in the borderland do not share the unity in identity and culture that the border markets foster. Informants on the Mozambican side complain consistently about the arrogance of South Africans. When asked about people on the Mozambican side of the border informants in South Africa explain that they are poor, uneducated, dirty and full of diseases. These sentiments are not shared by everyone in the borderland, but are widespread.

The border market is a place where the traditional (*chintu*) meets the modern (*chilungu*) and where both flow, with their attached values across the spatial divide. Although most of the products found at the border markets are South African, many of the products are also foreign and new to people on the South African side of the borderland. The processed foods and bottled beers did not originate in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Even the neatly packaged maize meal and sugar are products from South Africa's cities. People from Mozambique go to the border markets to purchase modern (*chilungu*) products, like tinned pilchards, corned beef and bottled beer. In a similar way, people from South Africa go to the border markets to get fresh fish, bush

meat and palm wine. For Maputaland's residents fish, bush meat and palm wine are markers of 'tradition' and 'culture' (Webster 1991). These products have become extremely scarce in South Africa. The border markets are places where people can procure these 'cultural' products.

Rodgers (2002) concurs that Mozambique is perceived to be more traditional and South Africa more modern. He writes that,

> 'the historical construction of the Mozambique-South Africa border landscape reveals "Mozambique" as a place of origins of the "Machangana people" (including both South Africans and Mozambicans) and as place of "home" (*kaya*), "tradition" (*xintu*), "nature" (*ntumbuluku*) and socially productive labour (*tirha*). South Africa on the other hand emerges in the historical narratives as a "place of whites" (*xilungu*) and wage labour (*tirha*) and was experienced as eroding or contaminating of the core values associated with Mozambique' (p.104).

Because Mozambique is a more 'traditional' place it is perceived to be symbolically purer and culturally superior to South Africa (Rodgers 2002:169, 260).

The border markets on the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border fulfil a similar function to the cross-border traders described by MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga (2000:61-63) who sell African products to Congolese in Paris. Their products include manioc, maize meal and other types of food and drink, beauty products, clothes, compact disks and videos. As is discussed above, the supply of traditional products, like bread, cashews and cloths from Mozambique to South Africa was also noted by Peberdy and Crush (2001:118).

These products, or commodities, are important markers of identity in the borderland. Commodities, as Kopytoff has remarked 'must be not only produced materially as things, but also culturally marked as being a certain kind of thing (1986:64).' Commodities are endowed with culturally specific meanings. Consumers buy goods within a specific cultural framework (MacGaffey & Bazenguissa-Ganga

2000:59). Goods are used to 'create cultural categories and principles, cultivate ideas, create and sustain lifestyles, construct notions of self, and create (and survive) social change. Consumption is thoroughly cultural in character (McCraken 1988:xi). Mozambican bread is not only popular at the market because it tastes better than bread available in stores in South Africa, but because when people eat the bread they reassert their identity as Mozambicans, as people with ties across the border. Similarly, palm wine reasserts a Thonga identity in the face of Zulu ethnic domination in northern KwaZulu-Natal. Drinking palm wine and eating fish, the cultural practises of Maputaland before Zulu domination, ties the people of the borderland in unity and marks the differences between them and the other people living in KwaZulu-Natal. At the border market people can celebrate this shared identity, which has long been fragmented and suppressed. In this way the border markets play a role in breaking down social boundaries between people on opposite sides of the border.

Conclusion

When the international border between Mozambique and South Africa was drawn in 1875 it separated a unified social and political community and at the same time cut across old trade routes linking Delagoa Bay (Maputo) with KwaZulu-Natal and Swaziland. Although trade continued along these routes throughout the Mozambican war and the political upheavals in KwaZulu-Natal before the 1994 elections in South Africa, the importance and dynamics of economic interaction across the border dwindled as the border became a far greater obstacle. At present it is precisely because of its nature as an obstacle that the border is contributing to the creation of unity in the borderland. The border, due to its very existence, creates opportunities

for people to make money by smuggling goods across it or by trading along it with people on the other side who do not have access to the same resources. In the process international cross-border smuggling and trading networks are established. As with globalisation on a larger scale, increased economic interaction leads to increased social interaction and the disappearance of the symbolic boundaries between people on opposite sides of the divide. In this manner the international border is thus, ironically, a major contributor in the creation of social and cultural union in the borderland and the disappearance of social boundaries drawn along it.

Figure 21: An offer of *ubuganu* (Marula beer) to the ancestors, South African borderland, 2001

Photograph by Callie Pretorius

CHAPTER EIGHT

DISPLACEMENT, TERRITORIAL BOUNDARIES AND THE SPIRITS OF THE ANCESTORS

> Ancestral rights were significant because of the traditions that linked lineage and ancestral rights to specific land(s). One's ancestors came to life in the land, ensuring the right of their descendants to life and work the land, and ensuring fecundity. Living on someone else's land meant that *deslocados* either lived without the protection of their ancestors or, if they chose to perform ceremonies to bring the protective spirits of their ancestors with them, lived on land under the rule of someone else's ancestral lineage. Many people told stories of becoming sick because their ancestors fought with the ancestors who had historical rights to the land, the former hating to succumb to the domination of the latter.
>
> Nordstrom (1997:120).

In this chapter I concur with Boddy (1994:427) that spirit possession is about much more than the mere metaphysical. The multiplicity of identities in the borderlandscape finds resonance in the spirit-world. Possession by an alien spirit is a social phenomenon that creates unity, through real and imaginative ties of kinship, between people on opposite sides of the border. I analyse 'cross-border' spirit possession and illustrate how this is used to cement and establish unity in the borderlandscape, through real and imaginative ties of kinship.

In the sections below I consider how the union between the living and dead members of society can be broken through displacement and sustained through the existence of territorial boundaries separating people from their ancestors and ancestral land(s). During the Mozambican war of the 1970s and 1980s thousands of refugees fled to South Africa, leaving their ancestors behind. These refugees used various means to relocate their ancestors across the international boundary, thereby sustaining

the links between the living and the dead. To the extent that the ancestors are territorial, the link between people and their ancestors also symbolises and entrenches the link between people and their land. Others who fled the country left their ancestors behind, willingly and unwillingly. Some of these people devised ways of honouring their ancestors from across the border, while others, unable to keep the ties with their ancestors alive, suffered greatly due to this separation.

Apart from examining the obvious rupture in the union between the living and the dead with the displacement of people, I also analyse the possession of South Africans by spirits from Mozambique. People, especially healers, on the South African side of the border, claim that Ndau-speaking spirits of the Zambezi Province in Mozambique possess them and so establish common lineages between the people of KwaZulu Natal and Mozambique. In northern KwaZulu-Natal possession by these unfamiliar Ndau-spirits increased during the 1970s and 1980s. As the ties between refugees and their familiar ancestral spirits were broken, many saw a linkage in Ndau-possession to their home country and kin.

Furthermore, healers in KwaZulu-Natal view possession by Ndau-spirits as a blessing, since these spirits are judged as much more powerful than local ancestral spirits. Therefore, many healers in northern KwaZulu-Natal claim possession by a Ndau-spirit as well as possession by a familiar ancestral spirit. I argue that this notion is connected to the general belief by residents of northern KwaZulu-Natal that healers and medicine from Mozambique are far superior to local medicines and that Mozambique is a more 'traditional' (*chintu*) country than South Africa and, therefore, is a place more 'in touch' with the ancestors.

Essentially then, this chapter is about the creation of unity and division, both ideologically and socially. At an ideological level territorial boundaries create

disunity between the world of the living and the world of the dead and confuse and distort peoples' ideas of life and afterlife. People who crossed the border during the war were prevented from communicating with the spirits of the dead and were unable to conduct 'traditional' rituals. On a social level, the rupture in relations between people and their ancestors, through whom they are linked to people across the border, creates disunion between people on opposite sides of the border.

This chapter is divided into three parts. In the first section I discuss general characteristics of the cosmological beliefs of the people of the borderlandscape with particular reference to the spirits of the ancestors. In the second section I illustrate the dilemmas Mozambican refugees faced in the relationship between them and their ancestors when the ties between refugees and their land were severed. With the use of case-study material I illustrate the means people employed to overcome the physical division in space between them and the dwelling places of their ancestors. In the third section I look at the occurrence of, and belief in Ndau-possession in northern KwaZulu-Natal and how this possession is used to justify a common lineage between people in northern KwaZulu-Natal and Mozambique.

Cosmological beliefs in the borderland

The pre-colonial cosmological beliefs of people in the borderland are based on two pillars: belief in the existence of a Supreme Being and belief in the continuing involvement of their ancestors in their daily lives (Hammond-Tooke 1989). In pre-colonial times people did not worship the Supreme Being (*Unkulukhulu*). They remembered him as the creator of all things and the oldest ancestor of the community. However, since he is so old no one could remember his praises anymore and he

played virtually no role in the daily lives of his descendants (Junod 1962:368; Krige 1988:108).

Much more important and central in the lives of the borderlanders was the belief that the spirits of the ancestors (*amadlozi*) can affect the lives of the living. In the borderland people believe that human beings consist of three components: body (*umzimba*), soul or spirit *(idlozi*) and shadow (*isithunzi*). However, after the body dies, the shadow will ultimately become the spirit (Krige 1988: 283-284).[1] People believed that the spirits of the dead maintain an active interest and involvement in the lives of their descendents and can influence their lives in a positive or negative manner. It is important that balance and congenial relations be maintained between the living and dead members of the community and also between that which is visible and that which is invisible in their universe.

The ancestors generally play a protective role in the lives of their living relatives. In return they demanded to be looked after through various offerings and sacrifices. In the same way that living people depend on their ancestors for fortune in their lives, the ancestors depend on the sacrifices of their living relatives to live in the ancestor community. There is thus continuity between the community of those still living and those who have passed away.

Lan (1987) explains that death in African society can be compared to a weir in a river.

> For a while the flow of life is held up. The current eddies round and round and streams back on itself as the processes of dying and burial get underway. But then the weir gates are winched open and the flow of life continues,

[1] People refer to ancestral spirits interchangeably as spirits (*amadlozi*) and shadows or ghosts (*izinthunzi*). It is for this reason that Berglund (1975) prefers to call the ancestral spirits shades. When a person does not cast a long shadow people believe that he is weak and vulnerable to disease and misfortune. A dead body therefore does not cast a shadow because a person is buried with his shadow. After a person dies a ceremony (*ukubuyisa*) is held whereby his *isithunsi* becomes the *idlozi* and the person is taken up in the ancestral community (Clegg 1981; Krige 1988: 283-284).

though now on a different level (p.31).

In south-east Africa the realms of the living and the dead are inseparable and together these constitute peoples' social world. People carry their statuses and personalities with them when they die. Therefore, it is obvious that certain ancestor spirits are more important than others, in the same way that certain living people have a higher social ranking than others (Krige 1988: 283- 285).

My informants argued that venerating the ancestors was not so much a form of worship, but rather an attempt to communicate with deceased people who can still influence one's life. Having crossed the boundaries of life and death, the ancestors are closer, and in fact part of the powerful and mystical world of the spirits and the creator. This enables them to aid the living if they so desire.

Since the twentieth century people of the borderland distinguish between two distinct classes of spirits: the spirits of their own familiar ancestors and those of foreigners. Familiar spirits are usually benevolent protectors, but if their relatives neglect them, they may withdraw their protective support, thereby rendering people vulnerable to illness and misfortune. This can be corrected through appropriate ritual actions and is therefore not as serious as harm caused by witchcraft. It is therefore important to have a positive relationship with the ancestors, which is strengthened at every important occasion.

Throughout the borderland people venerate their own ancestors through specific rituals, called *ukupahla*. Most homesteads conduct the *pahla* rituals in a sacred place within the homestead. A shrine (*ingandelo*) is often constructed for honoring the ancestors at the stem of a marula tree (*Sclerocarya birrea*). In other instances people even construct special huts inside the homestead for the ancestors where they are looked after by their descendants, serving them daily with food and

drink. Veneration rituals differ relatively little from one place in the borderland to the other. A person may decide to *pahla* when illness or misfortune befalls him or her or a member of their family. Diviners often instruct people which ancestors have been neglected and should be honored. In most cases the eldest living male member of the homestead performs the ritual, although in particularly serious cases a diviner may be called to perform or oversee the ritual. Praises are recited for ancestors and some animal must usually be slaughtered. In the borderland, especially in Mozambique, it is usually a chicken or goat, since people do not keep large stock of cattle due to ecological and economic reasons. Only in extreme situations do people purchase cattle to appease the ancestors. In one case I recorded, Jabulane Mposa spent over R5, 000 on a *pahla* ritual. Jabulane told me that his ancestors abandoned him because shortly before his father passed away, he disobeyed his father by marrying someone whom his father disapproved. Jabulane became certain of the need to appease the spirits of his father's family when his wife died and he struggled to find employment.

Traditional sorghum beer (*utswala*) is also brewed in preparation for the *pahla* and gifts, such as sweets or the favorite foods of the ancestors are usually presented to them. To ensure the benevolence of the spirits the *pahla* must be performed to the exact specifications of the spirits as relayed through the eldest family member or through the diviner. If the spirits are content with the ritual they will aid their descendant(s). If not, further offerings must be made or another *pahla* organized.

The alien spirits are predominantly those of displaced Zulu people and of the Ndua people of the Zambezi Province in central Mozambique (see Chang 2001). Honwana (2002:72) argues that in the nineteenth-century interactions between Nguni, Ndau, and Tsonga people gave rise to new categories of foreign spiritual beings that could be personally embodied. These spirits differ from the familiar spirits because

they possess only certain individuals. A person who has been possessed in this manner undergoes a period of apprenticeship where after he or she will act as a speaker on behalf of the spirit who possessed him or her. I discuss possession by foreign spirits in much more detail below. For now it is important to note that possession by alien spirits play a vital role in the cosmological beliefs of the people in the borderland.

Apart from the ancestors, diviners (*izinyanga* and *izangoma*) also play an important role in the cosmological beliefs of the residents of the borderland. Diviners, like lineage heads often act as translators of the mysteries of the ancestral world. In veneration ceremonies they often interpret the wishes of the ancestors to their living relatives. During the Mozambican war diviners often fulfilled this role when families were broken up, or where lineage heads were killed and could not act as mediators between the world of the living and the world of the dead.

Displaced people and ancestors across the border

Many informants who fled Mozambique during the war attribute their present-day misfortunes to their physical displacement, which severed them from the dwelling places of their ancestors. The international border and obstacles like landmines, bandits, border police and soldiers made it impossible for people to visit the graves of their ancestors to honour them. In some cases people tried to overcome this problem by relocating their ancestors, taking them with their ancestors to the places they fled to. This in itself brought about new problems. Nordstrom (1997:159) describes the manner in which the war disrupted the relationship between people and their ancestors in the following words:

> Ancestors share the life-world of Mozambicans. They provide and protect; they punish when the living make mistakes; they counsel; they even eat, drink and enjoy a good joke. And they suffer the fates of war as do their living descendants. Properly ministered to, ancestors share fruitfully in their offsprings' lives. Their demands are not excessive. A proper funeral and burial, and fealty and respect shown in ongoing ceremonies for them in their "home-land" are the things that constitute wealth and peace of mind for the ancestors. To disregard an ancestor's wish is stupidity; to desert one a sin. People cannot, in good faith, leave their ancestors unattended in a land ravaged by violence. But if they invite their ancestors to relocate with them, they generally ensure their ancestors' unhappiness. Severed from their homeland, subordinate to the lineage of those controlling the new destination, shorn of normal family supports, the ancestors can bring turmoil, misfortune, and even death to the living. The ancestors, quite literally, can make life and death possible (p.159).

Some refugees who fled Mozambique during the war returned before 1992, risking the dangers of landmines and abductions by FRELIMO or RENAMO forces, not to mention the problems of crossing back into South Africa, to 'fetch' their ancestors. However, as Nordstrom (1997:159) states in the quotation above, relocating ancestors brings with it other problems and generally ensures their unhappiness. One informant related to me that, 'Every place has its own ancestor spirits who have lived there for many years. When one brings foreign spirits to that place it can cause problems.' He continued, 'Your ancestors are now strangers and no longer the owners of their own place.'

However, considering the alternative Mozambicans had during the war, which was to leave their ancestors behind unattended, it is understandable why people brought their ancestors to a foreign place, even if it meant that they have turned their ancestors into displaced refugees like themselves. Although many informants told me that Mozambicans brought their ancestors with them to South Africa during the war, I could only collect two cases where this actually happened. One of these cases is that of Russell Masinga who went to Mozambique during the war to bring his ancestors to live with his family in South Africa.

Case 8.1. Russell Masinga fetches his ancestors in Mozambique

Russell decided to fetch his ancestors from Mozambique after his two elder brothers died in KwaMshudu, in South Africa, during 1988. A diviner told Russell that he was next in line to die, because he and his brothers neglected their father's grave and did not venerate his spirit. Russell took white cloths and an empty Coca-Cola bottle to their old homestead at Gebeza, where his father and grandfather were buried. Risking the danger of being caught by soldiers operating in the area, he jumped the border at Muzi and travelled under the cover of night to the family's old homestead.

Russell laid the white cloths on the graves of his father and grandfather and asked them to get into those cloths and to come with him. He also put sand from the grave and from his grandfather's old house in the Coke bottle. When he returned to safety in South Africa, he put the sand at the stem of a marula tree in his homestead and laid the cloths over the branches of the tree. From then on that tree became the place where Russell and his younger brothers could go to speak to their forefathers.

During the Mozambican war refugees would also venerate the spirits of their ancestors in Mozambique at the international border. After a diviner instructed a person to venerate the spirits of his ancestors, that person and his/ her family would gather at the international border fence and call the ancestors to attend the ritual performed in their honour. Family members conducted the ritual, slaughtered and cooked two chickens or a goat, ate part of the meat, and hung the rest on the border fence for their ancestors. This was the closest many of them could get to the graves of their ancestors.

Most Mozambican refugees who settled in KwaZulu-Natal could only return to appease their ancestors after the war ended in 1992. This, for instance, was the case with Sam whose harrowing escape from the brutal war I discussed earlier.

Case 8.2: Sam and Msongi's journey to bring back their father's spirit.

After he had settled safely in South Africa, Sam stayed there until after the Mozambican war. In 1995 Sam and his older brother Msongi returned to Mozambique for the first time. Msongi's son had become terribly ill and the doctors in the hospital at Manguzi could not cure him. Msongi consulted a diviner about his son's sickness. The diviner told Msongi that his deceased father was 'calling him' and that he should visit the grave of his father in Catembe. Msongi asked Sam to accompany him.

This time they reported at the Farazela border post and crossed the border with South African passports. Sam told me that when they arrived in Catembe they were depressed to see how things had been destroyed during the war. They barely knew anyone who was still living there. Msongi slaughtered two chickens, which they bought at Catembe, at the place where his father's homestead used to be. The house was still standing, although it was in serious need of repair. After they had slaughtered the chicken, Msongi sprinkled beer on his father's grave and then he and Sam had some beer themselves. When the ritual was completed and Msongi was satisfied, he and Sam performed a second ritual of 'bringing back the spirit' (*ukubuyisa*) of their father. Msongi, who was the eldest brother, informed their father that his family now lived in South Africa and wanted him to return with them. Sam told me, 'The whole time Msongi was speaking in old Thonga'. They placed white

rags on his grave and asked him to enter the rags so that they can transport him to South Africa with them. More beer was then offered to the spirit of their father.

When they returned home, Sam and Msongi placed the white rags in the branches of a marula tree in Msongi's homestead. They then invited their relatives, the local chief and a prince (*umntwana*) of the Tembe royal council to a welcoming ritual for their father. Msongi's wife brewed sorghum beer in preparation for the ritual and Sam and Msongi purchased a goat and six chickens to be slaughtered. Eight days after returning from Mozambique Sam and Msongi performed the final phase of the *ukubuyisa* ritual by slaughtering the goat and chickens for their father and the people who had come to welcome him. From that moment onwards their father stayed at Msongi's homestead.

Informants told me that red cloths can also be used to transport the spirits of the ancestors. Another way of moving the *amadlozi* is with a branch of the *umphafa* (*Ziziphus mucronata*) tree (see Hutchings *et al*. 1996:193). During this ritual the family goes to the place where an ancestor was buried and holds a feast in his honour. They place a branch of the *umphafa* tree on the ancestor's grave and tell him to climb onto it. Once at the place they wish to relocate the ancestor, people will slaughter an animal, burn medicine, drink traditional beer and ask the spirit to settle there.

Although these trees often suffice as the place of venerating the ancestors, some people may even build special huts for the spirits of their ancestors. No living person lives in the hut. The family keeps the ancestor's personal belongings inside the hut, and enter only when they wish to communicate with the spirit.

Besson (2000) notes how people use emblems to symbolise the unity between them and their ancestors, and specific places. He reports that some Jamaican migrants

living in London place small sacks filled with Jamaican soil in their English homes. They usually take the soil from the house-yards in which the family dead are buried. This soil reproduces the felt connection between expatriate life and the active ancestral world that has only notionally been left behind (pp. 116-130). Similarly, Colson (1971:210-233) recorded rituals for relocating ancestral spirits almost identical to those performed by Mozambican refugees in exile amongst re-settled Gwembe families in Zimbabwe. Sakai (1997:50, 60-61) writes of the displaced Sumatran Gumai:

> In order to maintain their affiliation with the ancestral place, the Jurai Tue brings a handful of soil and the trunk of an areca tree (*pinang*), both of which are planted in the centre of the new village… Failure to maintain ties is believed to infuriate the ancestral spirits and will cause misfortune against their descendants (Sakai 1997:50, 60-61).

Many Mozambican refugees in KwaZulu-Natal have to this day not been able to return to Mozambique, or, when they did, they could not find former homesteads and gravesites or did not know whether people were alive or dead, and, in the latter case, if they were buried at all. This happened to Jonas Tembe, the man whose life-history was narrated on pages 78-80.

Case 8.3: Jonas Tembe's sacrifice in exile

Jonas said that there had been many occasions when he wanted to *pahla*. At first it caused him great concern because he was scared of returning to Mozambique. He finally obtained *muti* (medicine/ a magical potion) from a healer in Manguzi that helped him. According to Jonas the healer told him to stay well away from the graves of the family with whom he was living in South Africa. Instead, he was to find a place in the bushes, where he was sure no one had been buried. There he had to burn

the medicine and recall the praise-names of his ancestors so that they could help him. Jonas says that he believes in these methods and that it has helped him in the past, although he still wishes he could return to his ancestors' gravesites one day.

Healers gave contradictory answers when I asked them whether it is necessary to *pahla* at the places where people died, or whether the ritual can be performed anywhere. Russell, in the case above, would certainly have been angry if, after he had crossed the border in 1988 into Mozambique, he had learned he could *pahla* at his house. A prominent healer in Manguzi told me that he could summon ancestral spirits from anywhere in the world. On his travels to Durban or Cape Town he always takes a special root with him. When he burns this root he recites the praise-names of his ancestors. The smoke from the burning root calls the ancestors to where he is and he does not need to go to them.

However, many informants I spoke with did not agree with this. According to them the ancestors are closely associated with particular places and it is always necessary to go to the place of the ancestors to *pahla*. One diviner explained that if a person fleeing from Mozambique knew the place where his ancestors had died, he/she needed to go there to *pahla*. If he/ she did not know the exact location or even if they were not sure whether a person had died, they can *pahla* in South Africa at their new home.

It is not only the distance between living and dead relatives that cause problems when a person needs to *pahla*, but also the distance between living members who have to be at the ritual. Apart from the diviner who usually accompanies people to the gravesites of their ancestors to *pahla,* it is usually also necessary for the oldest living member of a family to be present at the ritual. The oldest member knows the

ancestors more closely and is asked to speak to them on behalf of the afflicted family. He or she also helps the family decide what to bring to the *ukupahla* ritual. There are some general items like chickens or goats and traditional beer, but there are also articles which the ancestors preferred while they were still alive. These can include their favourite bottled beer, alcoholic spirits or even sweets or potato chips. The oldest member of the family knows which articles the ancestors would prefer.

Language can also play an important role. Those who fled Mozambique whilst they were youngsters and the children of refugees are sometimes unable to speak the languages of their ancestors. Most of the younger people who have grown up in South Africa have taken Zulu as their primary language. Zulu is a language foreign to their ancestors, who can only understand Thonga or Shangaan. Therefore it is necessary to have Thonga speakers at the *ukupahla* ritual to communicate with the ancestors.

During the war in Mozambique and even today people sometimes have to cross the international border to fetch older family members before they can *pahla*. In some cases young people have moved back to Mozambique after the war while their older relatives have stayed in South Africa and *vice versa*. For these people it is very necessary to locate and invite their older family members to *pahla* ceremonies if they wish them to be successful.

Case 8.4: Rain-making Inside the Elephant Reserve.

The intimate linkage between the ancestors and land and the need to venerate ancestors at their places of death was evident during the severe drought of 2002. In that year *Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife* allowed the Khumalo clan to cross

another impenetrable border - the Tembe Elephant Park fence - to perform an ancient rain-making ritual at their ancestral graves inside the game reserve.

In this case it was the fence of the nature reserve rather than the international border that caused displacement between people and their ancestors. However, in certain respects, the fence of the game park is more impenetrable than the international boundary. Many borderlanders view the fences of the Ndumo Game Reserve and Tembe Elephant Park, in similar ways to the fences that form the international border. Some of them attribute more negative connotations to these borders than they do to the international border.

However, the rains did not start to fall after the rainmaking ritual had been performed. People blamed the Khumalo family members who congregated inside Tembe Elephant Park, saying that they did not leave meat for the ancestors, but instead took it with them after they had finished eating.

At a typical rainmaking ritual people slaughter a cow, cook its meat and eat a part of it (usually as much as they can) at the gravesite. Large pots of sorghum beer and palm wine is also prepared for the ritual and drunk with the meat. When the congregants had finished eating the meat, they had to leave the leftover meat and beer for the ancestors. In this particular instance everybody in the community was asked to contribute to the purchase of the cow, since rain would benefit everyone. Observers told me that they saw those who performed the rainmaking ritual leave the Park with meat and that that was the reason why it failed to rain. The diviner who officiated at the ritual said that the rangers from Tembe Elephant Park did not allow them to leave any meat or beer behind. Rangers, whom I spoke to, denied this. Others remarked that it did not rain after the ritual because the sacrificial cow did not walk to the gravesite, but was driven there on the back of a four-wheel drive vehicle.

According to custom the cow must walk to the sacrificial site. The more it suffers the more the ancestors will accept the plea. However, because the site was in a nature reserve, with wild animals, it had to be transported.

The Khumalo's are only allowed to make rain for a small area around the Tembe Elephant Park. Of far greater social importance is the official rainmaking ritual of the Tembe people. This ritual draws together people from both sides of the border and thus contributes to union in the borderland. At this rainmaking ritual the ancient Tembe ancestors are venerated. These are the common ancestors for people north and south of the border. This ritual does not only reaffirm the bonds that tie the community of the dead to the community of the living, but also the historic, religious and social bonds that unite people north and south of the border.

The greater rainmaking ritual has to be conducted at the royal gravesites at Catembe on the Maputo Bay in Mozambique. The only time between 1975 and 1994 that this was done was in 1991. It might have been done by people resident in Catembe at another time, but the only time the royal family sanctioned the ritual during this time was in 1991 when there was a great drought in the area. According to a diviner who was at that ritual, two cows were slaughtered at the gravesite of the old Tembe kings at Catembe. Since the Mozambican war was still in progress, the Tembe king of that time, Mzimba Tembe, could not attend the ritual. As in the case of the Tembe Elephant Park, circumstances beyond peoples' control prevented them from performing the rain-making ritual correctly. In the former case people were not allowed to leave meat at the graves of their ancestors. In the latter, the war prevented key people from officiating at the ritual.

All these examples illustrate the ideal of intimate union between people, ancestors and land. The war in Mozambique and the displacement it caused, as well as the impermeable nature of the international border in the 1970s and 1980s, fractured this union and entrenched this separation. It is precisely at this time that possession through alien spirits created new ties of unity across the international border. According to most people I interviewed regarding this matter, possession by alien spirits in the borderland increased dramatically in the 1970s and 1980s as refugees who had lost all ties with their country explored new ways of crossing boundaries between South Africa and Mozambique.

Displaced ancestors from across the border

Healers and diviners in northern KwaZulu-Natal claim a connection to the supernatural powers across the Mozambican border through possession by Ndau spirits. According to one diviner 'the ancestors are not too much powerful, Ndau have too much power'. Possession by spirits tie healers in northern KwaZulu-Natal to the supernatural powers of a more 'traditional' Mozambique and, at the same time, reinforces old kinship ties that bind people north and south of the border in unison.

According to Lee (1969:130), the first reports of possession by alien spirits appeared amongst the Zulu in 1910. Ascription and spelling vary from district to district. Junod (1927) describes '*ndjao'* spirits amongst the Tsonga-speaking inhabitants of south-east Africa. Harries (1994:163) refers to these same spirits of the Ndau-speaking people as '*ndiki'* spirits.[2] In the borderland people referred to these foreign spirits only as *ndau* or *amandau* spirits. Lee (1969) states that despite the

[2] *Ndau* and *ndiki* possession are particularly identical, though each cult possesses its own language. *Ndau* have powers of possession, whereas the *ndiki* have none. *Ndiki* means spirit (Lee 1969:130).

confusion that exists between these foreign possessing spirits, because of the different spellings and appellations, one common factor is that 'the naming and subjective aetiology of the states follow closely social change, particularly in culture contact situations' (p.130).

Local people in the borderland have different interpretations of what exactly a Ndau-spirit is. Everybody agreed that the Ndau-spirits come from Mozambique and that they are very powerful. Apart from that, most people did not know much about them except that they can be extremely malevolent. John Mthembu, for instance, recalled that a Ndau-spirit from Mozambique once made his daughter extremely ill. He called on the services of a diviner named Dlamini who is well known to have been possessed by a Ndau spirit himself. Dlamini instructed John to kill one of his goats to appease the Ndau-spirit and to save his daughter. After John killed the goat his daughter was healed. About a month later she fell ill again. Dlamini once more instructed John to kill a goat, and again his daughter was healed. When his daughter fell ill for the third time, John consulted a different healer. He argued that Dlamini's Ndau-sprit made his daughter ill so that Dlamini and his Ndau-spirit could eat goat's meat each week.

After hearing John's story, I went to visit Dlamini to find out more about the Ndau spirits. Dlamini told me that the Ndau are a people living in Mozambique, on the Zimbabwe border. This explanation finds resonance in the ethnographic literature. Harries (1994:163) reports cases of Ndau-possession during the wars between the Gaza and the Ndau-speaking peoples of central Mozambique. The spirits of slain Ndau soldiers would invest the bodies of their Gaza killers to exact revenge on them. According to Honwana (2003:71), possession by Ndau spirits came through a phenomenon known in southern Mozambique as *mpfukwa*. *Mpfukwa* is a term that

comes from the verb *ku pfukwa*, which means 'to wake up', and indicates 'a person who wakes up from the dead.' According to Honwana (2003:71),

> Mipfukwa, plural for 'spirits' and also known as 'spirits of the war'… were those of foreign soldiers (Nguni and Ndau) killed during the Nguni wars in the southern region. The spirits of soldiers and civilians killed during the wars are believed to afflict the living (especially those who caused their death or mistreated them or their descendants in life)

Likewise, an informant of Nordstrom (1999:165) in Mozambique explained to her how the spirits of people one kills stays with you.

> You see, if you kill someone, their soul stays with you. The souls of the murdered follow these soldiers back to their homes and their families, back to their communities to cause problems. The soldier's life, his family, his community, begins to disintegrate from the strain of this.

According to oral traditions in the borderland, once the soldiers from the Mabudu chiefdom, who fought in the Gaza wars of the nineteenth-century, returned, they started to get ill. They would sweat, hallucinate and speak in strange languages. People soon realised that the soldiers poke the language of the Ndau people they had fought against. The Ndau spirits were angry because they had not been buried properly and had not been incorporated into the community of the ancestors. To appease the Ndau spirits possessing them, people asked their own ancestors to accept these foreign spirits as part of the family. Should a Ndau accept this offer, he would stop harming the person he possessed and bless him or her with divining powers. From that point onwards the Ndau spirit was seen as part of the ancestor spirits of that person, although much more powerful, and would pass along the lineage line from a diviner to his children.

In the 1920s and 1930s Ndau spirit possession took on an epidemic form spreading rapidly south to Swaziland, northern KwaZulu-Natal and to the former Transvaal (Harries 1994:163). This coincided with the serious influenza and malaria

epidemics that hit those areas in 1919 and 1933 (Sundkler 1961:23). According to Harries (1994:63),

> The belief in ndiki (ndau) was also carried to the mines where the frequency of death and the ritual impurity of burial produced a plethora of uneasy and displaced spirits awaiting incorporation into the world of the ancestors. Miners often served as unsuspecting vectors for these rootless shades by spreading them in the compounds and carrying them back to their rural homes.

Informants in northern KwaZulu-Natal said that if a person was part of the same work team as Mozambicans on the mines he too could be possessed by Ndau-spirits. One informant related,

> If a friend of yours, who comes from Mozambique and who has that Ndau-spirit dies in the mines, that Ndau will not stay in the mines. It will come back with you and make you a powerful doctor.

Ndau have the unique ability to confer healers with the powers of becoming *nyamusoro* (a person who can smell out witches). Pienaar (1999:71) states that when a Ndau spirit possesses a person, special medicines are given to him or her. Furthermore, the initiation ritual of the *nyamusoro* differs from that of normal healers, and makes them much stronger. Sundkler (1961:23) observes that anyone who is possessed by a Ndau spirit can only be healed by someone else who possesses the spirit.

> This is done by rites and dances designed to cause one of the patient's ancestral spirits to materialise. The initiate goes through many days of exhausting dance, until at last the spirit enters her. It speaks through the initiate in a reputedly foreign tongue, as, for instance, a so-called "Indian" or "Thonga" language. In actual fact it may be only a series of meaningless sounds, which are thought by the audience to be some foreign language. Sometimes two or even as many as seven different ancestral spirits may take up their abode in the person concerned and speak different languages (Sundkler 1961:23).

Dlamini, the diviner whom I interviewed, said that he inherited a Ndau spirit from his father. Dlamini calls it, 'a great blessing. Like the Holy Ghost'. Dlamini

argues that the fact that he has a Ndau spirit indicates a common lineage between him and the Ndau people of Mozambique. Chang (2001:53) found a similar situation in KwaNgwanase (Manguzi), where 'some diviners claim that Ndawo [ndau] spirits are lineage ancestors.' A prominent and respected healer with who I spoke in KwaNgwanase explained that many healers claim they have Ndau-spirits to attract customers. According to this healer, 'People think that Ndau spirits are much stronger than our ancestors.' Ndau-spirits accord healers with a sense of mystery. For this reason, it is important for healers in northern KwaZulu-Natal to have a spiritual connection with Mozambique. This often includes being trained in Mozambique and using Mozambican medicines.

The question that needs to be answered is why people in northern KwaZulu-Natal view Mozambican healers and medicines as superior to their South African counterparts. There can probably be two answers. In the first place, people in northern KwaZulu-Natal see healers north of the border as stronger precisely because they are foreign. As Van Onselen (1996:72) remarks, 'the opaque crafts of an outsider with the gift of healing often take precedence over the more familiar skills of an insider.'[3] These healers provide new medicines that transcend available techniques. Considering the situation in the borderland, one can say that the Mozambique/ South Africa border has become a 'gateway to the supernatural'. That which lies beyond the spatial divide is foreign and unknown and therefore perceived to be better.

However, if it were merely the distance from patients that infused healers and their medicine with so much power, then Mozambicans would surely see South

[3] Van Onselen (1996) describes how Kas Maine travels from Schweizer-Reneke in the former Transvaal to a San healer in present-day Botswana to receive treatment for his infertility. It is a long journey that takes a few days, yet Kas is willing to travel since he believes that the *foreign* medicine and healing must be better than that which he can get locally.

African diviners as superior. I could not find this to be so. Informants did not seek cures from South African diviners and viewed their own *nyamusoras* as far superior. Rodgers (2002:265) found a similar occurrence on the north-eastern Mozambique/ South African borderland. According to Rodgers (2002) Massingir (area on the Mozambican side of the border) 'was known across the border landscape as a place where one found powerful healers and rare herbs. It is a place where the important ancestors were buried and residents still claimed entitlement to land on the basis of clan identity and kinship' (p.265).

When Mozambicans do seek treatment across the border they visit hospitals and clinics, not traditional healers. Mozambicans make up five percent of all in-patients at Manguzi hospital and as much as ten percent of patients seen at the borderland clinics of South Africa (see chapter six).

Thus, the international border should not only be seen as a gateway to the supernatural. It is rather, as I suggested in the previous chapter, a divide between the 'modern' and the 'traditional'. The reason why people from northern KwaZulu-Natal view healers and medicine from Mozambique as superior to those ones in South Africa is simply because it is natural and traditional. Things on the Mozambican side of the borderland are 'truly' African, untouched, or rather, influenced lesser, by 'modernisation'. In the same way that people cross the international border to Mozambique to get palm wine or to eat bush meat, traditional food and drink of the area, they cross the border to get traditional medicine and traditional healing.

Healers in northern KwaZulu-Natal claim to be possessed by Ndau-spirits to gain access to the powers of 'tradition' that they associate with Mozambique. From a

functionalist perspective[4] Ndau possession can thus be seen as strengthening the union between healers south and north of the border. Ndau possession is not merely a physiological or metaphysical phenomenon. It also performs an important social role in uniting a fragmented society. As Boddy (1994:427) notes '[spirit] possession has been shown to be about morality, kinship, ethnicity, history, and social memory - the touchstones of social existence.' It is, according to Stoller (1995:36), 'an incontestably embodied phenomenon that triggers a myriad of cultural memories', which should not be seen in isolation of the social and cultural history of the people amongst whom it occurs. In the borderland Ndau possession assert shared ties of kinship and ethnicity that unite healers in modernised South Africa with 'traditional' Mozambique.

Conclusion

The separation of people from their land reverberates in the relationship between people and their ancestors. The physical displacement of Mozambicans during the war also caused a spiritual displacement, in some cases between people and their ancestors, and in other cases of the ancestors themselves, being relocated to foreign lands. This physical and spiritual displacement was exemplified by the existence of an alienated international borderland milieu (Martinez 1994) throughout the 1980s and early 1990s.

[4]According to Stoller (1995:17) writers have applied five dominant forms of explanation to analyse spirit possession: functionalist, psychoanalytic, physiological, symbolic and theatrical. The strength of the functional analysis is that it highlights spirit possession as a social process with social consequences.

At the same time that physical and spiritual displacement causes separation and disharmony in the borderland, possession by displaced spirits asserts greater unity, even if healers only claim such unity to attract customers to their business.

As was stated in the previous chapters, a large percentage of people currently living in northern KwaZulu-Natal moved there during the Mozambican war. Many of these people nowadays consider themselves permanent residents, unwilling to return to Mozambique. Spirit possession, like ties of kinship, links people to those who reside on the opposite side of the border. These ties strengthen the borderland community and lead to a greater amount of similarity across the fence.

Figure 22: Drying out fish, Mozambican borderland, 2003

Photograph by Wayne Matthews

CHAPTER NINE

BORDERLAND IDENTITIES: CITIZENSHIP AND ETHNICITY AT THE INTERNATIONAL FRONTIER

> If 'identity is always mobile and processual' (Malkki 1992:37), identity itself should hardly remain the ultimate subject of analysis. After the dangers of essentialising identities as primordial affiliations have been acknowledged, the studies of refugees and borderlands face the converse danger of exaggerating fluidity. People are often attracted by particular identities, and their capacity to change identities is a function of power relations (Ortner 1998)
>
> Englund (2002:24)

> … border studies can help to reveal the relative strength of national and ethnic identities, the gap between which may become particularly visible where closed borders reopen and vice versa.
>
> Wilson and Donnan (1998:16)

In a well-known essay, Webster's (1991) contends that amongst the Tembe-Thonga communities living along the northern KwaZulu-Natal border, ethnic identity is structured along gender lines. Webster (1991) argues that in the social and economic realm it is profitable for men to take a Zulu identity and for women to emphasise a Thonga identity. Emphasising a Zulu identity guarantees work for men when they migrate to the cities of industrial South Africa, because white employers typify Zulu men as strong and hard workers. In the rural domestic sphere, however, he observes, women emphasise a Thonga identity, which provides them with social freedoms unknown to Zulu women.

Ngubane (1992) has already questioned Webster's (1991) claim that Thonga women enjoy more freedom in the domestic sphere than Zulu women. In this chapter, I wish to disagree with Webster's (1991) theory on another ground. Ethnicity in the

'border communities' cannot be analysed in the absence of the role that the international border plays in identity formation. Borderland identities, like other identities, are not only shaped by single factors, such as race, religion and gender. In the borderlandscape the international border fosters new identities, multiple-identities, shaped and determined by the context and side of the border people find themselves on. Taking on a Tembe-Thonga identity north of the border means something completely different from taking on a Tembe-Thonga identity south of the border. In the north Tembe-Thonga is associated with an older ethnic meaning, i.e. something that is not Zulu (Nguni). South of the border people generally view Tembe as a sub-identity of the Zulu, in the same way Mthembu and Ngubane are viewed as sub-identities within a larger Zulu identity.

Certainly, this does not always hold true due to the fluid nature of ethnicity and identity. South of the border, the Tembe-Thonga royal family and those with close ties to them deny any connection between Tembe and Zulu. They emphasise the cross-border social and kin ties of all Tembe-Thonga and the longing for a new state, free from Zulu domination. By contrast, the members of other southern Tembe-Thonga families, both men and women, highlight a Zulu identity, and an unwillingness to follow the Tembe-Thonga royal family in pursuit of an order separate from the Zulu. These people emphasise the differences between themselves and those across the border.

As stated above, one cannot explain ethnicity in the borderland by single factors (gender, 'tribal alliance', migrant labour etc.). Ethnicity, already a fluid and situational concept (Cohen 2000:1-6; Zegeye 2001:1), becomes even more fluid and contextual in borderlandscapes. In a liminal milieu that is constantly in a state of fluctuation, people are often able to shape and reshape identities to their own benefit

(Anzaldua 1999:23). People manipulate their identities as they move from one side of the border to the other. Barth's (1969; 1994) argument that ethnic groups are seldom homogenous social groups with distinct bounded cultures and that ethnic boundaries are situationally invoked in different contexts becomes clear below.

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part investigates historical sources to determine what ethnicity and identity in the area was before the international border was instituted in 1875. The second part looks at the differing histories of the two sides of the borderland since 1875 and the forces that were at work which established cultural, ethnic and social differences on opposite sides of the border. I focus particularly on British and Portuguese colonial administration, Zulu influence south of the border, and on the effects of war and displacement on ethnicity and identity north of the border. Since most of the historical facts of the first two parts of this chapter have already been discussed in the previous chapters, the discussion here is brief and focussed primarily on ethnicity and identity before 1994. The third part of this chapter examines ethnicity and identity in the borderland at present. Based on interviews I conducted over four years in the area, I hope to illustrate how people identify themselves and others at present, and the role the international border plays in shaping identities in the borderland.

Ethnicity and identity before the border (-1875)

Through time the people who live in the current borderland have been referred to as Tembe, Tonga, Thonga, Tsonga, Ronga, Maputa, Mabudu and Pongo. All these terms have been questioned. Tsonga is also the name of the language spoken by the Gaza and Hlengwe people further north; Ronga, as a term denoting an ethnic group,

has fallen into disuse; Maputa is sometimes remembered as the previous name of Manguzi; while Pongo is a term that was used mainly by sugar farmers for migrant labour residing beyond the Pongola River.

At the turn of the previous century, the famous ethnographer, Henri-Alexandre Junod (1962:13-16) described the historical inhabitants of the present borderland as belonging to the Tsonga tribe. Junod distinguished six groups of Tsonga clans living south of the Sabi River in south-eastern Africa (see Map 1). He called the group living in the areas surrounding Maputo Bay the Ronga. Junod (1962:13-16) identified two sub-divisions of Tembe within the Ronga group, namely Matutwen and Maputu. Thus, according to Junod's interpretation, the international border that was drawn in 1875 divided the Maputa-Tembe clan, of the Ronga sub-group of the Tsonga tribe.

Junod, like other anthropologists of his time (see Hamilton & Wright 1989:50-57), used the 'boundaries of ethnic classification to bring a neat, Cartesian logic to our understanding of the peoples of southern Mozambique' (Harries 1994:1). Yet, as Felgate (1982:9) and Harries (1994:3) indicate, there never existed a bounded group or 'tribe' called the Tsonga or the Thonga. Thonga was a term used by the Gaza and the Zulu to distinguish themselves from surrounding people who did not adopt their customs. Harries (1994:3) cites St. Vincent Erskine arguing that terms like Thongas, Amathonga and BuThonga 'are not tribal appellations and one might as well try to define the limits of the 'Kafirs'. Tonga simply means something [someone] which is not Zulu'.

Furthermore, since the Gaza and Zulu used the term Thonga to distinguish them from their neighbours, it became synonymous with inferiority (Felgate 1982:9). Local people therefore rejected this appellation. Instead of identifying themselves with large 'national' units like Thonga or Ronga, people formed their identities on a

smaller-scale, identifying themselves with specific chiefs and chiefdoms. In other words, a person would identify him or herself as being 'from the land' of a particular clan or chiefdom (Harries 1994:5). Information lodged in the Stuart Archives shows that people coming from the present-day borderland identified themselves as *abakwa*Mabudu, or 'people from the place of Mabudu,' the ancestor of the ruling Mabudu-Tembe lineage (Webb & Wright 1979:157). The Mabudu chiefdom was structurally, like the later Zulu state, a new type of organisation, which ultimately gave birth to a new ethnicity (see Kopytoff 1999:31). A common, shared identity thus emerged with the rise and consolidation of the Mabudu-Tembe chiefdom.

Since the early nineteenth century the strong Zulu cultural and social influence in the area had a direct impact upon identity and ethnicity, and brought about greater diversity in the Mabudu chiefdom. During the reign of Shaka (1816-1828), various individuals and groups passed through or settled in Maputaland, and introduced new languages and cultural practises to the area. Such assimilation compounded to greater ethnic diversity amongst the Mabudu (Bryant 1964:292).

As more and more people from the southern chiefdoms crossed into Maputaland, greater prestige was attached to the Zulu language, since the Zulu were politically dominant in south-east Africa. Felgate (1982) writes,

> during the reign of Shaka there was, then, a steady increase in Zulu influence in Mozambique. The Zulu were the prestige nation and Zulu became the prestige language. The men had been trading with the Nguni for a long time prior to Shaka's rise to power and when they found Zulus in their midst they had perforce to learn the language. The women, on the other hand, particularly in the southern regions, did not have the same need to speak Zulu and Junod records the fact that the women did not speak Zulu (p.11).

As the Mabudu occupied new territories, they encountered autochthonous groups, such as the Ngubane and Khumalo, who spoke Zulu and rejected Mabudu domination (Felgate 1982:11).

Trade at Delagoa Bay and migrant labour also had a tremendous effect on the manner in which people identified themselves. Felgate (1982:11) states that with the advent of trade at Delagoa Bay (around 1650) and greater contact between the people of the hinterland, Mabudu men started to identify themselves as Zulu. This gendered experience of ethnicity was further developed by men's experiences during migrant labour. In the industrial areas where they looked for work, men found it advantageous to describe themselves as Zulu to white employers who associated this ethnic group with images of power and strength.

However, despite the growing influence of Zulu, the vast majority of Maputaland residents emphasised a unique Mabudu-Tembe ethnicity (Felgate 1982:11-17). Thus, the only conclusion that can be drawn about ethnic identity in the borderland before 1875 is that the majority of people identified themselves with the Mabudu chiefs and that there was unity in identity across the area where the border was drawn. Suffice it to say, the border dissected a political community with a largely shared ethnic identity.

Colonialism and its legacy (1875-1975)

Asiwaju (1985:2-3) describes the drawing of boundaries in Africa as 'political surgery', since they cut across well-established lines of communication including, in every case, a dormant or active sense of community based on traditions concerning common ancestry, usually very strong kinship ties, shared socio-political institutions and economic resources, common customs and practises, and sometimes acceptance of common political control. He goes on to add that:

> Apart from the division which arises routinely from the mere location of boundaries, partitioned groups were further pulled apart in consequence of the

> opposing integrative processes set in motion by the different states. Such processes have tended to make the divided groups look different political, economic and social directions… Different symbols of formal status, above all citizenship, are imposed on the same people (Asiwaju 1985:1-3).

At first, the MacMahon line, which separated the Portuguese and British spheres of political control in southeast Africa, had little effect on the ability of the Mabudu chief to exercise power over the entire chiefdom. The difference between the British and Portuguese systems of colonial administration, however, soon had a significant effect on the unity of the Mabudu (Felgate 1982:18). In terms of the British system of 'indirect rule' indigenous authorities continued to exact control and colonial subjects were allowed to practice their own customs and ways of life, provided they paid homage to the British crown (Mamdani 1996:62-71). In contrast, the Portuguese administered their colonies as integral parts of the mainland (Hailey 1938:213-216). The Portuguese believed it was their God-given task to bring 'civilisation' to the peoples of Africa, by forcing them to adopt the Portuguese culture in favour of what was perceived as a 'backward' and uncivilised way of life (Smith & Nöthling 1993:288).

In terms of social identity people living on opposite sides of the international border thus underwent different experiences in the colonial era. While the British system of indirect rule fostered ethnic (tribal) consciousness (Vail 1989:12-13), the Portuguese system of colonial administration aimed to assimilate people north of the border in the Portuguese culture. Today, this is especially notable in the language of the borderland, where people north of the border mainly speak Portuguese (the language of the colonisers) and people south of the border mainly speak isiZulu and Thonga (indigenous languages). In this way colonialism disturbed the social and cultural unity that existed across the international border.

The entrenchment of Zulu identity south of the border (1897-1994)

After 1896 Britain administered the area south of the MacMahon line as British Amathongaland. AmaThongaland was subsequently divided into 'crown' and 'trust' lands. The crown lands were set aside for occupation by white farmers, while the rest of the area was put in trust for the 'Mabudu tribe' (Van Wyk 1983:62). In 1897 British Amathongaland was incorporated into the Ingwavuma district of Zululand (Harries 1983:26). Thirty-seven years later, Van Warmeloo, the government ethnologist, estimated that sixty-two per cent of the people of the Ingwavuma District, comprising half of British AmaThongaland, were under the administration of the Mabudu chiefs (Harries 1983:26). The rest were presumably of Zulu orientation (Webster 1991:248).

The Bantustan policies of Apartheid, since 1948, entrenched Zulu control over Thongaland. The area became increasingly integrated in the structures of Native and later Bantu administration. According to Webster (1986):

> the loss of independence, the splitting of the Tembe-Thonga chiefdom, the ravages of proletarianization, and various colonial practises, all took their toll on the Thonga, and their coherence as a society began to crumble. Most of the men now speak Zulu as their preferential language, and have adapted Thonga clan names to resemble Zulu ones. Thonga cultural practises such as traditional economic pursuits, rituals, and material culture still persist, and many women in the area insist on speaking Tsonga, and teaching the children to do the same (1986:615).

In 1976 Thongaland became part of the self-governing Zulu Homeland of KwaZulu. In the Government census the inhabitants of the area were listed as Zulu rather than Thonga. Webster (1986:615-616) states that this fact 'need not confuse us, as the government's attempts at social engineering can change a person's ethnicity, race or nationality at the stroke of a pen.'

This was clearly illustrated in 1982 when the government, in a bid to de-nationalise a large portion of its citizens and at the same time create a buffer state with Mozambique, tried to cede the Ingwavuma district of KwaZulu to Swaziland (Van Wyk 1983:55; Omer-Cooper 1994:59-61, 269). The Ingwavuma Land Deal re-opened the debate on ethnicity and identity in Thongaland. The South African government alleged that there were strong historical and ethnic links between the inhabitants of Ingwavuma and Swaziland. Academics such as Tomlinson *et al*. (1982) and Van Wyk (1983) lend credit to this theory. A government appointed commission headed by Tomlinson asserted that the true identity of the inhabitants of Ingwavuma living west of the Pongola River was Swazi' but that inhabitants east of the river belonged to the Tembe-Thonga kingdom, which was subservient neither to the Zulu nor Swazi (Tomlinson *et al*. 1982). Van Wyk (1983:60-62) made similar conclusions, but stated that the Tembe-Thonga would be much more willing to be under the authority of the Swazi, than under the Zulu.

In Ingwavuma news about the Land Deal led to a 'paroxysm of Zulu jingoism with mass, sometimes enforced, recruitment into Inkatha' (Webster 1991:248). Successful court action by the KwaZulu and KaNgwane Homeland governments effectively brought an end to the Land Deal (Omer-Cooper 1994:269). Threats by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the leader of Inkhata, also led to the failure of the Land Deal.

According to a local story, related to me by a member of the Tembe royal family, Piet Koornhof, the South African Minister of Cooperation and Development, visited chief Mzimba of the Mabudu and asked him if he is willing to be placed under Swazi rule. Mzimba was delighted with the idea and agreed. When asked whether he feared that the Swazis would suppress his people, Mzimba answered that no suppression could be greater than that which his people are experiencing from the

Zulu. Upon hearing of Mzimba's willingness to place his chiefdom under Swazi rule, State President P.W. Botha invited Mzimba to Pretoria to discuss the plans. However, before he left for Pretoria, Mangosuthu Buthelezi visited chief Mzimba. In Pretoria Mzimba was asked three times whether he was a Thonga or a Zulu. To the surprise of P.W. Botha and Piet Koornhof, Mzimba answered that he was a Zulu, although he hesitated a long time before he answered for the third time. Thereafter, in January 1985 chief Mzimba openly apologised to chief Buthelezi for having petitioned P.W. Botha for an independent Tonga homeland, evidently with the object of seceding from KwaZulu and being incorporated into Swaziland. Chief Mzimba asked for a representative from KwaZulu to accompany him to Pretoria to withdraw his petition, which, he admitted, had been drawn up with the help of officials from Swaziland who, he said, misled him (SAIRR 1985:286). Mzimba's actions in Pretoria angered members of the Mabudu royal family who wanted to cede from KwaZulu and nearly caused a rift. Only after he explained that his life was threatened, was Mzimba forgiven, although many members of the royal family resented him for what they perceived as cowardly behaviour.

However, in November Mzimba claimed that chief Buthelezi forced him to lie about being tricked by Swazi authorities and again petitioned the South African government to cede his chiefdom to Swaziland. This time his plea was ignored (SAIRR 1985:287). In a last attempt to free his people from what he called 'Zulu oppression', Mzimba started the Thongaland Independence Party to further his goal of a Free Thongaland, but did not attain any success. At chief Mzimba's funeral, Prince Gideon Zulu (another prominent Inkhata member) was overheard expressing his delight in the chief's death, saying that at last this 'succession business' can be laid to rest. Chief Buthelezi later blamed the deterioration of relations between late chief

Mzimba and himself on 'manoeuvres of certain manipulators who came from within this country and also from without our borders.' At a speech he delivered in Ingwavuma in 1992 Buthelezi made it clear that the people of KwaTembe were part of the Zulu nation and that he and his party had saved them from subordination to the Swazi king. In his speech Buthelezi stated:

> Between the KwaZulu Government and Inkatha, tens of thousands of Rands were spend to save the people of this district from having this district excised and given on a platter to Swaziland. I therefore saved your birth-right and prevented the South African government from taking away your right as South Africans.
>
> Where, I asked the South African government, would the thousands upon thousands of men in this district have been able to find work in Mbabane or Manzini? Where… would the medicine come from for Manguzi hospital? How… would the people of this district fare if they turned their back on their great ancestor, Ngwanase Tembe, and give his land away to the Swazi king? How… would the people of this district live if their ancestors folded their arms, turned their backs on their people, and looked the other way, while all manner of evil came in to destroy the people?
>
> Stop and think about these things. Stop and think about the might of the Zulu nation of which you form part. Stop and think about the founder King of KwaZulu, Shaka Kasenzazakhona. Remember how even people, who were not conquered joined King Shaka to become part of the Zulu nation, because that is where they would find support and protection (Buthelezi 1992).

The question that needs to be answered is how all these events influenced ethnicity south of the border. Did the people of Ingwavuma accept their status as a subservient chiefdom within the Zulu Kingdom? Did they adopt a Zulu identity, or, did they continue to assert their Thonga identity?

The teaching of Zulu in local schools, use of Zulu as official language of government, and the issuing of Zulu identity documents strengthened the Zulu cultural influence in Maputaland. Felgate (1982:9) and Webster (1991:254) argue that men were most inclined to adopt a Zulu identity. This choice was influenced by men's experiences of working on South African mines and farms. Felgate (1982:9) attributed this to the fact that men have closer contact with Zulu speakers in trade and migrant labour and, because of the higher status attributed to being Zulu in these

fields; men take on a Zulu identity. Similarly, Webster (1991:254) suggests that white employers held a stereotypical view of Zulus as 'strong, masculine, militaristic and reliable, whereas most have never heard of the Thonga.' For, Webster (1991:254), 'migrant labour and Zulu identity have become necessary equivalents'.

In contrast to men who readily adopted a Zulu identity, Webster (1991:246) suggests that women identified themselves as Thonga. Webster (1991) asserts that people in northern KwaZulu-Natal who 'present themselves in terms of different ethnic criteria send messages of social difference not for delimitation of ethnic boundaries, but to draw the battle lines in a struggle between the genders' (p.246). According to Felgate (1982:9) and Webster (1991:246), women do not need to take over a Zulu identity since they have minimal contact with Zulu-speakers and do not migrate to the mines or farms where status is attributed to Zulu people.

Hence, we can conclude that in the period between 1875 and 1994, when the borderland was re-opened, people on the South African side of the borderland increasingly adopted a Zulu identity. My research, presented below, indicates that the ethnic boundary between Zulu and Thonga shifted northwards from the Mkhuze River to the international border, as people came to see the international border as an ethnic boundary between Zulu and Thonga.

War, displacement and identity north of the border (1975-1992)

At the same time as Zulu socio-political influences dominated south of the border, important changes in ethnicity and identity took place north of the border. The Portuguese colonial policies of cultural assimilation deliberately sought to erase

existing ethnic loyalties and to impose a new Portuguese identity amongst the inhabitants of Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique).

In 1975 FRELIMO took over with its own agenda of social engineering. FRELIMO viewed traditional ethnic identities as 'obscurantisms' that stood in the way of nationalism (Englund 2002:8). According to West (2001) FRRELIMO aimed to dramatically transform Mozambican society and the operation of power within it. This required, the 'liberation of constituent communities and their members- in short, the decolonisation of individual minds and the creation of what FRELIMO referred to as the new man' (pp.191-121). Shortly after independence FRELIMO started to implement Marxist-Leninist principles in Mozambique. According to informants, all schools, clinics, legal practises, funeral parlours, all land, most privately owned businesses and other property were nationalised. FRELIMO also planned to do away with traditional chiefs, replacing them with Party Secretaries. The president of Mozambique, Samora Machel, triumphantly announced, 'We killed the tribe to give birth to the nation.' (Munslow 1987:160-161).

That which was left of ethnic identities after the social engineering projects of the Portuguese and FRELIMO came under attack during the Mozambican war, which commenced shortly after independence and lasted until the signing of the Rome Peace Accord in 1992. The war caused the large-scale displacement of people, turning thousands into refugees. Communities were uprooted and traditional ethnic boundaries confused. When the war ended, soldiers and ordinary people settled where they found themselves. As McGregor (1997:5, 10) states of the inhabitants of the border areas along the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border,

> they do not have historical claims, being former migrant labourers and soldiers from elsewhere in the country and people invited back by RENAMO. These people were not 'locals', did not have historical claims to land, and were involved in disputes with returnees. Some arrived during the war and stayed on;

others were invited into the country by RENAMO after the peace agreement; still others in-migrated to the area to hunt, fish, or exploit timber or palm wine.

A large part of the 'new' inhabitants have recently moved into the Mozambican borderland from Maputo and areas further north. They were attracted to the area by the creation of many formal and informal employment opportunities by the tourist industry. Mozambicans who lived in South Africa during the war, as well as South Africans with no real ties to Mozambique, have also been attracted to the area by economic prospects. These people are mostly young men in their twenties, like Luis (see pp. 99-100). Many new migrants constantly move from South Africa to Mozambique as they are pulled by economic and social factors (see Case 9.1.).

Colonialism, the Marxist-Leninist policies of FRELIMO and displacement caused by the war had a dramatic effect on the ethnic landscape of Mozambique. The current inhabitants of the borderland in Mozambique are a mixture of ex-soldiers, people who stayed behind during the war, returnees, South African immigrants, work seekers from Maputo and elsewhere in Mozambique and travellers from other African countries making their way to South Africa. Although there are still people swearing allegiance to the Mabudu chiefs, inhabitants of the borderland are no longer the Mabudu people described by Bryant (1965) and Junod (1962).

War and displacement have created new identities on the northern side of the borderland in the same way that Zulu political dominance has shaped ethnicity on the southern side of the borderland. These new identities can be seen in the case study of Fernando Tembe below.

Case 9.1: Fernando's changing identity

During my stay at Campo Paradisomo at Ponta Malongane I employed a young man to look after my campsite during the day and to chase the monkeys away from my foodstuff. He was born in Mozambique, but grew up in South Africa. He speaks fluent Portuguese and Zulu, but not a word of Thonga. While in Mozambique he goes by the name of Fernando Tembe (a traditional Thonga identity), but in his South African Identity book his name is Jabulane Mthembu (a traditional Zulu identity).

Fernando is but one of many young men I met who change their names as they cross the border. On top of changing their names, they also hide other aspects of their identity that would give them away as belonging on the other side of the border. For instance, when I first met Fernando I tried to communicate with him in isiZulu. He acted as if he didn't understand a word, and it was only on my third stay at Campo Paradisimo that he started talking back to me in isiZulu. He later explained that in South Africa he never speaks Portuguese and introduces himself there as Jabulane Mthembu, a Zulu, South African man.

For borderlanders like Fernando the international border is almost a portal through which they move and when they come out on the other side they have changed identities. The fluid and liminal space of the borderland enables and, to some degree, forces these borderlanders to have multiple ethnic and national identities. They are forever moving from one identity to the other as the situation demands.

Ethnicity and identity after the opening of the border

Cohen (2000:1-6) has argued that studying ethnicity is similar to studying literature: one learns about a character by what he says about himself and about what others say about him. To understand how, and if, the international border shapes identity in the borderland, I conducted interviews on both sides of the border, in areas close to and removed from the border. The interviews revolved around two themes: peoples' views of their own identity; and, peoples' views of the inhabitants on the other side of the international border.

1. Views of own identity and ethnicity. Since ethnicity is situational people might identify themselves in a particular way in conversation with a white anthropologist that may differ from how they might identify themselves in other situations. Therefore, I acknowledge that the results presented in the following two tables cannot, on its own, be taken to show that people identify themselves as Thonga or Zulu. It illustrates merely the way people identified themselves to an outside researcher with the aim of understanding peoples' views of the border, themselves and of people across the border.

The results presented in the following two tables were obtained by asking people directly what ethnic group they belong to (*Ungowasiphi isiswe*?). Using a random sample I interviewed as many men as women on both sides of the border in Puza and KwaMshudu. The results presented here wrongly assume that people have single ethnic identities and do not indicate which identities are sub categories of which. At first I did not contemplate this prediction. Through open-ended interviews and participant observation it became clear to me that people had multiple identities

and that South Africans who identify themselves as Tembe do not necessarily deny a larger identification with the Zulu.

Table 10: Primary ethnic identity of people at KwaMshudu (South Africa), 2002

Ethnicity	Male	Female	Total
Thonga	37	33	70
Nyembane	1	0	1
Zulu	9	14	23
Shangaan	3	2	5
Swazi	0	1	1
Total	50	50	100

Table 11: Primary ethnic identity of people at Puza (Mozambique), 2002

Ethnicity	Male	Female	Total
Thonga	37	31	68
Nyembane	1	1	2
Mulato	1	0	1
Shangaan	2	11	13
Zulu	11	5	16
Total	50	50	100

The data contained in these tables does however demonstrate that Webster's (1991) argument is incorrect in asserting that men identify themselves as Zulu whilst women adopt a Thonga identity. Webster (1991) argues that women reject a Zulu identity, not just due to a lack of contact with Zulu-speakers, but as a deliberate defence mechanism in the gender conflict. Thonga women, according to Webster (1991), have had much more freedom than Zulu women. These traditional freedoms were: 'husbands could not maltreat wives… wives had the right to sexual gratification… they had the right to luxury items… they could dissolve a marriage'

(1991:259). Webster's argument is thus that a Thonga identity affords women many benefits in the domestic sphere.

Ngubane (1992:72-73) criticises Webster's argument on two grounds. First, she argues that t Zulu women are not more oppressed than Thonga women, and enjoy similar freedoms. Second, she attacks what she perceives as technical weaknesses in Webster's argument. She disputed his conclusion that there is no point in trying to unravel the mystery of true identity of the people of Maputaland 'as if these people were born with a given identity and ethnicity… (p. 70)'

In reading Webster's (1991) thesis and Ngubane's (1992) critique, it is important to bear in mind the different political philosophies and agendas of these authors. Webster was an anti-Apartheid activist affiliated with the United Democratic Front and the African National Congress. In his argument he was determined to illustrate that ethnicity was not primordial as advocated by the South African government. Ngubane, on the other hand, was a Zulu ethnic nationalist and an IFP member of parliament who wanted to illustrate the viability of a Zulu identity.

I nonetheless agree wholeheartedly with Ngubane's (1992:72) suggestion that most of 'these [Webster's] gyrations could have been avoided by simply saying that these people are in a typical border situation with consequently ambiguous ethnic identity…' Although Webster's (1991) article is sub-titled 'Ethnicity and Gender in a KwaZulu Border Community', he gives scant regard to the influence of the border on identity formation. Felgate (1982:165) already mentioned the multiple identities of the people of the borderland who life in Mozambique, but keep South African identities to secure work in South Africa. When moving into Mozambique these men would adopt the identities of kinsmen from the area, or would act like complete strangers with no ties to the area.

My research furthermore shows that ethnicity in the borderland is not organised along gender lines as Webster (1991) argues. The vast majority of people in the borderland identify themselves as Thonga. In fact, more men than women in South Africa and Mozambique identified themselves as Thonga. Only a very small minority identified themselves as Zulu. Yet, in other situations these same people interviewed might identify themselves as Zulu. Ethnicity in the borderland is not simply determined by gender, although that may in some instances (as when men are seeking work on the mines) play a role. It is important to keep in mind however that Thonga and Tembe in South Africa is oftentimes seen as a sub-Zulu identity, in a similar manner to Ngubane and Khumalo. Tembe and Thonga identities are seen by many as a smaller identity within a larger Zulu ethnicity.

Instead of seeing the people in the borderland as adopting a single identity based on gender, age or economic status, one should rather see the existence of multiple identities. As was illustrated above in the case of Fernando (Case 9.1.), people in the borderland continuously shape and reshape their identities as they move from one side of the border to the other. The same person can at any one time identify himself/ herself as Thonga, Shangaan, Zulu, Mozambican or South African. People use their access to multiple identities to extract the greatest amount of social and economic benefit for themselves. In certain situations it is beneficial to emphasise the link with people across the border, while in other situations it is beneficial to emphasise the differences with people across the border.

The fact that similar customs are practised on both sides of the border enables people to move more easily from one identity to the other. These 'cultural markers' do not signify identity for the people themselves. A person claiming to be Zulu practises traditional Thonga customs even if some of these are considered taboo

amongst the Zulu. Although it might seem trivial, fish is the most important source of protein in the borderland. Yet fish is considered an absolute taboo amongst the Zulu (Krige 1988:388; Harries 1994:40). People who eat fish in the borderland deny this taboo, claiming they are 'true Zulus', giving yet more weight to Barth's argument that ethnicity is not determined by the 'cultural stuff' found inside ethnic boundaries, but in the boundary itself (1969:15). Webster (1991:250) has gone so far as to draw a list of 'cultural markers'[1] that make the people of the borderland Thonga, although he does state that 'producing a check-list of traits is not a satisfactory means of establishing identity.'

What is puzzling in the borderland, especially south of the divide, is that whilst some people use 'Thonga' customs as markers of ethnicity, others who practise the exact same customs deny any relationship between a particular custom and Thonga identity. In other words, people can participate fully in all the customs and rituals used, sometimes aggressively, to prove Thonga identity, despite claiming adamantly to be Zulu.

This is nowhere better illustrated than during the annual first-fruits festival. The festival, called *mtayi*, revolves around the ripening of the marula (*Sclerocarya birrea*) fruit in early February. The fruit is fermented to produce an intoxicating liquid called *buganu* south of the border and *bukanye* north of the border. According to Junod (1962:399), great importance was placed on brewing marula beer in the past, not only in this area, but amongst the larger area he described as being inhabited by the Tsonga. *Mtayi* differs markedly from the first-fruits festival traditionally practised

[1] Webster (1991:250) lists the following as markers of Thonga culture in the borderland: 'place names, and names of natural phenomena (trees, soil types, fish, animals, birds and rivers) are Thonga; homestead structure is distinctive with most huts in a line (not a circle) and facing east; the cattle byre is never in the homestead, but set outside its boundaries; fish forms an important part of the diet, and hunting and gathering are important food supplements; inter-cropping, swidden-agriculture and field rotation are practised, men and women often share agricultural work and people tenaciously adhere to the tradition of planting three or four maize seeds in one hole.'

by the Zulu (Krige 1988:249-260) and should not be confused. Felgate (1982:61) recorded in the 1960s that the marula festival, which he knew as *ukuluma*, was no longer honoured. It was therefore interesting to see the revitalisation of this ritual on both sides of the border (see Figure 23 and 24).

Figure 23: Women bringing marula beer to the festival, February 2000

Photograph by Callie Pretorius

On the southern side of the border *mtayi* is practised in some wards, but not in others. There is also a clan wide *mtayi* where all the local headmen gather at the royal kraal. After the 'royal' festival has taken place, the headmen initiate similar rituals in their own wards. The ritual is usually accompanied with the slaughter of chickens and goats and lasts for several days. In some of the poorer wards where I attended *mtayi*, marula beer was the only item on the menu. Those who can, bring beer to the house of the headman, others, like me, pay R5. Everybody, from the oldest women to

the young kids gets extremely intoxicated and, usually by around 4am the celebrations wind down.

Figure 24: Dancing at Mtayi festival, February 2000

Photograph by Callie Pretorius

The revitalisation of *mtayi* is relatively recent and only started after the death of the previous chief of the Mabudu in 1999. In my conversations with them people identifying themselves as Thonga often pointed to the *mtayi* festival as a marker of their identity. They said it is Thonga and shows that they are not Zulu. Yet, at the same time others, claiming they are Zulu, participate in the ritual, and play down any connection between *mtayi* and being Thonga. This is almost similar to Jewish people celebrating Christmas.

North of the border, in the village of Zitundo I found a similar revitalisation of *mtayi*, called *chikanye* in Mozambique. There, under the leadership of the local chief, who was instituted with the help of members of the Mabudu royal family, people have

started to practise this old custom once again. According to the chief, the 'people of Tembe' have always practised *chikanye*, even in the time of the Portuguese. During the war it was stopped. Now, after the war, it is the chief's responsibility to see that people remember this ritual and their own identity. The link between *chikanye* in Zitundo and the Mabudu is clearly illustrated by the fact that the ritual is held at the gravesite of Makhaza, an old Tembe chief, who died in 1952. As with *mtayi* south of the border, *chikanye* is also a veneration of the ancestors. During *mtayi* beer is poured on the ground around the *ingandelo* (shrine for venerating the ancestors). At *chikanye* in Zitundo the praise names of the old Tembe chiefs are recited, illustrating the ethnic bonds between people on both sides of the border.

The revitalisation of *mtayi* and *chikanye*, orchestrated by the Mabudu royal family, is part of an attempt of the Mabudu royal family to re-institute their authority over the traditional chiefdom in Mozambique. It is also a sort of ethnic revival, people reclaiming their traditional customs and way of life. This interpretation is not mine, but that of the many people I interviewed in the borderland. Informants present the marula festival, together with such strange things as *fonya* (thrust-basket fishing), palm wine and the fish-kraals at Kosi Bay as evidence of their Thonga identity and allegiance to the royal family. Yet, at the same time, people claiming no allegiance to the Mabudu chiefs or Thonga identity participate in all these rituals. Many of these people assert that the Tembe clan forms part of a larger Zulu nation.

2. Views of people on the opposite side of the border. My research showed that both South Africans and Mozambicans saw a difference between themselves and people on the other side of the border. They primarily defined the differences in terms of language and their economic status. My respondents only referred to

ethnicity when specifically asked to define the ethnicity of those on the opposite side of the border.

Eighty-two per cent of my respondents at KwaMshudu (South Africa) and ninety-five per cent of respondents in Puza (Mozambique) believed that the border was a marker of social, physical or cultural differences.

Mozambicans would argue that South Africans differ from them because they 'use money.' South African respondents, on the other hand, would describe Mozambicans as 'subsistence farmers.' South African respondents will tell me: 'There are no cars, shops or proper houses in Mozambique', 'they [Mozambicans] have no clinics… they are poor… they don't have livestock… they wear second hand clothes.'

In general, Mozambicans are perceived as sexually less inhibited.[2] South African as well as Mozambican men described Mozambican women (or Shangaans, as they referred to them) as sexually liberated. Michael, my field-guide, who had fled from Mozambique in the 1980s and settled in Manguzi, told me that his wife in South Africa accused him of treating her like a whore when he asked for the same sexual favours he used to get from his previous Mozambican sexual partners. Other South African men complained to me that if you want to sleep with a Zulu wife you always have to do it in the dark. The man has to stay outside while the woman undresses and gets under the covers. Before he comes into the room the woman will blow out the candle and he has to stumble around in the dark before he can sleep with her. Men

[2] It is interesting to note that, in contrast to this stereotype of Mozambican women, Rodgers (2002:151) found that Mozambican women living in refugee communities on the north-eastern border between South Africa and Mozambique actually portrayed South African women as sexually more promiscuous than themselves. Mozambicans further stereotyped South African women as lazy, money-hungry fans of television soap operas. In this situation Mozambicans are seen as more traditional and pure, whereas South Africans have adopted more Westernised lifestyles. On the southern border between Mozambique and South Africa in turn, Mozambican immigrants to South Africa are often perceived as more Western and decadent, whereas local South Africans are truer to the traditional (Zulu) ways of life.

also told me that Zulu women will never have sex while men face their backs, arguing that only dogs and monkeys have sex that way. Zulu women also saw oral sex as disgusting.

Shangaan women or 'girls from Maputo' are not only perceived as far more promiscuous, but as more loving than Zulu women. South African men explained to me that Shangaan girls will allow a man to hold her hand in public or to kiss her in front of people. With Zulu girls you always have to be secretive. 'You always have to sneak around like a criminal, even just to talk to her.' Wiseman Vilane, who has two wives in Mozambique and one wife in South Africa, explained to me that he married twice in Mozambique because Thonga women 'give better sex', whereas he married his South African wife only to have children.

On the other hand, I found a strong liking for Zulu women among Mozambican men. According to one informant, Raphael Gumende, 'women in Mozambique are all sluts'. Most of them have lost their virginity, either having been raped during the war or having had sex with soldiers for money. Although Raphael has children with two different Mozambican women, he would like to marry a Zulu wife because they are more pure.

Apart from differences in sexual behaviour, many South Africans also highlight physical differences between themselves and Mozambicans. South Africans are quick to point out that Mozambicans have vaccination marks on their forearms, whereas South Africans are vaccinated on their upper-arms. They also say that when South Africans walk they always lead with their right feet, whereas Mozambicans lead with their left feet. These differences are trivial and do not in any way imply a derogatory image of Mozambicans. The following descriptions of Mozambicans, given to me by South African informants, are however extremely derogatory, 'They

(Mozambicans) are not neat', 'They do not wash themselves', They are not beautiful, they are too dark (black)', 'We are much taller than them', and, 'They are ugly'.

South Africans also use custom, language and ethnicity as identity markers between themselves and Mozambicans. South Africans responded that 'They speak Thonga, we speak Zulu'[3], 'They behave differently from us', 'We are Zulu, they are *Shangani* and *amaJapan'*, 'They are of mixed races (*mulatto*), we are all African (black)', and 'The kids don't respect their elders.'

Religion is also used as a marker of identity. Mozambicans are revered as powerful diviners and healers. It is the place where the Ndau spirit comes from and where all the best healers have been trained. It is also a place with much stronger medicine than South Africa. 'Mozambique is a place of traditional religion; South Africa is a place of churches.' Informants are quick to point out that there are no churches or temples in Mozambique for worshipping God, 'They are witches, who use the thunderstorm and we are Christians.'

Another way in which South Africans usually describe the differences between themselves and Mozambicans is by saying Mozambicans like to make war and 'Mozambique is the place of fighting.' South Africa in contrast is a place of refuge for those tired of the fighting, fleeing to safe their lives. This view is obviously the result of the war in Mozambique and the flight of refugees, many of whom settled in South Africa. For many South Africans the only contact they had with Mozambicans was with those fleeing the war in Mozambique. Therefore, they portray Mozambique as a place of war and its people as prone to warfare.

Mozambicans gave similar reasons for why people across the border were different from them, paying attention especially to economic differences between

[3] Interestingly, the informant who gave this response identified himself as Thonga in the questionnaire survey. This again alludes to the fact that Thonga is seen as a sub-Zulu identity in South Africa.

people on opposite sides of the border. Mozambicans also complained that South Africans were extremely arrogant.

When asked about the differences between them and the people across the border, Mozambicans answered that 'they have shops, electricity, development, clinics and schools'. On the other hand they will describe themselves as poor and miserable, living a life full of hardship. Mozambicans are hunters, palm wine tappers, fishermen and agriculturalist who have to work hard for their food, unlike the people in South Africa who get pension from government.

Unlike South Africans, Mozambicans did not use religion or physical appearances as markers of difference between themselves and South Africans. Whereas most South Africans tell fantastical stories about witches and spirits in Mozambique, Mozambicans do not have similar stories about South Africans. Mozambicans, however, produced more tales of sacred sprits and sacred forests in their country than in South Africa. Mozambicans also spoke much more openly about witchcraft, spirit possession and ancestor worship than South Africans. The influence of the Christian church probably has a role to play in South Africans' unwillingness to talk about these subjects or even the belief in forests where sacred spirits dwell and large snakes in sacred rivers, which Mozambicans are fascinated with.[4]

Mozambicans also highlighted cultural and ethnic differences between themselves and South Africans. 'South Africans are Zulu, we are Shangaan', 'they speak a different language from us', 'They have different customs (*amasiko*)', and,

[4] Informants related that there are four sacred forests in the vicinity of Zitundo. They are all named after great *izinduna* who were buried there. *Mato de* Makhaza *e* Madingi literally means the bush of Makhaza and Madingi and is the place where these two leaders were buried. Mystery and ambiguity surround the forest of Makhaza and Madingi. Informants say that only the tribal elders are allowed to enter the forest. They go there to *phahla.* The elders assemble in a circular formation in the centre of the forest. If the ancestors are pleased with them, a large snake, which looks like a cobra, slithers around the group of men until it has encircled them. They then put snuff on the snake's head to calm him. If the snake calms down, it means that the ancestors will grant the requests of the men. If the snake does not calm down it is necessary to sacrifice a chicken or goat to appease the ancestors.

'Chiefs (*amakhosi*) in South Africa are strong.' Mozambicans would also argue that South Africans have lost their tradition, that they've become urbanised and that they sit the whole day and wait for 'whites' to help them, whereas Mozambicans do things for themselves.

Although most people did not use ethnicity as a marker to highlight the differences between themselves and people across the border, when asked specifically about it people did indicate that the international border was also the ethnic line between the Zulu and the Thonga/Shangaans. Table 12 and Table 13 illustrate peoples' views of the identity of those on the other side of the border.

Table 12: Inhabitants of KwaMshudu's (South Africa) ethnic classifications of people across the border, 2002

Ethnicity	Total
Thonga	86
Shangaan	54
Nyambane	8
Ndau	3
Zulu	3
Chopi	1
Total	155

Table 13: Inhabitants of Puza's (Mozambique) ethnic classifications of people across the border, 2002.

Ethnicity	Total
Zulu	98
Thonga	4
Total	102

As can clearly be seen in these two tables, people in South Africa classify people in Mozambique as Thonga or Shangaan, while people in Mozambique classify

South Africans as Zulu. In fact, very few Mozambicans could tell me the names of other ethnic groups, beside Zulus that live in South Africa. In quite a few interviews informants were adamant that the only people found in South Africa are Zulu. When I asked whether that makes me Zulu, they laughed and said 'No, you are from America.' The figures in these tables are quite interesting when one compare them with the figures in Table 10 and Table 11, which showed that the majority of people on both sides of the border classify themselves as Thonga. This again alludes to the fact that Tembe-Thonga is seen as a sub-identity of Zulu in South Africa, while it is seen as an independent identity in Mozambique. Most people see the international border as an ethnic dividing line between Zulus in the south and Thonga/ Shangaans in the north.

Conclusion

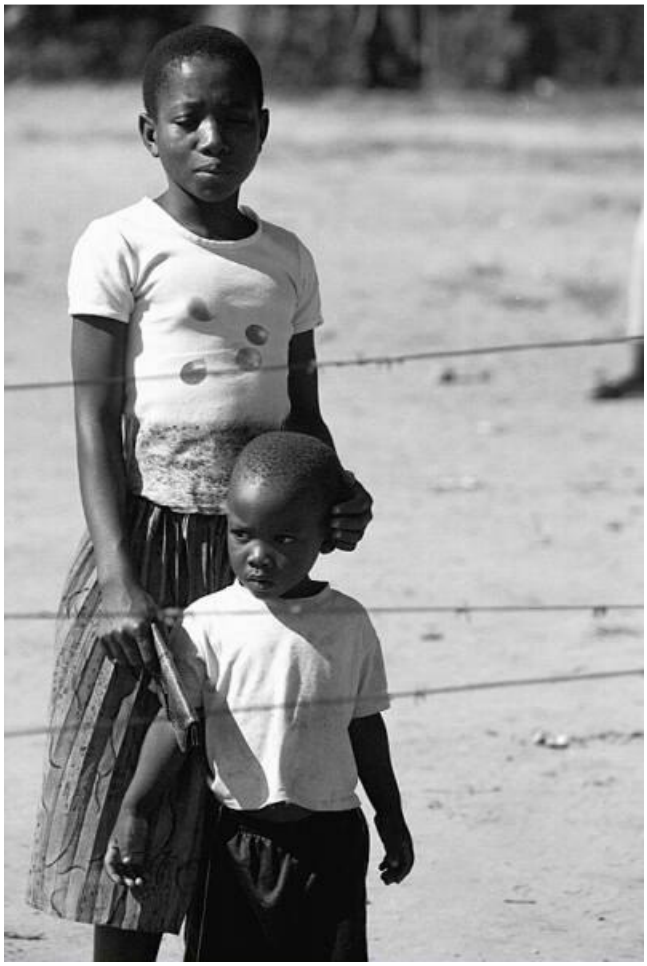
Apartheid only ended in 1994 and Mozambique is still recovering from a long and devastating war and socialist modernisation programmes. At present there are various processes at work that emphasise a new unity in the borderland. This unity is not only drawn on shared ethnicity and history, but on a shared way of life, a borderland culture. Throughout this thesis I tried to illustrate that there are certain experiences shared by people, in various parts of the world, who live in borderlandscapes. These experiences are the result of their proximity to international borders. Borders do not only divide and unite; they also give life to a new person, a borderlander, constantly moving from one side of the border to the other. In the process the borderlander amalgamates life on one side of the border with life on the other side of the border. Similarly, the identity of the borderlander changes constantly as he moves from one

side to the other, in this case being neither Mozambican nor South African, neither Zulu nor Shangaan, but none of these things, and all of these things at the same time.

Ethnic identity is 'open-ended, fluid and constantly in a process of being constructed and reconstructed as the subject moves from one social situation to another, resulting in a self that is highly fragmented and context-dependent (Zegeye 2001:1). In the borderland, which is a place 'in a constant state of transition' (Anzaldua 1999:25), ethnicity becomes even more fluid as the borderlander constantly finds himself in a situation betwixt and between two states.

Furthermore, my research shows that ethnic labels have different meanings on opposite sides of the border. Whilst Tembe-Thonga is seen as a sub-Zulu identity south of the border, north of the border it is equated with an older ethnic meaning, and, even as part of a Tsonga or Shangaan identity. One thing is certain: single factors, such as gender, social status and custom cannot account for the multitude of identities in the borderlandcape. Instead, all these factors simultaneously influence the way people view themselves and people across the border.

Figure 25: Photo taken from South African side of the border, 2002



Photograph by Hannie du Plessis.

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSION

> Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same: leave it to our bureaucrats and our police to see that our papers are in order.
>
> Foucault (1972:17)

In the conclusion to this thesis I provide a concise summary of the major findings of my research and spell out its contribution to the 'anthropology of borders'. I also address matters relating to the arbitrary nature of national borders and consider the implications of my research for the politics of policing national borders. Beyond purely intellectual concerns about borders and borderlandscapes, I contemplate the potential insight of my research for improving administration and control of the frontiers of modern nation-states.

Lessons from the Mozambique/ South Africa borderlandscape

In this thesis I argue that the social dramas that are played out at borderlandscapes should be brought to the forefront of investigation. This landscape is typified by unique experiences as a result of its location at the frontiers of modern nation-states. No sociological investigation in an area situated close to an international border can ignore the effects of the border on the inhabitants of this landscape. This is clearly illustrated in this ethnography of the southern Mozambique/ South Africa borderlandscape.

The border that European imperialists drew across the south-east African landscape in 1875, which divided a unified political and ethnic community, still exists. However, it no longer fragments a unified community. Instead, it has become a place where two different landscapes meet and where a new landscape, or borderlandscape is formed. The borderlandscape combines the characteristics of places and spaces north and south of the border. It is neither Mozambican nor South Africa, neither Zulu nor Thonga nor Shangaan, neither Portuguese nor English, but all these things.

The history of the borderlandscape is one of warfare, suppression, trade, the immigration of people with foreign cultures and customs, failed programs of colonial administration and socialist modernisation, ethnic debates and plans for secession. This history, coupled with the current movement patterns of goods, people and ideas across the borderline has infused the once imposed colonial border with social and cultural meaning, way beyond what the European imperialists could have possibly thought.

What makes the southern Mozambique/ South African borderland different from other borderlandscapes of South Africa is that two different European powers colonised the areas north and south of the border. (This was also the case with present day Namibia where Germany tried to build its empire, but the German influence was limited to areas further removed from the South African border and short-lived.) Portugal's administration of Mozambique influenced the areas north of the border both politically and culturally. North of the border people started to speak a different language from their counterparts south of the border and also adopted fragments of Portuguese religion, custom and politics.

FRELIMO's socialist modernisation plans and the Mozambican war transformed the cultural landscape north of the border even further. The war lasted for almost fifteen years and saw the displacement of millions of people. The area north of the KwaZulu border became almost completely de-populated as people fled across the border to seek refuge amongst relatives and friends. When the war ended, demobilised soldiers, displaced refugees from different areas of Mozambique and returning refugees from Swaziland, Zimbabwe and South Africa filled the southern borderlandscape. These people brought with them languages and customs foreign to the area. This led to the creation of a social and cultural landscape north of the international border completely different from that south of the border.

Equally important to the creation of cultural diversity in the borderlandscape was the British, and later South African, administration of the area south of the border. The British and South African governments embraced the preservation of indigenous authorities. However, until the 1970s Thongaland (Maputaland) was ignored and even 'forgotten.' Then, in line with its Apartheid politics, the South African government awarded the area to the KwaZulu 'homeland'. This planted the seeds for an ethnic debate that reached a climax in the 1980s when plans were made to cede Thongaland to Swaziland. The end result was a dominant Zulu political and cultural influence in the area that undermined the Thonga heritage of the past. The Zulu cultural influence was not only a break from history, but also meant that the area south of the imposed international border became vastly different from the area north of the border.

However, in the zone extending across and away from the border a new landscape had started to develop. The borderlandscape is formed and transformed through constant interaction and exchange between people living on opposite sides of

the international border. This interaction is nursed by the economic opportunities presented by the international border and through transnational kinship ties that survived despite the Mozambican war. Since 1992, when the Mozambican war ended and the border was opened, contact across the border has proliferated. Increased contact has made people more aware of both the differences and similarities between themselves and the people on the other side of the border. Increased contact, spurred on by economic need and social factors, also fosters an image of union, social solidarity and cultural homogeneity across the international border. Borderlanders move with ease from one side of the border to the other, from one world to another, as they manipulate their identities and change their behaviour to remain undetected by the mechanisms of the state that try to control their cross-border movements.

In the borderlandscape boundaries are constantly created and destroyed. This landscape is characterised by ambiguity, fluctuation, equivocation and uncertainty. It is essential that social analysts take cognisance of the fluid and uncertain nature of borderlandscapes. Although the borderlandscape does not determine the lives and experiences of its inhabitants, it creates incidents, circumstances and opportunities that directly influence peoples' lives. This study suggests that any sociological inquiry into the lives of people in the borderlandscape needs to recognise their unique location at the frontiers of modern nation-states.

What chiefs want, what commoners want

Throughout this thesis I argue that from the perspective of Africans, the border of modern nation-states, especially those of post-colonial Africa, are arbitrary. The exact position of borders is the result of historical processes that have elevated certain

groups into positions of power, while others have been made powerless as a result thereof. In Africa nation-state borders reflect a colonial past, rather than a pre-colonial political and cultural order. The question that beckons is why these borders were not re-drawn in the post-colonial era to better reflect older African political communities. Put simply, the answer is that the new elites of post-colonial Africa benefited (and benefit) from the state mechanisms and territories they inherited from the colonial era. Although many local people, living along the borders of African states, may still view these borders as arbitrary or artificial divisions between kin and larger social groups in certain contexts[1], Africa's post-colonial elites have come to accept these borders as markers of the territories of new 'nations'.

The history of northern KwaZulu-Natal aptly illustrates some of the tensions between elites and commoners within the borderlandscape. On the one hand, the old (Mabudu) Tembe chiefs who are still an elite group in northern KwaZulu-Natal, have, as a result of the border, lost authority over areas in Mozambique and became subservient to the Zulu king. Among this group there is still a strong drive to augment the borders that surround them in a bid to become part of the Swazi nation-state. On the other hand, commoners have no interest in becoming part of Swaziland - a state which is unable to grant them the same social benefits of citizenship as South Africa (For example, old age pensions, child maintenance grants, housing, medical facilities and educational resources). This group embraces South African nationality and subservience to the Zulu king.

The tension between these two groups plays out in small, but connected incidents that continuously stress the arbitrary nature of geo-political borders. For

[1] The anomaly of the situation is that, although many local borderlanders view Africa's borders as arbitrary impositions in certain contexts, in other context, especially where borders act as barriers to economic competition (i.e. labourers from neighbouring countries are prohibited from competing for certain jobs), they don't typify these borders as being artificial.

instance, ten days prior to the South African national elections a small crowd of about thirty people set fire to the South African flag at the municipal buildings at Ingwavuma and hoisted the Swazi flag in its place. Police officers were dispatched from Mkhuze. The officers lowered the Swazi flag and reminded the locals that KwaZulu-Natal is Zulu country, ruled by the Inkatha Freedom Party.

A few days later Inkosi Israel Mabudu Tembe married a Swazi woman from the Ingwavuma region. The Zulu royal house failed to send a representative. The Swazi royal house sent a contingent to the wedding that included a prominent prince and the former head of the Swazi armed forces. A few days after the wedding, the Tembe royal family attended the birthday of King Mswati III of Swaziland in Mbabane. At the function they were not treated as subjects of the Zulu, but instead given the same respect as the Zulu representatives.

The old elites of Maputaland still express a very strong desire to re-draw the southern Mozambique/ South Africa border and to cede the northern borderland areas of KwaZulu-Natal to Swaziland. According to representatives of the royal family, their primary aim is still to get the MacMahon line augmented, either by uniting northern KwaZulu-Natal with Mozambique or by getting Mozambique to relinquish southernmost Mozambique to South Africa. By regaining authority over this vast traditional chiefdom the royal family belief they would finally be free from Zulu 'oppression', and, would once again have the status taken away from them by Britain and Portugal in 1875.

The Tembe royal family have received the greatest amount of support from the Swazi monarch. The ruler of this landlocked country has made countless promises to acknowledge the Tembe chiefs as rightful rulers of Maputaland if the area was united with Swaziland. Such a move would give the Swazi state access to the sea, where it

planned, since the late 1970s, to build its own harbour. Local chiefs even suggest that a dual monarchy could be established if northern KwaZulu-Natal and Swaziland were to be united. However, commoners who are recipients of South Africa's well-developed social welfare programme,[2] oppose the old elites. Although local people might view the international border as an annoyance that prohibits them free access to family, friends and natural resources, most benefit from being citizens of South Africa, rather than Swaziland or Mozambique, as the case would be if the border were to be re-drawn. South African residents of the borderlandscape have benefited from the positioning of the border, which has placed them in a relatively wealthy country. By contrast, Mozambican residents of the borderlandscape perceive the border as a barrier that denies them access to shops, schools, employment opportunities and an array of social grants. They can be likened to the borderland inhabitants of Lesotho along the South Africa/ Lesotho border of whom Coplan (2001) writes,

> the majority of workers/ peasants straightforwardly desire the abolition of the border and an end to formal independence, which they see as an obstacle to local development and their own economic development. Such people do not identify the Basotho nation with Lesotho as a nation state. On the contrary, they regard the Lesotho government, the senior aristocracy, and the army as existing only to serve their own interests (p. 111).

By considering the perspectives of these different interest groups, I believe that the current location of the international border should not be altered. Despite my sympathy for the Tembe royal family, I believe that it would be suicidal for South African residents of the borderland to be placed under Swazi rule. All my research indicates that Maputaland cannot sustain its large population without direct government assistance. Agriculturally the area is extremely poor, it has no industries

[2] A census conducted by the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge (see discussion on methodology in the introduction this thesis) found that as many as ninety per cent of households in northern KwaZulu-Natal receive some type of social grant (pension, child support etc.) from the South African government.

other than tourism and it does not have any substantial mineral deposits that can be mined. Perhaps another way can be found for the Tembe chiefs to 'rid' themselves of perceived Zulu 'oppression', provided they have popular support. The government of South Africa has actually shown a willingness to support traditional chiefs, who have the support of their people. Perhaps the best way for the Tembe chiefs to move forward would be within a larger provincial and governmental entity that supports the chiefs and, more importantly, their people.

Towards a recognition of borderlanders

The governments of South Africa and Mozambique have made good progress towards enabling the residents of the borderland to move more freely across the international border. Initiatives discussed in this thesis, like cross-border access to health care industry, make the border less of an imposition to life in the borderlandscape. However, much can still be done to accommodate the special needs of the inhabitants of the borderlandscape. For instance, the introduction of special passports for borderlanders that will allow them easy access across the boundaries of the state can vastly improve peoples' lives.

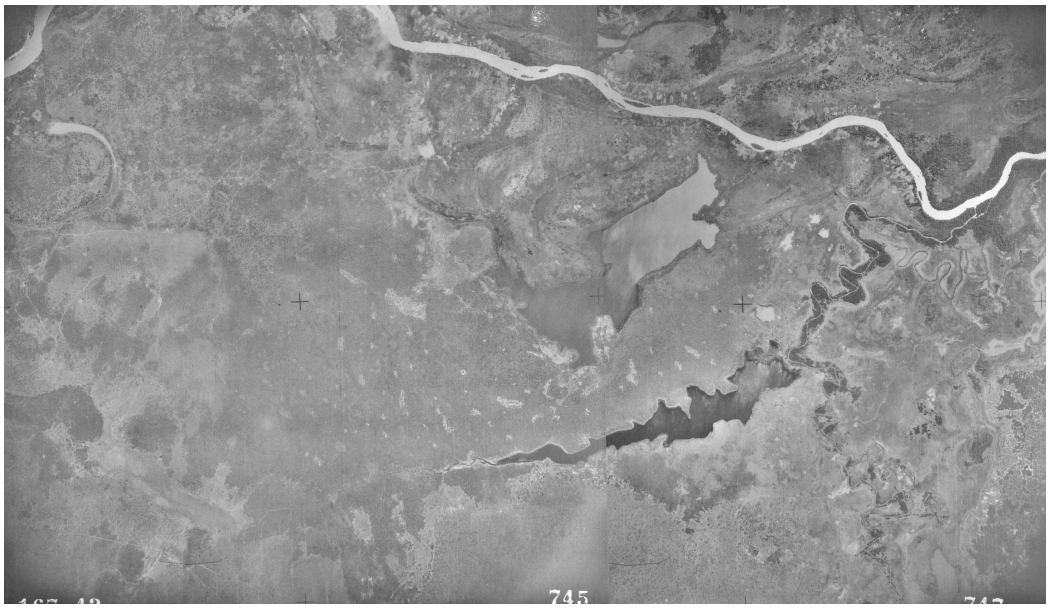
The misperception that most local people are involved in cross-border criminal activities legitimates rigid state control of the border. Instead, as this research suggests, cross-border criminal activity is primarily orchestrated by persons and syndicates outside the borderlandscape who only use the area as a space which they infiltrate temporarily to conduct their crimes. Borderlander crimes are directly related to the nature of the borderlandscape and mainly restricted to 'illegal' cross-border movement (mainly to visit kin) and cross-border trade in harmless articles like

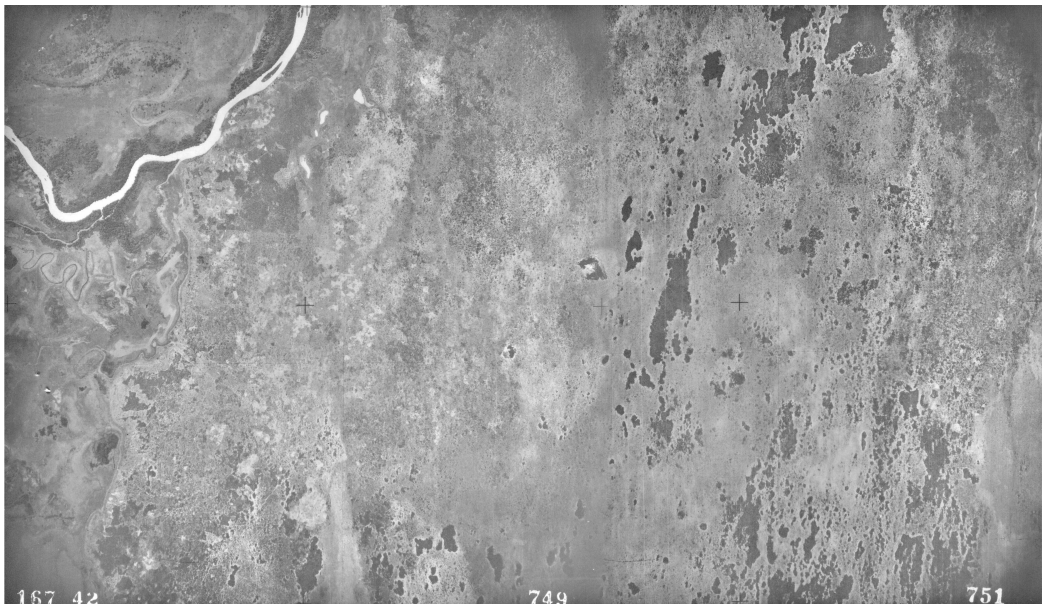
second-hand clothes, crafts and food. Instead of pursuing borderlanders for these petty crimes and regarding them as enemies, those who police the border can benefit greatly from a positive partnership with the inhabitants of the borderlandscape. People in the borderland know the movements of criminals in their space and, if the authorities were able to access the knowledge of borderlanders they would be in a better position to track criminals and contain crime in the borderlandscape. However, before that can be done, perceptions will have to change. If the authorities were to take steps to facilitate the cross-border movement of borderlanders, they would ensure goodwill and partnership. In turn borderlanders would be keener to assist the authorities in tracking criminals who utilise the borderlandscape to commit their crimes. The greatest insight this thesis can give for the policing of borders is that borderlanders need to be involved in the process to ensure effectiveness.

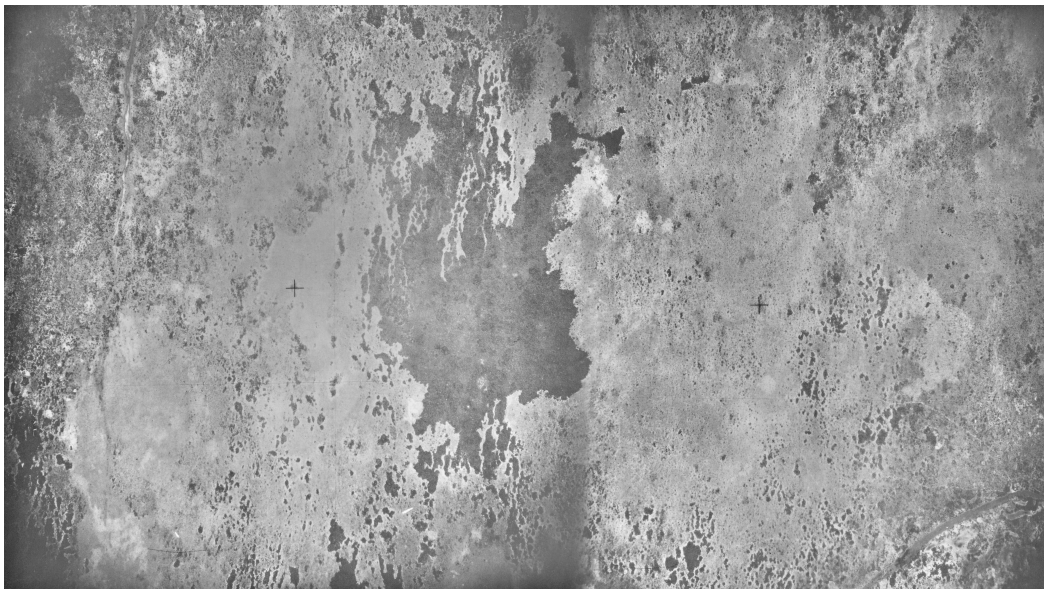
APPENDIX A, B, C and D: Aerial Photographs of the Borderland.

The collection of aerial photographs displayed on the following pages (Appendix A, B, C and D) were taken in 1942, 1960, 1975 and 1991 respectively. Each photograph covers and area of approximately twenty square kilometres. The photographs are here displayed from West to East. Rivers, lakes and the Indian Ocean are relatively prominent on these photographs. Compare the photographs with Map 3 to determine the areas displayed on each photograph.

Appendix A: Aerial Photographs of the Borderland, 1942.

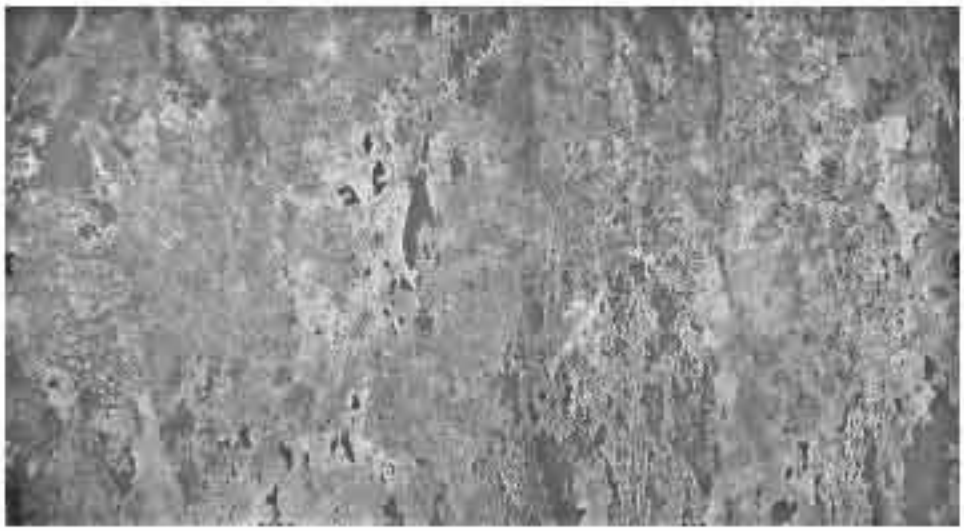






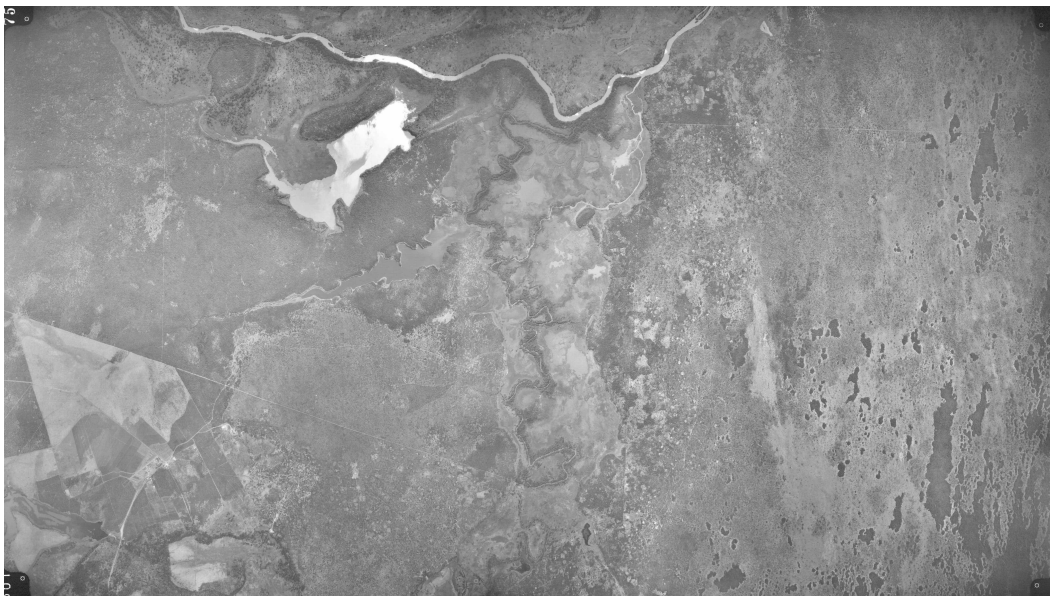
University of Pretoria etd – Kloppers, R J (2005)

Appendix B: Aerial Photographs of the Borderland 1960.



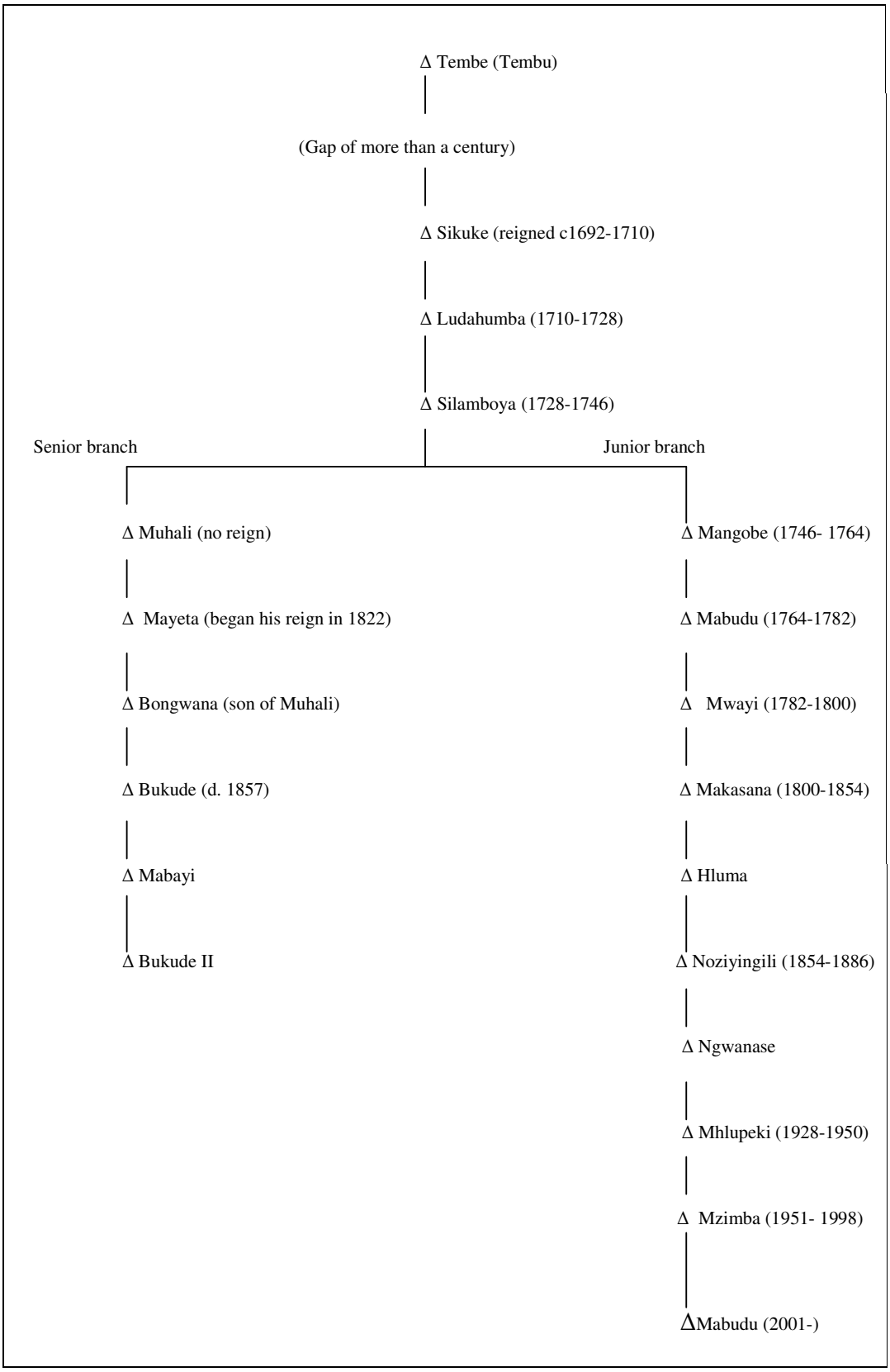
University of Pretoria etd – Kloppers, R J (2005)

Appendix C: Aerial Photographs of the Borderland, 1975.

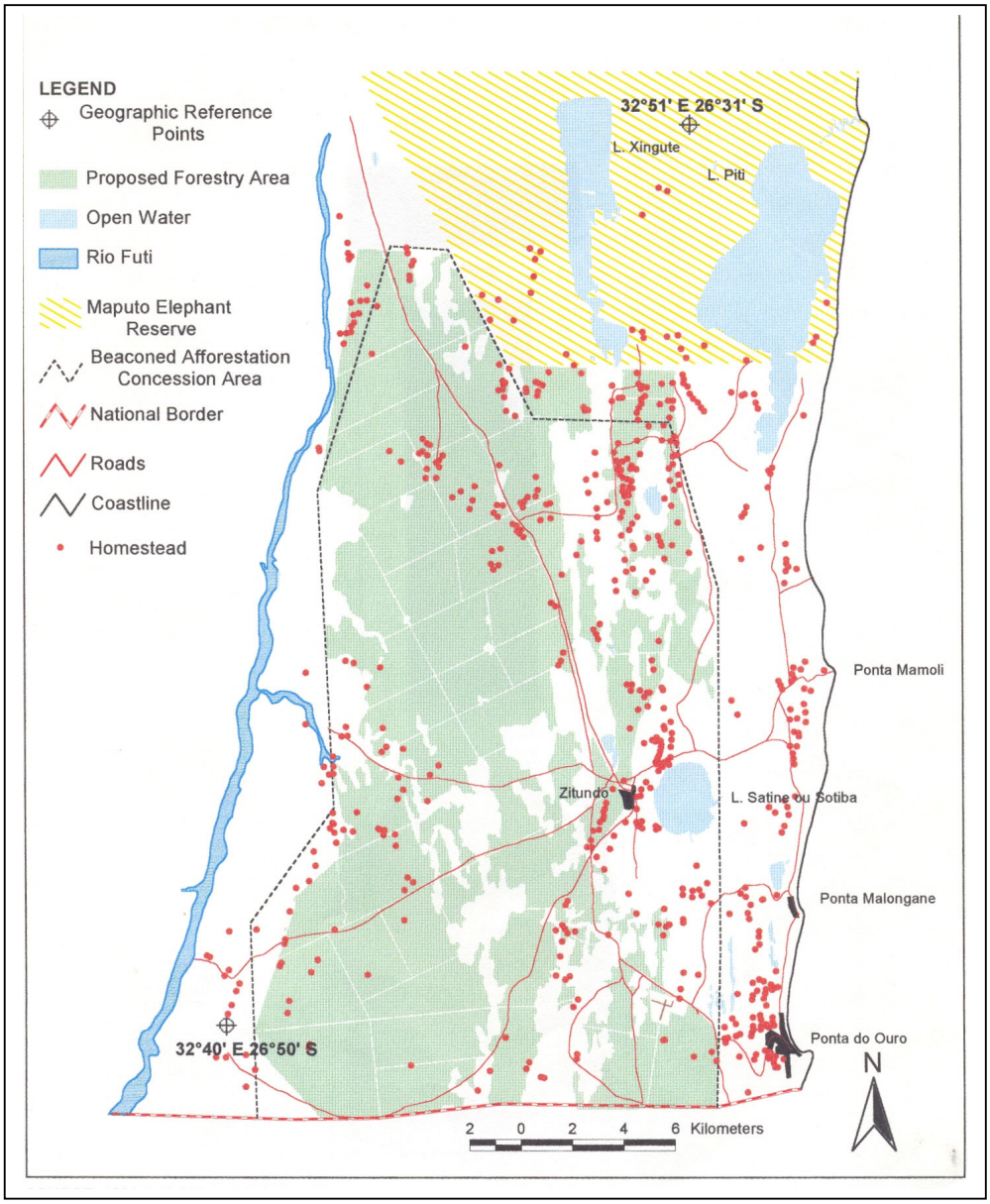


Appendix D: Aerial Photographs of the Borderland, 1991.

APPENDIX E: Genealogy of the Tembe *amakhosi*

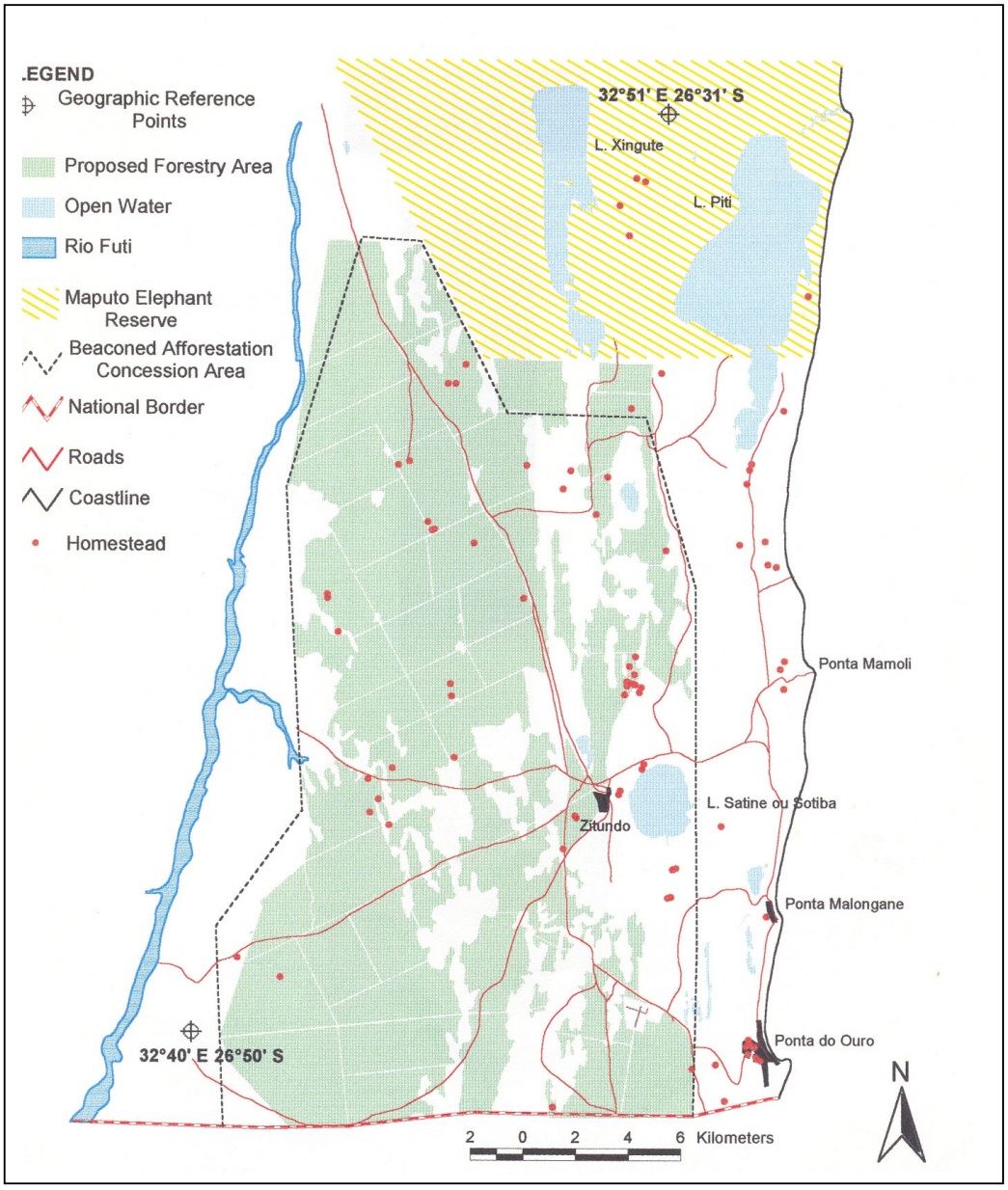


APPENDIX F: Homestead distribution in Matutuine 1982.



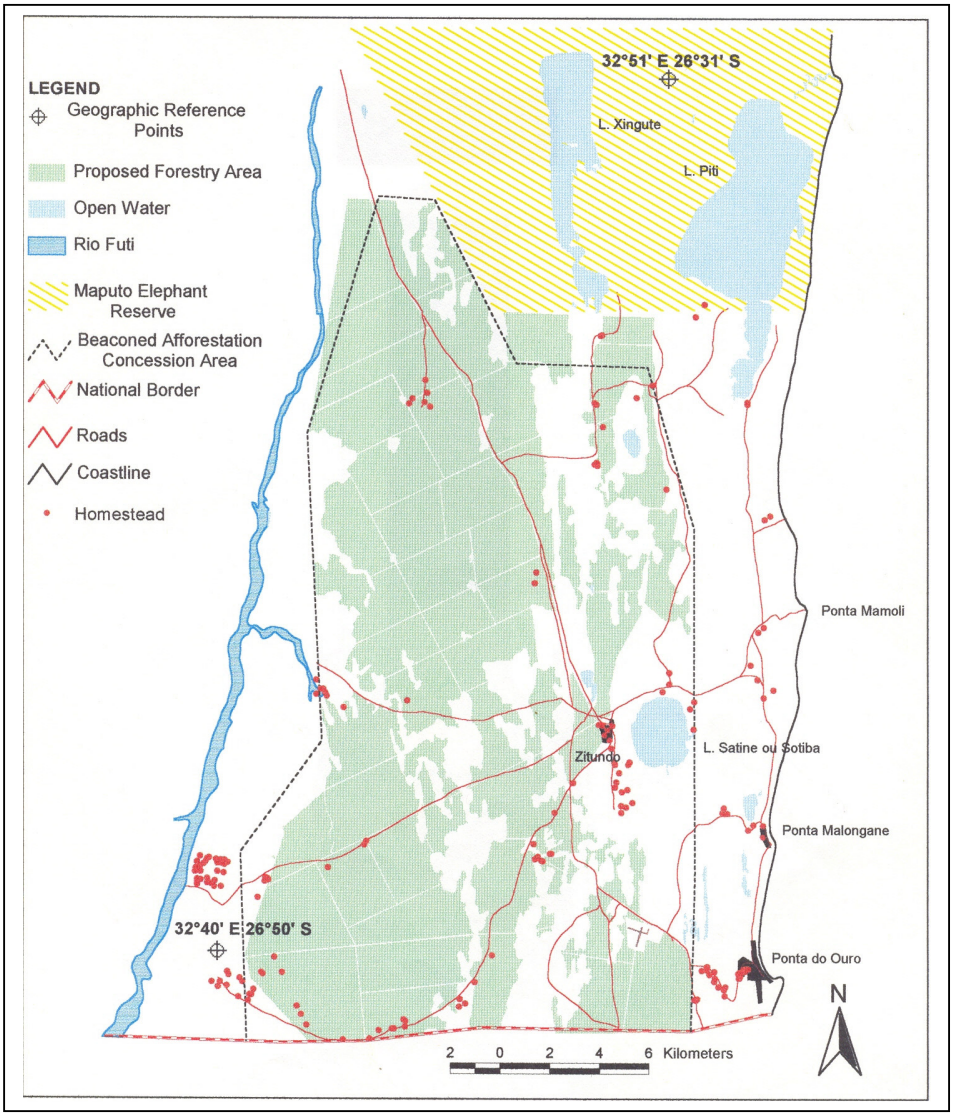
Source: INR (1995: based on 1:40 000 aerial photographs)

APPENDIX G: Homestead distribution in Matutuine, 1989.



Source: INR (1995: based on 1:40 000 aerial photographs)

APPENDIX H: Homestead distribution in Matutuine, 1995.



Source: INR (1995: based on INR field survey, July 1995).

APPENDIX I: Locations in Mozambique where some of the current inhabitants of KwaMshudu originate from as indicated in a field survey, 2002.

Name of place in Mozambique	Number of people
Bella Vista	1
Catembe	1
eSimbangi	2
Gaza	1
Gebeza	2
Hembeni	1
Inhambane	1
Inyaka	1
Mandini	1
Manica	1
Manhoca	5
Manjolo	1
Maputo	8
Masali	1
Maxixi	1
Mloli	1
Ngwengu	1
Nkwalini	1
Phuza	14
Ponta D'Ouro	1
Ponta Malongane	1
Salamanga	6
Satari	1
Shiya	13
Sofala	1
Zambezia	1
Zitundo	23
Total	92

APPENDIX J: Places in Mozambique where relatives of interviewees in KwaMshudu stay, September 2002

Place in Mozambique	Number of people
Catembe	3
Gala	1
Gebeza	1
iNyaka	1
KwaGwengu	2
Majolo	1
Manica	1
Maputo	11
MaShiya	3
Maxixi	1
Puza	24
Ponta d'Ouro	1
Ponta Malongane	1
Salamanga	2
Statari	1
Zitundo	11
Total	65

Appendix K: Places in Mozambique frequented by people from KwaMshudu for reasons other than visiting friends and family, September 2002.

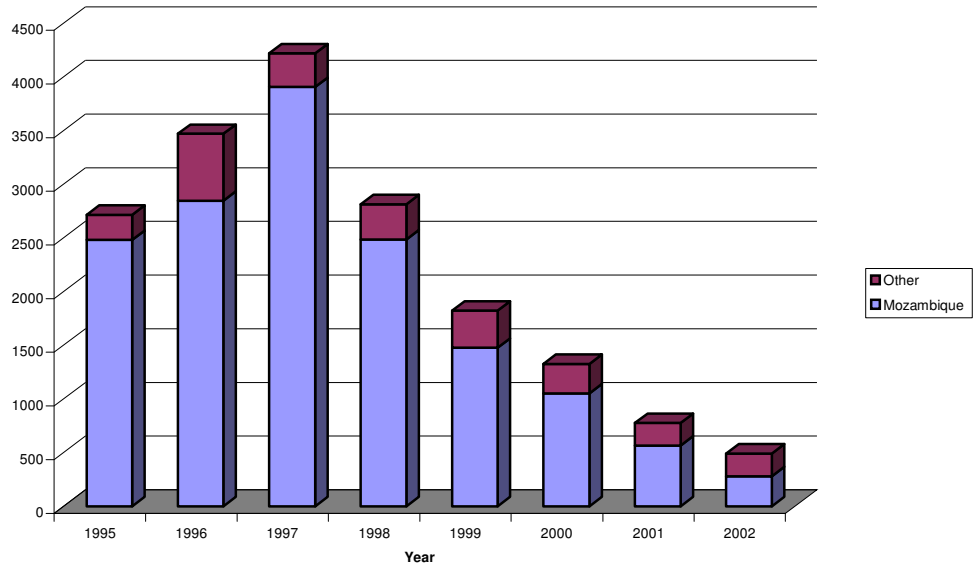
Place in Mozambique	Number of people
Catembe	2
Emashakeni	1
KwaMasali	1
KwaMluli	1
Manica	1
Maputo	3
Mashiya	4
Matola	1
Ponta d'Ouro	2
Puza	63
Salamanga	2
Statari	1
Zambezia	1
Zitundio	10
Total	93

APPENDIX L: Undocumented migrants entering KwaZulu-Natal from Swaziland and Mozambique, 1993-2002.

Year	Total
1993	1095
1994	830
1995	2343
1996	4267
1997	4363
1998	15784
1999	23514
2000	17064
2001	13258
2002	6755

Source: SANDF, Jozini

APPENDIX N: The amount of illegal immigrants arrested in the Manguzi area from Mozambique compared with illegal immigrants from other countries, 1995 –2002.



Source: SAPS Manguzi, 2002.

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