Teresa Koloma Beck

The Normality of Civil War

Armed Groups and Everyday Life in Angola

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List of Acronyms

ELNA	*Exército de Libertação Nacional de Angola*, National Liberation Army of Angola (armed forces of FNLA)
FALA	*Forças Armadas de Libertação de Angola*, Armed Forces of the Liberation of Angola (armed forces of UNITA)
FAPLA	*Forças Armadas Populares de Libertação de Angol*a, People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (armed forces of the Angolan government)
FNLA	*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*, National Front for the Liberation of Angola
GRAE	*Govêrno revolucionário de Angola no exílio*, Revolutionary Exile Government of Angola
MPLA	*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*, Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
PIDE	*Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado,* International and State Defence Police
SADF	South African Defence Forces
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
UNITA	*União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola*, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola

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1. Introduction

"The conditions in the Central Highlands were very complex. Especially in the villages it happened, for example, that at night it knocked on the door of a father. And his son, who was fighting on the other side, stood there, asking for money. Money for medicine, money for food. 'Father, we are dying out there!' he would say. What would this man do in such a situation? Would he act as one from the other side? Or as a father?" (Interview, 2005m)

The sound of shooting, the flickering of muzzle flash, burning houses and vehicles, people fleeing from the scenes of violence, corpses left behind—such or similar are the images that come to our mind thinking about war. Popular as well as academic discourse have cultivated an image of war as a state of emergency, as a temporary deviation from the "normal" course of affairs, a deviation that is marked by destructive and disruptive forces. But civil wars are not fought in one day; many of them last several years, some decades. In Sudan and Chad, Sierra Leone and Liberia, Angola and Mozambique, in Peru, Columbia and Nicaragua, in the Palestinian areas of Israel and the Kurdish territories of Turkey and Iraq, in Lebanon, as well as in East-Timor, Myanmar and Vietnam violent conflicts have been going on for ten to thirty years.[1] Given the time horizons of existential human activities such as cultivating fields or raising children, this seems to be a rather long period to be experienced as a transitory state of emergency. Moreover, as psychological research shows, a persistent experience of crisis quickly leads to a breakdown (Schauer, Elbert and Neuner, 2005). Therefore, a "state of emergency"-perspective on wars might be useful in the reconstruction of political and legal problems. Yet, its contribution to the understanding of the social processes in war situations can only be limited. This observation, however, raises a fundamental epistemological question: if not as a state of emer-

1 The data is drawn from the online database of AKUF (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Kriegsursachenforschung, Research Group Causes of War) at Hamburg University, Germany (AKUF, 2012).

gency, how can war situations otherwise be conceived? The aim of this book is to propose an answer to this question. In the spirit of qualitative empirical research, the discussion develops around a case study on civil war in Angola.

The account cited at the beginning vividly illustrates the limitations of an state of emergency-perspective on violent conflict. Collected during field research in Angola, it describes a situation, which, according to the interviewee, was typical for the civil war period: a father finds himself in a dilemma to choose between, on the one hand, loyalty to the armed group that is ruling the area he lives in, and, on the other hand, loyalty to his combatant son who is "from the other side". The confrontation takes place at his very doorstep, and the decision he is confronted with affects him in a rather personal and emotional way. Fatherly loyalty would be the obvious choice; yet, it would also bring him into perilous conflict with the armed actors ruling the territory. The story shows how, in a civil war situation, the civilian and the combatant milieu come to meet in a contentious everyday life. Moreover, the wording of the interviewee suggests that, to his experience, the scene was all but exceptional. This story, thus, defies the notion of war as a state of emergency; moreover, it contradicts the commonly assumed distance between the realm of the combatants and the non-combatants. While putting common implicit presumptions about violent conflict into question, it also serves to reveal the very same presuppositions: in the common epistemology of war, the latter appears, firstly, as crisis suspending "normality". And secondly, it is assumed that this crisis is driven by a particular constellation of agents, by the violent confrontation between at least two armed groups, fighting at the expense of an innocuous civilian population. The distinction between those who are waging war and those who fall prey to it is supposed to be identifiable and clear cut as well as the distinction between the armed opponents themselves.

Tacitly orienting research and analysis, these implicit presumptions have major implications for the study of wars in academia and beyond. Systematically, they draw the researcher's attention, on the one hand, to events indicative or emblematic for a state of emergency; and on the other, to the protagonists of war situations: armies and armed groups. Invariably, the warring parties and the so-called civilian population appear as mutually exclusive and intrinsically contradicting spheres, touching each other but episodically, typically in moments of violence and destruction.

The origins of these preconceptions can be found in the ideal of trinitarian warmaking, described by Carl von Clausewitz against the background of

the state formation-wars in Western Europe (Clausewitz, 2008; see also van Creveld, 1991, 35–41). They are, hence, closely linked to the project of modernity that cultivates an image of society as being peaceful and progressive, and therefore can conceive of war only as of an exceptional event, limited in time and space (Bauman, 1993, 1–30; Spreen, 2008, 30–4; Reemtsma, 2012). Yet, the idea of war taking place contained and controlled at the *outside* of society never captured its social reality. The combatants themselves are always commuters between the realm of battle and the realm of civilian life, bringing war back home, but also bringing elements of "home" to the front. In war "civilian" and "combatant" life are, thus, intimately related, conditioning and informing each other constantly. For the study of contemporary conflict, acknowledging this interdependency becomes crucial. Since the end of World War II the majority of violent conflicts around the globe have been intra-state wars (Schreiber, 2001). The latter systematically abrogate the boundaries separating the realm of combat from the realm of civilian life. In doing so, they introduce an expansion of war into the sphere of everyday life. This observation serves as a starting point for the endeavour undertaken in this book, i.e. to conceive war beyond alleged notions of emergency.

1.1 The problem: the expansion of civil war into everyday life

Commonly, violent conflicts within states are called "civil wars". This terminology emphasises that conflict takes place between people, who belong to the same political entity, who are citizens of the same state. In military strategy, such wars have also been called "low intensity conflicts" to highlight that they are fought for longer periods of time, but with low intensity and frequently in the absence of advanced weapon systems (van Creveld, 1991, 42–52). Looking, however, beyond political and strategic concerns at the social dynamics of such conflicts, their most salient feature consists in their tendency to negate the distinctions considered to be constitutive for inter-state wars.

First and foremost, civil wars blur the boundary between combatants and non-combatants. The reason thereof is plain: the protagonists of intra-state conflicts, beside the state itself, are non-state armed groups. Different from regular armies that institutionally and especially financially are backed by the state, armed groups have to rely on the so-called civilian population in order

to sustain their ranks and to provide for sufficient supplies. This has far reaching consequences: in the perspective of the opponent, any "civilian" under certain conditions might appear as a camouflaged or at least potential combatant, or otherwise as a supporter of the armed group. Therefore, civilians inevitably become a direct target of military operations.

Empirical data on war situations suggests that the line separating combatants from non-combatants is always thinly drawn, even in inter-state conflicts.[2] Yet, in civil wars, spurred by the armed groups' need for popular support, this line is permanently in flux, converging towards practical dissolution. "The 'soldier' of the Small War", writes the German sociologist Trutz von Trotha, "[is] civilian and soldier in one person. The 'combatant' of the Small War is himself the annihilation of the separation belonging to the trinitarian war" (Trotha, 1999, 89, my translation).

Yet, the distinction between combatants and non-combatants is not the only one to be put into question in civil wars. It might also become difficult to distinguish between the armed opponents themselves. With but rudimentary uniforms and the possibilities of long-distance communication being limited, it is not always clear to whom to attribute certain actions. An account of the Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuscinski from the Angolan War of Independence illustrates this problem. He describes how, approaching a roadblock, it was vital, yet often difficult, to identify by which party the latter was manned:

> "[W]e must bear in mind, that the armies fighting each other are dressed (or undressed) alike and that large regions of the country are a no-man's-land into which first one side and then the other penetrates and sets up checkpoints. That is why, at first we don't know who these people are or what they will do with us" (Kapuscinski, 2001, 44).

The blurring of boundaries between competing sets of agents spurs the collapse of other differences, assumed to be constitutive for war situations: first, the war is spatially no longer confined to its classic theatres, i.e. the battlefield. Instead, places belonging to the sphere of the everyday, such as schools or hospitals, market places or bus stations, farming fields or private homes, turn into theatres of war. Second, beside this dissolution of spatial bounda-

2 Beginning in World War I, the world's major armies increasingly relied on so-called 'civilian soldiers', i.e. conscripts recruited on a temporal basis. Having been pulled out of civilian life, they seemed to be less inclined towards fighting than the professionals who had been socialised in the army (Bourke, 1999, 77–8).

ries, the temporal limits of conflict are increasingly difficult to define. Official truces or peace agreements are no reliable indicators for an end of war violence. Numerous are the cases—the civil war in Angola being one of them—in which fighting continued despite the negotiation of a peace accord (cf. Richards, 2005).

In a nutshell, civil wars show a tendency towards a three-dimensional decomposition of boundaries: first, in the social dimension, obliterating the distinction between combatants and non-combatants; second, in the spatial dimension, annihilating the boundaries of battlefields; and, third, in the temporal dimension, blurring the distinction between times of war and times of peace. Under such circumstances, war is no longer a mere state of emergency fought out between two armed parties with non-combatants being but collaterally involved. Instead, combatants and non-combatants are living together. The theatre of war shifts from the front into everyday life. In the words of von Trotha, "[t]he Small War is […] the war in the sphere of everyday social life" (Trotha, 1999, 89, my translation).

Empirically, such dynamics have been frequently described, especially by anthropologists[3], but also by historians[4]. Even more than in social science research the importance of the everyday in war situations surfaces in autobiographies or novels written by persons who lived through them.[5] In these accounts, normal everyday experiences appear as crucial in the social dynamics of (civil) war, yet in a double and ambivalent sense. Two distinct but interrelated dynamics can be observed: on the one hand, the accounts show the *destabilising* effects brought about by the collapse of familiar everyday structures, an aspect that resonates well with state of emergency-thinking on violent conflict. Yet, on the other hand, these accounts disclose a *stabilising* function of experiences of "normality". Moreover, they reveal that the reproduction and transformation of normality in war situations can serve very different functions: on the individual level, for example, perceptions or actions, which appear as normal or familiar, are anchor points of orientation and sources of resilience; in armed groups (state and non-state alike) the habitualisation or normalisation of violent action is vital, if not an operational condition; in violent action, the attack on physical or social structures of the everyday can become a strategic objective. State of emergency-think-

3 See for example Nordstrom, 1997; Nordstrom, 2004; Maček, 2001; Maček, 2007; Lubkemann, 2008.

4 See for example Harneit-Sievers, 1995; Bourke, 1999.

5 See for example Guevara, 2000; Malaparte, 1952; Kapuscinski, 2001; Drakulić, 1993.

ing on violent conflict is closely related to images of war as a breakdown of normality. The considerations presented, however, suggest that such an understanding fails to capture the importance of "normality" or everyday life as analytical categories, whose examination might contribute to a better understanding of the social processes evolving in civil war situations.

In the research on contemporary violent conflicts, we can observe a growing awareness for the social dynamics of everyday life. However, the impact of the insights gained so far on theory-building has been limited. Theorising violent intra-state conflicts based on these insights demands nothing less than an epistemological revolution. On the one hand, state of emergency-thinking has to be overcome: conceding that civil wars unfold in the sphere of everyday life suggests to conceive them theoretically in terms of a condition of the everyday, as a particular mode of normality, which raises questions about the emergence, reproduction and change of the latter. On the other hand, the problem of internal and external boundaries of civil war situations has to be addressed: theories would need to recognize the changing relations between the combatant and non-combatant world. Theorising the empirically observable expansion of civil wars into the sphere of normal everyday life, thus, creates two interrelated challenges: first, conceptualising the everyday, and, second, conceptualising the continuous expansion of war into it. Obviously, the second challenge cannot be addressed before answering the first. The following sub-section sketches, to what extent recent theoretical contributions to the study of violent conflict respond to these demands.

1.2 The challenge: thinking the everyday

The end of the Cold War brought about a renewed interest in the study of violent conflict. The world appearing behind the falling Iron Curtain was not the peaceful paradise peace activists had hoped for. Instead, the number of violent conflicts increased (Gleditsch, Wallensteen, Erikkson, Sollenberg and Strand, 2002; Schreiber, 2001). What is more, these conflicts did not only occur in faraway places of the Global South. With the violent collapse of Yugoslavia war instead came back to Europe, i.e. to a region of the world believed to have learned the lessons from its violent past. The attacks of September 11, 2001 and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq further contributed to the impression of an increase in political violence around the globe (Harbom

and Wallensteen, 2007). Against the background of these empirical developments, researchers of various disciplines set out to make sense of the violent confrontations of the post-Cold War era. The subsequent research produced not only a multitude of case studies analysing events in particular places around the world, but also a number of theoretical contributions attempting to provide conceptual frameworks for *thinking* contemporary armed conflict. In a first stage, much of the debate focused on capturing the specifics of post-Cold War conflicts as compared to those of other periods; the renaissance of the theory of asymmetric warfare[6] and the so-called "New Wars"-theory[7] are the most salient examples in this regard. Eventually, however, this debate drew attention to *epistemological* problems in this area of research. On the one hand, critics of the New Wars-approach pointed out that the conceptual problems in analysing violent conflicts today are not due to the latter's new and unprecedented features; instead, they are rooted in the fact that with the end of the Cold War conflict research lost its principle framework of interpretation and analysis (see for example Kalyvas, 2001). On the other hand, sociologically oriented scholars drew attention to the highly problematic dissociation between thinking about violent conflict on the one hand, and thinking about (peaceful) society in general on the other (Reemtsma, 2006; Jabri, 1996).[8] Both developments stimulated a shift of emphasis in the research on violent conflict, especially in political science. From different perspectives, researchers highlighted the necessity to think about war not only in terms of politics and geostrategy, but also in terms of social processes: whereas the critique of the New Wars-approach led to the emergence of a new research agenda, which focusses on social dynamics on the micro-level, the mentioned sociological critique stimulated investigations, which deliberately draw on existing social theories to conceptualise processes in war situations. Chapter 2 will present the contributions of both approaches in greater detail.

Despite this growing theoretical interest in social processes on the micro- and meso-level, and notwithstanding a related scepticism towards state of emergency-preconceptions, these works did not contribute significantly to the conceptualisation of the expansion of civil war into the sphere of normal

6 See for example Arreguín-Toft, 2005; Courmont and Ribnikar, 2002; Dworkin, 2006; Hammes, 2006; Paul, 1994; Thornton, 2007; van Creveld, 1991.

7 See Kaldor, 1999; Münkler, 2002; Münkler, 2005.

8 In fact, this debate had been launched already in the late 1987 by Zygmunt Bauman's seminal sociological work about the Holocaust (Bauman, 1993).

everyday life. In the preceding sub-section, it has been argued that this venture involved two related challenges: first, theorising the everyday, and, second, theorising the process of expansion, i. e. the blurring of boundaries and distinctions. Yet, in the works sketched above, the everyday itself remained conceptually fuzzy. Consequently, the expansion of war into the sphere of normal everyday life could not be conceived sufficiently.

Yet, this shortcoming is far from being haphazard. Rather, it is rooted in the epistemological problems arising in any attempt to analyse everyday life proceedings: perception and attention are based on differences. We perceive things because they contrast with something else. In the absence of contrast, in the absence of difference there is but insignificance. This was first described by philosophers such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Merleau-Ponty, 1964, 132), and is supported by recent developments in cognitive sciences (cf. Waldenfels, 1985, 59). Modern knowledge-based society, with its mass media and research institutions at its forefront, is built on this very principle (Bohn, 2003). The everyday, by contrast, is closely related to notions of the ordinary and the "normal". The latter refer to phenomena that literally go without saying, to the matters of course, which govern human existence. Accordingly, the ordinary, silent proceedings of everyday life, which are reiterated countless times, systematically tend to evade our attention. Special efforts have to be made to bring them into focus. Conceiving the expansion of violent intra-state conflicts into the sphere of everyday life thus demands more than considering social processes in civil wars on the micro-level. It first and foremost demands an understanding of the particular structures of the everyday itself.

Mindful of these considerations, this book aims to develop an approach for theorising the reproduction and transformation of social life under the condition of civil war. The central question is: *how is society transformed in the continued interaction between combatants and non-combatants in the contentious everyday life of a civil war situation, and how can these processes be conceptualised*?

From the discussion of epistemological and theoretical problems presented above it should have become clear that this question does not only refer to an empirical problem, but at the same time to a theoretical, and, relatedly, a methodological one. Hence, the challenge is not only to establish what empirically is the case, but also to consider which theories, i.e. which frameworks of description and interpretation, are apt to disclose what is the case. Moreover, appropriated methods of information gathering and assessment

have to be employed. Against this background, the overall objective of this study is to develop an analytical framework which facilitates an analysis of transformative processes in civil war situations, brought about by the expansion of violent conflict into the sphere of the everyday. The following two sub-sections sketch the conceptual (1.3) as well as the methodological approach (1.4); both will be further elaborated in chapter 3. This introduction closes with an outline of the book (1.5).

1.3 The conceptual framework: theories of the everyday

As stated above, current research on contemporary armed conflicts continues to undertheorise the expansion of civil wars into the sphere of everyday life. A central problem is that, despite a growing interest in the fate of "ordinary" people, the notion of the everyday itself remains fuzzy. At the heart of this study is, therefore, the conceptualisation of everyday life. For the purpose of this research, however, it is not sufficient to conceive the "everyday" in terms of a particular level of analytical (dis-)aggregation of the social, which is synonymous to the "local", and distinct from the "national" or "global" level. Instead, it will be conceived in view of a particular form of experience, characterised by naturalness and obviousness. In the words of the German sociologist, Hans-Georg Soeffner, this "fundamental form of experience, knowledge and organisation in the everyday environment" is *normality* (Soeffner, 1992, 16, my translation). Therefore, theories of normality provide the conceptual framework for this book.

In philosophy as well as in social sciences, various authors have dealt with the idea of normality, though not necessarily using the term as such. There is no unified theory of normality, yet the idea of a particular form of experience, that is marked by its obviousness, its naturalness, its *Selbstverständlichkeit* to use the German expression, appears in various schools of thought from the turn of the 19th/20th century onwards. William James' *common sense* and Edmund Husserl's life-world (*Lebenswelt*) point to the discovery of "normal" experience as an object of research in philosophy. In social sciences, the term has been introduced by the works of Comte and Durkheim. In the formulation of "everyday life" or "*le quotidien*", to use the French term, it has found its fixed place in social science terminology. Within the discipline the schools of social phenomenology and anthropology developed their research

agendas around this problem. But the idea of "normal" reality also appears in the other theoretical and methodological traditions, such as the Bourdieuian concepts of field and *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1976; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, 94–140) or in sociological systems theory (e.g. Luhmann, 1984, 162–66, 416). In the last decade of the 20th century, there has been an increased interest in the explicit study of the formation of "normality" in modern societies and the role of politics, media and statistics within this process. "Normalisation" and "normalism" are key concepts of this debate (Link, Parr and Thiele, 1999; Link, 1997; Foucault, 1976, 189–90). But, what is normality?

In his monograph on philosophical concepts of normality Thomas Rolf defines the term as follows: "A concrete experience can be considered to be normal if its launching, maintaining, closing or interrupting does need no rational, no explanation for a deviation, no accompanying comment and no general justification" (Rolf, 1999, 44, my translation). He thus relates the notion of the normal to a form of experience that is marked by the absence of irritation and fulfilment of expectations. It implies some kind of correspondence between the structures of the subject of experience, the structures of society and the environment. Therefore a theoretical reconstruction of normality touches at the same time the relationship between the individual and society, and the rapport of both with the world.

Such an understanding of normality implies, however, that "being normal" is not a property of objects, but a particular mode of perceiving them, a mode, which is based on patterns that are collectively shared. What appears as natural, obvious and "normal" in an individual's perspective is in fact the result of a historical evolutionary process, in which this particular reality prevailed over possible others. Hence, normalities are contingent; what is considered to be normal changes with the evolution of man and society, in processes involving interest, power and politics. Going back to *norma*, the Latin term for a carpenter's square, the meaning of normality oscillates between a descriptive and a normative pole, referring to the "is" as well as to the "ought". Wars can be conceived as periods, in which "normality" is reconfigured, in which norms as well as the normal are redefined.

1.4 The case study: civil war in Angola (1976–2002)

In the following, the questions sketched above will be discussed in view of concrete empirical data. This seems to be appropriate for two reasons: first, because the structures of normality or the everyday differ from context to context. Therefore, the analysis of particular contexts is indispensable when it comes to analysing normalities and processes of normalisation. The second reason is related to the particular difficulties arising in any research about violent processes. As physical violence threatens existence, observing or studying such phenomena mobilises emotions. Moreover, it evokes dominant moral and political concepts, such as the prohibition of physical violence as a means of conflict regulation. More than many other areas of social sciences research, research on violent conflicts, thus, risks to be influenced by prejudices and normative preconceptions. Against this background, employing a method that helps to move analysis beyond the structures imposed by pre-existing prejudices appears as crucial for the task at hand. For this study, a qualitative case study approach was chosen, with the civil war in Angola serving as primary empirical example. This subsection provides, first, an introduction to the historical background of the case and describes, second, the methodological approach.

Angola looks back upon one of the most extended war periods in the modern history of the African continent. This violent conflict began with the anti-colonial struggle in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Three groups—MPLA (*Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola*, Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola), FNLA (*Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola*, National Front for the Liberation of Angola) and UNITA (*União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola*, National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)—started to fight for independence of the country from Portugal. Each group had been formed in a particular social and ethno-linguistic milieu, and each was supported by different foreign agents.

In 1974, independence came into reach, when the Salazar regime in Lisbon was overthrown in what came to be remembered as the Carnation Revolution. In the course of the political reforms following this event Portugal renounced its overseas-territories. Authority over Angola was to be put into the hands of a joint interim government, formed by representatives of the three major anti-colonial organisations. Yet, this plan was never realised. Once announced, a violent race for state power began. In autumn 1975, the MPLA, eventually, took the country's capital Luanda and declared a People's

Republic. As this declaration was contested by the MPLA's competitors, FNLA and UNITA, a struggle for state authority began, which lasted nearly thirty years.[9]

Since the FNLA was vanquished quickly, there remained but two protagonists in this civil war: on the one hand, there was the ruling MPLA, initially under Agostinho Neto, since 1983 under Eduardo dos Santos, and supported principally by Cuba and the Soviet Union. On the other hand, there was UNITA under Jonas Savimbi, supported by South Africa and the United States. A first peace agreement, the *Bicesse Accords*, was signed in 1991. It foresaw a DDR programme[10] and elections to be held in September 1992. Yet, when the polls declared a government victory, UNITA took up arms again, and war re-erupted, now more violently than before. Two years later, another peace treaty failed, the Lusaka Protocol of 1994. Civil war in Angola only ended in 2002, after UNITA's leader, Jonas Savimbi, was killed by government forces. The remainder of the armed group's command conceded military defeat and signed the Luena Memorandum, a ceasefire agreement that reenacted the Lusaka Accords. This treaty paved the way for the transformation of UNITA into a political party and its integration into a formal power-sharing arrangement.[11] As the struggle for state power in Angola lasted almost three decades, preceded by another decade of armed anti-colonial struggle, the transformative effects of violent conflict on society can be assumed to be particularly pronounced.[12]

As stated above, the overall objective of this study is to develop a conceptual framework which permits to reconstruct transformative processes in

9 For a detailed overview on the period of anti-colonial struggle until the end of the post-colonial transition John Marcum's two volume oeuvre *The Angolan Revolution* remains unmatched (1969 and 1978). A recent contribution focussing on combatant-civilian relations during this period is Inge Brinkman's study on Southern Angola (2005).

10 The acronym "DDR" stands for "disarmament, demobilisation and integration", a policy-bundle typically employed in postconflict situations.

11 The body of academic writing on the civil war in Angola mirrors the state of world politics as well as conceptual developments in the field of conflict studies. Under the impression of the Cold War, the conflict was described either in terms of collective deprivation (e. g. James, 1992), or it has been denounced as a proxy war launched and maintained by imperialistic powers (e. g. Wright, 1997). From the late 1990s onwards, inspired by then popular debates about greed and grievances, attention moved to the economic dimension of the conflict (e. g. Hodges, 2001; Malaquias, 2007). A detailed (although not impartial) account of the military events until 1991 is provided by George (2005).

12 Although a shortcoming might be that the "initial" state, in the sense of a "non-war" situation, is hard to reconstruct.

civil war situations induced by the expansion of violent conflict into the everyday. Methodologically, this inquiry follows the principles of qualitative empirical social science research. The analysis evolved in a reflexive process, repeatedly confronting theoretical conceptions and empirical data. Different from positivistic approaches to social sciences, in which hypothesis are, first, generated to be, in a second step, verified or falsified by empirical analysis, qualitative empirical research proceeds in several feedback-loops between theory and data. The overall objective is to permit and facilitate a process of mutual stimulation: theory informs empirical analysis, and at the same time, empirical analysis informs theory building (Kalthoff, 2008; see also Peirce, 1958). Therefore, the theoretical framework elaborated in chapter 3 of this book did not precede the analysis of the empirical data presented in chapters 4 to 7. Instead, it is already the fruit thereof.

The crucial part of empirical data on the case was gathered during seven months of ethnographic field research in Angola, from September 2005 to April 2006. Data gathering during field research was complemented by a review of the academic literature on the case. Field research followed a multi-method approach, combining, first, individual interviews with "ordinary" people as well as with political, social and religious leaders on the provincial, district and community level; second, real-group discussions in rural communities; and, third, participant observation. Most of the time was spent in the Province of Huambo in the Central Highlands. Therefore, the majorities of interviews and observations took place in this region, which, in the words of one interviewee was essentially "feeding the war machine" in Angola (Interview, 2005b).

For the study of questions relating to the everyday, field research is an indispensable method of data gathering, because information on everyday processes can hardly be obtained without observing the regions in question first-hand. Neither media nor NGO reports can be considered a valid basis for research on the issue. Yet, although being essential, field research is all but uncomplicated. A number of problems occurred, which are typical for field research on war situations: the prevalence of conflict as well as the presence (latent or open) of violence complicates field access, the possibilities of data gathering, and the exploitability of the data . Moreover, the distrust typically inscribed into war societies as well as the conflicting parties' competition about the "true" version of events is necessarily reflected in the data, creating problems of reliability and validity (cf. Wall and Mollinga, 2008; Salmon, 2006; Nordstrom and Robben, 1995). At the time of my research stay in

Angola, hardly four years after the signature of the *Luena Memorandum*, these problems were still very pronounced. Field access was difficult. A major difficulty was trust—or rather the distrust of potential interviewees. Therefore, interviews usually had a run-up of around ten days at least, as contacts had to be mediated by third parties who would vouch for my trustworthiness. Attempts to arrange interviews without such introduction either failed completely, or, if a meeting actually took place, the interviewee would reproduce fragments of the official discourse and show an astonishing impermeability to any questions asking for personal experience. As recording the conversations turned out to have the same effect, I had to resort to extensive note-taking instead; in some situations, the interviewee even rejected this procedure and notes could only be taken afterwards. For this reason, information from the interviews is usually presented as paraphrase. The few literal quotes are either from the few recorded interviews, or they are very short and were taken down in handwriting during the interview itself. As distrust and fear continue to be pertinent issues, no names are given throughout this work.

Under these rather complicated circumstances, one aspect became crucial in facilitating access to the field: the fact that I was accompanied by my husband and our then one year old daughter. In a society deeply affected by fear and distrust the familiar image of family life helped to bridge the gap. Moreover, the everyday necessities arising out of maintaining a household brought about contacts to a variety of people whom I would hardly have met staying in a hotel or a rented room. At times, these contacts facilitated the organisation of interviews. Even more important, however, my own immersion into everyday life contributed to the gathering of information by participant observation.

1.5 Outline of the book

The analysis presented in this book is divided into a conceptual and an empirical part. Chapter 2 opens the theoretical discussion with a review of state of the art conceptual research on contemporary violent conflicts. We are going to see that two different approaches can be distinguished: micropolitical theories on the one hand and social theory approaches on the other. While the former aim to conceptually reconstruct social dynamics in violent

conflicts on a micro-level based on empirical research, the latter propose to employ existing theories of social order, social action and social change to describe processes in war societies. It is argued, that the analysis of the question at hand in this book can draw on both approaches: with the micropolitical research agenda it shares the focus on micro-level social dynamics, but this perspective has to be complemented by existing social theories which permit to conceive the particular structures of the everyday.

Those theories are explored in chapter 3. Drawing on concepts from two schools of philosophy—phenomenology and pragmatism—the first part of this chapter reconstructs the everyday as defined by "ordinary" experiences. Starting from this assumption, the (re-)production and transformation of such experiences is conceived based on four concepts: life-world, habit/habitualisation, transitivity and normality/normalisation. The chapter elaborates, how these concepts might serve as analytical tools in researching social processes in war situations. It is shown how theories of the everyday permit to accentuate the research question, asking for the social processes by which violent conflict turns into an ordinary experience. As this question will be answered differently in armed groups, on the one hand, and the non-combatant environment on the other, the second part of chapter 3 complements the theories of the everyday by a triangular theory of violence, which takes the problem of experience into account, and a conceptualisation of armed groups as organisations.

The empirical analysis begins in chapter 4 with an introduction to the historical background of the case in an aim to reconstruct the socio-historical conditions for the outbreak of the civil war in 1976. It will be shown that the latter was not the first violent conflict in the modern history of Angola; instead, war and coercive rule were a continuity in the Portuguese colony.

Finally, processes of the normalisation of violence during the civil war in Angola are the subject of chapters 5, 6, and 7. As suggested by the theoretical discussion, this analysis distinguishes between processes of normalisation in the armed group UNITA on the one hand, and such processes in the non-combatant environment on the other. The considerations on UNITA reveal how the armed group facilitated the normalisation of violent conflict among its members by integrating into its formal organisational structure (chapter 5) structures of non-combatant everyday life, in particular from family and village life (chapter 6).

Chapter 7 then develops an analysis of the normalisation of violent conflict in the non-combatant environment. Thus, chapter 7 serves to illustrate

that the latter was driven by two different dynamics: on the one hand, by the non-combatants attempts to reorganise habitualised practices, most importantly subsistence activities, so as to circumvent the actions of armed groups; and on the other, by the transformation of the patterns of interaction between combatants and non-combatants into orders of domination. This chapter also includes an inquiry into the limits of normalisation processes and the faultlines of normality.

Chapter 8 presents a summary of the major findings with regard to the empirical subject, theory building and methodology.

Before embarking upon this endeavor, the following should be mentioned: to the theoretical purist, the conceptual eclecticism of this work might be disturbing. Yet, the choice of theories employed is not random. Its purpose is to unite competing theoretical approaches in order to enable an integrated inquiry of the ordinary and the everyday experience in times of (civil) war. It would have been feasible, of course, to deal with the problems discussed in this book within the framework of but one of the conceptual approaches. Yet, as we are going to see, the different scholars of the everyday each emphasised particular aspects of the (re-)production and transformation of ordinary experiences. Consequently, each school of thought developed a unique language to describe the everyday. Reformulating these ideas by squeezing them into a single framework would also mean to lose valuable insights. More than for the beauty of theory, however, this work is written to contribute to the understanding of social processes in civil wars. And it is in this spirit that the reader is invited to follow through the thicket of various theoretical approaches.

2. Theorising violent conflict: state of research

As argued in the introduction, any attempt to understand the transformation of societies in civil war situations faces not only an empirical puzzle, but also a conceptual gap. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to review recent contributions to the theorisation of violent conflict and to explore to what extent the latter can contribute to addressing the question at hand.

Conceptual interest in violent conflict renewed after the end of the Cold War. With the implosion of the Soviet Union, superpower confrontation lost its relevance as the leading paradigm for conflict studies. For the moment, the ineffable danger of the planet's destruction by nuclear weapons was off the table. Bargaining and deterrence were no longer the issues of the day (cf. Schelling, 1960).[13] Instead of these Cold War strategies, hot conflicts moved into the focus of public attention. The latter were fought not with the high tech armoury which had served for deterrence in the decades before, but with small arms or—as in the notorious case of the Rwandan genocide—with hardly any firearms at all. The need for a revision of theories and concepts of war and violent conflict seemed to be at hand. Less obvious and less contemplated, however, was another significant change brought about by the end of the Cold War: with the fall of the Iron Curtain, world politics had lost its meta narrative, the master framework of interpretation which had served to lend intelligibility to events around the world. Therefore, the quest for understanding the violent conflicts of the post-Cold War period was always associated with a quest for new frameworks of interpretation. Thus, beside an abundance of empirical case studies, whose aim is to reconstruct and interpret events and processes at a particular place and time, there have been also a number of explicitly conceptual contributions which attempt to

13 Recent developments, however, show that nuclear power has become all but irrelevant as a bargaining chip in world politics. The most salient examples are nuclear weapon tests by emerging and developing countries (SAIC, s.a.), or the escalating conflict around the nuclear programme of Iran.

theorise violent conflict as a social process. In terms of the subject of this book, two different approaches to theorising violent conflict might be distinguished: on the one hand, there are studies which attempt to conceptually reconstruct and systematise particular aspects or elements of contemporary violent conflicts, such as war violence, non-state armed groups or the emergence and reproduction of war economies; they might be described as micropolitical theories of violent conflict. On the other hand, there are contributions which discuss war within a framework of broader social theory. In these cases, the aim is not so much to conceive particular theories of violent conflict, but to deliberately consider violent conflict as a social process among other social processes. Both branches of conceptual research attempt to theorise what happens in war. Yet, the social theory approach systematically tackles this question in the light of a another one: how is what happens in war related to non-war periods? The approaches, hence, differ significantly—and this is important for the question addressed in this book—in their epistemological stance. While the micropolitical theories tend to present violent conflict as a particular area of interest within a given social sciences discipline, the social theory approach systematically analyses war in view of broader social processes, disclosing continuities and the ambiguity of social structures. In other words, the first approach silently implies an exceptional character of war, while the second one seems to contradict this position. Conceiving war in the framework of social theory, the second approach theoretically—although not normatively—normalises the processes in question. For the problem at hand this distinction is of major importance.

The following two sections present the major contributions from both bodies of conceptual research (2.1, 2.2). The chapter closes discussing to what degree these approaches can contribute to addressing the question at hand in this book (2.3).

2.1 Micropolitical theories of violent conflict

Micropolitical theories of violent conflict can be understood as middle-range theories as proposed by Robert K. Merton (Merton, 1949). They typically start from the observation or identification of a particular empirical problem or puzzle. Concepts or theories are thus understood based on the analysis and systematisation of empirical regularities (ibid., 5–10). The analysis takes

place in the framework of a given, more or less explicitly stated social science paradigm, such as rational choice, symbolic interactionism or social anthropology. The theories and concepts thus conceived provide insights into particular aspects of the social dynamics of violent conflict, such as the emergence and reproduction of non-state armed groups, the logic of war violence or the development of war economies.

A first major research impulse came from Mary Kaldor's book *Old and New Wars* (1999). Writing in the face of an emerging new humanitarianism, Kaldor argues that the end of the Cold War had given rise to a new type of armed conflict which differed significantly from the so-called old wars: first, with regard to the causes and motivations which lead to collective violence (grievances vs. greed), second, with regard to the support armed groups enjoy among the population (legitimacy vs. illegitimacy) and, third, with regard to the principles guiding the exercise of violence (strategic and controlled vs. tactical or uncontrolled). Although a number of arguments presented in the book received theoretical (Münkler, 2002; Münkler, 2005) as well as empirical support (Collier and Hoeffler, 2000), its main proposition—the novel character of contemporary conflicts—has meanwhile been refuted (Kalyvas, 2001; Chan, 2011). It turned out that "new" were not so much the forms of violent conflict, but rather the condition researchers and other observers found themselves in: with the end of the Cold War they had lost their framework of interpretation, the master narrative which permitted to make sense of any event in world politics (Kalyvas, 2001; Schlichte, 2009). The dramatic gesture implicit in the New Wars approach was, thus, above all an expression of the researchers' disorientation, not an indicator for the advent of a henceforth unseen type of conflict. Yet, one of the greatest merits of Kaldor's study is to have displayed this quandary exactly and to have stimulated meticulous empirical inquiries into the structural features of contemporary conflict, framed by a debate about appropriate research methods.

Most importantly in view of the question at hand, it spurred what might be called a *micropolitical turn* in the study of violent conflict (cf. Kalyvas, 2008; King, 2004; Schlichte, 2009). The emerging new research programme aims to understand and theoretically reconstruct social processes in wars based on an inquiry into micro-level dynamics. This objective introduces three interrelated methodological changes: first, research moves away from the large-N-sample studies which had dominated the analysis of violent conflict since the mid-20th century. Second, it abandons the fiction of unitary actors and, instead, argues for disaggregation; "the rebels", "the state" as well

as "the civilian population" are not longer considered as collective subjects divided by some "master cleavage", but they are decomposed into different sub-groups and segments with distinct attitudes, interests and agendas. Third, the micropolitical turn draws attention to a blind spot of conflict studies so far: for a long time research on the latter focussed on causes and motivations (e.g. Gurr, 1993; Skocpol, 1997), on strategic and military aspects (e. g. van Creveld, 1991), on the problem of ending a war (Marchal and Messiant, 1997; Walter, 1997), or on the post war period (e. g. Jeong, 2010; Sandole, 2010). The micropolitical studies, however, systematically take an interest in the social processes, which take place *during* the violent conflict and help to sustain it.

Among the most well-known contributions to this emerging new research programme are studies on non-state armed groups in civil wars by the political scientists Stathis Kalyvas (2003; 2006) and Jeremy Weinstein (2005; 2007). The aim of both scholars is to shed light on the particular logic of violence in civil wars. Both argue that the patterns of violence must be understood in the context of the armed groups' relation to the so-called civilian population. In *The logic of violence in civil war* Kalyvas conceives civil wars as triangular dynamics between incumbents, insurgents and civilians (Kalyvas, 2006). The latter, he argues, are not only a primary target of armed groups, as the humanitaristic paradigm suggests, but also their central resource. Therefore, violence is exercised first and foremost as a means to achieve compliance (as opposed to an instrument of extermination), whose effectiveness depends on the degree to which it is employed in a discriminate and selective way (ibid., esp. 173–209). With regard to research methods and paradigms Kalyvas insists that the dynamics of civil wars cannot simply be inferred from politically or ethnically informed "master cleavages". Such conflicts violently confront people who share a history of non-violent interaction, which have been neighbours, friends or members of the same family. Therefore, research has to take into account the context of local and inter-community dynamics. Straddling the divide between the political and the private, the collective and the individual, becomes, thus, a central feature of the logic of violence in civil wars (Kalyvas, 2003, 487; Kalyvas, 2006, 364–87).

Jeremy Weinstein's *Inside Rebellion* attempts to further accentuate the discussion (Weinstein 2007). As Kalyvas, he comprehends an armed groups' relations to the so-called civilian population as crucial in defining their use of violence. Yet, he challenges the view that this relation is generally one of dependency. Instead, Weinstein argues, two types of armed groups have to

be distinguished, which differ with regard to their resource endowment: only armed groups who lack access to external resources are dependent on local populations; groups which control, for example, easily exploitable natural resources and are endowed with other external supplies, can act independently of civilian support. Weinstein concedes that this difference does not predict success or failure of an armed group (Weinstein, 2007, 340), but he indicates that it has a systematic impact on their exercise of violence: groups that have to rely on the population for supplies exhibit a much more selective and limited use of violence than groups with independent economic resources (ibid., 12).

Kalyvas and Weinstein both argue in the framework of the positivist paradigm of Rational Choice. But the micropolitical turn just described is by no means limited to this school of thought. Other important contributions have been elaborated in the framework of interpretative sociology. Stephan Malthaner's comparative case study *Mobilizing the faithful*, for example, analyses the social dynamics between militant islamist groups and their support milieus in Lebanon (*Hizbullah*) and Egypt (*al-Jamaa al Islamyya* und *al-Jihad*) in the framework of Symbolic Interactionism (Malthaner, 2011). His relational analysis discloses the strong impact of (non-violent) support milieus on radicalisation or de-radicalisation processes in militant islamist groups. Other examples are Alex Veit's discussion of interventions as indirect rule in the framework of figuration sociology (Veit, 2010), Katrin Radtke's study on the diaspora financing of armed groups in terms of moral economy (Radtke, 2009) or the volume on the experience of war edited by Christine Sylvester (2011). Together these works show the fruitfulness of interpretative sociological approaches, especially when it comes to the study of the development of relations and interactions between armed groups and non-combatant parts of the population over time. Frequently, the social processes in question are better understood in terms of interdependencies and trajectories than in terms of *choice* (be it rational or not).

Notwithstanding these differences in approach, the micropolitical turn enhances the understanding of violent conflict in general as well as the understanding of particular cases by shedding light on social processes on the micro-level and linking them to meso- and macro-level dynamics. At least of equal importance, however, is the impact of the micropolitical research programme on debates among and within social science disciplines: studying the decisions and trajectories of "ordinary" people rather than focussing on official decision-makers stimulated interdisciplinary dialogue and transdisci-

plinary studies. Political scientists opened up to the insights produced and the methods employed by anthropologists or sociologists. At the same time, anthropologists came to be strongly engaged in conceptual and theoretical debates. A prominent example for this fruitful mutual exchange is the meanwhile popular concept of *markets of violence*, which has been initially proposed by the social anthropologist Georg Elwert (1997; 1999).[14] By re-adjusting the focus of empirical research, micropolitical approaches to violent conflict thus bridge the gap between different social sciences disciplines. They foster interdisciplinary awareness and mutual receptiveness with regard to methods and knowledge.

2.2 Social theory approaches to violent conflict

While the micropolitical approach attempts to conceive middle-range theories for particular aspects of the social reality of violent conflict, social theory approaches tackle the problem from a different angle. They start from the assumption that war or violent conflict is a social processes among other processes. Therefore, what happens in war has to be studied in the light of what happens in non-war periods. A major implication of this assumption is that understanding violent conflicts does not necessarily demand the elaboration of specialised theories of war. Instead, general theories of society are employed. The approach thus differs substantially from the micropolitical theories of violence presented in the preceding section. Despite their emphasis on ordinary people and microlevel research, the latter tend to discuss violent conflict in terms of the extraordinary, which has to be dealt with by specialised theories. In the following, the concept of social theory will be explained and it will be shown how it might contribute to the study of violent conflict.

In their extensive and seminal study on war in the history of social sciences, Hans Joas and Wolfgang Knöbl argue for a social theory approach to

14 The concept starts from the assumption that violence is one possible form of human action and asks for the interrelations between violence and other forms of action. In this logic, Elwert shows how interactions between violence and exchange can lead to the emergence of a particular type of social structure called *markets of violence* (Elwert, 1997; Elwert, 1999). His work inspired the formation of the so called *Berlin School* as a transdisciplinary approach to the study of violent conflict.

the study of violent conflict so as to facilitate the systematic integration of the subject into theorising of social processes at large. They introduce "social theory" as an umbrella term for conceptual contributions to the analysis of social action, social order and social change (Joas and Knöbl, 2008). Social theory is, hence, a post-disciplinary concept, which is distinct from disciplinary notions such as "sociology" or "social sciences". It designates contributions to the theoretical reconstruction of processes of social reproduction. Such contributions, the authors emphasise, are by no means limited to sociology or political sciences, but can be found in all social sciences disciplines as well as in the humanities, for example in philosophy and history (ibid., 16–7). Social theory approaches to the study of violent conflict, hence, use general concepts of social action, social order and/or social change from various disciplines in view of two objectives: first, to lend intelligibility to social processes observed in violent conflicts; and second, to establish how the latter are related to social processes in so-called times of peace.

In recent years, the fruitfulness of such an approach has been illustrated by a small number of studies. Already in 1996 Vivienne Jabri published *Discourses on violence. Conflict analysis reconsidered*, in which she uses Anthony Gidden's theory of structuration (Giddens, 1984) to explore the dynamics of violent conflict . The book starts with an extensive discussion of the methodological as well as epistemological problems of conflict studies so far. Based on this analysis, Jabri emphasises the need for social theory in this field of research, as opposed to psychologising or positivistic explanations (Jabri, 1996, 1–28). In the focus of her work are continuities in discourse and practice, which facilitate the recurrence of violent conflict. Rather than conceiving war in terms of an isolated event, it should be understood as a social continuity (ibid.). A certain weakness of this early work is that the potential of the theoretical discussion is not always exhausted, due to normative concerns. Especially arguments about the structurally productive nature of conflict remain ambiguous, as in some parts of the book conflict is rather discussed in terms of breakdown and abnormality (ibid., 7–8). Nonetheless Jabri's book opened up a path for a new kind of thinking about the production and transformation of order in and through violent conflict, using the structurationist approach.

Another example for the potential of a social theory approach to the study of violent conflict is Klaus Schlichte's *In the shadow of violence. The micropolitics of armed groups* (2009). This work analyses armed groups in the framework of Max Weber's sociology of domination and organisation (We-

ber, 1978) and conceptually reconstructs them as potential state-builders. Schlichte's argument revolves around the problem of legitimacy, without which, he insists, no armed group can persist. In this perspective, he re-conceptualises the problem of armed group violence. He shows that because of the need for internal as well as external legitimacy, armed groups cannot exercise violence wantonly: although violent action might in some instances enhance legitimacy, violence perceived as being inopportune, unjustified or derailed can as quickly erode it. Therefore, controlling violence within the group as well as towards outside targets is a principal organisational challenge. Yet, if an armed group, despite this "shadow of violence", succeeds to establish legitimacy and combine it with territorial control, they become state-builders. Employing a Weberian sociology of domination, Schlichte's analysis thus links armed groups' operations to processes of state (trans-) formation. Similar to Jabri's structurationist approach, the work contextualises contemporary armed conflicts in a mid- and long-term perspective. Rather than as emergencies, these conflicts are discussed as periods in which an established social order is challenged and transformed.

A completely different perspective on violent conflicts is developed by Dierk Spreen in *Krieg und Gesellschaft* (2008).[15] The book discusses the constitutive function of war in modern societies. But most originally, it approaches the subject not in terms of norms, rules or actions, but in terms of *experience*. Introducing Immanuel Kant's concept of sensory experience (Kant, 1975) into discourse sociology the work aims to capture the particular effect of systematic and enduring collective violence on processes of social structure production and transformation.

The three contributions discussed so far illustrate the potential of social theory approaches to the study of violent conflict. Notwithstanding their distinct theoretical perspectives, the works share a concern not only for the empirical questions raised by armed conflicts, but also a sensibility for the epistemological dimension of the analysis. Introducing elaborate sociological or philosophical concepts into the study of war and armed conflict they do not only shed a new light on the subject itself. As this kind of analysis necessarily links the phenomena in violent conflicts to social processes at large, they also contribute to a different understanding of society in general.

15 The original German book has not been translated. The full title translates into "War and society. The constitutive function of war in modern society".

For Joas and Knöbl, this latter implication is the major argument in favour of this new approach. So far, the authors argue, war is more or less absent from general theories of the social. Although it might be very much present as a constitutive background of experience, the study of war itself has been delegated to or "encapsulated" in particular sub-disciplines and "hyphenated sociologies" ("*Bindestrichsoziologien*") such as military or historical sociology (Joas and Knöbl, 2008, 22–3), or, one might add, peace an conflict studies. They conclude that this omission does not only limit the understanding of violent conflict. It, moreover, leads to contorted representations of society in supposedly *general* theories. Thus the intention associated to the social theory approach is not only to facilitate a systematic and integrated theoretical reflection on violent conflict, but in doing so to further develop the discipline. Accentuating an argument, which first gained prominence with Zygmunt Bauman's study on the Shoa (Bauman, 1993, especially vii-xiv)[16], Joas and Knöbl conceive violent conflict as a kind of litmus test for general theories of society. The reason is that, more than other subjects of research, the study of violent conflict raises existential normative questions. Therefore, research in this field is highly influenced by social sciences' implicit and unreflected normative foundations, especially by its liberalist and colonial-imperialist legacy. Yet, the latter concomitantly implies that, if undertaken conscious of this problem, studies on violent conflict are particularly apt to disclose these implicit foundations and thus to overcome them (Joas and Knöbl, 2008, 14; see also Spreen, 2008, 11–6). In the words of the authors, a social theory approach to violent conflict might provide "anchor points for the construction of an empirically sound sociological theory and theory of modernity" (Joas and Knöbl, 2008, 14, my translation).

2.3 Summary and implications for research

The preceding sub-sections presented two recent and distinct approaches to theorising contemporary violent conflict: first, the micropolitical approach, which aims to understand social processes in war based on micro-level analy-

16 Although the critique of sociology's conceptual neglect of violent conflict became prominent with Bauman's book on the Shoa, it already in appears in earlier works. See for example Mann, 1987, 54.

ses; and, second, the social theory approach, which employs general theories of the social to study the production and transformation of social order in and through violent conflict. It should be emphasised, however, that this distinction has not been introduced here to provide a system of classification in a history of science. Instead, it is meant to serve as an analytical tool, which helps to identify different challenges in this field of research. Implicit or explicit in each of the approaches is a particular critique of the study of violent conflict so far: the micropolitical theories expose the problem of analytical overaggregation, while the social theory approaches oppose the theoretical disconnect between the study of violent conflict on the one hand and the study of so-called societies "at peace" on the other. Yet, the two approaches are not exclusive but can be mutually enforcing. Kalyvas' micropolitical analyses, for example, are frequently framed by epistemological considerations which are characteristic for social theory approaches; conversely, Schlichte's analysis of armed groups in terms of domination theory argues from a micro-level perspective.

Yet, beside the distinct contributions discussed in the preceding sub-sections, the micropolitical and the social theory approach share three interrelated implications: *first*, they contribute to a multiplication of research perspectives in the study of violent conflict; they, thus, enhance, to use a German expression, the *Anschlussfähigkeit*, i.e. the connectivity, in this area of research, not only with regard to theory, but also with regard to methods and potential empirical subjects. This implication has already been discussed with regard to the micropolitical turn, in the framework of which political sciences questioning merges with anthropological methods and sociological concepts to produce new insights into the social dynamics of violent conflict. To the social theory approaches, however, connectivity is constitutive, as contributions of this type deliberately exploit general theories of the social for the study of violent conflict and its relation to social processes in non-war periods.

One consequence of this enhanced connectivity, and this is the *second* implication common to both approaches, is a tendency to integrate different levels of analysis. Deliberately transcending disciplinary boundaries, micropolitical as well as social theory approaches venture to combine reasoning about micro-, meso- and macro-level dynamics.

The third and again related implication is that both approaches bring about a conceptual normalisation of the study of violent conflict—although in various ways. Micropolitical theories, above all, contribute to the de-scan-

dalisation of the subject of research. The studies focussing on actions and trajectories of ordinary people in and outside of armed organisations reveal the complexity of choices women and men in war zones are facing and thus defy sweeping distinctions between victims and perpetrators. Correspondingly, social theory approaches contribute to a theoretical normalisation of the subject, by attempting to conceive violent conflict as a social process among other social processes and, hence, to systematically integrate the study of the latter into theories of society.

In how far now can these recent developments in the study of violent conflict contribute to a discussion of the question at hand in this book? In other words: how can they contribute to conceptualising the expansion of civil wars into the sphere of everyday life? In the introduction, it has been argued that this question involves two major challenges: first, theorising the everyday; and second, conceiving the process of war's expansion, i.e. the blurring of its boundaries. In view of this double challenge, three important insights can be drawn from the literature review presented in this chapter. *First*, pointing to the disconnect between theories of violent conflict and theories of society, the social theory approach contributes to a better understanding of the problem itself. This perspective discloses that the semantics of war as a state of emergency is intimately linked to the self-representation of modern society as being peaceful and free of violence. In this framework, violent conflict has to be separated from theories of society. Accordingly, war is conceptually "encapsulated" and presented as an event, which takes place in temporal and spatial enclaves, in which distinct and defined groups of agents do what is otherwise forbidden. This perspective also highlights, that the problems in conceiving war beyond notions of emergency on the hand, and the problems in conceiving the blurring of its boundaries on the other are in fact two faces of one and the same coin. The semantics of emergency can only be upheld based on the fiction of war being an event with clear boundaries in space, in time and with regard to the agents involved.

A *second* important insight can be drawn from the micropolitical theories. Attempting to reconstruct the complex interrelations between and within different groups of agents in a microlevel perspective, the latter, at least implicitly, refer to the sphere of the everyday. In fact, the specific question discussed in this book is inspired by the insights produced by micropolitical research. A major shortcoming, however, is that the notion of the everyday itself remains fuzzy. It is commonly treated as a level of analytical disaggregation, quasi-synonymous to the "local" or "community" level. Yet, as argued

in the introduction, theorising the expansion of civil wars into the sphere of everyday life demands a more differentiated understanding of the everyday. A second limitation of micropolitical research refers to its conceptualisation of agents. Although many micropolitical studies highlight the closeness as well as the interdependencies between different sets of agents, especially between combatants and non-combatants, they fail to theoretically capture the strange intimacy between them, which echoes, for example, in the account cited at the beginning of the introduction to this book. The latter is a product of civil war's expansion into the sphere of everyday life.

The social theory approach, and this is the *third* important insight drawn from this review, might contribute to theorise the structures, which according to microlevel analysis, seem to be typical for civil war situations, but cannot be captured within a merely micropolitical approach. The former proposes to employ existing theories of social action, social order and social change to analyse social processes in war situations. In view of the question at hand, this means to start the investigation with an inquiry into existing concepts of the everyday. In a second step, this review might be complemented by concepts fit to capture the processes of expansion, understood as the perforation of boundaries and distinctions. The following chapter three is dedicated to this theoretical inquiry.

3. Normalities at war: a theoretical perspective on everyday life in violent conflicts

Empirical accounts of contemporary conflicts suggest that the expansion of war into the sphere of everyday life is one of the most salient characteristics of violent conflict. Indicators cited for this expansion refer to the blurring boundaries between groups of agents, the disappearance of battlefields in a classical sense and the abeyant character of many violent conflict, which seem to be neither ongoing nor definitely ended. The aim of this chapter is to develop a theoretical framework suited to analyse such expansion of war into everyday life. Inspired by the social theory approach presented in the preceding chapter, the discussion revolves around four concepts borrowed from two schools of philosophical thought: phenomenology and pragmatism. Both philosophies were leading in the discovery of "ordinary" life and "ordinary" people as an object of social science research. And both developed similar methodological ideas about how to approach this issue. The most important proposition is to conceive the everyday not as a level of analytical disaggregation, but as related to a particular form of experience. Characteristic of the latter is their pre-reflective character, which makes them appear obvious, natural, or, to use a German expression, "*selbstverständlich*"; so obvious and natural that we usually do not think about them. Starting from this basic idea, the first section of the chapter at hand theoretically explores the particular structures of the everyday understood thusly, focussing on the concepts of life-world, habit/habitualisation, transitivity and normalisation. The second section then discusses, how the latter can be employed in an analysis of transformative social processes in civil war situations. In doing so, the theories of the everyday are complemented with a triangular theory of violence and a concept of armed groups as organisations.

Yet, as already pointed out in the introduction, this framework should not be mistaken as the "basis" of the empirical analysis presented in the second part of this book. Instead, the discussion presented in the following pages is the conceptual synthesis of the insights gained in a qualitative em-

pirical research process on the issue. Characteristic of such processes is that that they are reflexive, i. e. working on theories and concepts goes hand in hand with the empirical analysis. The conceptual framework serves to lend intelligibility to the empirical material; yet, at the same time, this empirical material is used to test the concepts developed (cf. Kalthoff, 2008; similar Mayring, 2000).

3.1 Subject and life-world: theorising "normal" experiences

In the history of social theory, the discovery of normal, everyday life as a subject of conceptual and empirical inquiry is still a rather recent development. It is closely linked to the double critique of idealistic/aprioristic and behaviouristic schools of social thought emerging by the end of the 19th century. According to this critique, both ways of thinking where flawed presupposing a dichotomy between cognition and action. At the heart of the alternative approaches was thus the attempt to re-conceptualise this relationship. It is in view of this question that theorists turn to the study of everyday processes. The emerging theories describe everyday life as a particular form of experience, one that is characterised by naturalness and obviousness, by an untroubled continuous flow of the consciousness. Based on the study of such ordinary experiences, the theories argue that cognition and action are closely interrelated; in this relationship, however, neither assumes a lead. No longer playing them off against each other, cognition and action are conceived as being mutually constitutive.

Since the late 19th century, the idea of such ordinary or normal experiences appears in various schools of social thought. Thus, the founding fathers of sociology, August Comte and Émile Durkheim, employed the concept of the "normal" to define the subject of the new discipline. The conceptually grounding work, however, was done in philosophy. Two schools of thought stand out in this regard: phenomenology on the one hand, and pragmatism on the other. Emerging in the late 19th century, both schools of thought contributed to the understanding of everyday experiences in different, yet complementary ways, as will be shown in the following sections. Despite the differences in epistemological stance, pragmatist and phenomenological conceptions converge in view of the structural characteristics of the everyday: in both schools of thought, normal or ordinary experiences are con-

ceived as being based on a particular relationship between man and the environment. This relationship is characterised by congruity or consonance between the two: in a 'normal' situation, the pragmatist John Dewey writes, the individual and his/her environment are "integrated" (Dewey, 1938, 26); the phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty speaks of the subject moving in "acquired worlds", indicating that the structures of the world have to some degree become part of the structures of the subject (Merleau-Ponty, 1976, 163). Most prominently, however, this consonant relationship between the individual and its environment in everyday experiences is captured in the concept of the life-world, introduced by the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl (1970).

Both schools of thought develop ideas about how this consonance is actually produced. In a synoptic reading of these approaches two concepts emerge as the most salient and at the same time complementary aspects of experiences in the everyday environment: transitivity on the one hand, and habitualisation on the other. The concept of transitivity refers to the stream-like quality, i. e. the continuous flow, of the consciousness in "ordinary experiences". In the words of the philosopher Thomas Rolf an experience is ordinary or normal "if its launching, maintaining, closing or interrupting does need no rational, no explanation for a deviation, no accompanying comment and no general justification" (Rolf, 1999, 44–45, my translation). Transitivity hence means that experience moves on silently and undisturbed. While the concept of transitivity refers to the structures of the consciousness in normal experiences, the complementary concept of habitualisation focuses on the characteristics of everyday practices. The latter are based on particular body structures, i.e. ritualised or habitualised actions, which function without the need to consider and reflect on every single step. By introducing the concept of habitualisation the bodily dimension of human existence moves into the theoretical range of vision, if not into the focus of attention. The body is conceived as the instrument or the intermediary by which man relates to the world (Dewey, 1938, 21; Merleau-Ponty, 1976, 182).

Neither pragmatism nor phenomenology is a unified doctrine; instead the notions stand for two bodies of theory which were formed around and shared essential (epistemological) concerns and convictions. As such they have been open to further developments and inspired schools of thought in other disciplines, especially in social sciences. Alfred Schütz, for example, developed social phenomenology in an explicit attempt to exploit the philosophical concepts of phenomenology for the purpose of sociology (Schütz,

1974). His writings became highly influential for today popular approaches such as neo-institutionalism or ethno-methodology.[17] Symbolic interactionism, in turn, is the most direct offspring of pragmatist thought in social sciences.[18] In recent sociological theories, emphasis on the study of everyday life appears in various guises. In particular it raises the interest of scholars who, rejecting methodological individualism as well as methodological holism, attempt to conceptually bridge the gap between the individual and society. The idea of a particular mode of experience, characterised by pre-reflective habitualised action and a transitive flow of the consciousness, echoes in the Bourdieu's theory of *habitus* and field (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992), in Foucault's discourse analysis (Foucault, 1972; Foucault, 1977), in Gidden's structuration theory (Giddens, 1984), as well as in Luhmann's theory of social systems (Luhmann, 1984; Luhmann, 1995). In one way or another, those works reflect (at least) one of the philosophical and theoretical traditions described above. They share the view that the formation of order in the everyday environment is based on processes, in which the individual is acting and acted upon in a non-conscious, pre-reflective manner. The patterns and devices (*dispositifs* in the language of Foucault) structuring everyday life (*habitus*, discourses, structures, or systems in the respective theoretical language) (re)produce routinised, habitualised and pre-reflective forms of behaviour. In a sociological perspective, the importance, yet at the same time the predicament of the latter stems from the fact that they are stabilising on the social as well as on the individual level. Thus, the effectiveness of an order is directly correlated to the degrees of habitualisation and transitivity.

Despite this resonance of pragmatist and phenomenological concepts in sociological theory, this section goes back to the initial philosophical con-

17 The initial puzzle stimulating research in this tradition is the apparent order prevailing in the everyday in the apparent absence of a spanning creative power. The basic idea put forward as an explanation is that the life-world is permeated by rules; they structure the everyday and thus represent its order. Rules guide perception, they orientate action and interaction, and they channel meaning-formation (see for example Kasper and Streit, 1998, ch. 5).

18 Symbolic interactionism goes back to the works of the American philosopher and social scientist George Herbert Mead and has been founded as a school of thought by Herbert Blumer, one of his disciples (Mead, 1992; Blumer, 1977; Baugh, 1990). Its major contribution to the reconstruction of normality is that it points to the importance of interaction in the creation of normal realities in everyday life. As social phenomenology, symbolic interactionism considers a set of individually incorporated shared norms or rules, which result in shared expectations, is a necessary condition for social life and explore how the latter unfold within the interactions of everyday life (e.g. Goffman, 1986).

cepts to develop distinctive characteristics of the everyday. In doing so, the analysis revolves around the four concepts: the life-world, which relates the everyday to a particular form of experience; habitualisation, which refers to incorporated knowledge and pre-reflective routinised forms of behaviour; transitivity, which describes the continuous flow of the consciousness in everyday experiences; and, finally, normalisation which considers the production of the everyday as a social process. In view of the overall objective of the book, these concepts are introduced as analytical tools, i.e. as pieces of theory lending intelligibility to particular aspects of everyday life. Although each of them has been elaborated in one school of thought in particular, we are going to see that the ideas conveyed also play a role in the others. Therefore, the reconstruction does not follow a history of ideas-approach, but aims instead to develop a conceptual toolbox for the analysis of everyday processes in civil wars.

The life-world: pre-reflective conduct in the everyday environment

Today the "life-world" is a common notion in various social science disciplines. Initially, however, the concept has been elaborated by one of the founding fathers of phenomenology, the German philosopher Edmund Husserl. Yet, although the latter eventually became known for this concept in particular, the "life-world" only appears in Husserl's late *oeuvre* (Husserl, 1970). Having elaborated phenomenology as a method to overcome aprioristic thinking by theorising based on a distanced and disinterested study of *phenomena*, the introduction of the "life-world" corresponds to Husserl's growing awareness for the need to "earth" the theoretical project thus conceived (Sloterdijk, 2010, 46). This way Husserl became a pioneer of the study of ordinary everyday processes—in other words: of normality.

The groundbreaking importance of the concept of the life-world lies in no less than the "discovery" of a pre-reflective everyday environment as the basis for all reflecting and acting. The notion refers to the world as we move and act in it prior to theorising about it. It suggests that the acknowledgement of this world is the unquestioned "ground" of any experience, including philosophical reasoning (Husserl, 1970, 104–5). Thus Husserl writes: "It belongs to what is taken for granted, prior to all scientific thought and all philosophical questioning that the world is—always is in advance […]" (ibid., 110).

It is the inescapable "horizon" (ibid.) of all human activity. The concept of the life-world can, hence, be understood as a token for the "boundless abundance of reality" (Sloterdijk, 2010, 46, my translation).

Crucial in Husserl's concept is the *pre-reflective* character of life-worldly structures. The notion thus implies a particular relation between the subject and her/his environment. The particularities of this relation can be best understood in view of Husserl's radical re-conceptualisation of the "subject": in a phenomenological perspective, "subjects" and "objects" are no longer two spheres apart, but essentially interrelated. The reason is that the consciousness itself is intentional, i.e. it is oriented towards the physical presence of objects; the imaginary, i.e. the narrated, the remembered or invented are but derivative functions (cf. Rolf, 1999, 96). The life-world, however, lies at the back of this intentional subjectivity; suitably, Husserl speaks of the "anonymity" of the life-world (Husserl, 1970, 111–4). Thus, moving in the life-world the intentionality of the consciousness is suspended because experiences in this environment are based on pre-reflective action, on routinised and habitualised activities.

Theoretically, the consonant interdependency between the subject and his/her environment, which is typical for ordinary experiences, has been further refined by the French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty. The latter conceives such pre-reflective immersion into the everyday as the fundamental human condition. According to Merleau-Ponty, ordinary everyday experiences occur as we move in "acquired worlds" (Merleau-Ponty, 1976, 163). Yet, as Husserl's life-world, these worlds should not be mistaken for something objectively given. Instead the expression refers to sedimentations of prior experiences which do not need continuous reflection but present themselves as given, it means to carry around oneself a system of significations which does not need to be spelled out for being used (ibid., 162–3). Borrowing from another phenomenologist, Martin Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty coins the term "being-*to*-the-world" to describe this particular condition. Yet, while in Heidegger's own expression, "being-*in*-the-world", the "world" is taken for granted, Merleau-Ponty's concept is designed to emphasise that this world is not objectively given, but the product of a continuous interaction between the subject and her/his environment.

A major implication of the phenomenological reconstruction of the man-world-relation is the recognition of the bodily aspects of human experience. Eventually, the study of these aspects led to the formation of a particular branch of this school of thought: the phenomenology of the body, which

conceives the latter as our general instrument to relate to the world (ibid., 172, 182). In the writings of Merleau-Ponty, Husserl's idea of the intentionality of the consciousness is re-interpreted in view of the body, and motor action is conceptualised as "original intentionality". "Originally", writes the French philosopher, "the consciousness is not an 'I think that', but an 'I can'.", understood in a motor-bodily sense (ibid., 170, my translation).

In phenomenological thinking, the pre-reflective character of everyday processes captured in the notion of the life-world is, hence, in the focus of all considerations. The interdependencies between the subject and his/her environment in the everyday milieu are conceived in terms of openness and immersion. Pragmatist thinking takes a different approach to the issue. Based on a functionalist epistemology, the relation between the subject and the environment is conceived in terms of balancing. This perspective is most pronounced in John Dewey's seminal work *Logic*, which set out to conceive cognition as a function of the organic and social processes of human life (Dewey, 1938). In this work, living is understood as a process of balancing the organism and the environment. Similar to the phenomenologist, Dewey emphasises man's openness to and dependency on this environment; thus he insists that "[a]n organism does not live *in* an environment; it lives *by means of* an environment" (ibid., 25, my emphasis). Against this background, ordinary experiences are characterised by integration, understood as a dynamic balance between the two (ibid., 26).

As phenomenology, pragmatist thinking is aware of the importance of the body in the processes just described—although the latter is not theorised in great detail. Thus, Dewey highlights that any process of knowledge acquisition is "naturalistic" in so far as it involves the body and the senses (ibid., 23); accordingly he conceives processes of habit formation and learning as changes in the "organic structure" which condition future behaviour (ibid., 31).

Despite the difference in approach, phenomenological and pragmatist reconstructions of the relation between the subject and her/his environment in ordinary experiences converge in one point: both schools of thought emphasise the seriated quality of life activities. Countering behaviouralist conceptions of human conduct based on stimulus-response analogies, pragmatists and phenomenologist alike elaborate that life processes cannot be understood by studying isolated events. Instead, events and experiences built upon each other. This is important as it induces processes of knowledge formation. The constant interaction, the continuous balancing between the

subject and her/his environment creates particular sedimented forms of knowledge which are open to pre-reflective use and thus of particular relevance to the study of the everyday (see for example ibid., 26–32; Merleau-Ponty, 1976, 163, 175).

From this brief review of phenomenologist and pragmatist reconstructions of the everyday, three elements should be retained: *first*, the particularities of the everyday are best understood if the latter is conceived as a particular form of experience, which is characterised by ordinariness and naturalness, by the matters of course, by the things that go without saying; this understanding is distinctly different from many casual use of the notion in social science writings, where the everyday appears as a particular level of analytical disaggregation of society. *Second*, and most important from a social science perspective, the ordinary experiences thus conceived form the necessary ground and the inescapable horizon of all human activities. In other words, they are the underlying condition of the multitude of social processes studied by social scientists—including violent conflicts. *Third*, ordinary or normal experiences are linked to a particular relation between the subject and her/his environment, a relation which results from a process of continuous interaction between the two, from the seriated quality of everyday life.

In the following, the functional characteristics of ordinary experiences will be theoretically further refined exploring the complementary concepts of habitualisation and transitivity.

Habit/habitualisation: corporal knowledge in the everyday

One of the major implications of Husserl's theorisation of the everyday was to draw attention to the bodiliness of human existence, long neglected in philosophy and social thought. His description of the life-world as being governed by routinised and habitual activities, combined with the acknowledgement of the seriated quality of life itself suggests a new conceptual importance of the body as the versatile instrument of these activities. In Husserl's own work, however, the issue was merely touched upon. It was the French branch of the emerging school of phenomenology that ventured to spell out how everyday experiences relate to the bodily aspects of human existence. The major contribution of this school of thought is to have pointed out that the corporality of man is neither an antagonist nor a complement to the processes of the consciousness, but instead an integral part of them.

Pioneering in this regard is the work of Merleau-Ponty who set out to conceive a theory of perception in which latter is not understood as a faculty of a disembodied consciousness, but embedded instead in the corporality of human life (Merleau-Ponty 1976). It is in the context of this work that he considers the formation of habits.

Habits are conceived as a form of pre-reflective, routinised action. Therefore, they are crucial in facilitating an undisturbed flow of everyday life. Yet, in sharp contrast to behaviouralist thinking, in which such pre-reflective action is understood in terms of a reflex, i.e. as a particular response to a particular stimulus, Merleau-Ponty points out that especially action in everyday life follows more comprehensive patterns. Subjects do not produce specialised responses to each and every situational stimulus, but instead tend to respond with a certain *type* of action to a certain *type* of situation. These situations, the author insists, can differ significantly in their outward characteristics. The similarity is to be found not in their elements, but in their sense, as perceived by the subject. Habits are, hence, a particular form of knowledge, a knowledge that is pre-reflective an incorporated. The formation of habits, i.e. the process of habitualisation, as well as the reproduction of the latter are based on a consonance between the subject and his or her environment, which has been described in the preceding subsection. Accordingly, awareness for a habit usually only occurs if its performance is somehow disturbed (ibid., 177–81).

The importance of the concept of habits in Merleau-Ponty's work stems from the fact that his reconceptualisation of perception revolves around this notion. On the one hand, Merleau-Ponty emphasises that perception itself is not an abstract, but a bodily motor process, which is based on the motor habit of perceiving. On the other hand, it is based on perceptual habits, i.e. on implicit pre-reflective patterns which orient perception itself. In Merleau-Ponty's thinking perception is, hence, facilitated by a motor skill and oriented by perceptual habits. "It is […] true", he writes, "that the world is what we see and that, nonetheless, we must learn to see it […]" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, 4). Just as motor habits orient our movements in the everyday environment, perceptual habits orient our perception of the world. They are, thus, a form of acquiring a world.

Recently, the concept of habits and especially of habitualisation has been further developed by the German philosopher and physician Thomas Fuchs (2008). Drawing on Merleau-Ponty and the earlier French phenomenologist Henri Bergson (1903), Fuchs linked this form of incorporated knowledge to

the concept of memory and in doing so accentuated the importance of this particular body structure in facilitating experiences of continuity. In Fuchs' work, habits and habitualisation are discussed in terms of implicit memory.[19] At the core of the concept is the importance of repetition in everyday life processes. Fuchs elaborates that repetition introduces the habitualisation or physiognomisation of behaviour, which in turn facilitates automatised action. Implicit memory therefore plays a central role in everyday life, as it permits to shift attention from the coordination of the body movements necessitated by an action to the objectives of the latter. In a broader sense, implicit memory mediates the experience of continuity as the same sequence of actions is automatically performed in changing situations. Implicit memory, hence, liberates the individual from the necessity of continuous re-orientation, it embodies a past and thus opens up the possibility to turn towards a future (ibid.,38–42).

In phenomenology, the concepts of habit and habitualisation are crucial in reconceptualising the relationship between the body and the consciousness. The latter are conceived as being mutually constitutive; this means neither does the body predetermine thinking (as in behaviouralism) nor does thinking rule over the body (as in idealism). Instead the consciousness and the body are interdependent, mutually informing each other. This mutual constitutiveness of the body and the consciousness is particularly pronounced in the production and reproduction of automatised or routinised behaviour. Yet, phenomenologists also show that such habitualised behaviour has an impact on the relationship between the subject and his or her environment. Habitualisation can be understood as a form of acquiring or appropriating the world. This latter aspect can also be found in pragmatist thought.

Pragmatists acknowledge the importance of the body as the basis for habit formation, but the latter is not in the focus of analysis. Instead, the concept of habits appears in the Dewey's reconceptualisation of the relationship between the subject and her or his environment: as pointed out in the preceding section, the idea of a necessary balance between the two is central

19 The distinction between implicit and explicit memory introduced by Fuchs goes back to Henri Bergson's seminal work *Matière et mémoire*, in which the philosopher proposed to differentiate between the *imaginative* and the *repetitive* memory (Bergson 1903). The concept of imaginative memory refers to imaginal representations of past events; it is, hence, similar to the understanding of the notion dominant in Western thinking. Repetitive memory, however, refers to memory that is *embodied*, meaning that it has come to be inscribed into the habitual structures of the body, shaping pre-reflective patterns of perception, cognition and action (ibid., 75–81).

in Dewey's thinking. Yet, he insists that this balance is not static, but dynamic. Accordingly, life can be understood as a continuous process of balancing or equilibration. Dewey emphasises that the equilibrations are not isolated events. Instead, they build upon one another and thus produce, what he calls a seriated quality of life (Dewey, 1938, 26–7). In Dewey's thinking, the formation of habits can only be understood in view of this temporality of human existence. Accordingly, habits are defined as changes in the organic structure, i.e. the body in phenomenological language, which condition future behaviour. Thus, habits become the basis of learning (ibid., 31). Habits and learning, however, should not be confounded with simple repetition. Instead, both notions refer comprehensive patters of behaviour, or to the institution of an integrated interaction between the organism and her or his environment (ibid., 32).

Although phenomenologists and pragmatists consider the problem of habitualisation in view of the individual subject, the social dimension of these processes is not completely absent from their thinking. Thus, in an earlier work, Merleau-Ponty emphasises the intimate link between habits and the formation of social order. He argues that order is produced by so-called privileged forms of conduct ("*comportements privilégiés*"). The latter are understood as comprehensive patterns of behaviour enacted in response to a certain type of situation. Habits can be understood as a particular type of the latter, distinct by their pre-reflective and incorporated character. Merleau-Ponty argues that a basic form of social order is established simply through the repetition of such privileged forms of conduct (Merleau-Ponty, 2009, 53). As people interact and mutually observe each other, privileged forms of conduct gain trans-individual relevance by creating intersubjective structures of expectation.

Having explored habitualisation, the following sub-section will discuss the concept of transitivity. The latter accentuates the problem of temporality and continuity in everyday experiences, which has already been raised in this sub-section.

Transitivity: the consciousness in ordinary experiences

While the concept of habitualisation underscores the importance of incorporated knowledge and routinised action, the concept of transitivity captures the flow-like quality of the consciousness as a typical feature of normal expe-

riences in the everyday environment. The latter has been elaborated in particular in pragmatist thinking, especially in the works of the American philosopher William James. It is related to pragmatist conceptions of knowledge formation and change. As shown in the preceding sub-section, pragmatism shares with phenomenology an interest in the pre-reflective aspects of cognition and action. Yet, while in phenomenological concepts the relation between outer and inner worlds, i.e. between action and cognition, the body and the consciousness, plays a crucial role, pragmatism focusses on acting. The latter is understood as the basic form of man relating to the world, as the function facilitating the continuation of life itself; the formation of knowledge, the attribution of meaning as well as judgements and claims of validity are conceptualised relating to practical categories.

The concept of transitivity responds to a particular analytical question: how does the subject deal with the new? Starting from the observation that revolutionary changes in perception, cognition and action are rather rare, pragmatists set out to understand how new information revealed in the interaction between the subject and his or her environment is captured and ingested without each time inducing radical change. The concept thus refers to the problem of the acquisition of new knowledge and its incorporation into existing structures of perception, cognition and action. In a broader sense it is related to the problem of adaptation to changes in the environment. In pragmatism, this process is conceived as being part of the balancing dynamics described above, in which the subject seeks integration with her or his environment. The driving force and at the same time the guiding star of this searching process is experience (James, 1975, 81–94; Dewey, 1938, 25–32).

Introducing the notion of *common sense*, these ideas were first elaborated by James, whose collection of lectures entitled *Pragmatism* became eponymous for the emerging school of thought (1975). As Husserl the life-world, James proposes the common sense as a theoretical concept designed to capture the characteristics of normal or ordinary experiences in the everyday environment. James points out that in the latter the acquisition and incorporation of new knowledge does not take place at random path. Instead these processes are organised around an indispensable principle: the preservation of a continuous transitivity of the individual flow of consciousness; this "flux", to take up James own expression, has to be preserved in the face of an ever-changing environment (ibid., 92).

James, who as Merleau-Ponty was also a trained and active psychologist, emphasises that such an unbroken flow of experience is vital, because without it the formation of personal identity would be impossible. The latter is defined as the perceived continuity of the self, who necessitates an experience of continuity in relation to the world (James, 1957, 232–8). James' works thus emphasise that the consciousness is not fragmented but continuously coupled, forming a subjective continuum (ibid., 237). Taking up this idea, recent theories of the consciousness speak of its "field quality" (cf. Rolf, 1999, 79).

Yet, how can this transitive flow of the consciousness be produced, given the ever-changing character of man's environment? In view of this question, James points out that incorporation of new information and knowledge does not take place in leaps or sudden turnarounds. Instead, characteristic for the formation and transformation of knowledge in the everyday environment are techniques designed to buffer the prevailing "normality" against changes in the environment so as to permit a smooth and noiseless adaptation to new realities. Therefore, crisis or drama are but rare and exceptional forms of experience: to ongoing changes in the environment the common sense in the first place responds by supplementing and "conservatively" transforming the current stock of knowledge. This means that new situations or new information are not really incorporated as "new", but by systematically linking them back to already existing knowledge, by re-interpreting them in view of what is already familiar. As James illustratively explains: " Our minds thus grow in spots; and like grease-spots, the spots spread. But we let them spread as little as possible: we keep unaltered as much of our old knowledge, as many of our old prejudices and beliefs, as we can. We patch and tinker more than we renew. The novelty soaks in; it stains the ancient mass; but it is also tinged by what absorbs it. Our past apperceives and co-operates; and in the new equilibrium in which each step forward in the process of learning terminates, it happens relatively seldom that the new fact is added *raw*. More usually it is embedded cooked, as one might say, or stewed down in the sauce of the old." (James, 1975, 83)

According to James, this transitivity can be upheld even in genuinely anomalous situations. This means in circumstances that are not only alien to the existing schemes of the common sense, but explicitly contradict them. Under these conditions, adaptation takes place in a process of creative reorganisation, so as to normalise the anomalous event. Different from the continuous expansion of knowledge described before, the integration of "anom-

alies" necessitates the temporal switch to the conscious level: the existing stock of experiences and knowledge is revised so as to facilitate the reorientation of perception. This process briefly breaks the uniform flow of continuous knowledge expansion and results in saltatory advances (ibid., 82–3). Put differently, substantial instantaneous change in the structures of everyday perception, cognition and action takes place only in those situations where the implicitly held expectations undeniably happen to be disappointed. This disappointment of expectations leads to an interruption of the transitive flow of the everyday consciousness and necessarily introduces reorientation. On the level of social practices, gradual normalisation appears thus as a standard response to changes in the environment. More or less unconscious, it is an ongoing effort to bring perceptual schemes and reality into some coherence.

While in James analysis of environment adaptation, internal processes related to the structures of the consciousness are in the focus of interest, Dewey investigates the problem from the outside. Studying responses of the subject to changes in the environment, he distinguishes between three forms of adaptive behaviour, which differ with regard to the impact on existing structures of cognition and action (Dewey, 1986, 12–3). The first is *accommodation*, which refers to a passive resignation to the conditions of environment. In this case, these conditions are considered as unchangeable givens, therefore action is modified to match them. The counterpart to this kind of passive acquiescence is *adaptation*. Here, the features of the environment are modified in a way so as to make them match the existing patterns of cognition and action. In contrast to accommodation, adaptation is linked to conscious acting and intentional behaviour. The third mode is called *adjustment*. Contrary to passive resignation to the world as it is (accommodation) or the active modification of the latter (adaptation), adjustment is a radical process, which affects not only action as such but also the perceptual and cognitive patterns it is based on. Parallel to James' saltatory advances in knowledge formation, it thus relates to processes of fundamental re-orientation that change how the world is perceived, valued and acted within. Yet, as in James' work, such instances are conceived to be but rare events.[20]

An important contribution of Dewey's threefold distinction is to show that reactions to changing conditions in the environment can involve differ-

20 Dewey develops this distinction between accommodation, adaptation and adjustment in the framework of his theory of faith. In this context, the relevance of this concepts stems from the fact that religions typically pretend to introduce in individuals the adjustment-type of change.

ent degrees of activeness or passiveness, or—to shift to a more sociological language—different degrees of agency. Confronted with a change, passive acquiescence is but one possible way to reestablish the balance between the cognitive and behavioural structures of the individual and his or her environment. Another way is to become actively engaged with the environment, trying to modify the latter so as to make them fit one's own needs. The choice depends not so much on the environment conditions themselves, but on the way they are perceived by the subject.

Normality/normalisation: the social production of "normal" realities

As elaborated in the preceding section, pragmatist and phenomenological concepts define the life-world or the everyday as the range of experiences considered to be obvious, natural—or normal. Saying this, however, implies that the naturalness of the everyday environment is not determined by particular properties of objects. Instead, it goes back to a particular mode of experiencing them. As such, the life-world is not unequivocally defined, but the product of social processes, and, hence, subject to change. Ordinary experiences take place in a social environment. Therefore, the patterns of perception, cognition and action, on which they are based, must be—at least to some degree—inter-subjectively shared. This implies that, although in an individual perspective the structures of the life-world appear as natural, unquestioned and unquestionable, the latter are in fact the result of a historical evolutionary process, in which this reality prevailed among possible others. To conceive this particular aspect of the everyday, the notion of the "normal" seems to provide a useful concept. As already pointed out in the introduction, the latter etymologically relates back to the Latin *norma*, which denotes a carpenter's square. Accordingly, the meaning of the notion is inescapably ambiguous, characterised by an indecision between describing what empirically *is*, and demanding what normatively *ought* to be (Canguilhem, 1974, 81, 86–81, 87). In a sociological perspective, the concept of the normal, hence, relates to the social processes, in which the structures of the everyday environment are established, reproduced and negotiated.

The idea of this mutability of the life-world can already be found in Husserl's initial conception. There, the life-world appears not as a hermetically closed environment, but as a dynamic order, which in its very set-up entails the potential for its transformation. This is, for example, implicit in the met-

aphor of the life-world as the "horizon" of experience (Husserl, 1970, 110). An horizon changes as we move position; and it implies that beyond the boundary defining the range of the obvious and familiar, there are other worlds to discover (see also Husserl, 1973, 213–4). The normality of the life-world is, hence, contingent; it is a social artefact, specific in time and place. What is considered to be normal changes with the evolution of man and society, in processes involving interest, power and politics. The aim of this section is to explore the dynamics of normalisation, i.e. the emergence, stabilisation and change of normal realities.

The sociologist Jürgen Link conceives transformations in the structures of the normal in an evolutionary perspective. According to him, the general mechanism at work is the reinforcement of a deviation (*Abweichungsverstärkung*), or in other words the stabilisation and re-interpretation of a variation, which before has been considered an anomaly (Link, 1997, 77; see also Luhmann, 1998, 474–5; Bohn, 2003, 45). This approach emphasises the interrelatedness between empirical and normative dynamics: to introduce a change in normality, it is not enough that a deviant variation is repeated again and again. Concomitantly, a process of re-interpretation or reframing has to take place, i. e. that is patterns of perception and cognition have to be modified. What before had been considered to be outside of the boundaries of the normal, comes to be judged to belong to the inside. Most importantly, however, there is no direct correlation between the statistical frequency of an anomalous variation on the one hand, and the probability of a re-framing process on the other. As already pointed out by Durkheim with regard to criminal behaviour, not everything that is recurrent and widespread is considered to be normal. Conversely, at times a single unexpected or anomalous event can introduce a radical change in patterns of perception and cognition.[21]

As in any evolutionary process, it is impossible to theoretically predetermine the factors launching a process of change (cf. Luhmann, 1998, 48–50). It is, however, possible consider the conditions facilitating it. In view of the latter, two types have to be distinguished: first, situational conditions, which can be understood as opportunity structures specific to a particular time and place; and second, structural conditions, which relate to the structural characteristics to the everyday itself.

21 An example for this latter dynamics is the radical turn in German energy policy in the wake of the Fukushima disaster.

Regarding situational conditions, the most important factor are changes in the environment. Experiencing normality implies, as emphasised especially by pragmatist scholars, a balance between the subject and his or her social and non-social environment. Yet, when the outside environment changes this balance is disturbed. Processes of adaptation will set in responding to this change; in the language of evolutionary theory, behavioural variations are tested. As described in the preceding sub-section, this adaptation might take place in a silent process of reorientation, which is led by modifications in the patterns of action, or, although much more infrequently, as a radical change.

Analysing the structural conditions facilitating changes in normality, two factors can be distinguished: the first is the necessary incompleteness of the perceptual, cognitive and behavioural patterns facilitating normal experiences; and the second is the simultaneous existence of and competition between different sets of patterns prevailing in different spheres of the social. To consider these two aspects, let us go back to the phenomenological conceptions of the life-world: scholars in this tradition frequently evoke the metaphor of the net referring to the intersubjectively shared schemes governing normality (see for example Waldenfels, 1985). This metaphor, on one hand, evokes the image of a clearly organised structure; yet on the other hand, it also implies the presence of holes in the fabric: acting in everyday life is never fully determined by the patterns in place. Patterns of perception, cognition and action never structure the life-world in its entirety; if they would, the social space would be overdetermined and acting become impossible. Moreover, as emphasised in theories of difference, order can only be formed against the background of an un-ordered environment (see for example Luhmann, 1995, 83). Hence, even the most tightly woven net of intersubjectively shared perceptual and behavioral patterns still leaves an infinite number of things untouched. The indeterminatedness systematically produced this way might lead to variations, which in turn might introduced changes in normality.

The second structural condition facilitating changes in the normal is the simultaneous existence of and potential competition between different sets of perceptual, cognitive and behavioural schemes (cf. Waldenfels, 1985, 86–90). As already pointed out in Husserl's seminal work, the intersubjectively shared patterns governing everyday processes are not universal to society as such; instead they are specific to particular communities, sub-systems or even cultures (Husserl, 1970, 51). This leads to the simultaneousness of com-

peting forms of existence within the life-world. Different social spaces are governed by different sets of perceptual, cognitive and behavioural schemes, which might overlap, but also contradict each other. It is one of the most salient characteristics of everyday life that this competition does not enter the consciousness. Going back to the concept of transitivity introduced above, this blindness of the everyday consciousness for competing patterns of perception, cognition and action can be considered as a method to uphold the continuous and unbroken stream of the latter, which is characteristic of everyday experiences. In view of these dynamics, Max Weber speaks of the "trivialising tendency of everyday life" ("*das Verflachende des Alltags*") (Weber, 1968, 507, my translation). Most important for the question at hand, the simultaneous existence of competing patterns of perception, cognition and action, as well as the factual oscillation of individuals between them might introduce variations and, consequently, change, as experiences from within one system come to affect perception, cognition and action in another.

The objective of this section was to respond to the conceptual challenges confronting the study of contemporary violent conflict, as they have been laid out in the introduction. The discussion revolved around four concepts: First, the concept of the life-world served to define the everyday not as a particular level of analytical disaggregation, but instead as a distinctive form of experience which is characterised by pre-reflective processes. Second, the concept of habits/habitualisation emphasised the importance of automatised forms of behaviour and particular body structures in everyday processes. Third, the concept of transitivity described the continuous and unbroken flow of the individual consciousness, which is characteristic for ordinary experiences. And fourth, the concept of normality/normalisation was introduced to conceive the social and contingent character of the structures governing the everyday. As pointed out in the beginning, the objective of this discussion was to develop a conceptual toolbox for the analysis of the transformation of society in civil war situations. The following section will show in more detail how these concepts can reorient research on violent conflicts. We are going to see that the concepts introduced so far permit to accentuate the research question. However, in order to fully exploit its potentiallly fruitful merits to an empirical analysis, the concepts of violence and armed groups have to be defined to begin with.

3.2 "Terror as usual"[22]: the transformation of normality in violent conflict

Violent conflict can be understood as the antagonistic opposition, that unfolds between at least two armed groups and systematically involves the exercise of violent action. It is, thus, a consumptive process, destruction being one of its most salient features: destruction of material goods, of human bodies, of social structures. Often ignored, however, is that these destructive dynamics are but one side of the coin. Looking beyond destruction, war also appears as a productive process, not only as consumptive, but also as creative. Rather than simply destroying the structures in place, war modifies them, transforms them in an often stealthy process. Moreover, new structures emerge from the agents' efforts to respond to the challenges created by the war situation.

The acknowledgement of the social productiveness of conflicts once founded the basis of conflict sociology[23]; and the idea as such is not completely alien to the study of violent conflict. Most prominently, for example, it echoes in expressions such as "culture of violence" (see for example Nordstrom, 1998; Waldmann, 2007). The term "culture" refers to structures, which are the product of the very war situation. Yet, the expression has a strong negative connotation, and the implicit value judgement tends to obstruct the analytic view. Moreover, the concept of culture is, at least in its most common use, a static one. It, hence, primarily directs attention to the structures in place, not to the dynamic processes of the emergence and transformation of the latter. In the following it will be explored how the theoretical concepts introduced in the preceding section might further the understanding of social transformations in and through violent conflict.

The theoretical discussion presented in the preceding section took place against the background of the conceptual challenges involved in theorising civil wars as identified in the introduction. There, it has been argued that, according to the empirical literature, the most salient feature of civil wars is their systematic expansion into the sphere of everyday life. Taking this into account, any attempt to theorise the social processes evolving in violent in-

22 Quote from Taussig, 1989.

23 Seminal in this regard was Georg Simmel's sociology of conflict, developed in his work *Soziologie* (1992, 284–382), published in English as Simmel, 1904a; Simmel, 1904b; Simmel, 1904c. Simmel's ideas became popular in particular after having been taken up by Lewis Coser (1956).

tra-state conflict faces two major challenges: first, to conceptualise the everyday; and subsequently, to conceptualise processes of expansion of violent conflict. The theoretical discussion presented in the preceding section took place in view of these challenges. Yet, as mentioned before, the objective was not simply to provide a history of ideas of the everyday. Instead, the intention was to develop concepts, which might serve as analytical tools for the task at hand; in other words, the aim of the theoretical discussion was to develop a methodological framework for the analysis of social processes in violent conflict. In this spirit, the preceding section introduced four concepts: the life-world, habit/habitualisation, transitivity and normality/normalisation. In the following, it will be discussed, how these concepts might (re-)orient the study of contemporary violent conflict and further the understanding of the expansion of civil war into the sphere of the everyday.

Starting with the *life-world*, the most important contribution of this concept in view of the question at hand is a (re-)conceptualisation of the everyday. Husserl's initial conception elaborates that when we speak of something as being as "ordinary", "natural" or "*selbstverständlich*", to use the German expression, we in fact do not refer to particular properties of the objects or processes in question, but to a distinct mode of experience. For the analysis of transformative processes in civil war societies, this has two major implications: first, to study the expansion of civil war into the sphere of everyday life, it is not enough to focus on micro-level dynamics. Instead, the analysis has to turn towards individual and collective experiences.[24] The concept of the life-world thus provides an answer to the first conceptual challenge described above, the conceptualisation of the everyday. Most importantly, however, and this is its second major implication, the life-world-approach also facilitates to conceive an answer to the second conceptual challenge, the conceptualisation of processes of expansion: if the everyday is defined as relating to ordinary or "normal" experiences, studying the expansion of violent conflict into the sphere of everyday life means to analyse *how violent conflict turns into such an ordinary or normal experience*. The latter formulation provides an operationalisation of the research question stated in the introduc-

24 Recently, some works have advanced the same idea. Christine Sylvester, for example, emphasises the importance of this perspective, yet, she does not provide a conceptual approach which might guide empirical research (Sylvester, 2011). As mentioned in 2.2, one such conceptual approach has been developed by Dierk Spreen, drawing on Kant's concept of sensory experience (Spreen, 2008). A weakness of the Kantian approach, however, is that it fails to capture the bodily dimension of sensibility.

tion. Defining the everyday in relation to ordinary experiences, the concept of the life-world, thus, provides a general framework for the analysis of the question at hand. As we are going to see in the following, the three concepts introduced subsequently serve to conceptualise the concrete empirical processes at work in the (re-)production of ordinary experiences.

The concept of *habit/habitualisation* emphasises that the pre-reflective forms of conduct, characteristic for everyday experiences, are based on routinised action and incorporated knowledge. It, thus, orients analysis towards the study of the (re-)production of body structures and patterns of habitualised behaviour in violent conflicts, as well as towards the transformation of the latter in response to the war situation. Moreover, bringing in the body as an object of analysis, the concept facilitates the study of violence, which is constitutive for violent conflict, but as a bodily phenomenon poses particular conceptual challenges (see for example Spreen, 2008, 54–61).

The related concept of *transitivity* describes the unbroken flow of the consciousness as a condition for ordinary experience. It highlights the inert character of the cognitive and behavioural patterns conditioning everyday experience. It points out that transformation of the latter usually takes place in slow and conservative processes, in which preserving structures already in place is the guiding principle. For the study of the question at hand this implies to direct analytical attention towards continuities and adaptive processes, which facilitate the continuation of the flow of the consciousness and a gentle reorganisation of existing structures of perception, cognition and action.

The concept of *normality/normalisation*, finally, captures the social processes at work in the (re-)production of ordinary experiences. The evolutionary approach points out that transformations in the structures of the normal are based in variations considered to be anomalous. Yet, it also emphasises that those variations have not only to be stabilised, but also to be re-framed so as to integrate them into the structures of normality. In view of the question at hand, the concept of normality/normalisation, thus, orients the analysis towards events or forms of conduct, which are initially considered to be extra-ordinary, as well as to processes of their re-framing. Moreover, by identifying conditions for the emergence of such variations, the concept of normality/normalisation also suggests where to look for their emergence. A first and situational condition are changes in the environment. The emergence of a violent conflict and the proliferation of actions and events associated with it might be considered as such a change. Beside this, analytical attention

should be directed towards the incompleteness of patterns orienting perception cognition and action as well as to competition between different sets of such patterns, which provide the two major structural conditions for the emergence of variations and change.

Considering the question at hand, the theoretical discussion presented in the preceding section, thus, suggests that to conceive the social transformations introduced by the expansion of civil war into the sphere of everyday life, analysis has to turn to the study of the (re-)production of pre-reflective forms of conduct, focussing on habitualised behaviour and on continuities in the flow of the consciousness. To study processes of transformation, research should be directed towards contexts exhibiting the structural or situational conditions for the occurrence of variations initially perceived as extra-ordinary or anomalous. These conclusions are summarised in the table below.

The process of normalisation of a violent conflict, which might be conceived in this framework, does not follow a uniform pattern. Instead, it is, as any evolutionary processes, contingent and specific to a particular place and time. Thus, as mentioned before, the theories just introduced provide a framework of analysis, not the basis for a general theory of the normalisation of violent intra-state conflicts. In one regard, however, further theoretical generalisation seems possible: namely in view of the problem of civil war violence. The latter is commonly conceived to be constitutive and distinctive for (civil) war situations. Therefore, the problem of violence can be assumed to be in the focus of adaptive and transformative processes emerging in a civil war situation. Yet, this problem articulates differently in different spheres of the social: on the one hand, civil wars create the necessity to regularly enable violent action. This necessity is primarily met through specialised organisations, namely state an non-state armed groups. Based on the operation of these organisations, violence as a practice, as an experience and as an idea expands within society, which creates a concomitant need: to respond to violence. The normalisation of violence thus plays a systematic and important role in the normalisation of war situations. Common patterns of perception, cognition and action transform so as to systematically integrate the possibility of experiencing violence. This process can be far-reaching; amazingly far-reaching. Yet, it is not without limits. Living with the presence of armed groups means living with a threat to physical existence. Even the most sophisticated techniques of adaptation cannot do away with that. The normality emerging is, hence, a fragile one. In the words of the American anthropologist Mick Taussig, it is

Table: Reorientation of empirical research by theories of the everyday

Concept	*Definition*	*Reorientation of empirical research towards …*
Lifeworld	Describes the everyday as characterised by ordinary, pre-reflective experiences (instead as a level of analytical disaggregation)	• experience in general • pre-reflective conduct in particular
Habit/ Habitualisation	Describes corporal knowledge, which can be observed in routinised behaviour, as constitutive for ordinary experiences	• body structures in general • reproduction and transformation of routinised/habitualised forms of behaviour in particular
Transitivity	Describes the unbroken flow of the consciousness, which facilitates pre-reflective processes	• continuities and adaptive processes in generalreproduction and transformation of the knowledge and interpretative frameworks, on which action is based, in particular
Normality/ Normalisation	describes the social and contingent character of the structures governing the everyday	• processes of evolution, with a focus on variations, their stabilisation and re-framing in general. Contexts which facilitate the emergence of such variations in particular: (a) changes in the environment, (b) simultaneity of competing/opposing normalities, (c) events or fields of action not covered by frameworks of interpretation and judgement in place

"a state of doubleness of social being in which one moves in bursts between somehow accepting the situation as normal, only to be thrown into a panic or shocked into disorientation by an event, a rumor, a sight, something said, or not said—something that even while it requires the normal in order to make its impact, destroys it. […] Then it passes away, terror as usual […]." (Taussig, 1989, 8)

Given that violence and armed groups are constitutive elements of a (civil) war situation, the remainder of this chapter is dedicated to these topics. The following sub-section introduces a concept of violence, which contributes to the study of normalisation by distinguishing between different modes of experiencing violence. The chapter closes with a discussion of armed groups as organisations specialising in violent action.

The triangle of violence: performer, target, observer

In the theoretical-methodological framework developed in the preceding section, the concept of experience plays a decisive role. It has been argued that to study the expansion of civil war into the sphere of the everyday, analysis has to study how violent conflict becomes an ordinary or normal experience. Against this background, it seems to be useful, if not imperative, to combine this approach with a concept of violence that is responsive to the analytical category of experience. Therefore, this sub-section introduces a concept of violence, which focusses on the problem of experience and distinguishes between three different modes thereof (see Koloma Beck, 2011).

The starting point of this conceptualisation is an inquiry into the phenomenology of a violent confrontation: violent action targets a (human) body upon which injuries are inflicted with pain, or even death, being the result. Pain always is an existential human experience. It fundamentally shakes self-awareness as it deprives the subject of the familiar instrumentality of the body, as it reduces the subject to physical existence; and as it creates isolation. Prolonged states of pain erode the sense of time, opening wide the gates to despair (Trotha, 1997, 28–9). Yet, experiencing pain inflicted by violent action is still particular. It does not come as fate or hazard (as accidents or illnesses do), but it is brought about intentionally by someone else. It is injury and pain inflicted deliberately to enforce a will against the resistance of another. The exercise of violence is, hence, a social process, which negotiates and reconfigures a relationship, with asymmetry being the structural principle (cf. Simon, 2000, 109; Baecker, 1996, 99–100). Exercising violence can, thus, be understood as a technique of turning the body into a site of social bargaining processes (*Aushandlungsprozesse*).

Given that the establishment of an asymmetric relationship is a central function of violent action, the experience, and this is highly important for the question at hand, cannot be homogeneous. Instead, three interrelated but very different modes of experiencing violent action can be distinguished: first, as a "performer" of violent action. This mode is associated with intentional action, aimed at damaging another body, with a position of superiority and the exercise of power. The second and complementary mode of experiencing violence is as a "target". It is associated with the wounding of the body, with states of suffering or passivity, with feelings of fear and pain, with a position of inferiority; it is where the existential character of violence is derived from.

At first glance, these two complementary dimensions seem to comprise what is essential for analysing violence. They permit to reconstruct the relational dynamics of the situation as well as its somatic aspects. Yet, considering violence as a social process, we have to move beyond the confrontation of the "performer" and the "target" in the violent act to include a third dimension: that of the "observer". As a social process violence evolves in a triangle, where it is not only exercised and suffered, but also observed and judged.[25]

The "observer" is the most striking indicator of the relational fragility of violent situations. While in much of the academic literature (and even more so in public discourse) the modes of experience are mistaken for definite roles of particular agents, violence in fact frequently evolves in unsettled situations, in which positions can be reversed quickly: one moment's "observer" might be the next moment's "target"; today's "target" might be tomorrow's "performer" and a "performer" may quickly turn into an "observer".[26] It is because the agents involved know about the interchangeability of positions that violent situations gain momentum.

Yet, as emphasised above, the distinction between the "target", the "performer" and the "observer" mode of experiencing violence is an idealtypical one, designed to differentiate between three fundamentally different ways in which to relate to violent action. This means that the notions neither ontologically identify groups of agents, nor do they, in reality, present themselves as clear-cut and isolated as described here. Instead, the objective of this distinction is to analytically disentangle the dimension of the agents from the dynamics of the situation.

In view of the normalisation processes in the focus of this study, such a distinction is highly relevant. The approach discloses that the "normalisation" of violence is not a global process, but has various facets. On the level

25 The idea of violence evolving in a triangular constellation appears in various approaches. The terminology proposed here may seem somewhat artificial, yet it attempts to avoid the strong emotional connotations of other concepts. Riches for example conceives violent events as a dynamics between "performer", "victim" and "witness" (Riches, 1986). Communicative aspects of violence, with an emphasis on the role of the public, appear especially in terrorism research (Bergesen and Lizardo, 2006; Schmid and Graaf, 1982; Waldmann, 2005), but they also echo in research on armed group violence (Kalyvas, 2006). In genocide research, the role of the "observer" as a "bystander" has been intensively discussed (Barnett, 1999; Grünfeld and Huijboom, 2007; Hilberg, 1995; Vetlesen, 2000).

26 As a reminder of the non-ontological understanding of the notions, throughout this work quotation marks are used for these concepts.

of the subject, as well as in view of social structures, each of theses facets involves different challenges. This is most obvious regarding the normalisation of violence in the "performer"-mode, which involves the habitualisation of violent action as well as the set up of perceptual and cognitive structures justifying such action. The normalisation of violence in the "observer"- or the "target"-mode obviously involves quite different challenges. In view of the civil war in Angola, the latter will be studied in more detail in the empirical part of this book. The remainder of this chapter, however, is dedicated to the conceptualisation of armed groups. The latter will be conceived as organisations specialised in violent action. Therefore, the normalisation of violence, not only as an "observer" or a "target", but also as a "performer" can be assumed to be a major organisational challenge.

Armed groups: organisations specialised in violent action

Conceiving violent conflict as an antagonism, unfolding between at least two armed groups (Matuszek, 2007, 31–3), violence and armed groups are constitutive elements of these dynamics. They may, hence, be considered to play an important role in the process of expansion of civil war into the sphere of the everyday. Therefore, the objective of this sub-section is to develop a concept of armed groups, which is compatible with the overall objective of this study. The concept of organisation as it has been developed within social systems theory seems to provide such a suitable analytical tool (Luhmann, 1975; Luhmann, 1984, 551–92; Luhmann, 1995, 405–36; Luhmann, 1998, 813–47). Among the theoretical concepts applied to describe and analyse armed groups, "organisation" is the unchallenged champion. Explicitly or not, most analyses of armed groups are based on this understanding.[27] The systems theory approach to organisations resonates with the concepts introduced in the first part of this chapter, as it shares an interest in the dynamics between a given system and its environment. As in this perspective systems preserve their identity by continuously reproducing a boundary between themselves and the environment, interaction between the system and its en-

27 This is most evident in the literature written in the framework of rational agent theory, where participation in armed groups's action is discussed using concepts of decision and choice (Collier and Hoeffler, 2000; Weinstein, 2007; Gurr, 1970; Kalyvas, 2006). But the concept also underlies theoretically less specific works (Balencie and LaGrange, 1997).

vironment is conceived to be the driving force in structure formation (Luhmann, 1984, 30–45).[28]

Within this framework, organisations are conceived as a particular type of social system that is constituted by membership. They are deliberately set up and intended to pursue particular goals. In doing so, they rely on the coordinated and well-conditioned behaviour of their members. That means that belonging to an organisation implies to submit to certain behavioural expectations, which are defined by the organisation itself.[29] The latter means that confronted with a demand or task, the reaction of a member does not depend on personal disposition, but instead is based on the conditions imposed by the organisation he or she is involved in. As a consequence, organisations, more than any other form of social systems, attain the capacity to act in a collectively binding way. They are, hence, able to transcend the boundaries limiting simple interactions; they can grow large, outstripping the limits set to the growth of simple interaction systems, including the spatial limitations of the latter (Kieserling, 1994, 169–71). Decisive, however, in exploiting this potential is the organisation's capacity to influence interaction in its realm: by conditioning the behaviour of its members, organisations rationalise interactions between their members as well as between the latter and the social environment. The overall objective is to increase the efficiency of these interactions, and, most importantly, to bring them in line with the overall organisational goal (ibid., 175).

The importance of organisations within society is that they are designed to continually reproduce specific actions, even if the latter might appear artificial or improbable under other circumstances. Yet, to do so, they have to flexibly respond to changes in the environment. They have to be adaptable, while at the same time keeping certain structures invariant, so as to produce and maintain organisational identity. Organisations are, hence, highly specialised social systems, designed to attain a considerable degree of internal differentiation and efficiency. Operating within a long- or at least a mid-term perspective, organisations have to be set up so as to outlive external changes.

28 Knudsen points out that the most important philosophical influence of Luhmann's work was Husserl's phenomenology (Knudsen, 2006, 11–2).

29 In the systems theory approach which is underlying the current discussion, membership in organisations is commonly considered to be voluntary. Yet, such an understanding poses problems not only for the study of armed groups. Modern societies know a number of more mundane structures, which perfectly fit the definition of organisation, but involve compulsory or otherwise non-voluntary membership; schools, prisons and hospitals are examples in this regard.

In doing so, they essentially contribute to the stabilisation of expectations in society.

Conceiving armed groups as organisations entails various advantages. It is an obvious choice, since armed groups share features with other social phenomena, which by standard are conceived in the organisational framework, most important among them political parties, business companies, or state armies. Analysing armed groups in the same framework opens up a reservoir of conceptual analogies. Moreover, it permits to examine, to what extent armed groups come to adopt the structures of more common types of organisation. Finally, given that a number of armed groups once have been political parties or regular military forces, and that at the end of a conflict many attempt to restructure along one of these lines, the organisational framework also facilitates the analysis of transformation processes of armed groups. Yet, the concept of organisations thus conceived has one major shortcoming: it ignores the problem of boundaries. The latter are considered to be clearly delineated: membership defines who is on the inside and who on the outside. Yet, the empirical literature shows a multitude of ways to become involved in an armed group. The prototypical irregular combatant is but one among them. Beside this, there might be temporary or part-time combatants, porters and other assistance personnel, or people exclusively engaged in business activities associated with the armed group. This problem will be discussed in more detail in the empirical part of this book. Yet, despite these limitations with regard to membership, the concept of organisations permits to develop some general ideas about the problem of the normalisation of violence, as the latter directly relates to conditioning membership in armed groups.

Armed groups might be conceived as organisations specialising in the exercise of violence. Conditioning the behaviour of their members, the major organisational challenge is, hence, to systematically facilitate organised violent action. Fulfilling the latter means to put into practice two opposing, yet ultimately complementary strategies. The first objective is to enable violent and potentially deadly action, i.e. to normalise the experience of violence as a "performer". Complementary, however, the organisation has to prevent that the momentum violent interaction tends to gain turns against its own interests. In other words, armed groups have unleash a beast—and tame it in simultaneous processes.

Normalising the experience of violence as a "performer" means first and foremost to overcome, on the individual level, internalised barriers against

such behaviour. In all cultures, the act of killing another human being is embedded in a net of rules specifying in which cases and under which circumstances such an act is permissible. To enable armed groups' operations in civil wars, the prohibitions implicit in these regulations have to be overcome. Yet, the taboos about killing represent but one of the obstacles to armed groups' operations. The other is the feeling of fear, people usually experience confronted with an existential situation. The techniques to overcome both barriers differ from context to context. To conceive some general dynamics, let us go back to Joanna Bourke's comprehensive study on face-to-face violence (Bourke, 1999).[30] In this work, she describes that this process typically proceeds in two stages: in a first step, the individual is broken; in the second one, it is built anew as a fighter (ibid., 79). The first stage may involve techniques of deliberate disorientation and depersonalisation, such as exposure to tight schedules, seemingly arbitrary rule and punishments, forced social relationships and deprivation of food and sleep (ibid.). In the light of the theoretical framework introduced above, this stage can be conceived as designed to create a deliberate rupture in the transitive flow of the consciousness. In the second stage, the flow is then re-oriented so as to turn the subject into a combatant acting according to the objectives of the organisation. This involves, first, processes forging an emotional bond between the fighters, as the feeling of community, even the love for the comrades-in-arms is essential in overcoming fear (ibid., 141–45,172).[31]

A second ingredient in rebuilding the individual as a fighter are training regimes. The aim of the training is not only to teach future combatants how to master a weapon, but also to raise the probability that they actually use. In this context, drills, the execution of a particular set of movements with the weapon, frequently on a dummy figure, are one efficient technique (ibid., 98). In the conceptual framework introduced in the preceding section, such drills can be conceived as habitualisation processes, i.e. as interventions designed to create a corporal knowledge which permits a routinised and prereflective exercise of violent action.

30 Although this study has been developed with regard to the World Wars and the Vietnam war, the general tendencies of behaviour under combat stress described seem to apply to civil war situations, too.

31 An extensive study on the issue published in 1945, comes to the conclusion that these emotional bonds are most efficient if they mirror the affection within a family, with a loving father being the central figure (cited in ibid., 145).

A last element in creating a fighter, Bourke argues, are rituals confronting the issue of death. The latter may involve otherwise grotesque behaviour such as "playful" interaction with dead bodies or the collection of body parts as trophies. In a general sense, the aim of these rituals is to assert one's essential self in the act of killing (ibid., 40).

The dilemma of any armed group consists in the fact that the forces set free this way, the aggression, the experience of the efficiency of violence as an instrument in social interaction, the feelings of power and superiority associated with it, continuously risk to turn against the organisational order and the goals of the armed group itself. If violence is used to settle personal accounts among combatants, cohesion can be jeopardised; combatants' involvement in "private" violence against the population might undermine the support necessary for the armed group. The second set of normalising strategies therefore consists in controlling and containing the expansion of random violence in the armed group. The major instrument in this regard is a system of rules, enforced by severe punishments.

Yet, as Bourke shows, even if successful, the tension inherent in any violent organisation can never completely be solved. Managing violence between the extremes of unleashing and containing it is an ongoing process. An important valve alleviating this tension seem to be carnivalesque rites of killing. This means episodes in which, for a limited period of time, a pleasure of violence is ostentatiously staged, deliberately transgressing not only culturally determined rules, but also those established by the armed group itself. Analysing civil wars, it might not always be easy to distinguish whether those incidents of unleashed violence relate to the strategy of an armed group's leadership in dealing with violence or if they are but indicators for the weakness of the latter. Yet, if the former is the case, those authorised transgressions realise the central quality of any carnivalesque ritual, namely to reassert and stabilise the very order they seem to negate in their practice (ibid., 42).

The strategies just described can induce a normalisation of the experience of violence among members of armed groups, most importantly in the "performer"-mode, yet, concomitantly also in the "observer"- and to some extent even in the "target" mode. Violent action becomes an everyday business.

4. Historical Background

In August 1482, the Portuguese navigator and explorer Diogo Cão moored his ship at the estuary of the river Kongo in what is today northern Angola. He made friendly contact with local people, and, before heading further south, erected a stone pillar commemorating his arrival. He also sent a delegation to the local king, who was told to live further inland. Emissaries were sent out to assure the friendly intentions of the king of Portugal and his desire for trade (Ravenstein, 1900, 626–627, 629–30).

Yet, this friendly relationship between the Portuguese and the Bakongo people was not meant to last. Before the turn of the century, slave traders began to operate in the region, and in the centuries to come, their interests should spell the political agenda in the Portuguese colony of Angola. When this transatlantic business was eventually abolished in the first half of the 19th century, the Portuguese government launched a program of colonial expansion, so as to gain control of the other resources the country had to offer. Territorial control was extended at gunpoint, and secured through European settlement schemes.

When, in 1975, Portugal finally withdrew from Angola, exhausted by more than a decade of counter-insurgency, the country was seized by a violent struggle for state power, fought out among the three major anti-colonial organisations: MPLA, FNLA and UNITA. By early 1976, MPLA had succeeded in establishing itself in Luanda as the ruling power of a People's Republic of Angola, and inflicted severe military defeats upon its opponents. One year later, however, it became clear that UNITA was not ready to accept this situation. The country, once more, plunged into an intra-state war that, after a number of failed peace agreements, came to an end in 2002.

With hindsight, it seems that the peoples of Angola have been cursed from the moment the first Europeans set foot on their lands. The history starting in 1482 with the arrival of Diogo Cão seems to be driven by conflict and war, marked by a dynamic of repression and resistance, by the relentless

expansion of violent domination and the destruction of earlier socio-cultural conditions. Violent conflicts seem to be strung together, one but pre-configuring the next.

Such a reading of Angolan history as a stringent chain of ultimately fatal events can be found in a number of contemporary publications, often combined with a lament about the destruction and abuse of the countries riches (Henderson, 1979; Hodges, 2001; Malaquias, 2007). This is not without reason. Conflict, undeniably, is the driving force in Angolan history. Yet, this might not be as spectacular a fact as some authors want to make us believe.

The reason is that conflict and war are crucial to any process of state formation—in Angola and beyond. The U.S.-American sociologist Charles Tilly has shown this most convincingly for the history of state-formation in Western Europe (Tilly, 1975).[32] Works such as Tilly's remind us that the processes we conceive in terms of scandal and drama when they occur today in the countries of the so-called South are not as alien as they might appear. Instead they echo the violent past of our own social habitat; and they remind us that this past is inscribed into the present conditions.[33] The analysis presented in this work can be understood along those lines, focussing on violent conflict as a source of transformation.

The aim of this chapter is to provide the socio-historical background for the discussions to come. I will present an introduction to the history of Angola. In doing so, I will touch upon political as well as social developments that became relevant for the processes considered later.

The first section presents an overview of the pre-colonial societies and early colonial rule. The second section explores the socio-economic developments introduced by the colonial state, which led to the rise of various nationalisms in Angola. The third section describes the emergence of militant anti-colonial struggle in the country. The fourth one deals at some length with the transitional period after the withdrawal of the colonial power and the establishment of the Angolan state under MPLA rule. Finally, the last section gives an overview of the civil war and the peace process; yet, as this

32 This idea can already be found much earlier, for example in Hobbes' philosophical considerations on the origins of the state (Hobbes, 1992). Until today, the importance (and, at least to some, the scandal) of these and similar works lies in the fact that they break with a convention, refusing to conceive conflict and war as but destructive processes. In sociology, Georg Simmel laid out the basis for a different approach to the issue (Simmel, 1904a; Simmel, 1904b; Simmel, 1904c; Simmel, 1992).

33 This observation is also at the core of Norbert Elias' work on the *Civilizing Process* (1994).

period is in the focus of the following chapters, but a cursory outline of major developments will be presented.

4.1 Pre-colonial societies and weak colonial rule

Historically, Angola has been at the cross-roads of various Bantu peoples. The populations of the north, such as the Bakongo or Kimbundu, had cultivated strong ties with the regions of central Africa, to whom they were linguistically close. The people of the centre and the south, in contrast, such as the Ovimbundu, Herero or Gangela, were closer to the peoples of southern Africa, linguistically as well as in the orientation of their socio-economic activities (Childs, 1964; Neto, 2001). Today nine major ethno-linguistic groups are distinguished, as well as a number of smaller ones.

Given the ethno-linguistic diversity of the region, ethnic homogeneity was uncommon in the pre-colonial societies. There was a tradition of pluriethnic social relations within as well as among the different populations (Neto, 30, 39). The patterns of social organisation and political rule, however, differed strongly. Among the Bakongo a centralised political structure emerged. When Diogo Cão and his successors arrived at the Kongo river in the late 15th century, they had a "king" to negotiate with, a condition that significantly facilitated their colonising activities.[34] In the center and south, however, the patterns of socio-political organisation were less centralised. The Ovimbundu alone were divided into about a dozen different larger political entities (Childs, 1964, 67).

Due to the early exposure to European influence, details about the political and social structures of the pre-colonial societies, especially of those in the centre and south, are hard to obtain. Although Portuguese political authority remained weak for more than three centuries, the presence of Europeans had a major impact on the local populations, especially because of their economic activities. The transatlantic slave trade was the business that founded Portuguese interests in area. Along the coast a number of settlements and ports were established, to serve as bases for the commercial ac-

34 Marcum gives a detailed account on how the intensive contact between the Bakongo rulers and the Portuguese kings eventually led to the political subjugation of the latter (Marcum, 1969, 1–2).

tivities. Slaves were captured in the depth of the country and brought to the coast in caravans. The majority of them was shipped to Brazil.

The social impact of the slave trade was immense. It went, as Joseph Miller has pointed out, far beyond the simple loss of population. It introduced profound changes in settlement patterns and relations of power, but it also increased epidemiological exposure and affected the reproductive capabilities of the remaining population (Miller, 1988, 140–1).[35]

When, in 1822, Brazil declared its independence, Portugal lost control of its trans-atlantic trading centres. As a consequence, the government started to explore the economic potential of the African colonies. A program of colonial expansion was launched so as to gain control of the other resources the country had to offer. Rubber, along with palm oil, honey, ivory and other items, became the backbone of the reformed colonial economy. Slowly, colonial rule expanded through infrastructure projects and settlement programs, violently overriding the resistance of the local populations (Marcum, 1969, 2–3).

The intensification of trade had a major impact on the indigenous social structures. It initiated a change of settlement patterns, led to the emergence of conflicts within communities, and destabilised the structures of power within them.[36] One example for these dynamics is the shifting position of the traditional leaders: the expansion of trade facilitated upward mobility. Suddenly, people who had been among the least privileged in the traditional societies came to wealth and attempted to convert it into political influence in their communities. Threatened by these newcomers, many traditional rulers sought salvation in the co-operation with the Portuguese authorities. Yet, in the end this only furthered the erosion of cohesiveness within their communities (Heywood, 2000, 12–30).

Among the Ovimbundu, these developments are mirrored in a fragmentation of their political structures: according to the anthropologist Gladwyn Childs, the number of sub-chiefdoms increased from eighty to more than two hundred during the 19th century (cited in Edwards, 1962, 11; see also Pössinger, 1973, 39).

In 1884–85, the Conference of Berlin affirmed Portugal's nominal sovereignty over the territory of Angola. Yet, it obliged the once powerful naval power to effectively take control of the whole area claimed to be its colony.

35 A Portuguese census from the late 18th century shows a significant absence of adult men, the sex ratio approaching 1:2 in favour of the female population (cited in Miller., 160).

36 For a detailed analysis of these processes see (Pössinger, 1973).

This exigency was fulfilled in the twenty-five years to come (Marcum, 1969, 3). This period saw the violent subjugation of the remaining independent Angolan populations, especially in the center and south of the country. Sometimes, as in the legendary Bailundo War, the Portuguese army encountered massive armed resistance of the local population (Wheeler, 1973).

4.2 The Estado Novo and the rise of nationalism

Beginning with the early 1930s, the colonial expansion in Angola was pushed forward on high speed. The reason was a radically new stance of the Portuguese government towards its colonies. In 1932, Antonio Salazar had risen to power and proclaimed a new vision for his country: the *Estado Novo*. Central in the propaganda of the new authoritarian government was its emphasis on the intimate bond between mainland Portugal and its colonies. Stressing the unity of the motherland with its "Oversea Provinces", a major settlement program was launched.

The policies were backed by an ideology that spiritualised the undertaking: the concept of "lusotropicalism". According to the latter, Portugal was not a colonial power, but the historical centre of a particular cultural space in which Portuguese elements mixed with "tropical" ones to form a harmonious whole. The result were amicable cohabitation and increasing intermixture of the different races.[37]

Yet, the realities emerging in the colonies did not live up to the promises of the ideology. The settlers arriving in Angola ousted the African elite, which had been growing through the early 20th century, from but recently gained positions.

In the first decades of the 20th century, Angola rose to become the most valuable asset in the destitute Portuguese empire. Increasing agricultural production and export, especially of coffee contributed significantly to this economic ascent, as well as the intensifying exploitation of raw materials, such as diamonds, iron and petrol. Yet, this success derived from a forcibly controlled economy, dispossessing African peasants and forcing African Ango-

37 The concept of lusotropicalism goes back to the works of the Brasilian Gilberto Freyre (for example 1961). Discussions of the concept in the Angolan context can be found in the 1997 edition of the journal *Lusotopie*, dedicated to the topic (Barbeitos, 1997; Léonard, 1997; Neto, 1997).

lans to work on coffee plantations and in other European businesses under exploitative conditions.

In an hitherto unknown way, these measures affected the social structures in the country. They introduced new conflicts and tapered already existing tensions. It was during this period that the antagonistic collective identities were forged that would shape the conflictive dynamics in the years to come. Three major lines of conflict emerged:

Firstly, the policies created conflicts within the African communities. In continuation of the transformative processes launched by the expansion of trade, the position of local leaders was further weakened. In the system of forced labour they were frequently charged with the responsibility for levying workers, eroding their credibility and authority within the communities (Heywood, 2000, 74).[38] The void in local authority came to be occupied by new types of leaders such as native church officials, and later the nationalist leaders.

Beside the conflicts within the African communities, the *Estado Novo* politics, secondly, created conflicts between Angola's different ethno-linguistic groups. The Ovimbundu are a telling example in this regard. Being preferably employed on the northern plantations as well as in the military, they were deliberately alienated from other Africans, earning among them the reputation of being willing collaborators of the colonists (ibid., 135–7).

Finally, the Salazarian politics nourished rivalry among the elites of the country, which increasingly came to be defined in terms of race (Wheeler, 1969a). Crucial in this regard were the so-called politics of *aportugueamento*, "portuguesation". The latter divided the Angolan population into four classes with very different rights. At the top of this racial hierarchy were so-called "first class Portuguese", born and raised in mainland Portugal; "second class Portuguese" were those of Portuguese ancestry, but raised in the colonies. Together, they made up eight per cent of the Angolan population. The third category were the so-called *assimilados*, assimilated Africans. The legal procedures for gaining this status were restrictive, and but one per cent of the non-white Angolan population attained it.[39] Most of them were *mestiços*,

38 Forced labour was in fact part of a tax system, whose implicit goal was to make people work for the settlers. If the tax due could not be paid off in money, it had to be paid off in work for the settlers. Taxes were persistently increased to cover the budget. In 1948 "native taxes" made up for 65% of the annual Angolan budget (Heywood, 2000, 74).

39 Conditions included: a minimum age of eighteen years; advanced knowledge and exclusive use of Portuguese language; sufficient income to sustain the family and a "decent life" (Pélissier, 1978).

Angolans of mixed-race ancestry. At the bottom of the pyramid were the so-called *indígenas*, the not-assimilated African population. While those considered Portuguese or *assimilados* wielded full civil rights, the *indígenas* were deprived of the latter (Heywood, 2000, 92–3).

Disguised as a civilising project, the politics of aportugueamento in fact provided the legal basis for privileging the newly arriving settler population, provoking protest among Angola's resident elites.

4.3 From anti-colonial struggle to independence

From the late 19th century onwards, the protest against Portuguese politics in Angola could no longer be overheard. European settlers, tired of Lisbon's centralist rule; urban Angolan *mestiços* and *assimilados*, deprived of their privileges by the arrival of more and more settlers from Portugal; and a growing elite of black Angolans began to denounce the state of the colony and the conditions of its native population. Encouraged by the Brazilian experience, more autonomy or independence became their ultimate claims. And despite ever more tightening measures, the Salazar regime did not succeed in silencing this opposition.

Beginning in the late 1950s, parts of the African branch of the anti-Salazarian opposition started to organise for armed struggle. Yet, they did so not as homogenous block. Instead the emerging African liberation movement was fuelled by various sources with different ethno-linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. The organisations were formed in three regional centres (Marcum, 1969): first, the capital Luanda, where anti-colonial resistance was spurred by urban intellectuals, most of them *mestiços* or assimilated Africans. In this context, the first major nationalist organisation, the MPLA, emerged. The second epicentre was the rural Bakongo-speaking region in the North of the country along the Angolan-Congolese boarder, where the second major nationalist organisation, the FNLA, was formed in 1962.[40]

The Ovimbundu and Chokwe speaking regions in the central South became the third centre of anti-colonial resistance. Yet, for reasons examined

40 FNLA as well as MPLA had various predecessor organisations, dating back as far as the late 1940s. The detailed reconstruction of the pacts and alliances that finally led to their formation can be found in the first volume of Marcum's seminal work on the Angolan independence struggle (Marcum, 1969).

further below, protest in these regions became felt much later than in the north. Initially, nationalists from these areas attempted to integrate into the existing organisations formed in the north, especially into the FNLA. It was a growing disaffection with the latter, which, in 1966, led to the formation of UNITA, which would become the third major organisation in Angola's anti-colonial struggle.

Parallel to the emergence of the anti-colonial movement in Angola, an anti-Salazarian opposition in mainland Portugal was rallying its forces. As in the overseas territories, critique of the government's colonial ambitions formed the core of the protest. By this time, the latter had become a heavy burden to the population in mainland Portugal.

In an historical perspective, the re-affirmation of Portugal's colonial power had occurred at a moment when many African colonies irresistibly gravitated towards independence.[41] Yet, although presented as a civilising mission, the Salazarian colonial project was in fact an attempt to consolidate Portugal's bankrupt economy. By the 1960s, however, it had become clear that this endeavour had utterly failed.

The *Estado Novo* was struggling for its survival. The population was groaning under the burden the ambitious colonial project had become. By 1973, Portugal was fielding nearly 150,000 troops in three war zones (George, 2005, 50).[42] Since the rise of the *Estado Novo* 11,000 soldiers from mainland Portugal had died in Africa. Another 30,000 had returned wounded or disabled. Military expenditures, the major item in the Portuguese budget since the 16th century, had risen to forty per cent (Wheeler, 1969b), daily spending amounted to an equivalent of one million Euros per day (Schmid, 2004). The military efforts necessary to maintain a grip on the oversea territories had turned Portugal into the poorhouse of Europe. The country headed European statistics on inflation, but also on illiteracy[43] and infant mortality.[44] As a consequence, more and more Portuguese sought their fortune abroad.

41 In 1957, Ghana had gained independence as the first country of sub-saharan Africa. With the de-colonisation of seventeen African countries, 1960 became known as the "African year".

42 Proportionally to the population, this equals five times the American commitment in Vietnam (George, 2005, 50).

43 In 1970, alphabetisation was 70 per cent, this was 20 per cent less than in Spain. In countries such as Belgium, France or the United Kingdom, the figure of illiteracy approached zero at the time (Tortella, 1994, 11).

44 In 1970, the rate was 5.4 per cent, declining to 3.9 per per cent in 1975 (OECD, 2007, 216–7).

From the mid-1950s to the mid-1970s the country had experienced an unprecedented population exodus. Between 1960 and 1973 alone almost one million Portuguese left the country (Moreira, 2006, 52), among them, a significant number of draft-age men, determined to escape four years of mandatory military service. Population growth was negative in the 1960s, with the resident population declining from 8.9 to 8.7 million (Rosa and Viera, 2003, 23), leaving a workforce of but 3.5 million (Marcum, 1969, 5).

Contempt had not only seized the colonies, but it was also welling up in mainland Portugal. Among the first ready to admit the untenability of the current situation were the military leaders. While the political authorities still clang to the colonial project, the generals faced the fact that their army had, in the words of Commodore Leonel Cardoso, "reached the limits of physical and psychological exhaustion" (cited in George, 2005, 49). In April 1974, a military coup brought down the *Estado Novo* in what would become known as the *Carnation Revolution*.

4.4 From independence to civil war

Yet, although they had been struggling for this moment for decades, the political forces in Angola were ill-prepared for this turn of the events. In Portugal's other African colonies, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, the anti-colonial struggle had led to the emergence of a dominant and legitimised aspirant for state power. Yet, in Angola the political landscape was as fragmented. None of the political forces could argue a leading role in the transformation of the colony. At the same time, however, none was ready to concede this potential role to one of the others. The already well established antagonisms between the three anti-colonial organisations intensified immediately, as the option of one among them acquiring state power became tangible. And with Portugal as the common enemy gone, the inter-organisational conflict swiftly captured the focus of attention.

This struggle for state power unfolded in an international environment with some governments observing the events in the former Portuguese colony all but indifferently. The so-called international community became, hence, an interested third in the developments in Angola. Transnational agencies, first and foremost the OAU, as well as a number of single governments, came to intervene in the situation, seeking to influence the course of

events in line with their own political interests. The Cold War division of the world was the central pattern of observation in this regard. In this perspective, the Angolan race for state power was perceived as a variable that would alter the present state of affairs in favour of one side or the other.

As a consequence, the power struggle was carried out simultaneously in different dimensions. In the political sphere, agents tried to solve it by hammering out agreements and setting up joint government institutions; this process involved, in particular, FNLA, MPLA and UNITA as well as Portugal, the OAU and some African governments: in January 1975 the Alvor Accords were signed between the three militant anti-colonial organisations and the former colonial power; they defined 11 November 1975 as the date for independence as well as an institutional setting for the transitional period. Swiftly, however, military developments came to interfere with these political decisions, producing adverse realities. From July 1975 onwards, the competing organisations' quest for territorial control increasingly led to a division of the country into spheres of influence. In July, MPLA had re-asserted its hold of Luanda and from there had advanced to seize the centre of the country and the coastline. FNLA had receded to its strongholds in the north-east from where it prepared for a counter attack. UNITA struggled to defend its position in the south. Yet, by end of August, it had to recede to its heartland in the provinces of Huambo and Bié (Hodges, 1976, 52–3). By September 1975, the division of the country had advanced in such a way, that partition emerged as a political option seriously considered for settling the conflict (Marcum, 1978, 264). In August 1975, the Portuguese High Commissioner annulled the Alvor Accords, acknowledging the impotence of political decisions against the evolution of the military situation.

The military developments in question were facilitated by political decisions of third party states, among them most importantly the Soviet Union, Cuba, the United States and South Africa, to support one or the other of the three militant anti-colonial organisations. Hence, as independence day drew closer, military action increasingly ousted political decision-making as the mode of carrying out the conflict. Yet, for the moment, none of the parties was able to inflict a decisive blow to its opponents.

When 11 November 1975 came, Angolan independence was declared twice, once by the MPLA, and once by a FNLA-UNITA coalition. In following weeks, third party perception of the rival governments became crucial in deciding the conflict. In January 1976, the MPLA government was admitted as a member to the OAU. At that moment the MPLA, drawing upon its

military capacity combined with international recognition and the exuding political legitimacy, was put in a position to finally vanquish its opponents. By March 1976, FNLA and UNITA both had been militarily defeated, and MPLA had established itself as the ruling party in Luanda.

Yet, within less than a year, it became apparent that UNITA as an organisation had survived its military downthrow, and was determined to challenge the incumbent. Thereupon, the country was gradually drawn into a civil war.

4.5 The Civil War

While FNLA did not recover from its military defeat in 1976, UNITA proved to be of great resilience. Within a relatively short period of time, it reorganised its structures and re-animated its international alliances, becoming an effective armed group able to challenge state power. In the early 1980s, it began to expand territorial control, starting from its headquarters in the southern provinces of Moxito and Cuando Cubango.

The rise of UNITA as an insurgent armed group was paralleled and partly facilitated by the expansion of international involvement in Angola. The Cuban military intervention that had helped to establish and defend MPLA's dominance during the post-colonial transition, stayed on in the country to bolster the contested incumbent. Troop seize increased until it reached a peak of more than 60,000 Cuban troops in 1988 (George, 2005, 303). At the same time, South African involvement increased, in particular in the south of the country, where the South African army, SADF, combined military aid to UNITA with counterinsurgency measures against SWAPO in Namibia.[45]

Hence, the conflict between UNITA and the ruling MPLA in Angola was overshadowed by the confrontations of other states within the context of

45 The former German colony of Namibia had been occupied by South Africa during World War I. In 1920, the League of Nations officially mandated South Africa with the administration of the territory. Yet, as the country attempted to expand apartheid rule to Namibia, the United Nations tried to detract the mandate granted in 1920. Already in 1978, UNSC resolution 435 had called for the withdrawal of South Africa from the territory.
SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organisation) was a Soviet supported militant liberation movement.

the Cold War. Conceiving the conflict as a proxy war would be, however, an inordinate reduction.[46] As during post-colonial transition, the civil war was driven by different, yet partially overlapping agendas of various agents.

In an attempt to solve this entanglement of interests, the New York Accords were signed in 1988 after several years of negotiation. In the treaty between Angola, South Africa and Cuba, the latter two committed themselves to the withdrawal of their respective troops from Angola. Furthermore South Africa conceded independence to Namibia. The Angolan government hoped that the implementation of this accord would put an end to the civil war in the country. Deprived of SADF support, UNITA's forces were expected to crumble swiftly.

Events took a different turn, however. Upon the withdrawal of the South African troops, fighting intensified. And by 1989, the MPLA government had to acknowledge that direct negotiations with UNITA were inescapable. This decision launched the most frustrating, and eventually most violent period of the Angolan civil war: the era of failed peace agreements. A first accord was signed in 1989 in the Zaïrian town of Gbadolite. Yet, fighting soon broke out again. The Bicesse Agreement of 1991 initially promised to be of greater success. Concluded soon after the fall of the Iron Curtain, it already bore the signature of the dawning new era of peace making. It stipulated a ceasefire, the subsequent quartering of UNITA troops, the formation of new unified armed forces as well as the demobilisation of surplus troops. It foresaw the restoration of government administration in UNITA-controlled areas and, most importantly, multi-party parliamentary and presidential elections to be held in the following year. The peace process was meant to be overseen by a Joint Politico-Military Commission with symbolic support of a UN observer mission (UNAVEM II).

Yet, the implementation of the accord revealed to be difficult. While the so-called international community eagerly pushed towards the elections, the fulfilment of the treaty's military provisions was delayed. The new unified armed forces, FAA (*Forças armadas de Angola*, Armed Forces of Angola) were formed but days before election date. Both sides retained large armies, ready

46 To my sense, this reduction is the major shortcoming of George's otherwise extremely insightful account on the war period until 1991. As the title *The Cuban intervention in Angola* suggests, the events are conceived as the confrontation of big powers in a small country (2005). Similar dispositions can be found in Wright (1997).

for resumption of the conflict (Hodges, 2001, 13–4).[47] Although initially many observers had counted on an UNITA victory, MPLA, in the end, won an absolute majority of seats in the National Assembly.[48] In the simultaneously held presidential elections the incumbent Eduardo dos Santos gained a majority of 49,6 per cent, while UNITA's president Jonas Savimbi received 40,2 per cent of the votes (Hodges, 2001, 14).

When UNITA leadership refused to accept this result, the country was plunged back into war by the end of the year. The subsequent period was the most devastating one in the history of the Angolan conflict. Violence, exercised by both parties, came to affect Angolan populations in an hitherto unknown way. After the renewed outbreak of war, the government started to invest in the expansion of its military and police forces. By 1998, the FAA counted 90,000 men and had become the second largest regular army in Africa behind South Africa (ibid., 63–4). As the government advanced, UNITA took to more and more violent measures to survive. Moreover, the defeat at the polls had plunged the armed group into an internal crisis. Its leadership attempted to counter the impending fragmentation with increasingly violent measures.

In late 1994, the parties made another attempt to settle their conflict. The Lusaka-Protocol foresaw to integrate UNITA into the government. A transitionary joint government was meant to steer the country through a period of disarmament and demobilisation. Once the latter was concluded, elections should be held. Yet, in the end, the ceasefire of Lusaka also failed. It was only in 2002 that an end of the conflict came within reach, after UNITA's president had been killed by government forces. The Luena Memorandum signed some weeks later, re-affirmed the provisions of the Lusaka-Protocol, thus paving the way for a durable settlement of the conflict.

As signalled in the introduction of this chapter, the history of modern Angola might be read like a string of revolutionary turnovers: the beginning of systematic colonisation and the expansion of Portuguese settlements; the authoritarian rule of the Salazarian state, the independence struggle, and finally, the civil war. Yet, in the individual perception, in the everyday environment of the life-world, the political turnovers exhibited a lot of continuities. Various structures persisted in different disguises throughout these periods of Angolan history, facilitating the preservation of a transitive flow of the con-

47 For a detailed analysis of the period see Christine Messiant's double article "Angola. Les voies de l'éthnisation et de la décomposition" (Messiant, 1994; Messiant, 1995).

48 MPLA won 54 per cent of the votes, compared to 34 per cent for UNITA.

sciousness: there is continuity in the authoritarian set up of the state, securing its power with the aid of repressive security agencies. There is also continuity in the political instrumentalisation of local structures of rule, especially the implication of traditional leaders in the enforcement of state power; the strategic exploitation of collective identities is another point of continuity as well as the ever growing militarisation of society.[49] When civil war broke out in 1976, these continuities had already been deeply inscribed into the structures of the life-world. In the following chapters, we are going to meet again a number of the above mentioned practices and dynamics. As we are going to see, the government and UNITA alike perpetuated patterns set-up throughout the colonial history of the country.

49 João Paulo Borges Coelho has pointed out that the militarisation of society was not a result but a condition of the civil war (Borges Coelho, 2003).

5. From the bush movement to the quasi-state (and back): UNITA as an organisation

It has been argued that the core dynamics of civil war are reproduced by armed groups, which can be understood as organisations specialising in violent action. Therefore, this inquiry into processes of normalisation of violent conflict in Angola starts with an analysis of UNITA as such an organization. The history of this armed group appears as one of epic proportions. It is the story of an underdog, that, during the 1980s, rose to one of the most eminent armed groups in the Cold War world, and to a state-within-the-state of Angola; that, in the early 1990, was offered the chance to actually seize state power in an electoral process; and that, having failed to do so, took up arms again and disintegrated in a violent furor.

Founded 1966, about a decade after FNLA and MPLA, and five years after the first violent clashes with the colonial authorities, the organisation became the third major player in the Angolan independence struggle. In the transitional period, following the collapse of the colonial regime, opinion polls predicted UNITA being the winner of Angola's first elections, scheduled to be held in late 1975. These elections, however, never took place. Instead, by early 1976, MPLA, backed by Cuban troops, had installed itself as the ruling party in Luanda; and UNITA was militarily defeated. Its few remaining fighters fled to but sparsely inhabited regions in the utmost South of Angola. From there, no one seriously expected them to return.

By the beginning of the 1980s, however, UNITA was back, challenging MPLA state power. The erstwhile refuge in the South-East of Angola had become its primary foothold. From there, UNITA had started to expand territorial control. By the end of 1985, UNITA's military wing, FALA (*Forças Armadas de Libertação de Angola*, Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola) is said to have counted about 30,000 guerrillas (George, 2005, 193)[50] and the armed group had basically taken control of the Provinces of Cuando

50 As in many non-state armed groups, the strength of UNITA's troops has been an object of dispute. For 1990, for example, estimates range from 28,000 to 90,000 (James, 1992, 97).

Cubango and Moxico. Its areas of operation stretched out into the Provinces of Bié, Malange and the Lundas. And with single operations staged as far west as in the coastal town of Sumbe (George, 2005, 184–7) there could be no doubt that UNITA's bid for state power was serious. By the late 1980s, the MPLA government started to recognise that to settle the conflict direct negotiations with the insurgents were inevitable.

When the Bicesse Accords determined that elections should decide over the political future of the country, UNITA entered them self-consciously. Parallel to the situation in 1975, opinion polls initially favoured the armed group. Eventually, however, events took another turn. MPLA's election victory and UNITA's militant contestation of the result introduced not only the most violent phase of the Angolan civil war, but also UNITA's pernicious decline. In the end, its leaders found themselves where they once had begun: deep in the Angolan bush at the periphery of the country; a tiny remnant of a once powerful organisation, chased by government forces and ruthlessly exposed to the adversities of nature.

Yet, it is not the primary aim of this inquiry to develop a comprehensive history of the armed group.[51] Instead, in line with the overall question of this book, attention is drawn to interdependencies between the armed group and its social environment, in view of tracing the process of expansion of violent conflict into the everyday. Drawing on the concepts developed in chapter 3, processes of normalisation of violent conflict within the armed group are in the focus of analysis. It will be shown, that, in the case of UNITA, the concept of organisation alone is too narrow to describe these processes, as the armed group deliberately engaged elements "borrowed" from civilian everyday life so as to stabilise its organisational structures. Therefore, analysis will proceed in two steps: based on the conceptual framework developed in chapter 3.2, this chapter reconstructs UNITA's trajectory as an organisation in

51 To my knowledge, a comprehensive history of UNITA still waits to be written. Until today, material on UNITA is fragmented into three branches, along the lines of the armed group's historical trajectory: there are, first, some well-documented publications dealing with UNITA as an anti-colonial organisation, among them most importantly the works of contemporaries such as Marcum (1978) or Hodges and Legum (1976) but also Brinkman (2005). There are, second, a number of academic as well as journalistic sources covering the period of the 1980s. But, being contemporary writings, most of them suffer, at least to some degree, from a performative bias, usually in favour of UNITA, rooted in the Cold War divide (Bridgland, 1986; James, 1992; Loiseau and Roux, 1987). In a third branch of publications, dealing with the period of the 1990s, the issue of UNITA's war economy is predominant (Hodges, 2001; Malaquias, 2007).

three stages: first, as a militant anti-colonial organisation; second, as a insurgent armed group, challenging state power; and third, its fragmentation and decline.[52] Among them, stage one will be described most comprehensively, as this initial set-up remained crucial throughout UNITA's existence as an armed group. This analysis shows how the armed group secured its auto-reproduction in the the face of a changing environment. We are going to see that two environments were of crucial importance for UNITA. There were on the one hand local and regional populations in Angola on which UNITA had to rely to secure its basic material supply (especially food) as well as the supply with personnel. Where the armed group had seized territorial control, ruling these populations served to demonstrate UNITA's capacities as apolitical and administrative power; if successful, it provided the armed group with basic legitimacy (cf. Popitz, 1986, 33). On the other hand, there was an international environment of critics and, more importantly, supporters. The latter did not only provide substantial financial and military supply, but it was also crucial in the production of outside legitimacy.

Drawing on the concepts developed in chapter 3.1, chapter 6 then explicates how UNITA dealt with the problem of conditioning membership and facilitated the normalisation of violence among its combatants.

5.1 The militant anti-colonial guerrilla: 1966–76

UNITA was founded as the last of Angola's three major anti-colonial organisations. Yet, saying this means more than stating a mere chronology. When UNITA came into being in the mid-1960s, FNLA and MPLA—though being competitors—had been dominating anti-colonial resistance for almost a decade. In 1963, the Revolutionary Exile Government, *Gôverno Revolucionario de Angolo no Exílio* (GRAE), headed by Holden Roberto, had gained official recognition by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). In the same move, the OAU had credited FNLA the leading role in the Angolan independence struggle (Marcum, 1978, 96–9). Beside the two big players, FNLA and MPLA, there was a panoply of smaller organisations, all compet-

52 With the Luena Memorandum, UNITA enters a fourth stage: it becomes a political party. Yet, as this study deals with armed groups in civil war situations, this last stage will not be considered.

ing for followers, recognition and funds. In what he calls but "[a] partial list of Angolan nationalist movements", John Marcum enumerates eighty-six organisations for the period of 1962–76 alone (ibid., 318–20). Hence, at the time of its foundation, UNITA was all but an exceptional phenomenon. The need for yet another competitor in the already overcrowded arena of anti-colonial struggle was far from being obvious.

In the creation of UNITA, however, these odds translated into opportunities: although designed to be a militant anti-colonial resistance organisation, it was not protest against the colonial state that founded UNITA's creation. Instead, the experience of a decade of independence struggle in Angola, more specifically the problems that had become manifest in the ongoing insurgency, was the motivating point of reference. In the semantics accompanying the emergence of UNITA, the shortcomings of FNLA and MPLA became the central argument for the creation of a new force.

Three points of critique were dominating the discourse semantically justifying UNITA's aspirations: the first one referred to the composition of the two dominant anti-colonial organisations. While FNLA leaders and followers came, by their majority, from the Bakongo-speaking rural regions in northern Angola, MPLA, at its core, was composed by urban intellectuals, principally *mestiços* and so-called assimilated black Africans, from the region of the capital Luanda. The second point of critique was that neither FNLA nor MPLA were based in Angola itself, but operated out of safe havens in neighbouring countries, namely Kongo-Kinshasa and Kongo-Brazzaville. In this exile situation, FNLA had the advantage of its host-state sharing boarders with Angola. As long as the government in Kongo-Kinshasa supported FNLA, its units could move freely across the border into Angola, thus maintaining a considerable degree of insurgent activity in the north of the country, and claim a certain number of followers there. The MPLA-leadership, on the other hand, was operating out of the save-haven of Kongo-Brazzaville and thus lacked direct access to Angolan territory. Its followers inside of the country as well as the acts of resistance attributable to them were significantly fewer than those of the FNLA and remained an object of constant doubt. Hence, in a double sense, the dominant anti-colonial organisations were detached from the Angolan population: first, because they lacked inclusiveness and representativeness, and second, because they were spatially cut off from the people in whose interest they pretended to fight.

Different from the situation in the mid-1950, when MPLA and the predecessors of FNLA had been founded, the impulse to UNITA's creation was

not challenging the oppressiveness of the colonial state, but instead challenging the ways of the already existing anti-colonial organisations. The promise was to do it better.

Hence, on a structural level, competition (with FNLA) and not conflict (with the colonial state) was the impulse motivating UNITA's creation. It was by drawing a distinction between the newly created organisation and the two hitherto dominant independence movements, FNLA and MPLA, that UNITA attempted establish itself as an original organisation in the plethora of nationalist forces in Angola.

From the beginning, there could be no doubt that the armed group's aspirations were highflying. The forceful verbal attacks against MPLA and FNLA politics left no doubt, that UNITA did not intend to silently blend into the multitude of lesser known organisations. These pretensions gained credibility through the organisation's original cast: the enterprising personality driving the process of UNITA's creation, Jonas Savimbi, had himself been a high-ranking FNLA official and a member of the FNLA-created Exile Government. In a thespian move on the second OAU summit in 1964, he resigned from all his posts, denouncing FNLA inefficiency and its lack of representativeness (ibid., 136–7).

The allegations were not entirely new. FNLA had never succeeded in transcending its social roots in the Bakongo-speaking regions of northern Angola. Moreover, it faced a variety of problems stemming from its condition as an exile-organisation. OAU's elevation of FNLA had turned out to aggravate this situation instead of improving it. Designed to force unity upon the competing nationalist organisations in Angola by naming an official leader, this step had raised expectations FNLA failed to fulfil: organisational reforms necessary to consolidate the newly won position as well as to advance FNLA's capacity as a political and military force were repeatedly announced but never took off ground. Measures undertaken to broaden FNLA's support base, yielded but little results. Moreover, in the armed group's leader, the OAU recognition seemed to have inspired a new taste for world politics, distracting his attention from the pressing internal problems (see ibid., 100–13).

Against the background of this situation, discontent had been welling up within FNLA and the Revolutionary Exile Government. Especially for those from the Southern regions of Angola, Savimbi had risen to become a new hope. Already in late 1963, he had began to rally discontent GRAE members from the South, who, eventually, were joined by some disappointed North-

ern leaders. He also started out on diplomatic missions lobbying his own cause. Rumours spread, suggesting Savimbi would replace Roberto as the leading figure in the FNLA/GRAE (ibid., 134–5).

Yet, with the *éclat* on OAU's Cairo summit, events had taken another turn. Savimbi's public retreat from FNLA/GRAE leadership, in which he was joined by about a dozen other renegades, became a strategical milestone in the creation of a new organisation. Taking place on an international stage, it briefly turned the spotlight of attention to three central aspects of UNITA's foundation: first, to the deficiencies in the hitherto dominant organisations of anti-colonial resistance, deficiencies that eventually would serve as arguments justifying the creation of a new organisation; second, to the international experience of the organisation's future leaders and the transnational implications of the Angolan problems. Third, and most importantly, however, it drew attention to Jonas Savimbi himself. In retrospect, it seems that the brief appearance on the OAU summit condensed the characteristics that would eventually found the myth of this man: a discerning analyst, a brilliant strategist, a man of the world, and yet, a man of deed, an uncompromising advocate of the majority of the Angolan people—in short: a convincing leader.

Hence, there can be no doubt that the OAU summit in Cairo was an important step in the process of UNITA's creation. In the aftermath, however, the event came to be mythologically overdrawn as its very founding moment. Jonas Savimbi himself contributed most to this myth. A most telling example in this regard can be found in the book-length interview Savimbi granted to two French journalists in the mid-1980s (Loiseau and Roux, 1987). In an obvious allusion to Jesus and his apostles setting out to re-found faith, Savimbi recounts how he and a group of eleven fellow GRAE-renegades, after the public breakaway in Cairo, set out to create a radically new force in the Angolan nationalist struggle: the first objective of the renegade group had been to receive military training. Egypt's president Nasser, whom he had got to know while being a member of the GRAE, was the first he had turned to for help. The latter had advised him to petition Soviet aid. After an unsuccessful trip to Moscow, however, he had turned to China, whose government eventually offered military training to Savimbi and his entourage. In China the group was politically and militarily instructed according to the

principles of Maoism.[53] Most meaningfully, the training period is said to have lasted nine months, after which the group returned to Angola to launch its guerilla struggle from within (ibid., 125–26, 134–42).[54]

The mythicising hyperbolism of this account dissimulates the diversity of social networks interacting in the emergence of Angola's third major anti-colonial organisation. Suggesting that a dozen trained and determined men had been at the origin of the armed group mistakes the interaction system formed by those who who had followed Savimbi to China for the organisation itself. In sharp contrast to this representation, UNITA, from the outset, had drawn on various constituent and support milieus inside as well as outside of Angola:

To the formation of the armed groups' first organisational core, three, partially overlapping, social circles of Angolans became decisive. The group of FNLA/GRAE dissidents mentioned above was but one among them. A second one was a circle of politically active students abroad; they, too, entertained a critical stance towards FNLA/GRAE and were headed by Jorge Valentim, a confidant of Savimbi. The third social source feeding UNITA's first organisational nucleus was a circle of nationalist leaders from central and southern Angola, who, up to that moment, had felt excluded from the mainstream of independence struggle. They felt drawn to Savimbi who denounced MPLA's and FNLA's lack of representativeness, and who, moreover, belonged himself to the Ovimbundu, Angola's largest ethno-linguistic group, concentrated in the central highlands (Marcum, 1978, 161–7).

The mythical version of UNITA's creation conceals this diversity of social networks represented in the armed group's first organisational set-up. It points, however, to a fourth social milieu that came to play a major role in the formation of the armed group: the network of foreign supporters. In the aftermath of the breakaway from FNLA/GRAE, Savimbi made contact to a number of eminent political figures, travelling to various capitals, who were connected in a semantics of Pan-Africanism or Internationalism. He met with Nasser of Egypt, Ben Bella of Algeria, General Vo Nguyen Giap of Vi-

53 As we are going to see, Mao's ideas about a politically educated peasantry as the backbone of revolution and his emphasis on political transformation through the mass involvement of "ordinary" people would come to play an important role in UNITA's ideology.

54 Marcum's more contemporary reconstruction of the aftermath of Savimbi's breakaway from the OAU says nothing of Nasser's intervention, nor of a trip to Moscow. Instead, Algier's president Ben Bella is said to have been the mediating figure (Marcum, 1978, 160–1).

etnam, with Malcolm X and Ernesto "Che" Guevara (ibid., 160–1). While the aforementioned social networks of GRAE dissidents, students and local leaders from the south staffed UNITA's first organisational core and provided the armed group with internal legitimacy, the international connection became crucial in providing basic material and logistic support, but also in shaping the discourse that would found UNITA's outside legitimacy.

Being former members of the GRAE, Savimbi and his fellow renegades had been strongly affected by the Pan-Africanist wave that had seized Southern Africa in the wake of Algerian independence.[55] The overthrow of French colonialism by an indigenous revolutionary force had inspired anti-colonial militants all over the world. Throughout early 1960s, the Algerian case had served as an ideal for anti-colonial struggle in Angola (ibid., 62).[56] In 1965 the foundation of the OAU, in whose liberation agenda Angola had become the priority, had furthered these Pan-Africanist ties (ibid., 100). In addition, there were many personal, as well as organisational ties between Angolan nationalists and nationalists in other countries around the world.[57] In short: along with the contemporary *zeitgeist*, militant nationalists in Angola perceived their anti-colonial struggle in terms of world society. UNITA's first members were no exception in this regard.

UNITA's exact founding date is hard to define. In the mythical version of its creation, Savimbi claims a "constitutional congress" to have taken place on 13 March 1966, somewhere south of Luena (Loiseau and Roux, 1987, 153). Marcum confirms a "constitutive conference" in March 1966. About 70 members are said to have gathered there for about three weeks, electing the provisional leadership and adopting a constitution (Marcum, 1978, 166).

55 In the second volume of Marcum's seminal work, this Pan-Africanisation of the Angolan independence struggle is a central issue (Marcum, 1978, part I).

56 In fact, Algerians had been training FNLA combatants since 1961 (Marcum 1978, 62–6).

57 The organisational linkages are most pronounced in the case of MPLA that, due to its roots in Angola's former communist party, entertained formalised contacts to a number of programatically similar organisations, such as FRELIMO in Mozambique or PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau with whom it was joined in the *Conferência das Organizações Nacionalistas das Colónias Portugesas*, Conference of the Nationalist Organisation of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP). It was also a member of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO). The transnational network relevant to FNLA struggle was less formalised, yet, nonetheless significant. Well documented for example, are Roberto's contacts to the Algerian President Ben Bella (Marcum, 1978, 63). For a more detailed analysis of the issue see (ibid., 222–7).

It is, however, more than likely that this gathering of UNITA's organisational nucleus received its high-flying headings but post factum.[58]

The program of the newly created organisation was marked by one predominant objective. Its constitution stipulated to educate "all Angolans living outside the country [to] the idea that real independence of Angola will only be achieved through an armed struggle waged against the Portuguese Colonial Power inside the country" (cited from Marcum, 1978, 166). In the ongoing anti-colonial insurgency dominated by exile-based organisations, fighting the enemy from within was set to become UNITA's distinctive attribute.

Still in spring 1966, the newly founded organisation made itself felt, underscoring its determination and the seriousness of its aspirations: in one of their first operations UNITA guerrillas attacked the major artery of the colonial economy, the Benguela Railway (ibid., 167). Derailing a Portuguese train near Teixeira de Sousa, close to the Zaïrian boarder, they exposed the vulnerability of the colonial power. Other early operations targeted gasoline stations and river bridges, also in the east of the country (ibid.). Emblematically, these first operations laid out the course UNITA leadership intended to pursue in the years to come. And they swiftly granted the organisation public attention.

This quick success in the face of still very limited funds was due to the leadership's aptitude for straddling discourse and deed. From the beginning, the articulation between the organisation's goals and its actions was particularly close. On the one hand, UNITA leadership refined and propagated the distinct semantics that had accompanied the armed group's creation: the organisation's base on the inside of the country, its greater representativeness and its closeness to all people of Angola, especially its peasants. On the other hand, they staged operations set up like embodiments of this very ideology: they launched small scale guerrilla operations targeting Angolan infrastructure; and they engaged with the local populations, in an effort not only to recruit, but also to rise general political awareness (ibid., 167–8).

58 Although Marcum's oeuvre is marked by an effort to draw a balanced picture of the Angolan insurgency, his analysis of UNITA sometimes seems to be biased in its favour. The reason might be that, writing in the late 1970s, the image of Angola's third major anti-colonial movement was still unmarred. While FNLA and MPLA looked back on almost two decades of internal divisions and external struggle, UNITA still appeared as the underdog, unexpectedly rising to hold up the values its veteran rivals seemed to long have forgotten.

Given the still limited number of members and the continuous shortage of funds, in their substance, but few of these operations could have posed a serious threat, be it to the colonial authorities or to FNLA and MPLA.[59] Yet, these actions usually were set up in a way as to secure a maximum of visibility. Hence, above being military or political operations, they were communicative acts. They were designed to testify UNITA's very existence while at the same time affirming the armed groups political claims and pretensions.

In doing so, UNITA leadership seemed to have understood one major principle: armed conflicts such as the Angolan independence struggle affected at the same time local and regional structures on the one hand, and the political system of world society on the other. Hence, from the outset UNITA communicated with equal efforts towards diverse addressees. There were the local populations whose sympathies and support should be won; there were the colonial authorities to whom the organisation wanted to present itself as a serious threat; there were MPLA and FNLA, to whom UNITA strove to appear as a credible challenger; and there was an international public whose affection would grant legitimacy and decide about material support.

In total, UNITA's efforts seem to have been successful, since, when the colonial regime finally came down in 1974, UNITA felt strong enough to challenge FNLA and MPLA in the race for state power. A more detailed analysis of the armed group's activities, however, reveals that the impact of its operations differed strongly among the various publics mentioned above. It shows that the self-consciousness with which UNTIA entered the post-colonial transition resulted from its communicative successes towards one public in particular. In the following, each of these different environments will be briefly considered:

UNITA's activities among the populations of east and southern Angola were serious, but of mixed results. While MPLA, with its reputation of intellectualism, was estranged from the rural populations, and FNLA conceived them principally in terms of potential recruits, UNITA sincerely engaged in political education of a revolutionary style (Marcum, 1978, 167–8). UNITA activists arriving in the villages called for political meetings, and tried to raise broad political awareness among the peasantry (Brinkman, 2005, 73). True to the armed group's claim of closeness to the people, its activists were in-

59 Brinkman points to the fact that PIDE archives say but little about UNITA; apparently MPLA and FNLA were perceived as the more serious threats (Brinkman, 2005, 72–3). Only the attacks on the Benguela Railway seem to have raised more serious concerns.

structed to set up relations with the local populations, sharing their way of live wherever possible (Marcum, 1978, 167–8). Accordingly, they stayed close to the villages, sometimes engaging as protectors against colonial violence (Brinkman, 2005, 74; Marcum, 1978, 167–8).

Initially, UNITA seemed to have been rather successful in mobilising followers. From the early 1970s onwards, however, the armed group had to compete with MPLA's Eastern faction led by Daniel Chipenda. In the regions concerned, MPLA's superior armament quickly reduced UNITA's influence. The comparatively primitive weapons of the UNITA combatants—bows, arrows and spears—became a source of constant laughter (Brinkman, 2005, 73). And, people holding UNITA membership cards were denounced to the police (ibid.).

The success of UNITA operations destined to weaken colonial power was even more equivocal. On the one hand, some of its military targets had been vital to the political economy of the colony. On the other hand, however, documentation from the PIDE archives suggests that, until the end of their rule, the Portuguese considered UNITA as but a minor threat (ibid., 72–3). This perception was furthered not at least by an agreement between UNITA and Portugal, signed in 1971.[60] The existence of this secret pact had been vigourously denied by UNITA, but had eventually been confirmed in 1974.[61] It stipulated that UNITA refrained from attacking the Portuguese and focussed on MPLA instead. In exchange, the colonial authorities offered medicine, educational material, ammunition and non-interference (Brinkman, 2005, 53).

In the context of anti-colonial struggle, this collaboration treaty was nothing short of a scandal. Yet, in a conflict sociological perspective on the armed group, it made perfect sense. It re-emphasised the antagonism that had been incited UNITA's creation and was driving its activities: the armed group's major line of conflict was not with the colonial state; instead it was

60 The agreement had been a result of the weakening of UNITA's position in the South from the early 1970s onwards. By 1972, MPLA had practically driven UNITA out of Cuando Cubango, and continued to fight the competitor. UNITA denounced MPLA to fight a 'civil war' against its militants (Brinkman, 2005, 72–3; Marcum, 1978, 211). The Portuguese considered UNITA as a cheap bait for treason, as they were "merely surviving" and "powerless to protect the population" (Brinkman, 2005, 74, citation from PIDE documents).

61 According to Heywood, the documents were first published in *Afrique Asie* (Paris), 3–2I July 1974, and in *Expresso* (Lisbon), 17, 24, and 30 November I979 (Heywood, 1989, 49, fn. 2).

competition with MPLA and FNLA. Due to UNITA's well planned activities, the latter could but acknowledge the new rival. There was, however, no doubt about the ratio of forces. UNITA was recognised, but throughout the independence struggle, its military and political impact remained of minor importance.[62]

Hence, with regard to the local populations as well as with regard to the colonial authorities and the competing anti-colonial organisations UNITA's operations were of mixed results. With regard to the public of international observers, however, the armed group was most successful. From the beginning, UNITA leadership published its proceedings. Still in 1966, several numbers of *Kwacha-Angola*, UNITA's central organ of communication, were issued, informing about the decisions taken at the various meetings as well as about the principle goals of the organisation. Foreign newspapers and magazines took up UNITA's communiqués and public statements, interviews were granted to Jonas Savimbi, published along with photographs showing him in Angolan villages or next to railroad markers, ostending his presence within the country (cf. Marcum, 1978, 194). While MPLA consumed itself in factional fighting and FNLA had disappointed the hopes it had inspired in the early 1960s, UNITA appeared as an alternative. The expressly political profile of the armed group appealed to a number of outside observers, especially to intellectuals dedicated to the liberation project, but critical towards a Soviet influenced anti-imperialism. UNITA's semantic layout connected smoothly with the dominant discourse west of the Iron Curtain: the armed groups emphasis on democracy, its insistence on the superiority of the political *vis-à-vis* the military, its involvement in peasant education and, more generally, the armed group's obvious effort to reach performative consistency between discourse and deed, inspired the sympathies of journalists, academics, politicians and other observers.[63]

Until the eve of the Carnation Revolution, however, these sympathies did not translate into substantial material support for the armed group—much

62 According to PIDE sources relating to the year of 1970, UNITA accounted for but 4 % of guerrilla activities in Angola, 59 % were attributed to MPLA and 37 % to FNLA (cited in Brinkman, 2005, 53–4).

63 Marcum cites an interview with an UNITA spokesman published in 1972 in a Lausanne journal, exemplifying the armed groups political semantics: "Our army is not an instrument of power. It must above all protect our educational work and agricultural cooperatives. To liberate territory is of no interest to us, we want to liberate consciousness […] The army and the armed struggle are in a way secondary, for one does not conduct a nationalist war in the absence of national consciousness" (Marcum, 1978, 217).

to the regret of some of the sympathisers. Nonetheless, UNITA drew important gains, paid off in the currency of outside legitimacy. In the years between its creation and the collapse of the colonial state, UNITA successfully manoeuvred itself into the political calculus of the Western world. In an international perspective, it had become a force that—given the dominant political discourse in the so called West—could not easily be dismissed. This was the background against which UNITA entered the post-colonial transition period, self-consciously trying to take over state power.

In the turmoil quickly seizing Angola in the wake of the Carnation Revolution, UNITA emerged as the advocate of non-violence. Its insistence on finding a political solution to the problem of power transition, rather than fighting it out, was mostly a result of the organisation's military weakness. Nonetheless, this stance won UNITA important additional support, not at least among the settler population within Angola. Opinion polls conducted in spring 1975 predicted UNITA being the clear winner in the elections planned for October 1975 (ibid., 260, 437 fn. 164). As the Alvor Agreement waned, Savimbi undertook several diplomatic missions to bring about a new consensus.[64] Yet, in the dynamics unfolding in the weeks to come, this non-violent stance could not be maintained.

In June, UNITA was drawn into the fighting of what would become known as Angola's "Second Liberation War": its Luanda offices were attacked by MPLA and several people killed, among them a number of recruits scheduled to go south for training (Marcum, 1978, 260; Hodges, 1976, 51). In July, violence was engulfing the country (Marcum, 1978, 260–1; Hodges, 1976, 52–3) and in early autumn, the conflict had been spatialised in a way that partition came to be discussed as a viable option for its future (Marcum, 1978, 264). Terrified by those developments, the settler population started to leave in a panic mass exodus, depriving UNITA of a major constituency (ibid.).[65]

64 The Nakaru negotiations, taking place in June 1975 was fruit of these efforts. Under chairmanship of the Kenyan president, Roberto, Neto and Savimbi worked out a new, more detailed agreement about renouncing the use of force and delinating responsiblities for the rest of the transition period (Marcum, 1978, 260; Hodges, 1976, 51–2).

65 George insists on the superiority of Soviet aid to MPLA compared to the U.S. assistance towards FNLA and UNITA, which officially totalled 32 million USD. Marcum, however, argues that, taking into account U.S. covert assistance as well as the aid of other Western states, FNLA and UNITA together will have received about as much as MPLA from the Soviet Union, 80 million USD (George, 2005, 60–1; Marcum, 1978, 263).

It was against the background of these events that UNITA's competitive position came to be substantially improved: it became an official recipient of foreign military aid. Between July and October 1975 the U.S. as well as other Western donors started to financially and materially support UNITA (along with FNLA) so as to counter the prevailing Soviet supported MPLA dominance. Moreover, in September 1975, South African military instructors arrived in the country to train FNLA and UNITA units (George, 2005, 62; Marcum, 1978, 269).

When independence day came, UNITA, along with FNLA, announced the formation of a Democratic Popular Republic of Angola (DPRA) with Huambo as the new capital. Rivalling MPLA's proclamation of a People's Republic of Angola (PRA) in Luanda the same day, the act underscored the UNITA's claim to power (Hodges, 1976, 56). Yet, in the military and political developments introduced by this double declaration of independence, MPLA eventually prevailed. By mid-February, FNLA was defeated in the South. All of its traditional support areas had come under MPLA control and the remaining forces had fled to Zaire. The same month, the South African troops started to withdraw from Angola (ibid., 58). Following this event, UNITA's military forces quickly collapsed. In March, the armed group's last foothold in Southern Moxico fell. Savimbi, with his last remaining followers, headed off to the Angolan bush (George, 2005, 111–2).

5.2 The successful armed group: 1976–1989

During the months following the military victory of MPLA and its successful installation in Luanda, UNITA was, in the words of one of its veterans,

"[…] in a state of complete disorganisation. The movement had to run off the cities, at the beginning without any distinct destination; we were walking for the purpose of walking" (Interview, 2006r).

The following months, however, showed that the military defeat did not mean the end of the organisation. Different from the FNLA, that, having exhausted its forces in more than two decades of independence struggle, never really recovered from its military defeat in 1976, UNITA proved to be of great resilience.

The story of UNITA's recovery and its subsequent rise to a quasi-state has often been referred to in terms of a miracle: where a small remnant of a defeated military force had once set up hasty refuge in a most adverse environment, an alternative Angolan power center rose, challenging the MPLA incumbent.

Yet, again, this version of the events reduces UNITA's organisational complexity for the sake of a mythicising narrative of the armed group's history. It confuses the interaction system formed by the UNITA remnants on their legendary "Long March"[66] to the South, with the organisation as such. As pointed out in the preceding sub-section, UNITA was more than a couple of men gathered the bush. Instead it was an organisation that had differentiated in a way so as to operate simultaneously in various dimensions of world society. Hence, as any other organisation, it transcended the boundaries of those present at a particular moment in time. And, as we are going to see, this organisational complexity attained during the period of anti-colonial struggle prevented that the military defeat translated into the annihilation of the organisation as such.

Yet, saying this does not mean that the armed group's recovery was granted. With the international recognition of the People's Republic of Angola and the establishment of MPLA as a legitimate party in rule, the environment of UNITA's operations had altered significantly. Adaptation to these environmental changes was, hence, the prerequisite of organisational continuance. In the following, I will outline how UNITA managed adapt to these new conditions in a process of semantic as well as social re-organisation.

The first formal step in this process was the IV Party Congress, held in March 1977 (James, 1992, 93). Different from the mythicising version of UNITA's defeat in 1976, the legendary flight to the South involved but a part of the armed group's organisation, namely its military core, Savimbi and his immediate entourage. The majority of UNITA activists, however, had chosen another response to MPLA's military advancement. They had simply gone home, back to the villages they had once come from (Interview, 2006r). Hence, in a broader perspective, dispersion and not displacement had been the major impact of MPLA's military and political victory on UNITA.

66 The expression was used by the armed group itself in allusion to the retreat of the Chinese communists, starting in 1934 (see also Bridgland, 1986, ch. 20).

The Party Congress held in 1977 served first and foremost to reaffirm—internally as well as externally—the organisation's very existence. Yet, it was also designed to announce and to anchor a new strategy (cf. Savimbi, 1997, 101). The latter was to based upon a re-statement of UNITA's organisational purpose: "resistance against the Russo-Cuban expansion" became UNITA's new objective. The phrase stressed continuity. Taking up arms again was presented as being in fact a continuation of the armed groups struggle against foreign rule in Angola. This way, the legitimacy gained throughout the anti-colonial war should be preserved.

The IV Party Congress also reaffirmed UNITA's stance as an armed group of trans-Angolan relevance. Among the 500 participants (James, 1992, 93) were also some foreign observers, among them the Portuguese economist Fatima Roque who later became one of UNITA's leading figures (Interview, 2006r), as well as foreign journalists who had been reporting on UNITA during the independence struggle and now continued to cover the armed group's trajectory.[67]

Based on this strategic re-coding of the organisational purpose, the IV Party Congress launched a major social reorganisation of the armed group. By 1977, more than 30,000 Cuban troops were stationed in Angola and the government was receiving Soviet military aid on a regular basis (George, 2005, 303). On the Party Congress in 1977, UNITA leadership made clear that this confrontation would not be won easily. "We came to accept that the war would be long", said an interviewee remembering the Congress (Interview, 2006r). Against this background, professionalisation of the organisation, and most importantly, the creation of regular armed forces became the primary short-term objectives. Managing this process meant new, hitherto unknown challenges.

With the expansion of its military operation, the armed group needed to secure a continuous influx of fighters and, even more important, their loyalty. While during the anti-colonial struggle, material reproduction had been a central problem, in this period, UNITA's social reproduction moved into the focus of attention. Furthermore, with successful military operations, UNITA's control over territories and populations expanded, creating the need to establish and refine structures and practices of administration.

67 In August 1977, for example, *Washington Post* staff writer Leon Dash published a series of articles on UNITA after having attended the Party Congress (Dash, 1977a; Dash, 1977d; Dash, 1977c; Dash, 1977b).

From the late 1970s onwards, UNITA's formal organisation was like drawn from a Maoist guide on guerrilla movements.[68] The leadership was divided into three basic branches: first, the political secretariat; second, the general staff, uniting the leadership of UNITA's armed forces FALA; and third the secretariat of public administration whose role was to manage the populations in the areas where UNITA exercised territorial control. These three basic units were complemented by a diplomatic corps. At the head of the organisation was the President Jonas Savimbi who also presided the so-called political commission, an intermediary institution combined of leaders from all four functional realms. The political function was supplemented by classic mass organisations, such as JURA (*Juventude Revolucionaria de Angola, Revolutionary Youth of Angola*) or LIMA (*Liga da Mulher Angolana, Angolan Women's League*), destined for mobilising the population (see also UNITA, 1991).

Endorsing the principle of so-called democratic centralism, this differentiation into three functions at the top, political, military, administrative, was formally reproduced in the local branches of the organisation, the so-called "strategic fronts", which were further subdivided down to the village level. The basic unit of the organisation was the "cell", a group of three to four members, answering to the village committee.[69] Within the strategic fronts the political function was charged with the "sensibilisation" of the population for the political agenda of UNITA, with the mobilisation of the masses (here the mass organisations coma into play) and with recruitment. The administrative function in turn organised the provision of public goods, such as medical and educational services, where they existed. Yet, its principle task was to secure the peasants' contributions to the food supply of UNITA units. The differentiation of the organisation down to the village level answered to two of UNITA's principle reproduction necessities: first, the supply of food, and second, the supply of personnel.

A particular administrative unit were the so-called military bases, temporary troop settlements dislocating in response to the evolution of the military situation. In these bases particular rules applied, designed to secure efficiency and especially the discipline of the armed forces. By the mid-1980s, the latter had been successfully restructured and enlarged. The process had been sup-

68 The following reconstruction is principally based on two Interviews with longstanding UNITA officials (Interview, 2006t; Interview, 2006r), complemented by James, 1992, ch. 4.

69 For more on UNITA's formal structure see James, 1992, 100–1.

ported by SADF military advisers as well as by other South African aid.[70] Military operations were planned centrally by FALA's high command at the Central Headquarters in Jamba.[71] The troops had been divided into five different types of units, differing in their degree of training and specialisation.[72] Total troop strength had risen to about 30,000 (George, 2005, 193).

This growing importance of the armed forces had put a strain on one of UNITA's major organisational principles: the superiority of the political over the military. "There is no gun that goes until the end", is a principle Savimbi is said to have upheld (Interview, 2006r). In the new organisational set-up, this principle had been translated into a hierarchical order subordinating military to political personnel. Hence, the political commissar was authorised to instruct the military commander. This principle even applied for military units, where the military commissars exercised the political function.

Yet, as the armed group's military operations increased and expanded, this construct introduced major problems. Especially in combat situations it proved to be dysfunctional, as the militarily trained and experienced commander had to compete with the formal superiority of a political commissar. Therefore, by the mid-1980s, this practice was abandoned and replaced by the so-called *comandante quadro*, the cadre-commander.

The latter united the qualities and authority of a military commander and a political commissar. Hence, the organisational conflict between the political and the military function was transformed to an intra-personal one. The cadre-commander was at the same time the political and the administrative head of a strategic front as well as the high commander of the troops within it. Each was personally chosen by UNITA's president and went through a particular educational program. The latter included a course in basic agronomy, so as to close the gap between the military-political elite and the mainly peasant population. Thus the cadre-commander was meant to become the "father of the region". The cadre-commader thus mirrored, on a regional level, the integrating function of Savimbi at the top of the armed

70 In the early 1980s, South Africa operated three UNITA training camps in Namibia, and had appointed a permanent liaison officer to co-ordinate the delivery of supplies to Jamba (George, 2005, 165).

71 The high command was composed of Savimbi as Supreme Commander, the Chief of Staff and the respective Chiefs of Intelligence, Personnel, Operations and Logistics (James, 1992, 95–6).

72 For a more detailed overview of FALA's structure see (ibid., 95–7).

group, with regard to his formal functions as well as with regard to its role as the fatherly leader.

The logistical backbone of UNITA's re-organisation and expansion was the armed group's headquarters. Since 1981, the latter had been permanently at Jamba (*umbundu*, meaning "elephant"), close to the Namibian boarder in the South East of Cuando Cubango Province, some 20 miles north of the Caprivi Strip (George, 2005, 165).[73] Through the 1980s, it was expanded into a city. Covering an area of more than a hundred square kilometres, with a population of several thousand people and living standards superior to those in the urban centres of Angola, it eventually became UNITA's "Provisional Capital of Free Angola".

Based on massive foreign (especially South African) aid, Jamba became a city with concrete buildings and partially paved roads, with running water and a full-time supply of electricity. It harboured the armed group's most important schools, in which the political and military cadres as well as support staff (nurses, teachers) were trained. It also provided medical services, among them a well-equipped hospital of 250 beds. The facilities were partly staffed by foreign personnel, who also performed routine operations such as caesarian sections or appendectomies. Emphasising this high standard in medical services, one interviewee, an aged man who had spent a good part of his life with UNITA, told me not without pride, that he was wearing dentures made for him in Jamba (Interview, 2006t).

Equipped with an airstrip, braggingly referred to as "Jamba International Airport", as well as with several technical workshops UNITA's capital also served logistical needs. Supply planes debarked here, as well as a growing number of foreign journalists who had been invited to formal press conferences or extended visits, diplomats and politicians. Yet, beside its practical importance UNITA's capital was of tremendous symbolic meaning. It was an island of order and peace in a country engulfed by civil war. According to one interviewee who had lived in Jamba since its foundation, it was a city characterised by "a lot of discipline and a lot of responsibility" (Interview, 2005l). An adolescent interviewee, who had spent most of his life in Jamba, described the security prevailing in the city: "In Jamba we lived without fear, because we did not know war; only from the stories of the adults" (Interview, 2006a). Or in the words of another interviewee: "There was violent chaos in

73 The exact location had been kept secret for a long time. Writing in the early 1990s, James still but guessed it (1992, 99).

the cities and silence in Jamba" (Interview, 2005d). The creation of a more or less modern city in the midst of the Angolan bush served, internally as well as externally, to prove the progressiveness and the professionalism of the armed group. It, hence, served to counter an allegation that I am going to explore in more detail in the following chapter; the allegation according to which UNITA soldiers would be living "in the bush like animals".

Being at the same time a logistical turntable and symbol for UNITA's aspirations, Jamba was particularly important with regard to the international public. The practice of transnational communication that had significantly contributed to UNITA's legitimacy during the anti-colonial struggle, was intensified and extended: repeatedly, the armed group granted visits to foreign journalists and politicians, sympathetic to UNITA's cause (see for example Bridgland, 1986; Loiseau and Roux, 1987). From the early 1980s onwards, two other types of visitors appeared. Yet, they entered the city on less voluntary terms: foreign hostages and their negotiators.

Taking foreign hostages, not for the purpose of raising money, but in a quest for international attention significantly contributed to a global perception of UNTIA. James cites five major incidents in the period of 1982–84 alone (James, 1992, 120–2). Foreign aid workers, preferably those working in strategic government projects, but also missionaries, and, infrequently, militaries were the primary targets of these operations.

Usually, the hostages were taken at one place, and then had to make their way to Jamba on foot, covering distances of up to 800 miles. They were commonly well treated, yet, their release would be made dependent upon the engagement of foreign intermediaries. Beside depriving the Angolan economy of utterly needed trained staff, the capture of foreign nationals forced outside governments into contact with UNITA, thereby necessarily, although not always willing, drawing attention to the armed group. Sometimes, there was an additional gain in publicity, when the released hostages published their experiences in book-length memoirs (Duarte, 1983; Quintin, Marinova and Cottier, 1994).

In some cases, the liberation of hostages was made conditional upon negotiation with official diplomats, forcing foreign governments into the recognition of UNITA. The most spectacular case in this regard was the capture of 66 Czechoslovakians, working on the hydroelectric and paper-mill complex in Alto Catumbela, in March 1983. They were released only upon direct negotiation with Czechoslovakia's Deputy Foreign Minister, Stanislav Svoboda (James, 1992, 121–2).

The success of UNITA's broad reorganisation process as well as its strategic reorientation was mirrored in the significant expansion of its military operations in the year of 1981 to 1983. While hitherto the armed group had operated exclusively in the Southern Provinces of Moxico and Cuando Cubango and its ancient core regions of Bié and Huambo, it now began to stretch beyond those limits, choosing a broader range of targets. As George points out, in 1983, UNITA launched every type of operation from small-scale raids to full-scale assaults on garrisons . The August of 1983 saw the first major confrontation between MPLA and UNITA forces since the end of the "Second Liberation War".[74] Half a year later, in March 1984, FALA troops raided the coastal town of Sumbe in the Province of Cuanza Sul, less than 200 miles south of Luanda (George, 2005, 116; James, 1992, 184–7), and by the end of August, Savimbi announced being in Luanda by the end of the year (James, 1992, 117).

By the mid-1980s, UNITA had, thus, turned from a nuisance into seriously destabilising factor. Yet, despite Savimbi's announcement, that was backed by some successful sabotage operations in the capital,[75] it is unlikely that taking Luanda was the actual objective. At the time, foreign involvement in Angola had increased dramatically: around 50,000 Cubans were stationed in the country (George, 2005, 303), while SADF troops had invaded the South. Hence, it seems more probable that UNITA's operations in fact aimed at winning a promising bargaining position.

Yet, despite the armed groups' improved strategic positions, these hopes did not materialise. Acknowledging that the conflict between the government and UNITA was entangled with South Africa's fight against SWAPO in Namibia, the MPLA government started to engage in negotiations with South Africa and the United States. The objective was to bring about a SADF withdrawal, in exchange for the departure of the Cuban troops, hoping that, bereaved of its most important ally, UNITA would disintegrate.

After a period of strenuous and frequently disrupted negotiations that had been overshadowed by a series of intensive, yet inconclusive military

74 The battle for Cangamba (called Candongo in James, 1992), was high in losses. According to George, it was the bloodiest stand-off in the civil war until 1991, yet of inconclusive outcome. Having lost at least 1,100 men in a nine-day siege, UNITA called for South African air support, that eventually destroyed the town. Withdrawing from the site of combat, both sides claimed victory (James, 1992, 166–9; George, 2005, 115).

75 In 1984, FALA troops damaged ships in the Luandan harbour and hit Luanda's power station, depriving the capital of electricity and water for several days James, 1992, 117–8.

confrontations,[76] the New York Accords were signed on 22 December 1988, provisioning the withdrawal of South African and Cuban troops.

Yet, the withdrawal of UNITA's most important supporter did not, as observers as well the Angolan government might have hoped, lead to the breakdown of the armed group. Yet, instead, fighting intensified. UNITA held its ground and even expanded its operations. The efforts finally granted what had probably been the objective of the fighting the whole way long: direct negotiations with the MPLA government.

5.3 Disintegration and decline: 1989–2002

UNITA's entering into direct negotiations with the Angolan government coincides with a turning point in world history. The first, if still unsuccessful, negotiations in Gbadolite took place in 1989,[77] the year of the fall of the Berlin Wall that introduced the end of the Cold War. Hence, the efforts to end civil war in Angola became part of the era of peacemaking, dawning in the early 1990s and the associated revival of liberal values (Kriesberg, 2007, 34–8).

Quickly it turned out, however, that the prospect of an end of the conflict plunged the armed group into internal crisis. It led to the emergence of internal conflicts, which the armed group's leadership tried to control with restrictive, and eventually violent means. While before, UNITA's organisational evolution had been driven by conflict and competition with outside forces—the colonial state, FNLA and MPLA—, the prospect of peacemaking launched internal conflicts that would become decisive to the armed group's destiny. While until the early 1990s, the development could be described in terms of adaptive structure formation, its last stage is marked by disintegration and decline.

76 As in the 'Second Liberation War', the military stalemate was eventually solved by a major foreign intervention. The latter culminated in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale 1987/88, the second largest military confrontation in African history (George, 2005, 203). In this massive clash between SADF and FAPLA-Cuban forces, UNITA responded to SADF command, serving as part of the infantry in the South African assaults (ibid., 213). It suffered a high number of casualties, prompting the accusation that its combatants had been used as canon fodder and putting a strain on its relations with South Africa (ibid., 234).

77 Conference of Gbadolite in June 1989. The ceasefire agreed upon was soon be broken (James, 1992, 243–5).

The reason for this was straightforward: a peace accord would decide about the fate of several ten thousands of combatants and their respective dependants. Many of them had known, for a decade or more, no other life than their life with UNITA. Understandably, the prospect of an end of the conflict raised uncertainty among them. At the same time, part of the armed group's leadership came to be intrigued by the prospect of peace and participation in an incumbent government.

These conflictive preferences tore up an abyss between UNITA's leadership and its rank-and-file, that became visible as soon as in 1989. In the wake of the Gbadolite conference, rumours spread that Savimbi had agreed into voluntary exile as part of the peace agreement and accepted several million US-dollars in compensation. They spurred agitation and anxiety among UNITA's followers, and Savimbi had trouble to defend himself against these allegations. In response, UNITA leadership organised the II Special Congress, which took place in September the same year. It was devoted entirely to the conditions of a possible peace accord with the MPLA government. In his opening speech, Savimbi displayed a radical refusal of exile as condition for a peace treaty (UNITA, 1989; Savimbi, 1997).

This affirmation calmed the spirits of UNITA's members, yet, it did not solve the problem in the armed group's leadership which was divided about which course to take. While at the II Special Congress Savimbi had committed himself to a rather uncompromising course, some of UNITA's high-ranking officials were more inclined to acquiesce to conditions, if it would bring an end to the fighting and provided them with opportunities of government participation. Hence, still during the Bicesse negotiations, several UNITA generals defected and integrated into the FAPLA. The following year, two high-ranking political leaders left the organisation, accusing Savimbi of having ordered the assassination of two other internal critics within the leadership (Balencie and LaGrange, 1997, 629; Messiant, 1995, 187).

Yet, these internal tensions did not instantly affect UNITA's military performance. Despite the provisions in the Bicesse Accords, UNITA never seriously demobilised its troops. In a group interview in a village in Huambo province people told how, in the weeks before the elections, UNITA had "simulated" demobilisation to UN observers, who had been all too willing to buy into the charade: when officials of the UNAVEM II mission arrived in the area, UNITA would present some demobilised soldiers, lined up on the road. Yet, the villagers knew that entire units were still grouped in the adja-

cent hills (Interview, 2005g). When MPLA was declared being the election winner, the armed group was quick to react.

Due to the disproportionate demobilisation of government forces after the Bicesse accords, UNITA was able to gain advantage. It occupied and held large territories, among them, for the first time, a number of cities. Within the weeks following the defeat at the polls, it seized five out of eighteen provincial capitals, and besieged a number of others.[78] In March 1993, UNITA celebrated its symbolically most important victory by capturing Huambo (s.a., 2004, 90). The town was the urban centre in the heartland of UNITA's traditional core constituency, the Ovimbundu. In 1975, it had been declared the capital of UNITA's and FNLA's alternative Democratic People's Republic of Angola.

Yet, in the mid-term, this military success would become a turning point in the armed group's history, because it initiated the loss of support among those founding UNITA's legitimacy:

There were, on the one hand, the observers, hitherto sympathetic to the armed group. Following the re-initiation of civil war after the elections, international perception of UNITA changed dramatically. By defying the result of the polls, UNITA, once hailed as a hope for democracy in southern Africa, had become the spoiler of a peace process. In the radically reformed semantic set-up of world politics, UNITA's continued fighting could no longer be justified. Throughout the 1990s, the armed group lost its outside legitimacy, and the credibility of its political aspirations waned. By the end of the 1990s, not UNITA's political demands but its activities in illegal diamond trade had become the major issue of discussion. This change in international perception was most vividly mirrored in the U.N. stance toward the armed group: between 1993 and 1997, the Security Council launched a series of sanctions directed against UNITA, prohibiting the acquisition of military equipment and fuel (UNSC, 1993), restricting the travel of its officials and closing its foreign offices (UNSC, 1997), and finally prohibiting its diamond trade (UNSC, 1998). Yet, the loss of international support was not only a loss of outside legitimacy. It brought about serious problems in the material reproduction of the armed group. In the interviews, this was mirrored especially in the accounts from UNITA's capital Jamba, which declined in the wake of the failed election process. One interviewee, for example told, how

78 The occupied provincial capitals were Caxito, Huambo, M'bana Kongo, Ndalantando and Uíge. Besides, the armed group sieged Kuito, Luena and Malanga (Hodges, 2001, 15).

after the elections there was suddenly no food in the city and people had to start to cultivate fields (Interview, 2005l).

The war of the early 1990s did not only lead to the loss of support in the international environment, it also led to a disenchantment of its Angolan support milieus. Several interviewees, who had experienced UNITA rule during this period expressed disappointment. Throughout the 1980s UNITA had presented itself as the hope for better life in Angola. Yet, now, coming into power, they did not deliver what they had promised (Interview, 2005g; Interview, 2005b). Life in the UNITA occupied territories became hard over time, as the government started to cut off these regions. People suffered extreme supply shortages, especially in the towns, where there were no means of agricultural subsistence. The famine ravaging Huambo during UNITA's rule of the city is still vividly remembered (Interview, 2005k; Interview, 2005b; Interview, 2005g; Interview, 2006f).

The loss of support in UNITA's most important environments was paralleled by a dramatic change of the military situation: in the mid 1990s, UNITA's military dominance led to a major effort of the government to enlarge its own troops. In 1998, the Angolan army had become the second largest in Africa, topped only by the South African military (Hodges and Legum, 1976, 63–4). In November 1994 the government re-took Huambo and started to drive UNITA units out of the country's central regions (Interview, 2005k).[79] An important element in this strategy was to physically deprive UNITA of its popular support in the rural areas by forced dislocation. In the site of field research, entire villages were forcefully dislocated to the urban centres, where people had to life in improvised IDP-camps (Interview, 2006f; Interview, 2005f; Interview, 2005g; Interview, 2005h).

The Lusaka Protocol, signed in 1994, introduced a respite in the fighting. As pointed out before, the Protocol stipulated UNITA's integration into the political process, including its participation in the government. Yet, within the organisation it intensified the internal conflict between those urging for an end of the struggle and those insisting on continued fighting. In 1997, the internal disputes led to the formal exclusion of three high-ranking officials, among them the armed group's economic expert, Fatima Roque. In the end, splinter groups emerged.[80] Against this background of impending fragmen-

79 The success of the government's new strategy culminated in the destruction of Jamba in 1999.

80 In September 1998, five UNITA ministers, among them an ex-secretary general, founded UNITA-*Renovada* ("Renewed UNITA"), the most prominent among these break-away

tation, coercion rose to become the central mechanism for securing loyalty at the top of the organisation (cf. Bridgland, 1995).

The deterioration of the military situation and the fragmentation at the top of the armed group resulted in dispersion of UNITA's rank and file. After the destruction of military bases and especially after the destruction of Jamba in 1999 (APM, 2000), many of them strayed through the Angolan bush. With UNITA's formal structures disintegrating, they began to organise in small units of survival, often based on family and other pre-existing social ties. Many of them later regrouped in refugee camps or the so-called gathering areas before demobilisation (Interview, 2006b).

When Savimbi met his death in early 2002, UNITA already was in a state of decomposition. And accounts from the last days of its existence as an armed group eerily echo those from the beginning.

This chapter has traced UNITA's organisational evolution from its foundation as a militant anti-colonial organisation in 1966 to its disintegration as a fighting force. Based on the concept of organisation, it has been shown that from the beginning, UNITA's organisational set-up was complex as it straddled the local and the international dimension of world society. It was this complexity that had secured the persistence of the armed group after its military defeat in 1976. Furthermore, it has been shown that from its early days, UNITA's stance was founded upon two milieu's of support: on the one hand, constituencies within the country. And on the other, international supporters. Both were crucial in securing the reproduction of the organisation, in material terms as well as in the symbolic dimension. As supporters became members, they also contributed to the social reproduction of the armed group. The decline of the armed group is inseparably associated with the loss of support in both milieus.

Yet, as mentioned earlier, this chapter has addressed but one of the two major organisational challenges: the adaptation to the changing environment. This chapter has described UNITA's differentiated organisational structure. Yet, it did not explain, how the proper functioning of the latter had been secured. To put it differently: the problem of securing and conditioning membership has been left out so far. Going back to the concept of the life-world, this question will be addressed in the following.

fractions (s.a., 2004).

6. Staging normality: UNITA as a life-world

Gangs of men, dancing to the tune of violence—such is our common conception of armed groups, especially in African conflicts. Yet, the violent images transmitted evening after evening by news stations around the globe represent but a fraction of armed groups' reality. Those acts of violence are embedded in a network of rules regulating the exercise of physical force. The efficiency armed groups attain in controlling the use of violence, in guarding against its unintended consequences and in conditioning combatants' behaviour in this sense is crucial to their success (Schlichte, 2009, 57–84). Contingent upon the socio-political and cultural context, systems of rules and punishments emerge, as armed groups attempt to face this challenge. In the case of UNITA, this challenge was met by deliberately engaging life-worldly structures in an attempt to stabilise the functioning of the formal organisation.

In chapter 3.2 it has been pointed out that a central problem of any organisation is to condition its terms of membership, i.e. to induce compliant behaviour among its members. In the case of UNITA, this problem was dealt with by integrating life-worldly structures: the UNITA combatants came to live not as the male bands described above, but within social structures mimicking "normal" social life of family and agricultural work.

The initial background for these developments was a stigmatisation of the group in the wake of its military defeat in 1976: the new military and political situation had led to a spatial polarisation of the two main opponents. The self-appointed party in power, MPLA, consolidated its power bases the cities, while the military core of the defeated UNITA fled to the scarcely populated regions in the far south east of the country. In Angola, those regions not yet appropriated by humans, at best passed through by travellers are referred to as *mata*. "There was nothing but trees and wild animals", as an interviewee, who had witnessed UNITA's expulsion from the cities, explained (Interview, 2005l). This hostility of the natural environment

quickly translated into a hostile popular discourse, denouncing the armed group's bush existence (cf. Brinkman, 2003). Fusing colonial rhetoric and traditional beliefs, life in the cities and villages was praised as tough but civilised, while UNITA combatants and their families were branded to live "in the bush like wild animals" (Interview, 2005l). Hence, living with UNITA came to equal foreswearing humanity.[81]

The reorganisation process following UNITA's military defeat after Angolan independence seems to have been guided by an effort to prevent the armed group from actually becoming the feral bush guerrilla as which it was already represented in dominant discourse. As in any armed group, regulating combatants' behaviour became a central objective of UNITA's organisational structure. Yet, the armed group approached this problem in a very particular way. The system of behavioural regulation was not restricted to the immediate situations of battle and confrontation. Instead it was aimed at all domains of the combatant's life. In the attempt to condition combatants' behaviour, UNITA leadership set out to design and control their entire life-world. In a far-reaching project of social engineering "normal", in the sense of civilian, life was staged in UNITA's military bases, as if to defy the threatening wilderness of the surrounding *mata*.

The preceding chapter analysed how UNITA dealt with the challenge to continuously differentiate from and responded to a changing environment. This discussion addressed the first of two challenges, which, according to organisational theory, organisations systematically confront in the process of their auto-reproduction. The focus of the present chapter is the second challenge: the conditioning of membership. We are going to see that to meet this challenge UNITA as an organisation deliberately engaged pre-existing social structures. In the literature on Angola, the latter are commonly discussed in terms of the "social roots" of the armed group.[82] This chapter, however, will show, that the concept of roots is misleading, as these pre-existing structures did not only play a role as historical origins of the armed group, but also as functional elements of its organisation. The analysis will show how, from the 1970s onwards, the UNITA deliberately engaged life-worldly structures in

81 For more on the relationship between "physical" space and social order see for example Pierre Bourdieu's considerations on the issue (Bourdieu, 1991; for a modified English version see Bourdieu, 1999).

82 This issue has been dealt with most importantly in the works of Marcum (1978, 160–9) and Heywood (1989; 2000). See also Péclard, 2009.

an attempt to secure its social and material reproduction as well as to facilitate the normalisation of violent conflict among its members.[83]

In a first step, the general mechanisms of securing the supply with combatants is described. In a second step, it will be shown how the conduct of combatants was conditioned by engaging social structures of non-combatant everyday life. The last sub-section sketches the long-term social impact of these organisational strategies, a discussion that will be accentuated in chapter 7. To conclude, it will be shown how the systems theory concept of *interpenetration* might serve to conceptually bring together the organisational and life-worldly dynamics described in this and the preceding chapter.

6.1 "I have always been a soldier"[84]: recruiting members

UNITA's efforts to create an life-worldly environment to the armed group's formal structures are most pronounced in its strategies for recruiting members and conditioning their behaviour. Those strategies altered with the armed group's changeful history: during the independence struggle, the mobilisation of pre-existing social ties was the central recruitment mechanism. As pointed out above, the people of the central and southern regions had been utterly underrepresented in the FNLA and MPLA struggle. Nevertheless, in these regions, too, a couple of small, mostly tribal-based organisations had emerged with the advancement of Angolan interests at the core of their programmes. Playing on his own Ovimbundu identity, Savimbi succeeded in rallying these leaders for his cause, which then in turn mobilised their own small constituencies to form the UNITA core organisation. The nexus of people educated at the Protestant mission schools, along with associations of railway and port workers were decisive in this process. Yet, as we are going to see in the following, when UNITA transformed itself into an insurgent armed group in an intra-state war, this recruitment pattern changed.

83 As the objective of this chapter is to make a point about the particular organisational set-up of UNITA, the discussion focusses on the period before the disintegration of the armed group.

84 "*Sempre era militar*" (Interview, 2006p). The interviewee had joined UNITA in 1979 and had been demobilised in 2002.

As the organisation grew, and especially, as the armed forces expanded in size and scope of their operations, ethno-linguistic ties and similar patterns of socialisation were no longer enough to supply UNITA with reliable combatants. Hence, in the second phase of the armed group's history, from the late 1970s onwards, a second mechanism for engaging and binding members prevailed. It was the involuntary recruitment of adolescents, more commonly referred to as "kidnapping": boys and young men as well as girls and young women were taken from their families in villages or at roadblocks. They were brought to Jamba or to other military bases. Usually, they received primary education, and were then prepared for military life. Eventually, the boys were integrated into the armed forces, while most of the girls came to provide assistance services, acting as porters, nurses, cooks or teachers.

Considering this practice, it is, however, important to note that the actions commonly referred to as "kidnapping" varied heavily regarding the degree of physical force involved. Well documented are the cases in which adolescents were violently abducted at roadblocks, in villages or during fieldwork (see for example MSF, 2004). Such stories were also told by interviewees during field research. One woman, for example told, how she had been separated from her family during a UNITA attack and taken to Jamba at the age of nine. There, she grew up in what she called "boarding school" (*internato*), together with many other children who shared her fate (Interview, 2006o; similar Interview, 2006l). Yet, with the expansion of territorial control in the 1980s, the armed group began to mimic state behaviour. UNITA leadership sought to channel recruitment into an orderly process of military enlistment. Recruiting combatants then became an organised exchange between UNITA representatives and the *soba*, the traditional head of the village: UNITA officials arrived at appointed times during the year. The local leaders would already have chosen a group of boys and girls to leave with them (Interview, 2005g).[85] Yet, as such orderly recruitment processes, were dependent on the military and administrative hold of the armed group over a given territory, this order faded with the loss of control. Thus, interviewees in a village that had experienced changing territorial control told: "In a first

85 It must be highlighted, however, that even during this period of highly formalised recruitment, the kidnapping-practice was never fully abandoned, presumably to satisfy short-term recruitment demands.

phase, they would ask [for recruits], but later they only encircled the village and selected adolescents" (Interview, 2005h).[86]

Whether forcefully abducted or orderly recruited—the impulse of the abductees to return home was understandably strong, as life with UNITA was full of hardships. Accordingly, severe sanctions were imposed on any runaway attempt. As UNITA official put it: "Who tried to run was shot." (Interview, 2006t). Yet, as emphasised by Klaus Schlichte (2009), in the mid- and long run, no social order can be upheld at gunpoint. More sophisticated techniques were employed to condition the conduct of UNITA's combatants. They will be explored in the following.

6.2. "Weapon, hoe and pen"[87]: forming the UNITA combatant

The forceful recruitment, of adolescents and young adults secured a constant influx of members and provided the armed group with the additional combatants needed for its expanding military activities. Yet, it did not in itself secure the armed groups efficiency as a military, political and administrative force. Although the death threat prevented desertions, it could not, in the mid- and long-run, ensure compliant behaviour of those recruited.[88] The latter problem was addressed by creating a socio-structural framework that conditioned the members' behaviour according to the goals of the organisation. Echoing the denunciations of UNITA's savage life in the bush, the guiding idea seems to have been to establish transitivity and thus to guard against the derailing of violence by deliberately creating "normal" experiences.

86 Interestingly, in the interview this quote refers to UNITA and the government army alike. It continues " […], MPLA from the age of 18, UNITA from the age of 10" (Own Interview, 2005h). This illustrates that in many contexts, the government's competitive advantage in legitimately raising recruits through mandatory military service exists but in theory. Where the control of the state is weak, government armies face the same problems as non-state armed groups.

87 "*Arma, enxada e lapis*" (Interview, 2006r).

88 Turning usual civilians into effective combatants is a major problem of any popular army. Bourke describes how, starting from World War II, "training men to kill" became a subject of applied science research in the big armies of the world (Bourke, 1999, 93–8).

In this regard, the armed group's leadership had learned a lesson from the period of anti-colonial struggle. During this phase, UNITA had earned a reputation for wanton violence, despite its known lack of armament. Villagers in the south had come to fear UNITA because it was said to burn down villages. And even in the files of the colonial secret police, PIDE, the armed group had been characterised by its lack of equipment and its inclination to mutilate people (Brinkman, 2005, 73, 75).

Even if these allegations might have been exaggerated to some extend, this perception of UNITA threatened to undermine the legitimacy of the armed group. This is why UNITA came to get involved in a project of social engineering, attempting to condition its member's behaviour.

Most rigourously, this project was realised in the military bases. In sharp contrast to the common image of armed groups, UNITA soldiers there were embedded in the structures of an "ordinary" life of family, education and agricultural work. *Arma, enxada e lapis*—weapon, hoe and pen were said to be the tools of the UNITA combatant. It meant that, beside participating in military campaigns, he had to attend school and to work on the fields for defined periods of time. In the ideal-typical case, deployment to the battlefield was limited to three months, followed by six months of agricultural work and school attendance in a military base (Interview, 2006r; Interview, 2006t).

True to the principles established during the period of anti-colonial struggle, education remained a central objective in UNITA's overall project and the profession of the teacher was highly respected. During their stays in the bases, the rank-and-file of the armed group should be trained, at least, to read and write (Interview, 2006l). For the higher ranks, special courses were designed. Every cadre-commander (see 5.2), for example, had to pass an extensive programme, including a stay at the Centre of Agronomic Eduction (Interview, 2006r).

Beside this emphasis on education and agricultural work, there was the leadership's insistence on embedding its combatants within families. Each one was obliged, or, if necessary, forced, to marry and to have children. For this reason, UNITA kidnapped male and female adolescents alike. Echoing the allegations of savage life in the bush, UNITA leadership justified this practice, saying it wanted to prevent "prostitution". What they truly meant was the spread of uncontrolled (sexual) relations between women and man. Accordingly, everyone in the UNITA bases was obliged to choose a spouse (Interview, 2006l).

Yet, beside ordering the relation of sexes in the military bases along familiar and habitualised patterns, the practice had an obvious strategic advantage: starting a (new) family, and especially having children reduced the abductees inclination to seek a way back into their former lives. The loyalties and emotional attachments generated in the the process of human reproduction were exploited to enhance the cohesion of the armed group.[89]

Yet, especially for those forcefully abducted at a later age, this obligation could become an emotional burden, as one interviewee explained, who had been kidnapped on a roadblock in 1983, while travelling to visit a relative (Interview, 2006l): at the time of abduction, she already had had three children. The smallest one, a baby still, was with her when she was caught. Her husband was staying with the other two in Bailundo. As long the war lasted, she never saw them again. She was taken to a UNITA base in the province of Kwanza-Sul, where she had to remarry, and had six more children. Yet, this marriage did not outlast the war. At the time of the interview, she was living without a husband, together with her two youngest daughters and five adolescents boys, supposedly orphans, who had also been abducted by UNITA.

As in the so-called civilian society, the family became the basic social unit in the UNITA bases. The importance of the former was underscored by a system of rules designed to uphold family values. Weddings of the military staff had to be approved of by the commando. The bride had to pass an educational programme and the ceremony took place in front of the combatant's respective unit. In the perception of the female interviewee cited above, the combatants' marriages were "watched upon" by the political leadership (ibid.). This perception is confirmed by a former political co-ordinator as being a deliberately designed effect: according to him, the rules applying to the combatants were particularly strict, because otherwise "the military man likes to fool around" (Interview, 2006t).

The organisational efficiency created by exploiting family bonds is vividly illustrated in another account of the female interviewee cited above: she told that during the hasty demobilisation process in the run-up to the elections in 1992 (see 5.3), the rank and file members were "allowed" to leave the bases, but they could take only one child with them—so as to make sure they came back (ibid.).

89 An extensive study on this issue published in 1945, comes to the conclusion that these emotional bonds are most efficient if they mirror the affection within a family, with a loving father being the central figure (Bourke, 1999, 145).

The life-worldly structures were backed by a draconian jurisdiction. There were strict disciplinary measures for domestic violence, adultery and rapes, but also for robberies, drinking or incivilities (Interview, 2006l; Interview, 2006t). The punishments were designed not only to achieve compliance of the transgressor, but also as deterrent: public whippings, "imprisonment" in burrows, followed by "educational measures" were the most common castigation (Interview, 2005d). As the UNITA official put it: "The punishment was for education" (Interview, 2006t). Especially during the first years of UNITA's insurgent struggle these measures have been most rigorously employed. Yet, as the UNITA official cited above explained, their importance diminished over time. The order had become self-enforcing. The occasional affirmation of the punitive power was enough to uphold it.

As in the Foucauldian perspective on society,[90] the threat of punishment had come to be incorporated into the social, it had become part of a life-world taken for granted. From being actually perceived as a threat, it had merged into the horizon of the life-world. In a process of de-differentiation, it had come to rest in the back of intentional subjectivity.

It was thus by mimicking "normal" social life of family, education and agricultural work, yet under the auspices and control of the organisation, that UNITA's leadership tried to reliably and durably condition the behaviour of its members. Nowhere were those efforts more pronounced than in Jamba. UNITA's self-proclaimed capital did not only harbour the armed group's military headquarters, but was also the epicentre of its social project. As described in chapter 3, it was a city with concrete roads and houses, with running water and electricity, with medical services and a school system, that did not only include primary and secondary schools, but also institutes of higher education for the armed group's high-ranking cadres. Clergymen of all major Angolan denominations provided church services and pastoral care. Thus, Jamba became the symbol of the well-ordered civilian life within UNITA. With living standards well above those in the rest of Angola, in Jamba the illusion of a civilian normality was almost perfect. The order as well as the orderliness of social life of the locality inspired social organisation in all the UNITA bases.

The success of UNITA's administrative strategies in conditioning their combatant's behaviour is mirrored in a particular warrior *habitus* that could

90 On the importance of punishments for establishing discipline see Foucault's seminal work *Discipline and Punish* (1977, especially ch. 3).

still be observed during field research among the armed group's veterans. It is dominated not so much by martial values such as strength and skilfulness, but by self-discipline and education. Its prototype is the high-ranking veteran, so polished in his demeanour and so elegant in his speech that his thirty years past as a military man become almost inconceivable (Koloma Beck and Schlichte, 2007b; Koloma Beck and Schlichte, 2007a).

6.3 Like from a different world: the success of UNITA's social project

A survey conducted eighteen months after the Luena memorandum among demobilised UNITA combatants[91] in the Central Highlands further illustrates the scope of the social project of this armed group: the average demobilised had entered the armed group at the age of seventeen, had spent seventeen years with UNITA and was now around thirty-six years old. Some entered at a much younger age (from three years onwards), to spent their lives with the armed group. More than ninety per cent were married, most of them by common law; eighty-one per cent were accompanied by their spouses as they came to the resettlement areas, seventy-six per cent brought children with them (ibid., chapter 2).

From the late 1990s onwards, during the time of crisis, it became apparent that those forcibly recruited at an early age formed the backbone of UNITA's organisation. During this period, the armed group's leadership collapsed. In the end, it was reduced to a close circle of people coming from Savimbi's Bailundo clan. The rest had either deserted to join the MPLA government or was marginalised or had simply been "eliminated" (Bridgland, 1995). Yet, this process of disintegration at the top did not directly strike through to the many rank-and-file, socialised into the organisation. Here it was just with the increasing number of military defeats, especially after the destruction of Jamba in 2000, that a process of decomposition set in. Disoriented and left by their leadership, UNITA troops collapsed into small units

91 Note that the vast majority of those considered as "combatants" and could thus register for demobilisation (95 per cent in the cited survey) were men, in spite of the fact that most of UNITA's women have been combatants in the broader sense, providing rear support as porters, cooks, ect. (Gomes Porto, Parsons and Alden, 2007, 40–1).

of survival. Their loyalty, however, frequently remained unbroken, until present day:

During the field research, the women and men who had spent their lives with UNITA appeared like aliens in today's Angolan society. Talking to ex-UNITA people in Bailundo, where a large number of demobilised is concentrated, was like meeting people from a different world. When they spoke admiringly and full of hope about "our president", it took a little moment of confusion to understand, that the president they were talking about was, in fact, dead. They appeared like stuck in between a society that had ceased to exist and a life in a state by whom they felt rejected (Interview, 2006o; Interview, 2006p; Interview, 2006q; Koloma Beck, 2006).

This situation of UNITA's demobilised combatants shows to what extend the armed group's social project had been successful. For those, who had come to join the armed group in the late 1970s or early 1980s, UNITA had become their family—not in the figurative, but in the literal sense of the word. Through more or less coercive recruiting methods, combined with the sanctions imposed on runaway-attempts, the armed group had succeeded in cutting them off from their milieus of origin. Afterwards they had been successfully integrated in a parallel life-world. The latter mimicked the familiar life-worldly structures of family and community life, of education and agricultural work. "Normality" was staged so skilfully, that the extent to which they had been alienated from the majority society was revealed but after UNITA's disintegration.

In the survey cited above, ninty-six per cent of the 603 UNITA ex-combatants interviewed had been native *umbundu* speakers (Gomes Porto et al., 2007, 41). They thus belonged to the ethno-linguistic group, which is said to have been the backbone of the armed group. This chapter, however, should have shown that shared language and origins are no sufficient explanation for the strong loyalty which can be found until today among many of UNITA's rank and file. Neither are the more sympathetic interpretations showing UNITA as the advocate of the interests of a politically underrepresented people. Both aspects were important sources for UNITA's success in the 1980s, yet, neither of them could secure the armed group's efficiency.

The analysis should also have demonstrated to what extent the organisation perspective on armed groups can be myopic. In the functioning of the armed group, formal structure was coupled with a deliberately set up life-worldly environment that became the home of the UNITA people. Transitivity was created by facilitating the continuation of familiar "civilian" ways

of living. The perpetuation of habitualised forms of behaviour in agricultural work and family life played a central role in this regard. Yet, maintaining these practices also meant to maintain related frameworks of identity and meaning formation. "*Arma, enxada e lapis*" meant that despite UNITA being an armed group, the existence of their members was explicitly not limited to a life in combat. UNITA's success throughout the 1980s was, hence, facilitated by a social project designed to secure the functioning of the formal organisational structures by embedding them in a life-world. The measures undertaken in this regard seem to echo Foucault's considerations on the establishment of "disciplines" in society. The combination of punishing mechanisms with unsuspicious activities such as education or medical care creates forms of "normal" everyday life, which conceal the coercive conditions of their emergence (cf. Foucault, 1977).

This chapter also demonstrated that the assumption of a clear-cut distinction between the combatant and the non-combatant milieu is elusive. Looking for a concept that might capture the relation between UNITA's formal organisation and the life-worldly structures it engaged, one could conceive the armed group in terms of a "greedy institution" described by Coser (1974) or along the lines of corporations, the predecessors of modern organisations, in which membership included the person in its totality. Yet, a weakness of both concepts is to downplay the high degree of formal organisation reached by the armed group. Another concept from social systems theory, however, might serve to capture both aspects: the concept of *interpenetration*. In Luhmann's work, the notion refers to a process by which the complexity of an environmental system is used for the set-up of another non-identical system. The former uses the stability and the regulatory mechanisms of the penetrating system so as to stabilise own instabilities. Most importantly, however, these structures are adopted without reflecting on them. The complexity of the penetrating system is internalised as an "unconsidered abstraction" (Luhmann, 1981, 157, my translation). It is in this sense that structures of the family or of village communities were engaged to serve the organisational objectives of UNITA, in particular the facilitation of systematic violent action. The penetrating structures of "ordinary" everyday life counterbalanced the potentially destabilising effects introduced by the experience of violence as a "performer", but also as a "target" or "observer".

The double-framed analysis of UNITA in this and preceding chapter attempted to reconstruct the social structures, which created transitivity in the experience of UNITA combatants and thus facilitated the systematic exercise

of violence. It has been shown that central in this regard was the interpenetration of UNITA's organisation with familiar structures from family and village life. Along with legitimising discourses, training and disciplinary regimes, they facilitated a process of adjustment in the sense of Dewey, by which belonging to the armed group and exercising violence turned into "ordinary" experiences.

7. "We lived in an eternal war"[92]: life in the warscapes[93]

Twenty-six years of civil war in Angola did not mean twenty-six years of incessant gunfire. It meant, however, the continuous presence of combatants and, consequently, the repeated interaction with them. In some places, these interactions occurred but occasionally. Yet, in the centres of war they took place regularly over more than a decade, and they led to the emergence of patterns. The Central Highlands, where most of the field research was carried out, was one of those centres, "feeding", as one interviewee put it, "the war machine" in the country (Interview, 2005b). As in the quote cited in the title of this chapter, people who lived through the war in that region at one point lost the perspective of the war ever ending. They attuned to the idea that the situation could go on forever. Or, in the words of another interviewee from that region: "At one point, the war situation turned to be normal" (Interview, 2005d). In the perspective of the non-combatants, the evolving civil war situation, hence, appeared as a change in the environment, to which they responded with variations in behaviour as well as in perception and cognition.

Having considered, in the last chapter, the normalisation of the violent conflict within the armed group UNITA, this chapter aims to analyse these dynamics in the non-combatant environment. Again, the overall objective is to understand how the civil war penetrated into the sphere of the everyday and turned into an "ordinary" experience. Responding to the interview data, the problem of violence will be in the focus of attention. Although the interview strategy deliberately did not focus on the problem of violence, but attempted to stimulate a conversation about the organisation of everyday life during the war, the experience of violence in the "observer"-mode turned out

92 "*Vivemos numa guerra eterna*" (Interview, 2005g).

93 The notion of "warscapes" has been coined by the anthropologist Carolyn Nordstrom to describe the comprehensive transformation of social structures through violent conflict (Nordstrom, 1997).

to be the most recurrent topic. Such exposure to violent action appeared in four different settings:

First, there were confrontations between combatants and non-combatants in rather classical theatres of guerrilla warfare, such as ambushes or roadblocks. Being an insurgent armed group, UNITA's strength was not in the battlefield; larger military operations occurred—such as raids or sieges on particular cities—yet, they were limited in time and space. However, the armed group developed and refined its guerrilla tactics, with road traffic and railway services being among the most popular targets. In some cases destruction was the explicit goal. In others, the ambush (also) served to abduct people as recruits or to confiscate goods, arms, vehicles, etc. Yet, in the interview data collected, such instances of military-strategic violence do not dominate. Of at least equal importance are instances in which violent action resulted from the armed groups' reproduction needs. More precisely, they were stimulated by their demand for fighters and basic material supplies, sometimes also by their need to secure the symbolic basis of their actions by presenting themselves as capable administrative powers.

Thus, the *second* context, in which combatants and non-combatants came to interact repeatedly, is the recruitment process: throughout the Angolan civil war, the number of those who started fighting out of conviction or choice has been rather small, except maybe for the very first period of civil war. On both sides, forced recruitment has been a common practice. As described in chapters 5 and 6, each of the armed forces levied troops in the areas under their control. This meant that while UNITA recruited almost exclusively in rural and peri-urban areas, the government enlisted soldiers in the urban centres. As mentioned before, over time, isomorphic tendencies between the government and UNITA troops prevailed, i. e. as the war went on, the recruitment practices of both parties came to resemble one another: UNITA increased its degree of formalisation, while the government came to rely on irregular forces in their attempt to defeat the opponent.[94]

The *third* important context of regular interaction were the armed agents' attempts to mobilise resources within the non-combatant environment. As

94 The expansion of the police forces in the second half of the 1990s is the most salient evidence for this irregularisation of the government troops. Hodges points out that the wage bill of the police came to exceed the one of the military, which was due to the expansion of irregular forces such as the so-called *ninjas* (Hodges, 2001, 63–4). Interviewees also told that draft age regulations were frequently disregarded and teenagers forced to join the government army (Interview, 2006f).

pointed out in the preceding chapter, from the late 1970s onwards, UNITA's formal organisation included an administrative branch whose task was to manage most of the armed group's relationship with the populations under its control. Its major concern was to administer agricultural production in a way so as to provide for production surpluses and achieve the armed group's self-sufficiency. According to the armed group's own publications, this goal was attained in a centrally administered crop-raising project co-ordinating the activities of about fifty-three production sites, totalling twenty-five thousand hectares (cited in James, 1992, 98). Yet, in an interview, a high-ranking UNITA official conceded that, more often than not things have been organised along more pragmatic lines, with peasants being obliged to hand in a portion of their harvest (Interview, 2006t). Despite serious efforts, the self-sufficiency of the armed group remained a moving target and the increasing formalisation could not always secure the supply of the combatants. In the interviews referring to experiences in rural areas, there are numerous accounts of food and other items simply being stolen (Interview, 2005a; Interview, 2005f). In some cases, as in the account from the introduction, badly supplied soldiers secretly turned to their families in an attempt to cover their basic needs (Interview, 2005m).

Sometimes, however, raids and looting seem to have been not the result of the combatants deprivation, but had been conceived as a form of retribution or a disciplining measure (Interview, 2005a). The latter were the *forth* context of systematic interaction between combatants and non-combatants. UNITA as well as the government employed disciplinary measures to display power and to bring the population to heel. Yet, the significance of such measures was not limited to the pragmatic importance of compliant behaviour. It was, instead, part of the parties' quest for basic legitimacy. The German sociologist Karl Popitz used this notion to refer to the legitimacy exuding from the very functioning of an order, as distinguished from "disorder" (Popitz, 1986, 33). Most important in this regard were punishments, used to chastise violations of the internal order as well as to castigate enemy collaboration. In the sphere of UNITA's influence, corporal punishments, usually executed in public, were a regular measure. The government, by contrast, relied on common mechanisms of state authority such as detention and imprisonment (Interview, 2005g).

The image of war violence conferred by in the accounts from field research differs strongly from the images of violent conflict associated to state of emergency-thinking. Only rarely, the interviewees described their experi-

ence of war as an exposure to violent chaos. Instead, the focus of their narratives is on their re-organisation of everyday life in view of the presence of armed groups and the latent or actual threat of violence. The data shows how the continued interaction between combatants and non-combatants stimulated processes of the structure (trans-)formation. In view of this, two dynamics can be distinguished, which differ in the degree of agency involved: on the one hand, the interaction between the armed groups and the non-combatants became itself a structured process; non-combatants, hence, accommodated, in a Deweyan sense, to armed groups' rule. On the other hand, experiencing violence as an "observer" or a "target" introduced adaptive processes in routinised everyday activities among non-combatants; adaptation processes developed, whose primary objective was to preserve agency under difficult circumstances. The dynamics of adaption are in the focus of section 7.1. In section 7.2, however, we are going to see that although these normalisation processes were creative and far-reaching, they were not without limits; section 7.3, finally, shows how accomodation to armed groups' rule significantly changed broader social structures.

7.1 Defending everyday life: adaptations to civil war violence

Armed group action in Angola introduced changes in the environment of the non-combatants to which they had to respond. The most important of these changes was the exposure to violent action. The latter changed the patterns of action, but also of perception and cognition, but as we are going to see in the following, these changes did not take place as a sudden rupture with habitual practices. On the contrary, the alterations can be best understood in terms of adaptation, as conceived by Dewey; they are modifications attempting to change the environment in a way so as to preserve existing behavioural, cognitive and perceptual patterns. They were designed to facilitate the preservation of accustomed practices and, thus, the perpetuation of a transitive flow of the everyday consciousness. Put differently, they were intended to preserve agency under the conditions of civil war.

Structurally, four different types of adaptations can be distinguished, which will be discussed in more detail in this section: first, modifications of practices designed to avoid becoming a "target" of indiscriminate violence; second, modifications designed to avoid becoming a "target" of more per-

sonalised forms of violence; third, the implementation of practices designed to cope with experiences of violence.

Beside these three forms of adaptation, the interviews, however, disclose a fourth recurrent (although not frequent) response to the exposure to violent action: it is the incorporation of the exercise of violence into the range of possible actions. This change is not covered by the concept of adaptation, as it does not relate primarily to the sphere of action, but immediately involves frameworks of meaning formation, i. e. patterns of world- and self-conception. In the empirical data, such instances appear as borderline cases, which point to the limits of normalisation processes. These dynamics will be discussed in section 7.2.

Avoidance of indiscriminate violence

In the interviews, one important response to armed groups' operations in the non-combatant environment are actions designed to avoid the experience of violence as a "target" or "observer". These actions, however, differed, depending on whether the threat perceived was an indiscriminate or a personal one. The perception of a threat of indiscriminate violence first and foremost led to the rearrangement of activities so as to side-step the actions of armed agents. In the focus of these rearrangements were subsistence activities such as farming or trading. They affected the material, the spatial as well as the temporal dimension of social life.

The interviews suggest that temporal adaptations were the first to occur. During the hot phases of the civil war, temporal patterns of the military activities prevailed. People knew at what times during the day war violence was most likely to strike and tried to stay in their homes or other save places during these periods. The necessary activities, such as agricultural work or trading in the market, were carried out during those lulls in the fighting (Interview, 2005d; Interview, 2005e; Interview, 2006h; Interview, 2006n). On the one hand, these temporal patterns were crucial in maintaining everyday procedures, yet, on the other hand, they created a vulnerability. Well remembered in Huambo, for example, was the bombing of one of the towns biggest markets during such a period of truce (Koloma Beck, 2006).

These adaptations in the temporal patterns of everyday life were a response to more or less well ordered military activities. Another form of adaptation related to the material order of the life-world and attempted to minimise ex-

posure to more unpredictable occurrences of violence. Some interviewees told how they rebuilt their houses to guard against house raids and looting: additional walls or concealed holes in the floor were used to hide items, or even people from the intrusions of combatants (Interview, 2006e; Interview, 2006d; Interview, 2006g; Interview, 2005a).[95]

Another important adaptation took place with regard to individual mobility. In many interviews, people cited restrictions on the circulation of people and goods as one of the major problems during the period of war (Interview, 2005e; Interview, 2005g). As road traffic and trains were preferred military targets, people now moved only if it was indispensable and in moving searched the protection of a larger group, frequently somehow escorted by one of the armed parties.

More grave than those temporal adaptations in everyday activities and the spatial re-arrangements, was adaptation by changing the place of residence. In the dataset, such relocation is the third most frequent topic. In the dominant discourse, these migratory processes are usually referred to as "flight". Yet, confronted with the empirical data, this notion seems far too narrow as to encompass all the practices associated with this change in locality, as the story of a family from Bailundo illustrates:

When the war came to the region in the early 1980s, they lived in a house, some kilometres off town. In response to the first attacks, however, the father started to build a second house in the town itself, as, at this point in time, UNITA had not yet penetrated into the urban areas. Yet, in 1983, Bailundo came to be attacked, and after an intense discussion they moved to the first house outside of town. There they lived for one year, when Bailundo was attacked once more and they decided to move further away to a place near the house of the grandparents. Every day, however, the father returned to the house where they had lived before to see how things were going, and after a while the whole family returned. This time, they decided to stay there. Confronted with recurring attacks and raids, they started to change their family habits: first and foremost, they abandoned all practices reuniting the whole family in one place, such as joint meals. In 1986, they attempted once more to improve their situation by moving to the grandparents who lived in a rural area. Yet, one year later, they returned, hoping that the situation in Bailundo had changed and would be more secure than the isolation in the

95 A telling example from a different country for these adaptations in the material order of everyday life comes from the Lebanese city of Beirut, where a dance club was established in an underground bunker, the "BO18".

countryside. The story goes on like this until the end of the war (Interview, 2005a).

To the foreign observer, this narrative might sound like a story of protracted flight. Yet, the interviewee did not present itself as a refugee. By contrast, he appeared to be telling the story of a family that, because of the war, oscillated between different houses of the extended family, in an attempt to maintain a somehow self-sufficient life. It illustrates the gravitational force of the own hearth. In all of the interviews relating to wartime migration it was clear that maintaining a proper household was a top priority. As in the account just cited, people repeatedly set up new households after the destruction of the old ones. Settling down in a place for refugees, be it inside Angola or in one of the neighbouring countries, usually has been an *ultima ratio*.

One reason for this importance of the home is related to the symbolic value of the latter: living in "one's own house" is a sign of autonomy, and at the same time a sign of rootedness. It is a symbol of the capacity of agency. Yet, beyond this there were practical reasons attached to it. As one interviewee put it: "during the war, Angolans survived because of small subsistence agriculture" (Interview, 2005e). Having a house usually meant having at least some space for growing vegetables, crops or fruits. Wherever possible, people seized this possibility. Thus, still during the research stay, fields of maize could be found on undeveloped areas in the midst of Huambo. This double importance of the home is also reflected in accounts of villagers who, in the late 1990s, were forcefully resettled to the municipal centre: they described how some men repeatedly ventured back to the village in secret so as to search for crops, vegetables or fruits ready for harvest (Interview, 2005f). The account, however, suggested that the villagers took this risk not only because they were suffering from hunger, but also because they were suffering from the feeling of dependency brought about by the involuntary refugee life.

In sum, the accounts about relocations during the war strongly differed from images suggested by state of emergency thinking. They show that in many cases, relocations were not headless flights, but the outcome of processes involving consideration and deliberation. In this context, it is also essential to note that these considerations did not only set in when people found themselves exposed to violence as actual "targets". Recurrent in the interviews are accounts in which already the "observation" of violence in the immediate or a more distant environment prompted people to look for a safe(er) place to stay (Interview, 2006g).

These examples from field research show that adaptive processes designed to avoid indiscriminate violence primarily affected the dimension of action. In response to violence, habitualised activities were reorganised in time and space so as to facilitate their perpetuation. As a result, a continuous flow of the consciousness could be upheld in many circumstances; in this sense, violent conflict turned into an ordinary experience.

Avoidance of discriminate violence

In the images of war associated to state of emergency thinking, indiscriminate violent action dominates. Yet, the interview data discloses, that in a surprisingly high number of instances, discriminate forms of violence were of at least equal importance to non-combatants. The reason is that civil war violence does not take place among strangers. Instead, it is executed among people who share a history of living together, who master a common language as a basis of communication, who are linked by various social ties, such as family, business or religion. In many languages, "fratricidal" war, meaning a deadly war among brothers, thus, is a common synonym for armed intra-state conflicts. The proximity of the opponents allows to employ discriminate and selective violence, to a degree unattainable in wars between states. Beside the risk of becoming a "target" of indiscriminate violence, a number of interviewees, hence, also brought up the risk of violence turning against themselves personally. One informant, for example, told that during the battle for Huambo the family feared that the men who had killed his father would come after them now; the father had died in Bailundo during an interrogation by government special police. From the account it was clear that the men who had killed the father were not some anonymous government soldiers, but very definite people, familiar to the interviewee (Interview, 2005a).

In such situations, the slightest evidence could be enough to incriminate a person as being a supporter of the other side. In the story cited above, the hint had been an old photography, showing the father with some fellow students at the Dondi Institute, where many of UNITA's middle- and high-ranking staff was said to have been educated. In other instances, certain ways of speaking or the possession of certain items were interpreted as such proves of enemy collaboration. The data set furthermore shows a tight link between indiscriminate violence and the issue of denunciation. Frequently, armed

agents did not simply "discover" that someone might be a supporter of the other side, but this information was revealed to them by somebody else. In these instances, the military-political agenda frequently came to overlap with inter-personal conflicts: the man who denounced his neighbour whom he suspected to be sleeping with his wife is an emblematic example for how personal issues came to fuel the dynamics of denunciation (Interview, 2006h; Interview, 2005k; Interview, 2005g; Interview, 2005d; Interview, 2005b). Against the background of the theoretical discussion presented in this book, denunciations reveal that interpenetration in civil wars works in both directions: not only do life-worldly structures become engaged in the organisational structures of professionally violent organisations; but, vice versa, the violent conflict can also become engaged in social structures of the non-combatant environment—in this case, in inter-personal conflicts.

Despite the pronounced problem of denunciation, however, the interviews also show that the knowledge and social ties in the non-combatant environment were employed, not only to denounce, but also to protect people in one's surroundings. In the interviews, accounts about UNITA members vouching for government officials or the other way round, about government soldiers who clandestinely supplied their family living under UNITA rule, ect. are recurrent (Interview, 2005d; Interview, 2006k; Interview, 2006i; Interview, 2006h; Interview, 2005c; Interview, 2006c). Thus, the life-worldly structures in the non-combatant environment were engaged to further the interest of armed groups as well as to counter them.

In response to the risk of discriminate violence just described adaptations occurred. Their objective was to avoid being perceived as "one of the enemies". These adaptations responded to the particular ways by which enemy collaboration was "identified". In the perspective on UNITA, for example, possession of rare goods, such as oil, soap and especially salt, was considered a sign of MPLA collaboration. Among UNITA people, those victuals were rare as they could not be obtained from own agricultural activities. Hence, possession of these items necessarily meant involvement in the formal economy, and thus "collaboration" with the state. Yet, oil and salt were considered necessary for a healthy diet; salt was furthermore important for the conservation of fish and meat. Accordingly, people strained to obtain them. But they had to hide them and had to consume them with great caution.

This de facto ban on salt and oil in UNITA controlled areas also introduced adaptations in language. One interviewee told, for example, how in his family "salt" came to be referred to as "clay" (Interview, 2005d). This

account is related to a broader set of adaptations in everyday speech. In fear of being accused of enemy collaboration, people became cautious of what they said: unless one could be completely sure of the stance of one's counterpart, one did not speak frankly any more. This let to the development of a highly encoded language in which no thing was called by its proper name. The effects of this adaptation in speech could still be felt during field research, when in the beginning it was sometimes difficult to understand what people were talking about (Koloma Beck, 2006).

The interviews reveal that adaptations designed to avoid becoming perceived as an enemy collaborator had a strong impact on community life, especially in rural areas. First, because one of the not infrequent responses of people exposed to this risk was to permanently change the place of residence. This was most obvious with regard to the *sobas*, the so-called traditional authorities. Being community leaders, the latter were a preferred target of UNITA and government soldiers alike. Cooperation with the one party, brought about a threat from the other; any attempt to pursue an independent agenda brought the *soba* in conflict with both (Interview, 2005d). Therefore, throughout the war, villages practically lost this type of leadership, by death, by migration, or by resignation due to prolonged intimidation. In one village visited during field research, the post of the *soba* had remained unoccupied for a decade after the last holder of this office had been deliberately killed; although the family entitled to provide a replacement continued to life in the village, none of their members dared to occupy this position (Interview, 2005g).

Another effect of the adaptations to discriminate violence related to the organisation of community life. Villagers who had been living, for a long time, at the front line between UNITA- and government-controlled territories told how they had to abandon most accustomed collective practices that involved public gatherings of the villagers. Most importantly, this adaptation affected the village councils, traditionally platforms of deliberation and decision-making, and traditions related to solidarity and mutual help. But festivities and ceremonies in the circle of the year were also affected. The interviewees explained that they had to abandon these practices as the area was under close observation of both of the warring parties, and the latter tended to interpret any form of gathering as a conspiracy against them (ibid.; Interview, 2005f). Interestingly, however, in one village, interviewees emphasised that two types of ritual always took place: circumcisions and weddings (In-

terview, 2005g). Both rituals are related to reproduction, which explains their importance in a situation of continuous danger.

Coping with the experience of violence

In the focal zones of the Angolan civil war, as in the site of field research, people lived with the existential threat of war violence for extended periods of time. Such situations are necessarily a burden on the individual as well as on the community level. Complementary to the adaptations designed to avoid violence, practices emerged that focussed on coping with the experience of it. Most important in this regard were collective rituals, whose aim was to "metabolise" the events and to prevent the individual from collapsing under the burden of experience.

The Catholic Church as well as the various Protestant denominations played a major role, providing spaces and forms for these rituals, as places of mourning and sources of hope, but also as interpretative forces trying to make sense out of the incomprehensible. In the hot phases of the war, they were organised around the schedules imposed by the fighting. "Service always took place", one pastor said, "and if only for three minutes." (Interview, 2005j). Throughout the war, services were well attended, and they took place under the most difficult circumstances. Priests and pastors interviewed during field research referred to this period almost wistfully. As one Protestant pastor put it:

> "During the war, people were more in contact with God than today. Because of this, the churches were always full. The reason was fear, the thought that one could be hit by a bullet at any time. Because people felt very close to death, the intimacy with God was strong and fervent" (Interview, 2005e).

This account from a pastor resonates with statements in many other interviews. Asked how they managed to go through these difficult years, the answer was almost always: the Church. In addition to the rituals that provided consolation, and re-enforced a feeling of community cohesion, the churches were important agents in processes of meaning formation. Against a growing sentiment of the senselessness of the war, the churches interpreted the events as heavenly punishments or as a way of paying a debt to God. These interpretations were bolstered with stories from the Old Testament .

In addition to these pre-existing forms of collective rituals, in some communities new forms of ritualised behaviour emerged, adapted to the needs of

a particular situation. In one village people explained for example how, during a hot phase of the war at the end of the 1990s, they started the day always in the same manner: first gathering and counting the deaths, then burying them, then spreading out looking for new damages on houses as well as for new mines, afterwards gathering again and discussing the tasks of the day, and only then starting agricultural work (Interview, 2005g).

In some of interviews, the creativity and efficiency involved in these processes was remarkable. During my research stay, I met, for example, a government soldier who had failed to get out of Huambo when UNITA had taken the city in 1993. After several weeks of hiding in a flat, he had started to have terrible visions. He saw things written in blood on the wall, he saw the flat in flames, and finally attacked members of his own family. Whatever the diagnosis of an expert in the so-called Western world, the diagnosis of the family was that the soldier was suffering from demon attacks. Accordingly, they turned to the pastor of their church for help. In the following days, the pastor and members of the parish united to pray for the suffering man, and in the end they prayed with him. After a couple of weeks, the visions disappeared, and the patient was considered to be cured (Interview, 2005k).

Collective rituals designed to cope with the experience of violence were, thus, an important complement to the practical adaptations designed to sidestep violence. They relieved the psychological burden of the civil war situation and were, hence, crucial preserving the capacity of agency. This section described the adaptive processes to the exposure to civil war violence in the non-combatant milieu. It has been shown that the aim of these adaptations was to preserve agency under the conditions of violent conflict. The creative responses of the non-combatants to the exposure to civil war violence were crucial in securing survival—in a physical as well as in a cognitive and emotional sense. They were necessary to facilitate the exercise of subsistence activities. But their scope was by no means limited to this aspect. Different from what is suggested by state of emergency thinking, adaptive processes in the non-combatant environment went beyond "naked survival". Instead, many interviews show how people attempted to pursue individual life projects. For people living in the urban centres, studying and founding a family were important in this regard. A young man, who had lived through the siege of Kuito in 1993, for example, told, how he had organised school lessons during this period:

At this time, insurgents held sway over all access routes to the city. Inside the town, snipers were controlling the streets, and hunger was spreading

through the homes. It was in this situation that he, together with two of his friends, organised school lessons in the besieged town. They were fifteen or sixteen years old at the time, and—as he told in an interview—did not want to accept having to suspend their studies because of the war. People declared them crazy. Yet, they found a teacher who accepted to give lessons. They cut old sheets of cardboard and used them instead of notebooks. Over time, D. told in the interview, these cardboards piled up against the wall, filled in tiny writing with the content of the lessons. The teacher's payment was half a cup of maize per day and student. If a student did not manage to bring as much, he or she could sit in the class anyway, but then had to negotiate with the teacher. This way, D. said, he did the sixth and seventh grade, all in one year (Interview, 2006j).

Stories such as the one just cited are told in all contexts of war. They seem to portray people who, defying the violent chaos prevailing, hold on to the principles and ideals of "normal" life. The conceptual framework developed in chapter 3 suggests that, what might appear as heroism can also be understood as a form of self-preservation. Re-enacting routinised forms of behaviour and interaction (in this case: a school setting), transitivity is created and particular aspects of the identity of the agents are re-affirmed, such as competence, self-determination and a sense of the future.

In the rural areas, stories such as the one just cited were not told. But the stubbornness exhibited by villagers in their attempts to return to their fields even under the most dangerous circumstances seems to have served the same function. As already mentioned above, the risks taken frequently are but deficiently explained by physical needs alone. Instead, the affirmation of independence and capability seems to have played an important role.

By facilitating the continuation of accustomed practices as well by preserving a sense of agency, the adaptive processes thus described led to a normalisation of violent conflict. People learned to live with the exposure to violence, with the experience of violence as an "observer", with destruction, deprivation and even with the recurrence of death. As one interviewee tellingly put it, "We lived together with death"[96] (ibid.). Or in the words of another, "Death ceased to be news" (Interview, 2005d). New habitualised patterns of behaviour emerged, which, in some cases, were so far reaching that people seemed to have got oblivious of the dangers prevailing. During the battle for Huambo, for example, several people died in an annexe to a

96 "*Convivemos com a morte*" (Interview, 2006i).

Baptist church, because they went there to prepare food outside truce hours (Interview, 2006n).[97] Yet, despite being far reaching, adaptation had limits. The latter will be explored in the following section.

7.2 States of emergency: limits of normalisation

Although the data collected during field research vividly describes how people accommodated, adapted or adjusted to the violent conflict, descriptions of emergency-type situations are not absent from the data. Most of them appeared in one of four distinct contexts. The first is the battle for and subsequent occupation of Huambo by UNITA in 1992/93, following the failed elections. The second and historically related context is the so-called march to Benguela. The notion refers to the collective flight of about 6,000 people, most of them government officials and state administrative staff, after UNITA's takeover of Huambo. By foot, people made for the coastal town of Benguela, about 350 km away. The third context, in which state of emergency-descriptions recur, is the siege of Kuito by UNITA in 1993. The fourth and at the surface less dramatic one is the forced dislocation of village people in the province of Huambo to urban centres. Analytically, these descriptions are highly important. As will be shown in the following, an analysis of these accounts, which point to the limits of normalisation, contributes to a better understanding of normalisation processes themselves.

Referring to these situations, the experience of self-alienation was a recurrent issue: one interviewee, for example, said to have lost, during this time, "the feeling of humanness" (Interview, 2005a). Another one told: "If you looked into the mirror, you could not believe it was you." (Interview, 2006g). The accounts from the interviews disclose four different factors driving this experience of self-alienation: extreme privation, the experience of exercising violence, a climate of denunciation and control, and the disruption of habitualised activities. While the second, third and fourth factor were specific to one of the instances cited above, the *first*, extreme privation, was an issue in all four contexts: the young man from Kuito cited before told how he and

97 The sanctity of the church was respected by the warring parties, but did not extend to the annex housing the kitchen. This was commonly know among the people who has sought refuge in the church. According to the interviewee, the deaths were the result of an oblivious neglect of known rules.

his three siblings had lived on one glass of maize flour a day (ibid.). During the occupation of Huambo people told to have subsisted on unripe mangos (Interview, 2006f). During the mass flight to Benguela, people lacked not only food but also water. Consequently, many died of dehydration (Interview, 2006m). The villagers, which had been forcefully dislocated, described how they suffered from hunger in the improvised IDP shelters they had been brought to (Interview, 2005g). One interviewee from Kuito told that people started to eat asphalt (Interview, 2006g); another told about cases of cannibalism (Interview, 2006s).

A *second* important factor producing feelings of self-alienation, which can be found in the accounts, is violence. Most importantly, however, the situations evoked in this context are not about exposure to violence as a victim, but about non-combatants resorting to it. One interviewee, who had lived through the siege of Kuito, said about this period: "There was no more restraint to kill" (Own Interview, 2006s). He described how supply packages airdropped by the government to support the population in the besieged city launched ferocious fighting among the residents, a "war of packages". He also told how, at times, he clandestinely left the city with a small group of others to steal food in the countryside, and explained that entering the city with the booty was almost as difficult as escaping from it, since now one had to fear being killed by one's starving neighbours. "Sometimes five went out, but only one came back" (ibid.).

Taking up the distinction introduced in chapter 3.2, non-combatants in these situations experienced violence not only as "observers" or "targets", but also as "performers". Looting in the countryside or fighting to get one of the supply packages involved violent action and the deliberate use of arms (also Interview, 2006g; Interview, 2006h). Yet, becoming a "performer" of violence was a quite different experience for non-combatants than for combatants. As we have seen in chapters 5 and 6, the latter are part of an organisational structure in which the normalisation of violent action is a functional objective. The non-combatants in Kuito, Huambo or on the flight to Benguela, however, were not supported by those structures. There was no moral order or no "higher cause" justifying their action, only the principles of self-defence and survival. Moreover, as the coping mechanisms described in the preceding section focussed on the experience of violence as a "target" or "observer", non-combatants were left without support in coming to terms with the experience of being a "performer". Therefore, for them exercising violence was much harder to integrate than for those who considered them-

selves combatants. More than for the latter, these experience became a burden. While among armed group members, the experience of exercising violence came to be normalised, for the non-combatants it frequently remained a necessary and recurrent, yet nevertheless anomalous experience.

While in the accounts from besieged Kuito, the issue of violence is predominant, the stories from occupied Huambo disclose a *third* factor driving the experience of self-alienation: extreme social control including the persisting threat of denunciation. Huambo under UNITA was ruled in a quasi-totalitarian way. Most importantly, the armed group attempted to get hold of any potential government supporter who had not left the town in the flight to Benguela. Referring to this period, interviewees vividly described how a climate of fear spread through the city. Yet, the latter was primarily not a fear of UNITA, but a fear of the people closest to oneself: neighbours, colleagues and even family members. "We lived in a system of quasi-dictatorship", one interviewee said, "This makes people shrink" (Interview, 2006k). Due to the fear of being denounced and detained people abandoned habitualised activities (Interview, 2005a; Interview, 2005d). Some ended up staying at home completely (Interview, 2006i; Interview, 2005k). Thus, although the condition differed strongly from the ones prevailing in besieged Kuito, they produced similar effects. In both cases, the continuous stream of the individual consciousness has been severely disrupted, bringing about a fragmentation of experience and identity. As the war for and occupation of Huambo immediately followed UNITA's defeat at the poll, elections and violence are deeply interlinked in the collective memory in the city. In the accounts of the interviewees, the election period is frequently described as a traumatising event, and the fear of its repetition was intense (Interview, 2006e; Interview, 2005e).[98]

The *fourth* important factor driving self-alienation, is most obvious in the group interviews from the villages. It is the impossibility to go on with familiar, habitualised activities. For the villagers, the activities related to subsistence agriculture were most important in this regard. The interviews, however, show that the importance of this practice went far beyond the material gains of agricultural work. They are also a form of self-assertion as they affirm agency and autonomy. Moreover, as subsistence agriculture usually necessitates some form of cooperation, it also served to activate and affirm social

98 During field research (September 2005 to April 2006), fear of elections was a recurrent issue, as the first post-war elections were scheduled for September 2006. Yet, they eventually only took place in 2008.

ties. It is against this background that in the interviews from the villages, the forced dislocation to urban centres in the late 1990s appears as the worst and most anomalous period of the war (Interview, 2005f, 2005g, 2005h). In a broader sense, the accounts collected from the forcefully displaced villagers point to the importance of the contiuation of habitualised practices in the dynamics of normalisation: as long as the subsistence farmers were able to continue with their subsistence work, they showed strong resilience to hardships imposed by the civil war situation. Yet, the moment they were forced to sit idly in a shelter for internally displaced people, they started to suffer—physically as well as mentally.

This analysis provides another important insight into the dynamics of normalisation in civil wars. It suggests that the degree to which the war situation, and especially civil war violence, can be normalised depends first and foremost on the degree to which transitivity can be preserved. In the besieged towns, in the dislocated villages as well as during the march to Benguela, a continuous flow of the consciousness could not be perpetuated as agency came to be extremely restricted by deprivation, social or political control: people were prevented to continue habitualised activities and accustomed practices, or—as in the case of the non-combatants becoming "performers" of violence—they found themselves forced to do things they could not mentally integrate. Once more this analysis counters state of emergency-thinking of violent conflict. The latter implies that the limits of normalisation or the degree of anomaly experienced in a war are related to particular forms of violence: the more atrocious the violence the more abnormal the situation is experienced. The analysis presented in this section, however, points into a different direction. It suggests that the degree to which a war situation can be normalised on the individual as well as the collective level depends not so much on the violent actions themselves, but on the leeway left for non-combatants to re-organise their life around war violence.

7.3 Orders of violence: accommodation to armed groups' rule

The discussion presented in the preceding sections showed how armed group action in the site of field research introduced changes in the environment of the non-combatants to which they had to respond; most importantly the

exposure to violent action. The preceding sections explored the adaptive processes emerging in response to this situation, as well as the limits thereof. Although this description focussed on changes on the level of practices, it also showed that the impact of adaptation transcended this dimension, affecting broader social structures. So far, however, the analysis of structure formation had been focussed on the non-combatants' attempts to re-organise their major activities. Not addressed were the transformations in the structures of interaction between combatants and non-combatants themselves. The latter are in the focus of this last section.

Most important in this regard are the interactions by which the armed groups attempted to meet their reproduction needs, such as recruitment or food supply. As mentioned before, where ever one of the armed groups succeeded in gaining effective control over a territory, the interaction between combatants and non-combatants transformed. Food as well as recruits were no longer taken at gunpoint, but an orderly process of cooperation evolved; i. e. patterns of interaction emerged and became habitualised. The latter permitted an expansion and intensification of the armed groups' activities. In the case of UNITA, this meant a multiplication of their administrative interventions beyond recruitment and food supply. The aim was to consolidate its position by providing social services. Thus, state-like structures were established. As described in chapter 5, UNITA's administrative staff was charged with agricultural production, education and medical care in its areas of control. Thus, UNITA claimed to have established 6,951 primary schools in Southern Angola, staffed with 7,127 teachers and attended by 224,811 students. Secondary Schools were also said to exist (James, 1992, 98). These administrative interventions of UNITA as well as of the government related to their material as well as their symbolical reproduction needs normalised the intrusion of combatants into non-combatant life. Yet, the normalisation prevailing was not simply some "emergent reality", but an order in whose ascent the armed actors had been deliberately involved.

While the adaptive processes described in the preceding section involved a lot of creativity on the part of the non-combatants, the transformation of the interaction between the combatants and non-combatants followed a logic of accommodation. As described in chapter 3, the latter differs from the adaptive processes analysed so far as it is characterised by a passive acquiescence to the prevailing conditions, and, hence, by a low degree of agency. People simply complied to armed groups's rule. And got used to the changes in rule over time.

The passiveness and resignation of the non-combatants is particular pronounced in accounts referring to the problem of armed group membership. Most interviewees showed a strong indifference towards the two parties. In many interviews, people did not clearly distinguish between UNITA on the one hand, and government forces on the other. Some explicitly declared this distinction to be immaterial with regard to their personal situation (e. g. Interview, 2005h). They emphasised, instead, the accidental character of armed group membership. Belonging to one party or another was not a matter of preference and choice, but depended upon who was ruling the area, when a young person reached draft age.

In summary, it can be said that accommodation to the violent action of armed groups in the context of their reproduction needs had two interrelated effects: violent action itself became less frequent, and a state-like order emerged. In this sense, the accommodation to armed groups' rule facilitated the consolidation of structures of domination. This accommodative processes, however, can only be understood in the context of Angola's history of coercive rule. Against the background of the latter, many of the coercive techniques employed by UNITA as well as by the government in their attempts to rule the population represented in fact continuities to earlier forms of rule. Thus, in the perspective of those involved—combatants and non-combatants alike—they did not appear as a violent rupture in the flow of transitivity, but as a perpetuation of habitualised patterns of contact between rulers on the one hand, and "their" populations on the other.

The continuity is obvious, for example, in the difficult situation of so-called traditional authorities, described before. The attempts of UNITA as well as of the government to enforce their collaboration was echoing the late period of colonialism, when the Portuguese state instrumentalised traditional leaders to back the forced labour system (Heywood, 2000, 83). In the same sense, UNITA's coercive collection of food supplies exhibited strong similarities to colonial taxation practices (ibid., 63–91). The restrictions on mobility, imposed during the civil war by armed group operations, the forced dislocation of entire villages as well as the climate of denunciation prevailing in some places were familiar from the high-period of Portuguese counterinsurgency (Interview, 2006d; Cann, 1997). UNITA's practice of corporal punishments evoked so-called traditional practices of rule.

In short, people in Angola had become used to coercive forms of rule long before the civil war. This observation has, however, a major implication for the relationship between the armed groups and the non-combatant envi-

ronment. While the preceding section has shown how armed group action came to transform life-worldly structures in the non-combatant environment, this analysis of continuities shows how structures sedimented in the non-combatant life-world came to facilitate armed group action in the first place.

A major consequence of these processes of structure (trans-)formation was a multiplication of social orders, which had been already conceived in the framework of Husserl's concept of the life-world. The latter, the philosopher emphasises, is not a monolithic block, but differentiated into various particular life-worlds, governed by different pre-reflective patterns of perception, cognition and action. In the interviews gathered during field research in Angola, the orders imposed upon the population by UNITA on the one hand and the government on the other appear as such different life-worlds. In the areas, where territorial control was disputed or changed repeatedly, another form of order emerged which pragmatically organised social life behind the façade imposed by one or the other of the competing parties. The patterns prevailing in the besieged towns are another example. Finally, the armed groups themselves can be conceived in terms of such a particular order.

As pointed out by Husserl, such multiplication of social orders is a regular feature of societies and not particular to civil war situations. Usually, people switch between such orders without problems. Yet, in some instances, this switch becomes difficult. It is when the experiences made within one order can hardly be communicated and shared outside of it. Then, experience fragments and in the worst case, people come to be trapped in these orders. Michel Foucault coined the term *heterotopia* to describe such orders (Foucault, 1984). The expression relates to the "outer spaces" within society, spaces which are related to all others without being one of them, spaces in which the dominant order is at the same time represented, challenged and turned over. The problem of *heterotopias* arises from this simultaneousness of exposition and detachment from the society. The analysis presented suggests that violent conflict and armed group action systematically risk to produce such *heterotopias* as archipelagos of organised violence. The accounts about the situation in besieged Kuito seem to describe such a structure. The alienation of demobilised UNITA rank and file from Angolan postwar society suggests that the military bases of the armed group, too, were such "outer spaces". The multiplication of social orders, especially the existence of *heterotopias* creates major challenges for postwar transformation, as the latter has

to address different sets of pre-reflective patterns of perception, cognition and action. This chapter has shown how the non-combatant life-world responded to the continued presence of combatants during the civil war in Angola. We have seen how combatant intrusion affected the life-world in various contexts and how the structures of the everyday came to adapt to this condition, by modifications introducing a normalisation of the presence of combatants and the threat of violence. Habitualised activities in the non-combatant life-world were creatively re-organised in a process of adaptation so as to evade armed group action. At the same time, accommodation to formal armed group rule prevailed, facilitating the formation of state- or state-like structures of domination. The analysis revealed that armed group rule and compliance with the latter was not the only driver of structure formation during the civil war in Angola. Of equal importance were the non-combatants activities designed to evade or cope with armed group action.

This double analysis of passive accommodation and creative adaptation echoes the work of the French philosopher and social scientist Michel de Certeau, whose aim was to conceptually rehabilitate the agency of ordinary people within given structures of domination. He emphasises that structures of domination never fully determine social life and conceives everyday activities as anti-disciplines, by which "ordinary" people creatively play with the structures of domination in place in search for opportunities to exploit them in their own interest (Certeau, 1984).

8. Conclusion

The aim of this book was to analyse processes of expansion of civil war into everyday life, which in the empirical literature appear as one of the most salient characteristics of contemporary conflicts. The problem thus conceived involved not only an empirical puzzle, but also a theoretical as well as methodological challenge, as in current research on (civil) wars the notion of the everyday remains under-theorised. Therefore a qualitative empirical research-approach was chosen to address this threefold challenge; a case study on civil war in Angola being the empirical anchor-point of the discussion. The overall objective was to develop a conceptual framework fit to serve as an analytical tool to conceive the expansion of civil war into everyday life.

Inspired by social theory approaches to the study of violent conflict, which suggest to exploit existing theories about social order, social action and social change, the analysis turned to theories of the everyday. Drawing on phenomenological and pragmatist philosophies the latter was conceived as a sphere governed by pre-reflective, habitualised processes, or put differently: by "ordinary" experiences. The review of these theories of the everyday, thus, introduced a paradigmatic change in perspective: considering the everyday along the lines of pragmatist and phenomenological theory, the focus of empirical research shifted from the study of events, spaces, periods and agents considered to be characteristic for times of war, to a study of the experiences of those involved. The (re-)production and transformation of habitualised forms of conduct as well as of the transitive flow of the consciousness moved into the focus of attention. Against the background of these considerations, the initial question of the work had been accentuated: in the light of pragmatist and phenomenological theories of normality, analysing the expansion of civil war into the sphere of everyday life meant analysing how violent conflict became an "ordinary" experience. The theoretical discussion also revealed that one might expect different answers to this question for different types of social systems: to armed groups, the normalisation of

violent conflict is an organisational challenge which has to be met in order to pursue their objectives. Therefore, armed groups deliberately employ social techniques to condition the conduct of their members; a principle objective in this processes is to normalise the experience of exercising violence as a "performer". In the non-combatant environment, by contrast, the normalisation of war responds to the need to somehow live with the exposure to these violent actions of armed groups; in other words, to live with the continuous risk of becoming a "target" or "observer" of violence.

The case study on the civil war in Angola demonstrated that important new insights can be gained employing the theories of the everyday as analytical tools. It has been shown that for maintaining the transitivity of the consciousness, which is crucial for the (re-)production of ordinary experiences, two factors played an important role: familiar everyday activities, especially those related to subsistence; and longstanding social relationships. Both are sources for the (re-)production of transitivity—but, as the accounts from the besieged towns and the forcefully dislocated peasants have shown, they also mark the faultlines of normality.

Most importantly, the analysis revealed the closeness and interdependency of the combatant and the non-combatant realm. In this light, the metaphor of the "expansion" of war, i. e. of the dissolution of its boundaries (cf. Trotha, 1999, 89), has to be reconsidered. This metaphor suggests that during the war, the spheres of the combatants and the non-combatants become indistinguishable. Yet, the analysis developed in this book rather suggests a relation of interpenetration between armed groups and the non-combatant environment. This has been most obvious in the double analysis of UNITA, which deliberately engaged structures of family and village life to stabilise its organisation; but also in the discussion of denunciation, in which the structures of the civil war come to be incorporated into the structures of interpersonal conflict.

The normalisation of violent conflict in Angola, hence, was not the result of a cannibalisation of the non-combatants' realm by the parties to the war. Instead, it was the product of creative processes of adaptation, designed to perpetuate familiar everyday activities, as well as of processes of accommodation, which transformed repeated interactions between combatants and non-combatants into orders of domination. This also implies that the degree of normalisation or anomaly of a given situation is not primarily defined by the forms and the intensity of violence exercised (as suggested by state of emergency-thinking), but mainly by the leeway left for adaptation. The analysis

of the interaction between combatants and non-combatants furthermore showed that compliance with armed group rule is not the only driver of social structure formation in violent conflict. Of equal importance are the changes introduced by the non-combatants' attempts of adaptation.

What is more, the analysis revealed the importance of normalisation processes as a source of resilience. The transformation of pre-reflective patterns of perception, cognition and action in the face of violence and deprivation so as to perpetuate familiar and habitualised activities is stabilising, on the individual as well as on the social level. The importance of these activities then transcends their practical meaning; they also serve to affirm agency and self-determination in most difficult conditions.

As the production of transitivity is based on the creation of continuities in the consciousness, the adaptive and accommodative processes prevailing during the civil war in Angola can only be understood against the socio-historical and socio-cultural background of the country's history. Relating to this aspect, two of the interviewees voiced the idea that the persistence of the Angolan population throughout the war was due to the fact that they were used to calamities. In the words of one of them: "Angolans, and maybe Africans in general, are accustomed to suffering. If they have much, they live in abundance; if they have little, they live with little" (Interview, 2005e; similar Interview, 2005i). The normalisation of violent conflicts, thus differs from context to context. The discussion presented throughout this book can provide a framework for the analysis of such differences.

But studying processes of normalisation in war situations does not only shed light on the social processes in violent conflicts, but also on particular aspects of postwar transitions. On the one hand, the structural characteristics of everyday experiences present challenges for a transition to peace. Most important in this regard is the inert and conservative character of these structures vividly described in James considerations of the common sense. This implies that the structures of the everyday are slow to change. Another problem is the multiplication of social orders described in the last section, which in a postconflict setting demands different efforts in different social environments to facilitate the consolidation of peace. On the other hand, however, the same structures present sources of resilience and postwar reconciliation. Thus, many interviewees in the site of field research emphasised the importance of family and village structures in overcoming the divisions imposed by the civil war. In the words of one interviewee:

"A mother who had three different sons in three different armies—in the FAPLA, the FALA and the ELNA—doesn't know anything about MPLA or UNITA or FNLA politics. She only knows that her sons suffered a lot; that she suffered a lot, too. She does not know combatants from FALA or FAPLA, but only sons and nephews." (Interview, 2005c)

Yet, the analysis presented in this book does not only shed light on Angola or transformative social processes in civil war contexts in general. As suggested by Bauman as well as by Joas and Knöbl (see chapter 2.2), it might also stimulate considerations about modern Western societies observing violent conflict taking place at the periphery of world society, in particular about the functions of the state of emergency-paradigm in dominant discourses about violent conflict. The study presented suggested that conceiving war situations based on the idea of a state of emergency means to miss important aspects of the intrinsic social processes involved in such contexts. Although observable and obviously important, these processes are disregarded in dominant discourses about (civil) war. Why?, one might ask. What is the function fulfilled by state of emergency-thinking about war within so-called Western society? Theories of normality might provide a hint to an answer. State of emergency-thinking conceives violent conflict as anomaly or deviation. Yet, since Durkheim's early reflections on the issue (Durkheim, 2009, ch. 3), social scientists agree that, against common intuition, the latter are an integral part of what is considered normality. Episodes of deviation corroborate the collective validity of particular norms (Bohn, 2003, 43–4). In the language of difference theory, they provide the background needed for the appearance of the figure of the "normal".[99] In this perspective, the othering of violent conflicts through conceiving them as states of emergency is revealing not so much with regard to the object of observation, but with regard to the subject of the observer. More than making us understand the situation of people living under the condition of violent conflict, it serves to discursively re-affirm self-descriptions of so-called modern societies in the Global North as being non-violent, harmonious and peaceful.

The analysis of normalisation processes in violent conflicts presented in this book, hence, did not take place in a spirit to belittle the drama associated to the deliberate annihilation of human life. Instead, the objective was to move beyond the self-serving interests of state of emergency-thinking and

99 Agamben's concept of the *State of Exception* as a zone of anomaly, from which an order in crisis can be re-founded, points in a similar direction (Agamben, 2005).

live up, in academic writing, to the dignity preserved by the people who live though war situations. It might, thus, be understood as being part of the research programme once proposed by Michel de Certeau. In his essay *The practice of everyday life* (Certeau, 1984) he criticises the obsession of many social scientists with structures of domination as being part of the project of domination itself; he argues for a differentiated study of everyday processes which recognises the creativity and agency of "ordinary" people. "This goal will be achieved", he writes, "if everyday practices, 'ways of operating' or doing things, no longer appear as merely the obscure background of social activity, and if a body of theoretical questions, methods, categories, and perspectives, by penetrating this obscurity, make it possible to articulate them" (ibid., xi). This quote points out that the question of whether violent conflict is a state of emergency or a form of normality is not so much an empirical one, but relates to the overall perspective of analysis. It is up to the researcher, which side to chose.

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