

The London School of Economics and Political Science

He who touches the weapon becomes other:

A Study of Participation in Armed groups

In South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo

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A thesis submitted to the Department of International Development of the London School of Economics and Political Science for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

London, January 2016

Declaration

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Abstract

This dissertation is a study of the dynamics of armed mobilization and participation in non-state armed organizations in the province of South Kivu, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. It asks one of the fundamental questions of the study of violent conflict: Why do people participate in armed groups? In addressing this central question, it also addresses the inter-related questions of *how* do people come to participate in armed groups and *who* participates in these groups. I make three main arguments. First, contemporary armed mobilization is driven by two ‘macro’ factors in rural eastern DRC, the necessity to organize and provide protection to the socio-polities that constitute rural eastern Congo on one side, and the more accumulative dynamics of labour mobilization and control that have long characterized the region and have taken novel forms with the development of an economy of predation. The protective dimension in particular has often been left out in recent accounts that have focused on economic agendas of armed groups. Second, the ‘social architecture’ of armed mobilization in the region has changed to reflect the social implantation of armed organizations in rural eastern Congo, resulting from the novel roles they play in these societies and the adaptation of these societies to their presence. As a result, modes of recruitment and control reflect the multi-faceted influence that these organizations have over rural societies. Third, I argue and show that individual determinants of participation are not time invariant, they evolve over time and reflect the changes in outlook and motivations of participants that results from the social implantation of armed organizations, but also as a result of the process of participation. In order to make these arguments, I use a mixed methods approach that combines a qualitative analysis based on interviews carried out during 9 months of fieldwork in the province of South Kivu, and a quantitative analysis based on original panel data collected through a survey of 1072 individuals and 134 villages of South Kivu.

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List of Acronyms

AFDL	<i>Alliance des Forces Democratiques pour la Liberation</i>
ANR	<i>Agence Nationale de Renseignement</i> (National Intelligence Services)
CNDP	<i>Congres National pour la Defense du Peuple</i> (National Congress for the Defence of the People)
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAC	<i>Forces Armees Congolaises</i> (Congolese Armed Forces).
FAR	<i>Forces Armees Rwandaises</i> (Rwandan Armed Forces)
FARDC	<i>Forces Armees de la Republique Democratique du Congo</i> (Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo).
FDLR	<i>Forces pour la Defense et la Liberation du Rwanda</i> (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda)
MONUC	<i>Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo</i> (United Nations Observation Mission in the DRC)
MONUSCO	<i>Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en RD Congo</i> (United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in DR Congo)
PARECO	<i>Union des Patriotes Resistants Congolais</i> (Union of the Patriot Resistant Congolese)
RCD	<i>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie</i> (Congolese Rally for Democracy)

Administrative Subdivisions of the Congolese State

Province

Territory

Grouping

Village

Ethnic Groups Mentioned in Thesis

(ba)- Shi

(The prefix *ba* designates the people in Swahili. Thus the people of Shi are called Bashi)

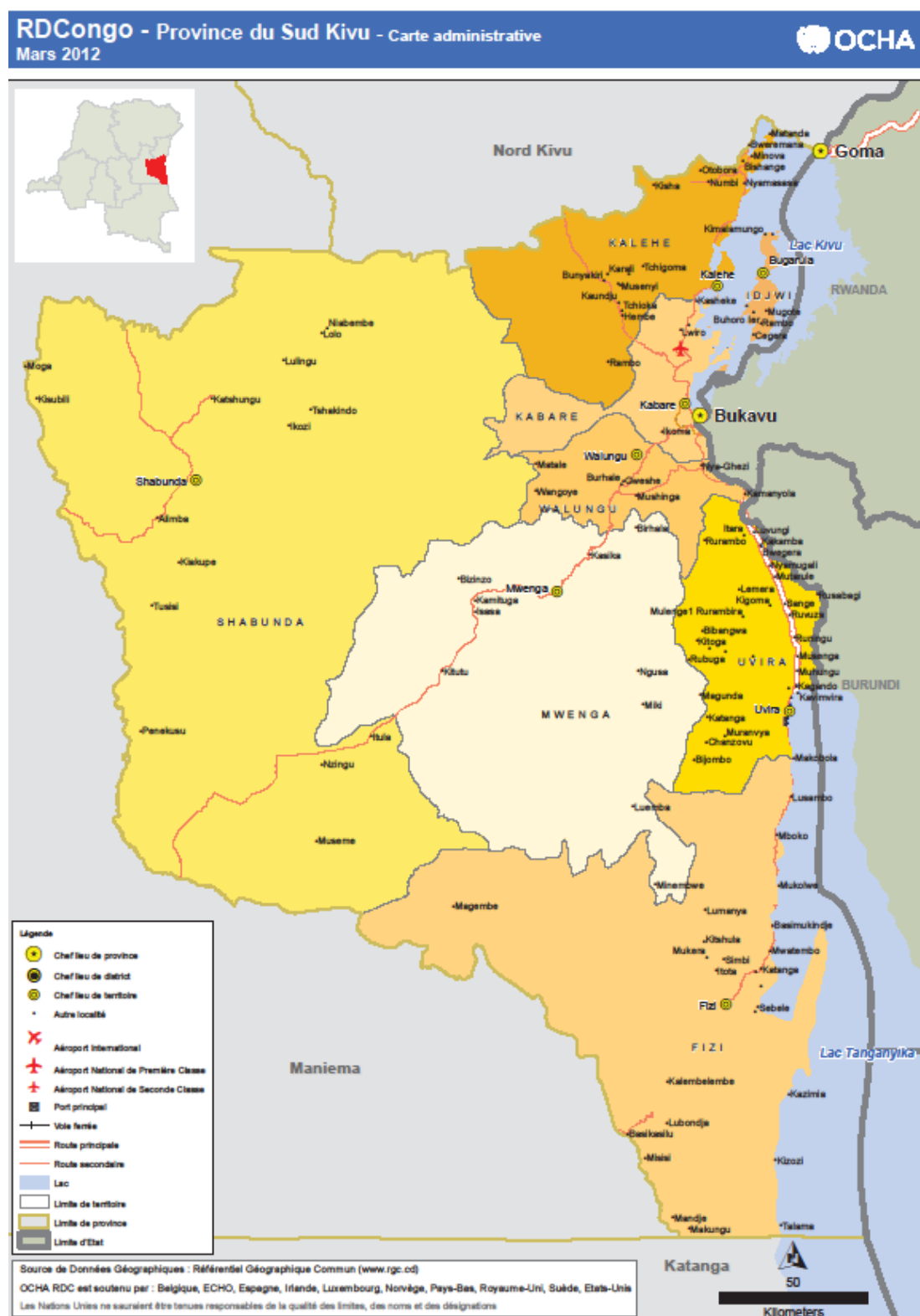
Havu

Rega

Hutu

Tutsi

Figure 1 : Administrative Map of South Kivu



Source: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (2012)

“Contrarily to widespread opinion, the courage of despair has but few adepts. Until 1942, only a handful of solitary men attempted to engage in the fighting. What is wonderful is that this disparate cohort composed of unseasoned and excessively pampered children, of out-and-out individualists, of workers by tradition revolted, of generous believers, of country boys horrified by the prospect of exile from the homeland, of peasants with the more obscure type of patriotism, of unstable dreamers, of tenderfoot adventurers at the side of old horses back from the Foreign Legion, and the lured of the Spanish War; This conglomerate was on the verge of becoming, in the hands of intelligent men, an extraordinary orchard (...) But then something, that was hostile, or simply stranger to that hope, came about and threw it into nothingness”

Rene Char¹

¹ “Note sur le Maquis” in *Recherche de la Base et du Sommet* (1955 p.25, author’s translation).

Introduction

A series of short documentaries, filmed by the video-journalist Susan Schulman and posted on the Guardian Development webpage (Schulman 2011, 2013), illustrate the ambiguous nature of participation in non-state armed factions in zones of protracted armed conflict. The series follows, between 2011 and 2013, the fate of the village of Kimua in a remote part of the province of North Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During her first trips to the village, the reporter finds that the population is living under the oppressive rule of a notoriously violent foreign armed group, the *Forces pour la Defense et la Liberation du Rwanda* (FDLR-Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda). As she follows several villagers around their daily chores, she collects testimonies of the difficulty of living with such an invasive and violent presence. Economic activity in the village, based mainly on subsistence agriculture, has come to a halt, as women no longer walk to the fields because they fear attacks and sexual assaults by members of the armed group. Abusive taxation and forced labour are imposed on villagers, and political and social activity is stifled by the oppressive, censoring and authoritarian presence of the Rwandan armed group.

But when the reporter comes back two years later to film the second part of the documentary, she is surprised at how different the situation in the village is. The FDLR are nowhere to be seen, as a self-defence group that has mobilized the village youth has chased them out and taken control of the village.² Interviews with villagers denote a starkly contrasting appreciation of the presence of this new group, which is lauded for enabling a partial restoration of economic and social activity in the village. A scene shows members of the group – most of them young men from the village - accompanying women to work in the surrounding fields to protect them from the still looming danger of the FDLR, and another shows a football game between the group and the village population, all pointing to a form of consensus around the group's purpose and presence. The members of the armed group are “*our children, our little*

² This group is called the *Forces De Liberation du Congo* (FDC- Forces of Liberation of Congo).

brothers, our big brothers, our papas” says the local teacher, suggesting that the family and communal ties that bind the group to the village are the source of this beneficial relationship. The village chief insists that, by providing protection to the villagers, the group is taking up the role of the state, and, as a result, is a fundamentally patriotic endeavour.

Yet a few elements in the final interviews set this apparently seamless story slightly out of tune. One interviewed mother says that her son didn’t ask for her permission before joining the group, that she no longer has any authority over him and that she is afraid of what will become of him. The schoolteacher shares his concern that, although all the members of the group are from the village, and as such are trusted and supported by the villagers, there is a fundamental metamorphosis once a person takes up arms: *“He is no longer the same person, he becomes other; The soldier who has the gun is not the friend of the population, he’s 50% for the population, and 50% military. Even if it’s my child, if he has a gun he orders me to sit down (...) it’s very serious”*, he says with a measure of uneasy humour. The football game, the very symbol of communal conviviality, ends with a score that hints to the unbalance that seems to be building up in the village: 4-0 for the ‘military’ against the ‘civilians’.

These three “periods” of the Kimua story can be conceived as three “portraits”, each one depicting different facets of the eastern Congolese situation, and crystallizing different narratives and conceptual lenses that have been applied to the understanding of the relation between armed actors and rural societies. In the first portrait, a rural village is caught under the oppressive rule of an “exogenous” rebel group, who terrorizes the villages and violently exploits its human and material resources. This image has dominated mainstream narratives of wars on the African continent since the 1990s, from international media to the fields of policy, advocacy and humanitarianism, as well as in academia.³ Its characteristic feature is the clear opposition between two, separate “orders”: One agrarian, grassroots, community based, and the other extractive, exploitative and violent. In this picture, participation in the armed groups

³ These narratives have different variants. In the case of eastern DRC, such dominant narratives have focused on the violent appropriation of natural resources as the main driver of armed conflict, and victimization of civilians – in particular sexual violence against women – as a central feature of the conflict. For a detailed analysis of these narratives see Autesserre (2012).

is either opportunistic and greed driven (those intent on exploiting others), or the result of exploitation (those who are recruited by force). The second “portrait” appears at the return of the journalist to the village. As a result of a collective effort, the rural community has regained the means of production and “restored” its political and social order. In this portrait, participation in the self-defence group is fundamentally tied to the village’s collective action, and as such is inscribed in the communal ‘moral economy’. The third portrait, which appears in the final interviews and scenes, is something of a blurred superposition of the previous two: From within the harmonious features of communal collective action resurfaces the deforming rictus of authoritarianism, oppression and extraction, incarnated this time not by outsiders or foreigners, but by the very heart of the communal body turned “*other*” in the figure of the village youth who has taken up arms.

The participation of the village youth in the armed group as it appears in the final portrait is fundamentally problematic, as it situates them at the crux of two logics that have predominantly been conceived as separate and contradictory, that of communal collective action associated to the rural social order on one side, and that of violent exploitation and plunder deriving from the ‘war economy’ on the other. This tension constitutes the departing puzzle of this dissertation: How can we understand the participation of the youth in this group?

This question resonates beyond the case of eastern DRC, and areas of active armed conflict.⁴ As a result of the retreat of states as main providers of security and the growing ‘privatisation’ of security provision, the emergence of non-state armed organizations that range from civil militia, vigilante groups, rebel and non-state armed groups, gangs and multiple other types of organizations represents one of the most pressing international concerns (Francis ed. 2005; Reno 2012). The scale at which these organizations recruit members - tens to hundreds of thousands for gangs and criminal organizations, even more in contexts of armed groups in zones of armed conflicts – suggests that large-scale dynamics of resource and labour accumulation are at play. Yet closer studies have shown that, far from reducible to the negative images

⁴ Civil wars are defined as conflicts that count more 1000 deaths per annum, and armed conflicts more than 25 deaths per annum (Blattman & Miguel 2009).

they carry, these organisations often emerge from longstanding forms of socio-political organization, and occupy a range of functions and roles within the societies in which they evolve, that range from the provision of protection, the organization of economic activity, to the formulation and enactment of political claims (Pratten & Sen 2007; Pratten 2008). As a result of their social and institutional basis and the roles they come to play in emerging political and social orders, even those displaying the most nefarious and violent behaviours – such as the Islamic State, Boko Haram, or the Mexican drug cartels – can enjoy somewhat surprising levels of popular support. Understanding why people join such organizations therefore bears relevance beyond the context of eastern DRC and contexts of active armed conflict.

While the study of participation in armed organizations has a long and rich pedigree in the social sciences, recent analytical framings of participation in violent collective action and/or armed organizations present some limitations when applied to contexts of protracted armed conflict such as that of Kimua. First, there has been a tendency to adopt an ‘atomistic’ viewpoint of participation, conceiving it as a dependant variable and weighting the impact of different factors - such as economic deprivation, social networks, or incentives⁵ - on an individual’s propensity to participate (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008; Mc Doom 2013). While these illuminate important facets of complex phenomenon, the ‘reduction’ of these factors to individual level determinants tends to cloud the supra-individual social, economic and political processes structure and shape dynamics of participation and interact in variegated ways with individual level factors.

Second, the fact that participation is often framed as a ‘unitary’ outcome variable limits the understanding of the multiple and heterogeneous forms of participation that exist (Parkinson 2013), the variegated and heterogeneous ‘paths’ that lead to participation (Viterba 2006), as well as the ways in which participation is sustained over time (Parkinson 2013; Petersen 2001). Moreover, such framings of participation rely on the problematic assumption that motives and determinants of participation are time invariant, i.e. that a single, initial motivation for participation explains participation throughout a period of conflict (Kalyvas 2008; Richards J. 2014). As a result, the ways

⁵ These correspond to the three main categories of individual determinants of participation identified by Humphreys & Weinstein (2008). We discuss these extensively in the following section.

in which the factors that influence individual participation evolve over time and *as a result* of the prolonged presence of armed actors within a society remain insufficiently understood. The role and effects of various individual factors on participation is likely to change significantly between the early stages and the advanced stages of a protracted armed conflict, precisely because the conflict's multiple effects on the social, economic and political environment that conditions such factors. Scholarship on civil wars has recently started uncovering the transformative effects of civil wars on societies and conceptualizing the multiple ways in which violence and militarization restructures political, economic and social structures and institutions (e.g. Kalyvas 2006; Raeymaekers & Vlassenroot 2004; Verweijen 2013; Wood 2008). Yet the ways in which these transformative effects alter processes of recruitment and control of combatants, and reshape individual determinants and incentives to participate are yet to be traced and conceptualized more extensively.

Third, there has been a tendency in studies of contemporary armed conflicts on the African continent to focus on the forced recruitment of combatants, often conceived through the reductive forced vs. voluntary binary categorization of individual participation (Richards J. 2014). As Danny Hoffman (2013 p.4) notes, the focus on forced recruitments has had the effect of obscuring “more complicated landscape of participation”. His contention that “the actual spaces and processes of recruitment remain poorly understood” calls for a more thorough and systematic empirical enquiry into processes of participation, particularly in the context of protracted armed conflicts.

These considerations provide the central motivation for the analysis of participation in non-state armed organizations carried out in this dissertation. The guiding question of the dissertation is: *Why do people participate in non-state armed organizations?* The analysis is thus focused on participation, which we define as active involvement in the security related tasks of an armed group.⁶ However, as mentioned above, an important aspect that has often been omitted in recent studies of participation is the fact that the causes of participation are likely to change in time, particularly in contexts of protracted conflict and prolonged presence of armed actors. This calls for a second line of inquiry, into the transformative effects of the emergence and presence armed

⁶ See Section 1.1.1. for further clarification of concepts and definitions.

groups in zone of protracted armed conflict, which runs alongside the first line of inquiry into the causes of participation in armed organizations. Taken together, these two lines of inquiry – into the causes of participation and into the transformative effects of armed groups on their environment - allow us to reformulate the guiding question as: *What are the evolving causes of participation in armed organizations in contexts of prolonged armed conflict?* Understanding why people participate in armed organizations requires understanding which categories of people participate, but also the ways in which they come to participate. The guiding question therefore summons two inter-related question that will also be addressed in this dissertation: *Who participates in armed organizations?* As well as: *how are people brought to participate in armed organizations?*

In order to address these questions, this dissertation explores contemporary processes of armed mobilization in the province of South Kivu, in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. This region has been affected by an armed conflict that has lasted for more than 20 years, alternating between phases of large-scale war and low intensity armed conflict. A myriad of non-state armed organizations have proliferated in the rural areas of the province since the first conflicts of the early 1990s,⁷ which are characterized by what Paul Richards (2005) described as a situation of ‘no peace, no war’. Even in periods of relative calm, civilians continuously experience what Hoffman (2011a) calls ‘micro-encounters’ with armed actors. Yet the duration of the conflict and the prolonged presence of warring factions have deeply affected the economic, social and political organization of the region (Raeymaekers & Vlassenroot 2004; Tull 2003, 2005; Verweijen 2013). This makes it a particularly relevant area to understand how the dynamics of participation have evolved as a result of the prolongation of the conflict and the transformative effects of the presence of armed actors. Furthermore, the diversity and heterogeneity of the region in geographic, economic and socio-political terms provides an advantageous configuration to analyse differentiated patterns of armed mobilization and participation, and carry out comparisons.

⁷ A recent survey by Christoph Vogel and Jason Stearns estimated that, in October 2015, 69 non-state armed groups of varying sizes and territorial expansion were active in eastern Congo (Stearns & Vogel 2015).

As Mampilly (2011 p.7) notes, there has been a tendency in the literature on armed conflict to focus on the relatively limited occurrences of active participation in violent organizations, while setting aside the more normalized and quotidian relations that occur between civilian populations and armed organizations. While our focus is on participation, the analysis seeks to depart from such a strict focus on participation by situating participation in the wider set of social processes that occur as a result of the constitution and presence of armed organizations. Conscious of the limitations of strictly individual-level approaches to the understanding of participation, I develop a theoretical framework to analyse and trace processes of armed mobilization at three, inter-dependant levels. The first level is the political economy of labour recruitment and control, i.e. the ways in which labour is mobilized, organized and deployed towards productive functions within local and regional political economies. The second level focuses on the social processes through which people are brought into armed organizations, and then maintained within these organizations, which I call the 'social architecture' of mobilization and control. Finally, the third level focuses on the individual determinants and dimensions of participation, and the ways in which they interact with the previous dimensions.

I adopt a mixed methods approach, combining a qualitative analysis with a quantitative analysis of the dynamics of participation in armed groups in the province of South Kivu. The qualitative analysis is based on interviews carried out with a range of actors. These include armed group members, commanders, recruiters and their family members and social entourage, as well as state, civil and customary authorities and a range of civilian actors who live or have lived in areas controlled or affected by armed groups. The interviews were carried out over a period of 9 months of fieldwork in Bukavu, the provincial capital of South Kivu, and in the rural territories of the province, including in areas where armed group operate. The quantitative analysis is based on original data collected specifically for this dissertation through a large scale survey that I co-designed with Raul Sanchez de Sierra as part of a project to document the economic, social and political history of rural South Kivu, and that was implemented in most territories of South Kivu, including in zones under control of non-state armed groups. As the dissertation seeks to grasp the evolving factors that drive participation, particular attention is paid to establishing a dynamic analysis of

processes of participation, but also situating contemporary processes within their historical context.

I make three main arguments in the thesis. First, I argue that two ‘macro-factors’ constitute central drivers in contemporary processes of armed mobilization and participation in armed groups in eastern DRC. The first is a ‘protective’ logic, driven by the necessity of organizing and providing protection to the fragmented socio-polities that constitute rural South Kivu, in a context where state provision of security is lacking or incomplete. In addition, I show that a more accumulative logic of armed mobilization and control is at play, a continuation of longstanding forms of large-scale labour mobilization in the region, which have taken novel features with the development of a militarized political economy. I argue that these two main factors do not operate in isolation or in exclusion of a range of other political, economic and social factors that I also explore, but nevertheless emerge as the most consistent empirical drivers of armed mobilization.

Second, I argue that, as the eastern Congolese conflict has extended in time, the modes and mechanisms of recruitment and control over combatants by armed groups have evolved to reflect the deeper implantation of these organizations in the rural societies of eastern Congo. I show that this implantation derives not only from the initial social base of these groups, but also from the two logics previously identified, as armed groups have the ambivalent function of providing protection to decentralized socio-polities while at the same time mediating large-scale dynamics of labour accumulation and control, and have triggered a general social *adaptation* of rural societies to their presence. As a result, the control exerted by these groups over their members surpasses the military sphere, and is part of the multi-faceted forms of control that these groups exert over the societies in which they emerge and evolve.

Third, I argue that individual determinants and dimensions of participation also evolve to reflect the changing role of these organizations. I find evidence for several economic and social grievances as determinants of individual participation, while showing, as Scacco (2009) has argued, that these interact with embeddedness in social networks that mediate mobilization to trigger individual participation. Furthermore, I show that the protective macro logic of mobilization also operates at an individual

level, as one of the central individual motivations for participation is the protection of one's social entourage. However, I show that these individual determinants of participation are not time invariant, they change in time to reflect the evolving outlook and motivations of participants, as well as the changing position of armed groups in societies. I therefore argue, following several recent studies (Viterna 2006; Parkinson 2013) that a processual understanding of the individual dimensions of participation is better suited to understanding participation in armed groups.

In this introductory chapter, I start by looking in Section 1.1. at how the question of participation in non-state armed organizations has been framed in recent studies of armed conflict, and the limitations of these framings. Departing from these limitations, I present in Section 1.2. the theoretical framework that will guide the quantitative and qualitative analyses, in particular the three levels which will be used to analyse participation: The political economy of labour mobilization, the social architecture of mobilization and control and the individual dimensions of participation. At each of these three levels, I discuss the relevant literature in order to draw out the central questions and puzzles, which then provide the orientation of the analysis. Section 1.3. concludes with a summary of the research questions and an outline of the dissertation.

1.1. The persisting puzzle of participation in armed groups

1.1.1. Clarification of concepts

Some conceptual definitions are necessary to clarify the focus of the inquiry. First, by the term participation, we refer to the act of active involvement and/or membership in an armed group, and more specifically active involvement in the security related activities of the group. Thus, the focus here is on people whose function and role within these organizations includes the potential exercise of force. We choose not to systematically use the term combatant, as it suggests a degree of professionalization, which is not always the case in the groups we study, for example concerning participation in small, locally constituted groups that display low levels of institutionalization and professionalization. The definition of participation that we use corresponds to Petersen's (2001) second and third levels of involvement in insurgent groups, both the active participation in local security organizations (the second level) as well as participation in mobile armed factions (third level). However, it excludes the first level of involvement, which corresponds to the multiple forms of civilian support to armed groups, such as information gathering, provision of supplies or various forms of encouragement. While these other forms of involvement will be discussed throughout the thesis, they are not included in our definition of participation. The discrete roles and functions that can be taken by individuals within armed groups – such as recruiters, informants, or various types of communication and representational roles – are systematically identified and spelled out, and overlaps with security related tasks are pointed out to avoid confusions.

Second, we define an armed group as a group of people whom, intermittently or permanently, exercise force and violence for a variety of purposes. Such a definition captures a wide range of different groups, from large-scale rebel armed organizations, to paramilitary groups, to militia and civil militia, as well as self-defence and vigilante groups. This is done purposely, as restricting the analysis to specific pre-established categories can be confusing in contexts where armed groups often correspond to several of the categories at the same time. As several authors have noted, the novel

forms of armed and security organizations that have emerged in contemporary warscapes tend to defy ‘classic’ definitions and binary categorizations, such as state vs. civil, state vs. rebel, military vs. civilian (Francis 2005; Reno 2012). While Reno (2012) provides a novel categorization of rebel groups on the African continent – majority rule, reform, warlord and parochial rebels – we choose not to use these categories *a priori*, as they are defined in terms of the political and economic agenda of armed groups, which in our case vary and change significantly in time. We also choose not to use the term rebel, as many of the Congolese groups that are designated by the state as rebels do not pursue ‘classic’ rebel agendas, such as regime change or territorial secession (Englebert & Tull 2013; Hoffmann & Vlassenroot 2014). Thus, the use of the term rebel can be misleading as its definitional base derives from changing notions of sovereignty. We therefore choose to adopt as large and neutral a definition as possible from the onset, in order to then clarify in each context what the defining features of the groups are, both in terms of their basis and in terms of their political or economic agendas. While the focus of the dissertation is not on state security forces – the national army, the police, and intelligence services – eastern Congo has been marked by repeated cycles of integration and defection of armed factions from the national army (Baaz & Verweijen 2013; Baaz, Stearns & Verweijen 2013). Thus, several of the groups we will study have been integrated into state security forces at some stage, which we will point out when it is the case.

1.1.2. Old question, new attention

Understanding why people risk their lives to participate in violent collective action and join armed organizations – from violent pogroms or protests, to armed gangs or vigilante groups, to armed militant or rebel groups – has been one of the guiding interrogations of the study of violence and warfare in the social sciences (Wood 2003, p.10). Although this question has guided a very long and rich stream of scholarship in several disciplines - in particular history, political science and sociology - it is only recently that this question has come into the focus of the study of International Development, particularly with regards to the African continent. Until recently, the sharp rise in civil wars on the African continent during the 1990s⁸ remained

⁸ See Straus (2012).

predominantly understood through old and deeply entrenched essentialist tropes about the continent's inherent violence, construed as irrational and obscure, or shrouded in teleological predications,⁹ while of little concern to mainstream International Development scholarship. However, a range of academics vocally argued that, as had often been the case regarding Africa, obscurity was in the eye of the beholder, and that the civil wars and contemporary violence on the continent were everything but irrational and deserved the same level of critical analysis as any other phenomena, which contributed to put the issue back into the spotlight (e.g. Berdal and Malone 2000; Clapham 1998; Kaldor 1999; Keen 1998; Richards 1996; Reno 1998).

Progressively, the attention of the development policy and research community shifted as a consensus grew that armed conflict and civil wars constituted primary concerns not only for global security, but also for International Development. This shift culminated with the 2011 World Development Report (World Bank 2011 p.1) which stated that “insecurity not only remains, it has become a primary development challenge of our time”, and set the understanding of the relation between armed conflict and development as a priority zone of inquiry on the development research agenda. Central to this agenda shift was the development of conceptual tools to apprehend and understand what were identified as novel forms of violence and armed conflict that emerged in the late 20th and early 21st century, which didn't fit the 'classic' conceptualizations of armed conflict and violence, in particular the war vs. peace, state vs. rebel, criminal vs. political paradigms (Kaldor 1999; World Development report 2011 p.2).¹⁰ Mainstream academia also adopted this shift, and disciplines that had until then paid little attention to war and conflict - in particular economics and political economy – developed significant research agendas on these topics (Blattman & Miguel 2009).

⁹ The most famous of these is Kaplan's 1994 essay “The Coming Anarchy”, which is widely used to exemplify reductionist conceptions of armed conflict in Africa.

¹⁰ The idea that the forms of armed conflict that emerged in the late 20th century were fundamentally novel was later challenged by Kalyvas (2001).

1.1.3. Strengths and limitations of current framings of participation

The renewed attention towards violence and civil wars by a range of disciplines in the social sciences has allowed to dissipate many of the longstanding tropes that still clouded the understanding of violent conflict, in particular the ideas that violence and participation in violence are irrational, senseless or unexplainable human actions, that often took an essentialist and deterministic undertone when relating to Africa (Chabal, Engel & Gentili 2005; Cramer 2006; Kalyvas 2006; Keen 1998; Richards 1998, 2005). The application of rational choice frameworks to the study of participation in violent collective action, which had been initiated by studies such as Popkin (1979), has significantly extended in recent years and allowed to restore a much needed sense of agency in the understanding of participation in violent collective action.

Methodologically, this has usually translated into comparisons between participants and non-participants, to see which factors play a larger role in explaining participation. In an influential article on the Sierra Leonean civil war, Humphreys and Weinstein (2008) measure the effects of the main factors that have been advanced to explain participation in violence during civil wars, regrouped into three broad categories: grievances, selective incentives, and social structures. This allows us to shortly review these main categories of explanations for participation, before assessing the limitations of such a framing and building a theoretical framework for understanding participation.

Grievances

Grievances have consistently been advanced as one of the most important pre-conditions for participation in violent collective action. Grievances are the manifestations of structural processes such as poverty, inequality, marginalization or exclusion experienced by individuals or groups of individuals, and can take multiple forms. The most prevalent ones have been associated to class (Marx 1848), land property in contexts where it is a crucial aspect rural livelihoods (Paige 1975; Scott 1976), ethnicity in the context of ethnically polarized political competition that can lead to the marginalization of entire ethnic groups (Horowitz 1985), income inequality (Muller and Seligson 1987), relative deprivation and lack of opportunity (Gurr 1970),

social anomie resulting from the gap between people's expectations and what they experience (Merton 1968; Cohen 1955 concerning armed gangs). These theories do not posit a direct causal relationship between such underlying factors and participation in violent collective action, but rather construe them as structural conditions that foment grievances, which can then lead the aggrieved to act on such grievances by participating in various forms of violent collective action. As these structural processes affect different segments of populations in differentiated manners, class, group or gender specific explanations of the relation between the grievances emerging from such structural processes and participation in violent collective action have been advanced. In studies of African insurgencies and rebellions, grievances have repeatedly been argued to condition participation in violent organizations. Among the different categories of the population, the youth – and particularly young men - have been argued to be the most likely to act on grievances by joining violent organizations (Honwana 2005; Jourdan 2004, 2011; Richards 1996; Van Acker & Vlassenroot 2001a, 2001b).

Selective Incentives

A second cluster of theories recognizes the role of grievances as background conditions but argue that the determining factor in explaining participation in violent groups are the benefits that accrue to participants. Following Popkin (1979), who used Olson's (1965) theory of collective action to argue that what explains participation in Vietnam was the fact that insurgents offered participants "selective incentives" in return for their participation, and scholars of social revolutions who also argued that insurgents rewarded participation and support by the selective distribution of material and collective goods as well as protection (Goodwin and Skocpol 1989; Lichbach 1995), a line of scholarship has focused on "selective incentives" as one of the central determinants of participation (Kalyvas and Kocher 2007; Mason and Krane 1989). Selective incentives can also be more attractive to certain segments of the population. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) show that young men are more likely to respond to such incentives because of their specific opportunity structures in contexts of relative economic deprivation. Furthermore, selective incentives are often strategically combined with "negative incentives" such as violent punishment or retaliation by rebel and armed organizations to obtain recruits (Beber & Blattman 2013; Gates 2002).

Social Structures

Another stream of scholarship has focused on the social structural conditions that enable the emergence of insurgent and violent collective action. Studying in particular agrarian social revolutions, these scholars identify structural features of rural and urban societies as central catalysts and enablers of revolts and revolutions, and, as a result, collective and individual participation in violent forms of collective action (Moore 1966; Scott 1976; Skocpol 1979; Taylor 1988). We will come back to these dimensions more extensively in the following section of this chapter.

In addition to these three main streams, a series of other major factors have been advanced to explain participation. Among the most influential of these is Elizabeth Jean Wood's (2003) study of insurgency in El Salvador, where she shows that, beyond structural preconditions and incentives provided by armed groups, emotional factors and the "pleasure of agency" play a determining role in driving individuals to participate in insurgent collective action. Also, Weinstein (2006) focuses on group level characteristics and advances a structural argument according to which groups that have access to resources - either natural resources or external funding - tend to attract a certain type of participants that have short time horizons, while resource poor movements tend to attract more committed participants.

Thus, a wide range of factors have been advanced to explain participation in violent collective action and armed organizations, the most salient of which we have reviewed here (but not all). However, ascertaining and weighting the role of these different factors is not an easy task. Indeed, not only do these different factors point to different types of processes, they are also identified by different methodologies, sometimes corresponding to different disciplines of the social sciences that can rest on different ontological assumptions, making a clear understanding of the relative importance of each factor difficult.

The recent development of novel methods of data collection and analysis, in particular the collection of disaggregated and time series data in post-conflict and – as for this dissertation – in active conflict settings, have allowed to enrich the empirical analysis of civil wars (Blattman & Miguel 2009). More specifically, it has allowed to weight

the importance of the different factors identified in the long and rich history of the study of civil wars as determinants of participation in violent collective action. Humphrey and Weinstein's (2008) use of post-conflict data on participation in the Sierra Leonean civil war allowed them to measure the separate effect of these factors on an individual's propensity to participate, and thus compare the relative importance of these different factors, a framing which is also adopted in the quantitative section of this dissertation. Importantly, they find that all three of the 'main' aforementioned factors have significant effects on participation, and suggest that the explicit or implicit 'rivalry' between these different theories is artificial, and that studies of participation should focus more on identifying the interaction between these factors, a point also made by Scacco (2009).

1.1.4. Articulating different levels of analysis

However, as mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the current framings of participation as a unitary individual outcome variable, and various factors as individual level independent variables also bears some limitations with regards to understanding the factors and processes that condition participation in armed organizations.

First, qualitative evidence and research on participation make us weary of the possibility of developing a single, all-encompassing theory of why people participate in armed organizations. This is due in part to the fact that what is subsumed under the category of participation and presented as a unitary outcome variable in fact regroups a large number of qualitatively very different actions and processes. As Parkinson (2013) notes, there are multiple degrees of participation and support, resulting from the numerous ways in which actors can engage with armed organizations, ranging from tacit support, to participation in supply or resource mobilization activities, to active participation in combat and violence (to which the definition of participation in this dissertation is restricted). These constitute discrete roles within armed organizations that can be driven by separate logics, and which are somewhat problematically bundled into the category of participation. Furthermore, participation displays significant temporal variation, as it can be episodic - as can be the case with riots, pogroms or massacres - or extend significantly in time, as is the case with long lasting insurgencies or rebel organizations. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, many recent studies

have relied on the problematic assumption that one initial factor explains participation throughout the period of participation, and remains time invariant (Kalyvas 2008; Richards K. 2014; Weinstein 2007). Different modes of participation, and participation at different stages of a conflict or episode of violent collective action, can be influenced by different configurations of factors and solicit different groups and categories of people. Moreover, there exist numerous and very different “paths” to mobilization, making a single, holistic theory of the causes of participation somewhat misguided (Viterba 2006).

In addition to the variegated forms of participation, the range and variability of the organizations that are often compiled together further begs caution about a comprehensive explanation of participation. Indeed, these can include large-scale rebel movements, private and proxy militias, various types of grassroots self-defence organizations, vigilantes, but also criminal organizations and gangs. Many organizations bear the features of several of these categories at the same time, or evolve from one to the other over time. Participation in a small vigilante group is qualitatively different from participation in a large-scale rebel organization, yet, as one can become the other over time, levelling and compiling different types of participation can miss such nuances.

What these considerations point towards is the need to understand individual determinants of participation in conjunction with supra-individual factors that condition participation in armed organizations. If taken exclusively, the methodological individualism or ‘atomism’ adopted by many recent studies of participation does not allow to fully capture processes that operate at a supra-individual level, and that structure in turn the individual level factors that affect participation, such as social processes (Mc Doom 2013). Furthermore, there is a need to take into account the transformative effects of civil wars and the presence of armed actors, as these are likely to influence and reshape the individual dimensions of participation, which are likely to change significantly over time.

1.2. Towards a multi-level framing of participation

Thus, while it has been the object of sustained attention in several disciplines of the social sciences, the puzzle of participation in violent collective action remains partially ‘unsolved’, as a conceptual understanding of the evolving dynamics of recruitment and control resulting from the changing role that non-state armed organizations play in zones of protracted conflict remains to be formulated and developed. This points to a variety of different aspects of the insertion of non-state armed organizations into societies, from their roles and functions in the economies of predation and protection that develop in areas of protracted conflict, to their modes of governance and interaction with pre-existing structures of authority, to the ways in which their presence affects – either directly or indirectly – the social structures and networks of a society.

In order to grasp these different sets of factors, we develop a framework that incorporates the individual dimensions of participation, but attempts to articulate them with supra-individual dimensions. Specifically, the framework that is presented here is an attempt to tie in three levels of understanding of armed mobilization and participation. The first level seeks to capture the role that armed groups have come to play in dynamics of control over resources and labour, but also their roles in the extension and deepening of economies of protection that often characterize zones of protracted armed conflict. This is what we call the political economy of recruitment and control of labour. The second level of the analysis is oriented towards the question of *how* people come to participate in armed organizations, and focuses on the modes of mobilization and control of combatants, in particular the social processes through which people are brought into armed organizations, and the ways in which they are controlled by these organizations. This is what we call the ‘social architecture’ of recruitment and control, which constitutes our second level of analysis. Finally, we look at the individual dimensions of participation, understood not at an exclusively individual level but in articulation with the two other levels. This comprises an analysis of both *who* participates in armed organizations – i.e. the individual level determinants of participation – as well as the emotional and other factors that can drive and influence participation. Although these three levels can be considered as a form

of ‘zooming in’ on the process of participation, they do not suggest an order of causality.

We now look in more detail at these three levels of understanding of participation. At each level, we raise the main interrogations emerging from the literature on armed mobilization and the role on non-state armed group, and that will constitute the guiding analytical threads of this dissertation. We include a particular focus on the literature concerning the African continent, as it allows us to build a more context specific and historically attuned framework around the processes at play. While certain references to the eastern Congolese situation are inserted, the specific articulation of this framework to the eastern Congolese case, using the Congo specific literature, is done throughout the qualitative empirical chapters.

1.2.1. The political economy of labour mobilization and control

Labour is a crucial resource of armed conflict, particularly armed conflicts characterized by low levels of technology, as is often the case on the African continent. The capacity to mobilize and control labour is a fundamental aspect of the political economy modern states. Historically, labour conscription for war has been one of the drivers of the development of states and the extension of their control over populations (Tilly 1985; Tilly 1990; Scott 1998). While the political economy of large-scale conscriptions for war is well understood for modern and centralized state, it is less clear in contexts of civil wars involving fragmented political power, where a multiplicity of armed actors mobilize combatants. In contemporary African wars that are characterized by high levels of military and political fragmentation, these can include large-scale rebel movements, private and proxy militias, various forms of grassroots self-defence organizations, vigilantes, as well as criminal organizations. The armed groups that operate in conflict-ridden areas such as eastern DRC often correspond to several of these categories at the same time, making a single account of their motives or dynamics difficult. Nevertheless, the aggregated numbers of mobilized soldiers, which can represent significant percentages of the total population

of regions or countries,¹¹ suggest scales of recruitment similar to those of large scale wars, and beg for an understanding of the underlying political economy of labour mobilization at play in those configurations. In this section, we start by situating the process of labour mobilization in contemporary wars in the history of labour mobilization in Africa. We then identify the new dynamics introduced by the crisis of African states and the recent rise in armed conflict on the continent, and delineate the central features of the political economy of labour mobilization in contemporary wars on the continent.

The mobilization of combatants by armed factions during contemporary wars on the African continent and elsewhere do not take place in an institutional or historical vacuum. Rather, as Munive (2011) has argued, it is inscribed in long-standing institutional histories of mobilization of resources and labour, that find their origins in the colonial era, itself a continuation of previous forms of large scale labour conscription, in particular the slave trade (Northrup 1988). The colonial state, as a result of its imperial origins, was in many senses the epitome of an extractive institution, as the administrative and political apparatus served the central purpose of extracting resources from the colonies (Amin 1972; Boone 2003, 2014; Mamdani 1994; Mkandawire 2010; Young 1994).

At the centre of the colonial political economy was the imperative of control over the productive forces of the population, and in particular conscription of manpower to serve both economic production and security provision in urban centres, but also in the rural areas. Indeed, recent studies of the political economy of rural Africa have challenged the idea that the colonial and post-colonial state's presence in rural areas was weak or inexistent – a position advanced by authors such as Herbst (2000) - and that the African peasantry had been largely left “un-captured” by central states (Hyden 2008, Hyden 2013). Boone (2003, 2014) has shown that the colonial state intervened heavily in rural areas to appropriate and mobilize resources, in particular land and labour. This involved various strategies to establish political control over the rural areas, from direct administration and modification of property rights, to the *territorialisation* of state authority through the constitution of ethno-territorial

¹¹ Our data suggests that around 12 % of the male population in rural eastern DRC has participated in an armed group.

constituencies and native authorities (Crowder 1964; Mamdani 1994; Young 1994; Hoffmann K. 2014). As we will see in Chapter 2, the imposition of colonial authority over eastern DRC and the territorialisation of state power were highly contentious processes that had longstanding consequences on the political topography of the region (Hoffmann K. 2014).

The “native” ethno-territorial circumscriptions that emerged from these forms of political and social engineering were integral parts of the colonial state’s extractive apparatus, as they facilitated the control, taxation, and mobilization of labour among rural populations with the coercive backing of the central state (Boone 2014; Mamdani 2011; Munive 2011). These institutionalized forms of labour mobilization were exacerbated during the large-scale conscriptions of soldiers for the First and Second World Wars, particularly in the French, German and British colonies (Gutteridge 1970), but also, as we will see, in the Belgian Congo (Northrup 1988). While the configurations varied tremendously, and gave rise to multiple forms of resistance and rebellion, they structurally shaped the resource and labour mobilization trajectories of the post-colonial states, both in the cities in in rural areas (Amin 1971; Young 1994; Mkandawire 2010).

The mobilization of labour in the context of contemporary armed conflicts is a continuation of historically ingrained, institutionalized modes of labour conscription (Munive 2011). However, in the absence of an overarching actor such as the colonial state, or other clearly identifiable, unitary ‘extracting’ actors, processes of resource extraction and accumulation are less clearly identifiable. Indeed, while the colonial state’s centralized administrative apparatus made patterns of resource extraction “legible”,¹² these patterns are less visible in contexts of diffuse and fragmented political and economic power. This is particularly the case in so called “weak states”, where power structures and modes of resource accumulation lack the rationalizing and organizing structures of a strong central state, as well as in contexts of armed conflicts and civil wars where political power is likely to be fragmented and contested.

¹² Both for the state itself, as argued by Scott (1998) – from whom the expression is borrowed - and for the researcher.

As a result of the crisis of the African state in the 1980s, novel conceptual frameworks were developed to apprehend the diffuse and multi-nodal forms of power that had been laid bare or had developed as a result of the breakdown of the central state. Departing from state-centric analyses of resource accumulation and political power, recent literature on contemporary history of the African continent put into focus the role of “networks”, seen as the new nodes of power and accumulation, that span the commercial, military and state spheres, and more accurately capture the multi-sited locus of power than traditional conceptions of state power.

During armed conflicts or civil wars, such networks of power often articulate around military actors, around which state, customary and business actors congregate because of their central role in contexts where access to the means of force is a central component of power. Raeymaekers & Vlassenroot (2004 p.14) use the concept of “complexes of power” to designate the novel networks of power that emerged in eastern Congo following the wars of the 1990s. Although their diffuse nature hinders the ascription of a unitary extractive “intentionality”, it does not entail that resource extraction is not at play, but rather that it is tied into fragmented and multi-layered political economies, where sites of negotiation, allocation and accumulation of resources are multiple and variegated. Understanding the political economy of labour mobilization and control in the context of protracted armed conflict as in eastern DRC therefore requires an understanding of the ways in which emerging forms of power and extraction that are being constituted interact with the inherited, institutionalized forms of both resource accumulation and political power.

The breakdown of centralized provision of security by states and the multiplication of armed actors in contexts of armed conflict fundamentally alters political economies of labour mobilization. Armed conflict challenges the institutional architecture of state power and introduces very different dynamics of resource accumulation and control. Military strength becomes a key asset through which different actors can appropriate resources at different levels. The literature on African conflicts has intensely focused on the violent modes of resource extraction and exploitation that develop in areas affected by armed conflict, reaching a paradigm in the so-called “greed” literature that followed the seminal works of Collier and Hoeffler (1998, 2004). The focus has largely been on the violent ways in which armed actors appropriate high value

resources, epitomized by the “conflict minerals” paradigm that has occupied a central position in mainstream depictions of armed conflict in the African continent.¹³ A parallel stream has focused on the extractive and exploitative modes of appropriation of labour by armed organizations, with a particular focus on the forced abduction of children by armed groups.¹⁴ Recent studies of violent recruitments into armed organizations relying on novel quantitative methods and using insights from ethnographic studies of forced recruitment have shed light on the accumulative rationale at play in the mobilization of labour through forced recruitment (Beber and Blattman 2013).

While violent modes of resource extraction and appropriation are important features of economies of war, the heavy focus on this dimension has tended to cloud the more complex reorganizations of political economies that occur in areas of protracted conflict. Challenging these dominant narratives, several authors have shown how non-state armed actors do not rely solely on exploitation and plunder, but develop elaborate relations with economic actors in areas of conflict, the basis of which is the extension of the ‘business of private protection’. In contexts of high insecurity, the private sale of protection which is typically done by criminal organizations such as mafias and gangs, who sell protection to economic actors operating in extra-legal spaces (Gambetta 1992), extends to all economic activities as a result of the general state of insecurity. For example, Raeymaekers (2010) documents how the rebel organization RCD-ML developed protection arrangements with trans-border traders at the DRC-Uganda border.

They are also subject to economies of scale. Using disaggregated historical data on patterns of violence and taxation in South Kivu, eastern DRC, Sanchez de la Sierra (2016) shows that armed actors who establish monopolies of violence tend to strategically reduce violent modes of resource appropriation to develop long term revenue streams through more stable patterns of taxation, behaving as Olson’s “stationary bandits” and developing elaborate taxation mechanisms. In certain cases, these involve the development of “state like” administrative apparatuses and considerably reorganize local economic and political structures (Mampilly 2011;

¹³ For a critical review of the conflict minerals literature see Rigterink (2011).

¹⁴ See Wessels (2006) for a review of child soldiering and forced recruitment of combatants in Africa.

Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly 2015). The control over the productive forces of the population, which are “extracted” through various forms of taxes and mobilization of labour, is therefore a fundamental feature of these organizations, although it usually operates at much smaller scales, and with much less temporal continuity - owing to constant infighting and military contestation - than national states. Tied to regional, national and international networks of power, these organizations become integral parts of the new modes of politico-military control over populations, and part of regional and national networks of power that aggregate in national and regional centres of power, taking the form of what Reno (1998) calls “warlord politics”.

The political implications of the development of these types of economies of protection in the areas where they occur are complex, and the subject of a burgeoning literature. “Private protection”, however, can be a somewhat misleading term, as the protection they provide is not necessarily distributed on a private basis, and can be provided as a collective good to socio-political entities. As many of these non-state armed organizations emerge from pre-existing socio-political entities - an aspect which will be explored in the following section - the protection they offer can be an integral part of these the political organization and resource distribution of these entities. This can be the case, for example, of armed organizations emanating from chiefdoms, villages or neighbourhoods, that can have strong political and social support within these entities and can play a central role in “re-localizing” security provision and resource distribution in contexts where state provision of security is lacking or insufficient. In many cases, they come to play a central role in the local economies of these entities, providing protection to strategic economic activities, but also re-organizing local economies in multiple ways, and giving rise to complex “politics of protection” (Pratten 2008).

In many of the contemporary armed conflicts of the African continent, the emergence of ‘war economies’ has also been characterized by transformations in modes of labour organization. Indeed, such ‘war economies’ are usually organized around high value extractable resources (such as minerals in the Mano River conflicts or the eastern Congolese conflict) or high value trading (such as drugs in the conflicts of the Sahel). As a result of scarce capital and technology, these economies are often labour intensive, as are the armed conflicts. The presence of two co-dependant labour

intensive ‘sectors’ – the mining sector, and the military/war sector – generates very peculiar dynamics for the political economy of labour. Studying the political economy of labour in the Mano River wars of Sierra Leone and Liberia, Danny Hoffman (2013) shows that combatants moved fluidly in and out of different labour intensive sectors of the economy, such as mining or informal trading in cities, but also what he calls the ‘work of war’- the armed factions. As we will see in the historical section, conceiving participation in war as a form of labour has a long history in eastern DRC, where mobilization for war in the colonial and post-colonial era has often displayed similar dynamics to that of other labour intensive sectors of the economy, in particular the mining sector (Hoffmann K. 2014; Northrup 1988; Young & Turner 1985). In this thesis, we will pay particular attention to the mechanisms that tie labour in the ‘war economy’ to other sectors of the economy, as well as tracing the continuities between ‘historical’ and contemporary modes of labour accumulation and control.

Several questions arise from these considerations, which allow us to orient our inquiry into the “macro causes” of participation in non-state armed organizations, and the political economy of recruitment and control over combatants. In Kimua, whose example was presented in the introduction of this chapter, the constitution of a village level self-defence group, although done to provide protection to this rural entity, comes into tension with the accumulative logics of labour mobilization in times of war. What remains to be understood are the ways in which the ‘protective’ functions of the self-defence group come into articulation or confrontation with the more accumulative logics of armed mobilization at play. A second question that emerges is the relation between the novel forms of labour mobilization that the armed group activates and the longstanding modes of labour mobilization that characterize the region and which have profoundly shaped its ‘political topography’. These questions motivate the attention that will be paid throughout this thesis to the political economy dimension of armed mobilization, both the historical modes of mobilization and control that will be explored in Chapter 2, and the novel modes of mobilization and control that have emerged with the proliferation of armed organizations in eastern DRC.

1.2.2. The “social Architecture” of armed mobilization and control

As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the question of *why* people participate is closely tied to the question of *how* they come to participate. In reviewing the dominant determinants of participation identified in the literature, we have seen that one of the most consistent findings of the study of participation in violent collective action is that social networks play an essential role in bringing people to participate in violent collective action. Recent quantitative studies of participation in violent collective action have found strong evidence of for the role of social networks in driving participation in armed groups in times of war (Humphreys 2008), in violent rioting (Scacco 2009) as well as in inter-group violence, in particular in genocidal violence in Rwanda (Mc Doom 2013). However, as previously mentioned, the role of social networks in participation cannot fully be apprehended through a strictly individual lens, as social processes operate at a supra-individual level, requiring a more extensive conceptual apparatus to appreciate their effect.

Furthermore, the central question of this thesis is to understand the causes of participation in armed organizations while taking into account the evolving role of these organizations in the social, economic and political environment in which participation occurs. This double interrogation – on the causes of participation on one side, and on the evolving roles of armed organizations on the other – orients the analysis of the “social dimensions” of participation towards two main areas. First, the ways in which armed organizations emerge from and ‘appropriate’ pre-existing social structures, as well as the ways in which they then transform and alter these social structures. Then, the social processes and mechanisms through which individuals come to participation in armed organizations, with a particular attention to the ways new processes can emerge - or existing processes can transform - as a result of the presence of armed organizations.

Together, these guiding questions motivate our inquiry into what can be called the ‘social architecture’ of armed mobilization and participation, which combines an analysis of both these deeper and more resilient social structures and the more dynamic processes of recruitment that occur ‘within’ them. The social processes and mechanisms that we seek to understand in this section do not operate in isolation from

either the political economy previously identified, or the so-called “formal” institutions of the state. Rather, they are constitutive of both the “formal” and “informal” institutions and modes of authority that regulate and organize social life, but also the political economy of labour mobilization previously discussed.

In this section, we look at the role of social networks in armed mobilization and participation with the objective of identifying key points of contention, and thus orienting the empirical inquiry into the ‘social architecture’ of armed mobilization and participation.

1.2.2.1 Social Networks and Armed mobilization

The role of social networks in facilitating violent collective action is well established. Studies of insurgencies and revolutions, conceiving insurgencies as particular types of social movements, have thoroughly analysed and documented the role of pre-existing social structures in facilitating various forms of violent and/or insurgent collective action. Social networks have two central functions. First, they ‘resolve’ the fundamental trust, screening and monitoring constraints that usually impede collective action (Bowles & Gintis 2002; Ostrom 1997). Second, they mediate one of the central spreading mechanisms of mobilization, which Mc Doom (2013) identifies as *social influence*. Social influence is the process whereby an actor intentionally or unintentionally changes his behaviour as a result of induction by another actor or group (Kelman 1974 p.128). It regroups an ensemble of social-psychological mechanisms including conformity, socialization, peer pressure, compliance, internalization and identification (Cialdini & Goldstein 2004; Mc Doom 2013 p.456). These mechanisms play out in a variety of ways, but are enabled and facilitated by the pre-existing social networks that armed organizations build upon.

The study of the social dimensions of armed mobilizations has largely focused on how pre-existing social networks structure insurgent mobilization or violent collective action, and the ways in which insurgencies or other organizations engaged in collective

violence ‘appropriate’¹⁵ pre-existing social networks (Barkey & Van Rossem 1997; Gould 1991, 1993, 1995; Marwell, Oliver, & Prahl 1988; Petersen 2001; Scacco 2009; Staniland 2012; Wickham-Crowley 1992).

The multiplicity and variation in types and forms of social networks give rise to very different configurations of socially mediated mobilizations. These can include social networks that develop as a result of “social proximity” and multi-faceted social interaction, that often bear a spatial dimension, such as those inscribed in rural villages or urban neighbourhoods. Analysing the Paris Commune of 1871, Gould (1991) shows that the “formal” organization of the Insurgent movement was built on pre-existing and multiple “informal” social networks embedded in Parisian neighbourhoods, which enabled mobilization and recruitment into the insurgency. Adopting a more dynamic perspective, Petersen (2001) carefully analyses the crucial role of community social structures in enabling and sustaining insurgent mobilization in Lithuania. He shows how strong communities - characterized by shared norms, social values, and multi-faceted interactions – mediate norms that pressure other community members into participation. Scacco (2009) shows the role of neighbourhood-level social networks in ‘pulling’ people into violent rioting during the Christian-Muslim violent riots in Nigeria in 2000-2001. Similarly, Mc Doom (2013), analysing the dynamics of inter-group violence during the Rwandan genocide, shows that micro-social interactions resulting from spatial proximity played a decisive role in bringing people to participate in the genocidal violence.

Spatial proximity, however, is not a requisite for social networks to mediate mobilization. Recent studies of recruitment into so-called ‘terrorist’ organizations such as Al-Qaeda or the Islamic State have shown that recruitments can be carried out through social networks that can extend internationally and span several continents (Atran 2008; Hegghammer 2006; Sageman 2004, 2008). During the Rwandan liberation war of 1990-1994, the Rwandan Patriotic Army was able to recruit combatants throughout the Great Lakes region - particularly in Zaire, Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania - using the strong social networks of the Tutsi diaspora (Mushemeza 2007; Reed 1996; Stearns 2012).

¹⁵ This expression is used by (Mc Adam, Tarrow, & Tilly 2001 p.115), also quoted in (Staniland 2012 p.149).

Understanding the networked dimensions of mobilization requires an understanding of how these networks are tied into particular political economies, in which they can play specific economic or political functions. It therefore requires understanding how they intersect and coalesce with both ‘formal’ institutions of authority, and how so called “informal” institutions of governance and regulation of economic and social activity are embedded within social networks. In contexts of weak or failing states, social networks have been shown to play crucial roles in organizing economic activity, in particular by carrying out monitoring and sanctioning functions that the state could not perform. Social networks built around professional activities, in particular, are bearers of trust-enforcing and protection institutions (MacGaffey 1991; Meagher 2003, 2010, 2012). Professional and occupational networks have proved to be particularly powerful mobilizing platforms for security or insurgent collective action, as illustrated by the case of the Bakassi Boys of Southern Nigeria, (Meagher 2007), or the Libyan insurgency against the Gadhafi regime (Quesnay 2012).

Unsurprisingly, security related professional networks also provide strong mobilizing platforms. As they tie together pools of security ‘specialists’, they have a strong comparative advantage with regards to security or violence related collective action. These can include the state security services, from the police to the army, private security services such as private security firms, but also various other organizations which have a connection to security related activities, such as boxing clubs or martial arts clubs. Ex-military professional networks have been shown to be at the origin of large-scale rebel organizations such as the Islamic State (Gerges 2016), but also criminal organizations such as gangs in the United States.

Pre-existing social networks do not just provide strong mobilizing platforms for violent collective action, they are also crucial in determining the organizational and institutional strength of armed organizations, their capacity to manage resources, and their resilience to different types of shocks. Through a comparative analysis of Pakistani armed organizations, Staniland (2012, 2015) shows that, in contrast to the arguments following the ‘resource curse’ paradigm that posit that access to high value resources or external funding tends to weaken insurgent movements (Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Weinstein 2007), it is the strength of the “social institutional” basis of

armed organizations that determines their capacity to efficiently manage resource flows. This has also been shown to be the case for Hezbollah in Lebanon (Norton 2007), or the Free Aceh Movement in Aceh (Aspinall 2009). Similarly, the social basis of the Southern Italian and Sicilian Mafias, organized around tightly knit families, has been advanced as one of the causes for their institutional strength (Paoli 2008).

Studies of non-state armed organizations on the African continent have emphasized their strong social basis, and the role of pre-constituted social networks in bolstering mobilization and recruitment. Indeed, many of the large-scale insurgencies that emerged on the continent emanated from social movements, of which they displayed one of the core features: That of using pre-existing social networks to mobilize resources, and in particular recruits. This has been documented for anti-colonial resistance movements and insurgencies, such as the famous case of the Mau-Mau resistance movement in 1950s Kenya (Throup 1987).

Studies of contemporary wars on the continent have also challenged dominant depictions of these wars as chaotic and greed driven, and shown that in many instances the armed organizations had strong social bases. In particular, they have highlighted the imbrications of the social bases of these armed organizations and the established modes of political authority. One of the most studied cases is the Civilian Defence Forces (CDF) and Kamajors militias during the war in Sierra Leone, whose organizational structure was initially based on established modes of political and social organization, in particular the institutions of the chiefdoms and the secret societies (Muana 1997; Abdullah 1998; Keen 2005; Hoffman D. 2007a, 2011a). The mobilization of combatants for the CDF illustrated the inter-twined nature of established forms of authority and network-based mobilizations in rural African societies. Indeed, chiefs - core institutions of the Sierra Leonean state in rural areas - were instrumental in mobilizing combatants for the counter-insurgent armed movement, “activating” social networks and modes of social control over rural societies, even though much of the recruitments took place away from the territorial constituencies of these authorities, in refugee camps (Hoffman D. 2007a, 2011a). Their capacity to mobilize was therefore tributary of an institutionalized mode of

power over people, tied to the architecture of political authority in the region and the deriving capacity to activate rural social networks.

In the case of eastern Congo, Stearns and Botiveau (2013) have shown that mobilization into armed groups can also be mediated by strong social networks embedded in rural societies, an aspect that we will explore extensively throughout this thesis. Even insurgencies and armed movements that have displayed some the most nefarious, ‘terrorist’ or exploitative behaviours have been shown to have strong social basis. For example, the infamous Boko Haram insurgency grew out of a social movement that had developed a strong social basis in northern Nigeria (Barkindo 2013), as well the Niger Delta’s People Voluntary Force in the conflict-affected Delta State in Nigeria (Hazen 2009).

1.2.2.2. Networks and Control: Wartime transformation

The study of the social base of armed groups has therefore focused extensively on how pre-existing social structure and networks influence the organizational and institutional characteristics of insurgent and other types of armed organizations. However, these studies often rely on the assumption that social networks are resilient structures, at least in the short to midterm (Staniland 2012 p.150). Recent studies of armed conflict have opened the ‘black box’ of armed conflict and taken a more dynamic approach to understand not only how armed organizations ‘appropriate’ pre-existing social structures, but also how they reconfigure them. Such an analytical viewpoint is particularly relevant in contexts such as that of eastern Congo where armed conflicts extend significantly over time, instilling and imprinting transformative dynamics to the economic, political and social environment in which they occur. Elizabeth Jean Wood defines such social processes of civil war as “the transformation of social actors, structures, norms and practices” (Wood 2008 p.540). As previously stated, analysing such social processes of civil war is of central importance to this dissertation, as it informs the understanding of the evolving causes and processes of participation in armed groups.

Social networks do not exist independently of the political economies in which they are imbricated and of which they are fundamental components. Understanding how

social networks are reshaped by civil wars therefore necessitates to factor in the transformative effects that civil wars have on political economies, and the evolving role that armed organizations occupy within political economies, as has been emphasized in the previous section. In particular, it requires understanding how modes of social control over people shift as a result of the spread of novel and often violent modes of accumulation of resources and labour, but also as a result of the extension and implantation of the economies of protection mentioned in the previous section.

The modes of control over their members that violent organizations develop has been the topic of an extensive literature, in particular in the field of military sociology, but also the sociology of gangs and criminal organizations. It is well established that armed organizations develop multiple mechanisms and institutions to control their members, ranging from entry rituals, internal hierarchies, codes of conduct, various forms of sanctions and punishment, to institutional incentives, as well as group bonding and peer pressure mechanisms (Gabriel & Savage 1979; Gutiérrez Sanin 2008; Kenny 2008; Rush 1999, 2001). Beyond the highly constraining ‘internal’ institutional and social spaces of military organizations, modes of recruitment and control over labour in times of war have wider manifestations in war-affected societies. Analysing the social and spatial dynamics of armed mobilization in conflict ridden Sierra Leone, Danny Hoffman (2007b; 2011a) shows that the requirements of rapid labour mobilization for the war prompted the emergence of spaces of predominantly male socialization, whose main function in the war economy was to maintain significant pools of labour “in a state of waiting”. These ‘barracks spaces’, such as abandoned hotels where unemployed or underemployed male youth would congregate, or makeshift mining camps in the Mano River area, constituted reservoirs of labour that were easy to tap into for various labour intensive activities, ranging from hiring supporters for political demonstrations, to mining activities, to the ‘work of war’. Intrinsically tied to the commodification of labour that occurs in zones of protracted armed conflict, these “barracks” are thus the spatial manifestation of a social adaptation to novel political economies of war.

While the emergence of separate and often highly constraining social spaces within and around military organizations serves the function of ensuring direct access to and control over members, what is less understood are the ways in which these particular

forms of social control interact and coalesce with other forms of control and authority in the wider social context in which they occur. Indeed, in some configurations, members of armed organizations can remain closely inserted into the societies in which they evolve. The sociology of gangs has been particularly informative with regards to the ways in which organizations that use violence as a means of production adapt to their social environment and take advantage of it to carry out their activities. In particular, studies have shown the ways in which the control of gangs over gang members extends beyond the restricted “social space” of the gang, to the multiple networks in which gang members are embedded, in particular family and community networks, which serve as essential parts of the political economy of these gangs (Joselit 1983; Sanchez-Jankowsky 1991, 2003; Venkatesh 2000). Social control over populations, and members, is therefore an integral part of the way in these organizations accumulate and control resources, in particular labour, and thus an integral element of political economies that develop around these organizations. This motivates our articulation of two levels of analysis, the political economy of labour mobilization and control on one side and its ‘social architecture’ on the other, as they are closely imbricated.

Furthermore, the burgeoning literature on the phenomenon of vigilantism, emanating in particular from anthropology and sociology, has also provided rich insights on the ways in which such non-state security organizations adapt to and transform their social environments. In their study of the contemporary global rise in vigilantism, Pratten and Sen (2007) show that vigilante organizations should be understood as continuations of longstanding forms of decentralized security provision that have come to play novel and multi-faceted roles since the global retreat of states as central security providers in the late 1980s and 1990s. Understanding their social insertion into contemporary societies therefore requires understanding their institutional and social genealogies. For example, several authors have shown that the rise in vigilantism that Nigeria has experienced in the 1990s and 2000s must be understood as a continuation of forms of decentralized security provision that emerged during the colonial era (Fourchard 2008; Meagher 2007; Pratten 2008).

Moreover, this can be the case not only with vigilante groups, often closely associated to “established” forms of security provision as they often serve as surrogates for state

security services, but also of criminal organizations or ‘bandits’. In her study of vigilantism and banditry in Kenya and Tanzania, Suzette Heald (2006, 2007) shows that rural “bandits” were deeply entrenched into the very fabric of rural societies, through networks of families that gave a “tentacle” form of presence to these organizations (Heald 2007 p.6). Their social implantation was tied to the functions they had come to play in such societies, at the centre of political economies of pillage and banditry, but also, in several cases, as providers of collective goods to their social base. Such contentions resonate with historical analyses of ‘social banditry’ on the African continent, in particular Crummey (1986), who followed Eric Hobsbawm’s seminal analysis of social banditry in Europe to show the double-edged role that such organizations played in rural societies, between plunder on one hand and provision of services and goods on the other. Similarly, studies of gangs have highlighted the fact that not only do they provide goods to their members as many organizations do, but these goods also percolate to the wider social networks in which these organizations are embedded (Whyte 1943; Sanchez-Jankowski 1991; Venkatesh 2000).

The modes of control that armed organizations exert over their members should therefore be understood as part of their wider insertion into the societies in which they evolve, which results from their institutional genealogies and their social bases on one side, and the multi-faceted roles that they come to play within these societies on the other. While coercion and violence is often a central feature of their modes of control over populations, the emphasis on coercion and violence that has dominated depictions of these organizations tends to cloud the wide range of roles that they come to play, as well as the general “adaptation” of civilian populations to their presence. As Verweijen (2013) has argued, using Anthony Giddens’ (1985) theory of structuration, civilians tend to adapt to the presence of such organizations, either strategically or by obligation. Such processes of adaptation and adjustment are numerous and very diverse. They can be seen as the social manifestations of the adaptation to the novel political economies of protection whose emergence in times of high insecurity was mentioned in the previous section, and to the complex ‘politics of protection’ that derive from them (Pratten 2008).

Indeed, in addition to economic and business actors who strategically adjust to the necessity of obtaining “private” protection from such actors, civilians and actors of all

types often seek out protection from armed actors. These can take particular social manifestations, such as women who marry members of armed groups with the intention of obtaining protection (Morvan 2005), or civilians strategically developing social ties with armed actors to obtain various types of advantages (Verweijen 2013). Becoming an active member of these organizations can be an essential aspect of these adaptations, as it can condition access to both individual and collective protection. Because of the authority that derives from these organizations' capacity to provide protection and other types of goods, families or communities can strategically decide to encourage participation of some of their members to obtain protection, an aspect which we will specifically explore in the quantitative analysis.

Furthermore, while armed organizations can come to exert multi-faceted forms of control over populations, this control comes under heavy contestation in contexts of civil wars, which introduces very specific social dynamics. Indeed, one of the defining features of civil wars is the extension of the armed conflict between opposing factions to the social realm, and the bitter infighting that takes place for control over people through social networks and actors, who are often forced to align with opposing parties of the conflict. This process is known as social polarization, and induces a deep reconfiguration of the social structures and networks within a society, including families and communities (Kalyvas 2006; Wood 2008). Counter-insurgency tactics tend to focus on "infiltrating" networks of support to insurgencies in order to break off support channels, and often rely on coercion and violence to achieve those ends (Kalyvas 2006). This can also involve 'taking control' of institutions that aggregate the social networks through which support for insurgencies is mediated - for example by replacing university rectors, religious leaders and different types of public authorities and figures - but also crafting new institutions designed to exert social control over populations, such as local committees or youth wings.

The literature points to several mechanisms tying counter-insurgency tactics, violence against civilians and participation. On one hand, counter-insurgency tactics can make it extremely costly to join or support an insurgent organization, as it can entail violent retaliation on an individual's social entourage, break down social networks that mediate mobilization, and thus dampen participation in insurgent groups (Gurr 1970; Tullock 1971). On the other hand, the violence against civilians that often takes place

in counter-insurgent operations can generate further grievances, which can lead to more participation, or leave civilians with ‘no other way out’ than to find refuge and protection from such violence in insurgent groups (Goodwin 2001; Kalyvas & Kocher 2007; Lichbach 1995; Mason & Krane 1989; Wood 2003). Thus, in understanding the transformation of social structures during civil wars, that are likely to reshape dynamics of participation in armed groups, the specific dynamics introduced by social polarization must be taken into account.

Three salient points emerge from this brief overview of the literature on the social dimensions of civil wars and the constitution of non-state armed organizations. First, understanding the social basis of armed groups, and the pre-existing social structures from which they emerge and which they can ‘appropriate’ is crucial in understanding their modes of recruitment of combatants. In eastern DRC, the high level of socio-political fragmentation of the rural areas is likely to condition very different types of socially mediated mobilizations, an aspect that we will explore in this dissertation. Second, while recent streams of literature have deepened our understanding of the transformative effects that civil wars and the emergence of armed groups have on social structures, the ways these in turn reshape modes and processes of recruitment of combatants remains to be spelled out and traced more precisely. In particular, the extension of both the accumulative functions of armed organizations and the economies of protection that develop around them which we have seen to be characteristic features of zones of protected conflict are likely to reshape the social processes of recruitment and control over combatants. Third, the specific dynamics introduced by the socially polarizing effects of civil wars, and the role of counter-insurgency operations in particular are an essential aspect of the reconfiguration of social structures during civil wars, and should therefore be taken into account in analysing the evolving modes of recruitment of combatants.

Together, these questions allow us to orient our inquiry into the ‘social architecture’ of participation in non-state armed organizations, both the macro-structures that shape armed mobilization and the more dynamics social processes of recruitment over combatants. This line of analysis is pursued throughout the dissertation. In the qualitative empirical chapters (Chapters 4-8), I pay particular attention to situating such processes of armed mobilization in their social and institutional history, looking

at inherited modes of labour mobilization and the way they structure contemporary mobilizations, and then trace the transformative effects of the war on the novel processes of participation. The quantitative analysis carried out in Chapter 9 keeps this thread of inquiry and looks into the effects of institutional and social mediation of participation.

1.2.3. Individual dimensions of participation

While the political economy and “social architecture” of armed mobilization shape and constrain the process of participation in multiple ways, they also delineate the spaces of agency, and freedom, of individuals. Participation, in the end, is a human action, and in that sense it bears the unpredictability and complexity of all human actions, despite and beyond their structural determinations. The story of participation in armed organizations is a story of people, of individualities, caught up in collective processes that often supersede their motives and actions, but are also shaped and altered by them. Without adopting a binary conception of structure versus agency, we seek to develop an informed and nuanced understanding of the individual dimensions of participation. This implies an analysis of how the previously identified processes shape the individual decisions and behaviour of participants, and are reflected in the ways in which they make sense of their own decisions and actions, but also the ways in which these individuals supersede and overcome such determinations.

Studies of violent collective action have long assumed that individuals participating in collective violence or violent organizations had specific psychological, social or biological traits that distinguished them from the rest of the population and explained their proclivity to engage in violent actions. The pathological characters advanced as causes for individual participation in violent collective action ranged from “biological sadism” and natural tendencies towards violent behaviour (Yablonsky 1966), to various forms of social delinquency or anomia (Cohen 1955). In studies of violence on the African continent, such pathological explanations have long been suffused with ontologies of race - whose genealogies can be traced back to the colonial and pre-colonial era - positing that Africans, as opposed to other human beings, were inherently or naturally violent (Alexander, Mc Gregor & Ranger 2000; Leopold 2005).

The academic literature on violence and violent collective action has come a long way to rebuke such ideas, although they remain pregnant in popular depictions of violence on the African continent. Following Hannah Arendt's (1963) famous rebuttal of Eichmann's prosecutor's depiction of the mastermind of Nazi logistics as a 'monster', and her contention that, in fact, Eichmann was an ordinary citizen, a growing literature has sought to show that participation in violence isn't due to pathological biological or psycho-social traits, and that participants in violence do not have exceptional individual characteristics. In particular, recent studies of perpetrators during the Rwandan genocide have revealed that those who participated in the violence had no particular distinguishing social or psychological trait, and, apart from a gender dimension, they were in fact fairly representative of the general population of Rwanda (Mc Doom 2009, 2013; Straus 2006; Verwimp 2005).

However, this does not entail that individual level characteristics or motivations are irrelevant for understanding participation. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the literature on participation has extensively documented the role of various types of grievances - stemming from economic deprivation, inequality, social marginalization, lack of opportunities - in motivating individual decisions to participate in violent collective action (Gurr 1970; Humphreys & Weinstein 2008; Jourdan 2004; Richards P. 1996; Scacco 2009; Van Acker & Vlassenroot 2001). Wars, and the very act of participation, can enhance such grievances or generate new ones, by further depriving and/or socially ostracizing participants, and generating 'endogenous grievances', which can motivate participation or remobilization (Eastern Congo Initiative 2013; Honwana 2005; Richards J. 2014).

Additionally, another particular war-related grievance that can play a role is the victimization of civilians and their entourage by armed actors. Attacks on civilians can considerably enhance frustration and grievances on the part of civilians, who can in turn decide to seek revenge by joining armed organizations. This ties in with several authors who have shown that armed actors can strategically use violence against civilians to force 'free riders' and bystanders into the conflict (Kalyvas & Kocher 2007). Azam (2006) showed that such a tactic reduces the opportunity cost of joining. While these represent constraining mechanisms to force individual participation,

participation can in turn entail access to protection from such victimization. Protection, in this case, represents an individual incentive to participate, in order to reduce victimization on an individual and his social entourage. What Richards (2014 p.310) calls ‘recruitment for protection’ can thus be part of the strategies and tactics of civilians to navigate the presence of armed actors, which we have discussed in the previous section (Morvan 2005; Verweijen 2013).

The difficulty of identifying ‘strictly’ individual determinants of participation stems from the inter-related nature of the individual and the social and institutional. Studies of participation in armed groups in Africa have predominantly adopted the ‘forced vs. voluntary’ paradigm to understanding participation. Yet finding the ‘strictly’ individual motivations for voluntary participation is difficult, and understanding what voluntary means is similarly difficult in contexts where the voluntary dimension is difficult to disentangle from external coercion (Honwana 2005; Seymour 2011; Boas & Hatloy 2008; Richards K. 2014). Similarly, it is not clear whether the relation between protection and participation occurs at an individual level, or a collective one, through families or even communities. The analysis of the individual determinants of participation must therefore be done in conjunction with the analysis of supra-individual factors. While such combined explanations are prevalent in qualitative studies of participation, it is only recently that quantitative studies have started exploring the interaction of individual and supra-individual factors. For example, Scacco (2009) finds that, while economic grievances do not explain participation in violence when taken independently, they become significant when interacted with social networks that mediate participation. Thus, she argues that individual grievances are ‘activated’ by the social networks that link together potential participants.

Beyond socio-economic pre-conditions and profiles, several authors have underscored the role of emotional factors, which can take multiple forms. In her study of insurgent mobilization during the civil war in El Salvador, Wood (2003) argued that, while important, socio-economic grievances are insufficient by themselves to explain why people risked their lives by participating in the insurgency. She argues that emotions associated with participation, what she calls the “pleasure of agency”, were a decisive aspect of their decision to join the insurgency. The pleasure of agency, however, cannot be understood solely as an individual level factor, as it is experienced

collectively, and rests on shared values and appreciations of what constitutes righteous actions.

Similarly, several studies of armed conflict on the African continent have put into light the fact that, in situations of economic and social crisis, the youth were most likely to participate in armed organizations, as these provided them with a form of social integration and community that they no longer had access to in their societies (Hoffman D. 2011a; Honwana 2005; Jourdan 2004; Van Acker & Vlassenroot 2001a). The experience of deprivation, and the desire to escape the oppressive orders in which they were constrained by forging new forms of sociality and community are collective emotions, which a focus on the strictly individual level characteristics cannot fully capture. Similarly, we have seen in the first part of this chapter, the literature on participation has shown that ‘selective incentives’, and in particular material incentives in the form of rewards, played an important role in driving participation (Popkin 1979; Kalyvas & Kocher 2007; Mason & Krane 1989). However, the individual’s valuation of these incentives, and his proclivity to join as a result of these incentives, does not happen outside of the social context in which he evolves, which shapes and influences his decisions. For examples, young men socialized into the types of Barrack Spaces that Hoffman has shown to emerge in times of war, are perhaps more likely to respond immediately to material or monetary incentives, or what Hoffman (2011) calls the “cash nexus”. Yet their individual proclivity to respond to such incentives is tied to their socialization into groups where cash-paid labour is commonplace, and collectively valued.

What these considerations point towards is an understanding of the processual dimension of participation, and the ways in which participation can reshapes the outlook of individuals, whose motivations can evolve as a result of their participation. While the youth of the village of Kimua who joined the self-defence group might initially be motivated by the protection of their families and communities, their participation opens new opportunities and constraints, such as the possibility of pursuing a military career, or leaving their village to embark on an adventure, which also constitute a form of ‘pleasure of agency’, that can be experienced individually but also within various forms of collective socialization.

These considerations focus our inquiry into the individual dimensions of participation on three main points. First, ascertaining whether there are clear, identifiable, individual level variables that explain participation. This will be carried out by paying attention to the leitmotifs in the narrative reconstructions of participants' experiences, to see whether factors such as grievances, protection, or opportunity appear consistently throughout the qualitative interviews. Furthermore, in chapter 9, we will look at whether specific individual level factors have clear effects on the propensity to participate. Second, following the aforementioned need to adopt a processual understanding of the individual determinants of participation, attention will be paid in the qualitative chapters to the ways in which participation reconfigures individual motivations for participation. Third, attention will be paid – particularly in Chapters 6, 7 and 8 that adopt a closer geographical focus – to the role of particular individuals.

1.3. Dissertation Road Map

This dissertation therefore seeks to understand the evolving causes of participation in zones of armed conflict, by looking at three, inter-related dimensions of recruitment and participation into armed organizations: The political economy of labour mobilization, the social architecture of recruitment and control, and the individual determinants and dimensions of participation. This is done through both a qualitative analysis of processes of mobilization and participation, and a quantitative analysis of participation in armed factions. Accordingly, the dissertation is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 begins by situating contemporary processes of armed mobilization in the history of labour mobilization in eastern Congo. The Chapter shows that, historically, the mobilization of combatants has been driven by the provision of security to the fragmented socio-political entities that constitute eastern Congo on one side, and the more accumulative logics of labour mobilization that were implanted by the empires that took control of the region on the other. This tension between these often conflicting forces has shaped the political and institutional “topography” of the region. The chapter then introduces the historical background of Congolese wars of the 1990s and 2000s. As this dissertation does not focus on the geopolitical, international or strictly political aspects of the conflict, these are summarized in this chapter in order

to situate the analysis. Chapter Three then presents the mixed methods approach of the dissertation, provides a justification of the qualitative case studies and discusses the challenges associated with conducting research in an African conflict zone.

The objective of Chapters Four and Five is to identify two key “macro-logics” of armed mobilization in the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement of South Kivu, by bringing examples from different areas and time periods into comparative focus. Chapter Four analyses the initial phases of the Mayi-Mayi mobilizations in the town of Bukavu and several rural areas of South Kivu, focusing on the “protective” mobilizations by the decentralized socio-polities of South Kivu and their articulation with the spreading dynamics of the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement, which bore the features of a social movement. Chapter Five identifies a contrasting “accumulative” logic of recruitment and control of combatants, which, although present from the onset of the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement, became more prevalent as the war dragged on.

The following chapters adopt a much narrower geographical focus in order to provide a closer tracing and historical contextualization of processes of armed mobilization and participation. Chapter Six focuses on the successive waves of armed mobilization that occurred during the rule of the RCD in the Midlands and Lowlands of the Mbinga Sud Grouping, in the territory of Kalehe. First, the chapter traces the Local Defence mobilization orchestrated by the RCD, who relied on chiefs to recruit labour on a large scale. The chapter then traces the “counter-mobilization” that followed defection from the RCD army by the Mayi-Mayi group of Cisayura, who relied on the charisma he had developed as a leader of the Local Defence as well as the deep channels of penetration into the Havu societies of the Midlands to recruit combatants for his group. We will argue that the modes of control that the group developed over its members should be understood in the light of the wider power that the group developed in the societies of the Midlands, which came to constitute a form of counter-authority in the region.

Chapters Seven and Eight focus on a close yet significantly different region, the Northern Highlands of the territory of Kalehe in South Kivu, and traces the successive rounds of armed mobilization that took place in the Hutu societies of the Highlands. Chapter Seven starts with a historical introduction to the region and points out the

social and institutional origins of the conflicts that took a militarized turn in the 1990s. It then traces the repeated rounds of armed mobilization that occurred in the Hutu societies of the Highlands in the 1990s and 2000s, emphasizing the progressive imbrication of these societies into larger dynamics of power politics playing out at the regional level, as well as their progressive militarization. Chapter Eight focuses on the most recent round of armed mobilization in the Hutu societies of the Highlands by tracing the emergence of the *Nyatura* armed movement in 2011- 2012. The chapter provides a close range analysis of the events that preceded the mobilization in order to ascertain the role of different factors in explaining the mobilization, and then analyses the “social architecture” of the first round of armed mobilization in 2011 and the second round of “crisis mobilization” against the Raia Mutomboki militias in 2012.

Finally, the same lines of analytical inquiry are pursued in Chapter Nine, in which a quantitative analysis of armed mobilization in the province of South Kivu is carried out. The analysis is based on a survey of 1084 individuals and 134 rural villages of South Kivu that allowed to develop a retrospective panel dataset that reconstitutes the economic, social and political “histories” of these villages and individuals over the last 20 years. Three main regression analyses are proposed, guided by the three central questions of the dissertation, namely *why and how* people participate in armed organizations, as well as *who* participates in the armed organizations. The dissertation ends with the concluding chapter Ten, that highlights the main contributions of the dissertation to the understanding of contemporary processes of armed mobilization, as well as the limitations of the dissertation and the avenues for future research.

Chapter Two

Armed Mobilization in Historical Perspective

This study focuses on the dynamics of participation in armed organizations in the province of South Kivu, in eastern DRC. The mobilization of combatants for war related purposes has a long and intricate history in eastern DRC, which is intrinsically tied to the dynamics of armed conflict and violence in the Great Lakes Region. The sheer historical and geographical extensiveness of this ‘history of violence’, which has been the topic of an extensive literature, is beyond the scope of this historical background chapter. The objective of this chapter is rather to look at historical patterns of labour mobilization for war related purposes, and the institutional and social mechanisms that enabled or constrained mobilizations. We will see that participation in armed organizations is tied to several, distinct processes. First, the provision of security to the decentralized socio-polities that have constituted the region, from pre-colonial kingdoms to the ethno-territorial constituencies that were crafted during the colonial period. Armed mobilization within these entities was either tied to the provision of security and protection to these entities, or to resistance against ‘external’ political control and resource extraction, from “Arab” slave traders and Rwandan invaders, to the colonial and post-colonial state.

In addition, the mobilization of labour for war has been inscribed in processes of labour conscription on a larger scale, from the colonial state’s “extractive” rule to the more complex forms of large-scale extraction that have come to prevail in the post-colonial era. These macro-logics of labour mobilization have interacted in complex ways with the more decentralized forms of mobilization. The armed groups that roam the countryside of eastern DRC today therefore have long “institutional genealogies”, historically situated at the crux of functions of accumulation and control, but also

resistance and provision of security to decentralized entities. The chapter also provides a historical background to the contemporary wars in eastern Congo, focusing on the international and political dynamics that are not specifically the topic of this dissertation.

2.1. A brief history of labour mobilization in eastern Congo

The armed mobilizations of the 1990s and 2000s that are the focus of this study are inscribed in a long history of labour conscription for security and war in the Great Lakes in eastern Congo. While novel in their scope and impact on society, the mobilizations of the 1990s reflected, re-deployed and transformed engrained frameworks of political and social organization and resource mobilization. Here, our objective is not to carry out an extensive history of labour conscription and mobilization for war in the region, but rather to identify some of the main ways in which labour conscription was institutionalized in eastern DRC, in order to trace the “social and institutional genealogies” of contemporary processes and mechanisms of mobilization.

2.1.1. Pre-colonial political organization in eastern Congo

Up until the mid-19th century, at the moment of the arrival of the first exploratory European expeditions that would pave the road to the colonial expansion, the region that now constitute the provinces of North and South Kivu was marked by political fluidity, with a domination of lineage based systems, connected through the inter-lacustrine trade networks, that aggregated into several chiefdoms such as Bushi, Buhavu, Butembo or Buhunde, and, further to the East, the great ‘Rega cluster’ formed of a constellation of smaller and semi-autonomous “forest societies” (Biebuyck 1973; Newbury 1992). While some of the chiefdoms displayed signs of political centralization and social stratification, in particular Bushi, it was incomparable to the much more structured, centralized and socially stratified “states” that were consolidating on the eastern shores of the great lakes, in particular the Kingdom of Rwanda.¹⁶ This, however, did not mean that notions of territorialized authority and

¹⁶ Newbury (2009), p.69.

political competences were absent in eastern Congo.¹⁷ While political authority was centred on the figure of the chief, it was elaborately balanced along lineage groups, and political competition concentrated on succession to the thrones of these entities (Newbury 1992). These polities displayed little signs of large-scale resource mobilization and accumulation. Labour mobilization existed, but was of a collective and communal nature, inscribed in the dense systems of reciprocal and collective relations and public goods provision that characterized these societies.¹⁸ Soldiers and security personnel existed as well, but were mostly tied to protection of these small political entities against external assaults and banditry, and thus lacked the scale and institutionalization of the larger states of the Great Lakes region, in particular King Rwabugiri's highly militarized state in Rwanda.¹⁹

From the mid-19th century, the relative isolation of the region and its political equilibriums were deeply shattered by several converging forces. The belligerent expansionism of the Rwandan Kingdom under Rwabugiri was projected unto the region as it carried out repeated military expeditions to expand the Kingdom's territory and force neighbouring kingdoms into vassalage. Repeated campaigns on the Havu island of Idjwi from around 1870 led to periods of full military control by Rwanda over the island, while other campaigns went as far west as Mpinga and Butembo, West of the Mitumba Mountain Range.²⁰ These expeditions favoured the emergence and spread of a corporatist military culture, epitomised by the "bovine armies" and "social militias" that spearheaded the conquests and carried out forced recruitments throughout the region. The most prolonged campaigns were directed towards the Kingdoms of Bushi on the South-Western Shores of Lake Kivu, where the Shi opposed a fierce resistance and repeatedly defeated Rwaburigi's army, eventually causing his death. These episodes of violent resistance against Rwanda would constitute important institutional and discursive templates for subsequent armed resistance movements throughout the 20th century.

¹⁷ Chretien (2000), p.149.

¹⁸ Northrup (1988), p.18.

¹⁹ Newbury (2009), p.137.

²⁰ Newbury (2009), p.136.

Superimposed to the military incursions of Rwanda was the expansion of ivory and slave trade networks into the region, which introduced large-scale accumulative modes of labour conscription. Indeed, the East African slave trade, dominated by the sultanate of Zanzibar and the ‘Turks’ of Khartoum, had been expanding throughout the Great Lakes along with ivory and other trades, targeting the weaker and more politically fragmented areas, including the Western Shores of Lake Kivu where slave raiding expeditions intensified around in the mid-19th century. These expeditions relied on elaborate networks of intermediaries and columns of “African” mercenaries recruited throughout the region, known as the *arabises*.²¹ Tippu Tip established himself in Kasongo in eastern Congo, and progressively became the most powerful trader in the region, commanding over large military expeditions throughout the region and setting up the foundations of a regional empire. Pillage raids – known as *razzia* - penetrated deeper and deeper to the West, mostly to obtain ivory and captives, who were then either sold as slaves or incorporated as “slave soldiers” into the expeditionary forces that could gather up to 10 000 men, initiating a culture of violent mercenarism that would take a solid anchorage in the region throughout the 20th century.²²

Two of the most important modes of participation and recruitment into armed organizations were therefore present in what is now eastern Congo in the period immediately preceding the colonial expansion: On one side, large scale conscription into the slave trade and violent mercenary forces. On the other, mobilization as part of the resistance movements that emerged from the existing socio-polities against these violent intrusions into the region.

2.1.2. Labour in the colony: The Extractive imperative

As in much of the African continent, the colonial conquest, and colonial rule, brought significant and durable changes to the political landscape of eastern Congo. The absorption of the region into the Congo Free State was a very violent process, involving a war against Tippu Tip and his trade empire, but also repeated military

²¹ Chretien (2000) p.179.

²² Northrup (1988).

campaigns to “pacify” the rebellious populations of the East. Under the rule of the Congo Free State and then the Belgian Congo from 1908, the slavery practiced by the Zanzibarites was replaced by similarly extractive and exploitative modes of labour conscription, in particular the state enforced system of forced labour, as well as the gradual introduction of exploitative forms of wage labour. The colonial state soon developed institutional means to mobilize “internal” labour from its territory. Legislation and decrees were passed as early as 1891-1892 requiring African Chiefs to provide *prestations* in food and *corvees* (compulsory unpaid work) to colonial agents, as well as soldiers to staff the colonial army, the *Force Publique*.²³ The brutality with which Congo Free State’s system of forced work was enforced, particularly for the production of rubber and the collection of ivory, have been vividly depicted in historical accounts of the period.²⁴ The *Forces Publiques*, initially staffed by former militiamen from the Zanzibari militias - the *arabises* - who pursued their brutal methods, was key to maintaining order in eastern Congo and ensuring that local chiefs met their quota.

Comprehensive reforms were implemented following the takeover of Congo by the Belgian parliament, including a reform of the labour tax in 1910 that was replaced by taxes in cash and the abolition of physical punishment. However, these did not alter the fundamentally exploitative nature of labour conscription. The progressive introduction of wages only faintly dissimulated the coercive nature of labour conscription by the colonial state. Wage labour nevertheless provided an alternative to the system of *corvees* (compulsory unpaid work), and pushed a large number of people towards wage earning jobs in plantations, or into the *Force Publique*.²⁵ The *Force Publique* itself served the double function of a state enforcer and labour mobilizing institution. Indeed, the *miliciens* (militiamen) of the *Forces Publiques* had the status of soldier-labourers and were deployed towards all sorts of labour intensive tasks. The nexus between security and wage labour, an important feature of the current conflicts, was therefore institutionalized in the early colonial state. World War I, during which the Belgian Congo engaged in military confrontation against German East Africa from 1916, sparked a huge effort to conscribe soldiers, porters and

²³ Northrup (1988) p.41.

²⁴ See Hothschild (1988) or Van Reybrouck (2013).

²⁵ Northrup (1988) p.71.

resources to the eastern fronts. The vast increase in the burden of *corvees*, as well as various other taxes led to widespread famine and pauperization, amplified by calamitous epidemics of sleeping sickness and influenza that decimated the population of eastern Congo.²⁶

From the 1920s, a significant rise in private investments in eastern Congo changed the configuration of economic activity and the role of the state in recruiting labour. The development of export agriculture, mining and trade and the resulting increase in infrastructure investments led to a sharp rise in the demand for labour. The role of the Colonial state shifted from being the primary employer of labour to the primary provider of labour to the colonial private sector. The state continued to oversee labour recruitment throughout eastern Congo, institutionalizing it through legislation, and established quotas to ensure a steady supply of labour. Although efforts were made to reduce the tax and conscription burden on the populations, the system remained highly coercive, with quotas of labourers being imposed on village chiefs, and several instances of revolts occurring as a result. This was particularly the case for the *Force Publique*, a much less attractive option than wage labour in the agriculture or mining industries because of the meagre pay and harsh conditions, leading to coercive pressure on chiefs and reluctant recruits and numerous instances of forced conscription.²⁷ This reluctance led to initiatives to import labour, in particular through the *Mission D'immigration des Banyarwanda* (Mission of Immigration of the Banyarwanda), a state orchestrated policy of migration of Rwandan (mostly Hutu) labourers to the coastal plantations of Kivu.

2.1.2.1. Territorialization and the role of chiefs

The 'extractive imperative' also drove a drastic reorganization of political space in eastern Congo which Hoffmann K. (2014) argues constituted a *territorialization* of state power. This was done through what he calls *ethnogovernmentality*, the organization of mediated state power through the constitution of ethno-territories, which corresponded more or less to the pre-existing socio-political entities.²⁸ In

²⁶ Northrup (1988) p.112.

²⁷ Northrup (1988) p.126.

²⁸ Hoffmann (2014) p.116.

eastern Congo, the creation of the native homelands and the imposition of what is known as indirect rule was a messy and violent process, giving rise to multiple resistance movements, but also setting the scene for internal infightings between different ethno-territorial groups.

The institution of the chief was central in the colonial state's apparatus of resource mobilization. Chiefs had already been playing the role of mediators in the mobilization of resources under Zanzibari rule, who relied on them to conscribe slave soldiers.²⁹ The colonial state extended, systematized and institutionalized their role, backed by a discursive justification inspired in part by the nascent discipline of anthropology, as well as pseudo-scientific justifications of indirect rule that accompanied the colonial project.³⁰ In 1891, the institution of the chiefdom was recognized by royal decree, enshrining native chiefs into the colonial state.³¹ The land over which indigenous chiefs ruled was given a separate legal status as *Terres Indigenes* (Native Land).³² A series of decrees and laws, in particular the law of May 2, 1910, further delineated the role of the chief, defining his power over territory and people.

The creation of the Native authorities, which included an administrative "gridding" of rural areas with the establishment of chiefs and sub-chiefs,³³ as well as mapping efforts and population censuses carried out in the early 20th century, served two main functions. On one hand, the native authorities ensured control over rural populations at a low cost. On the other, they served to mobilize taxes and labour destined, as previously seen, to a range of activities, from public works for the colonial state - in particular portage - to the various industries, to the staffing of the *Forces Publiques*. This put the chiefs in a difficult position, as they often tried to protect their subjects from the demanding quotas of the state, but nevertheless had to comply or face being deposed, imprisoned or even assassinated. Northrup shows that, initially, a "politics" of recruitment of labour was at play among the chiefs subjects, with chiefs

²⁹ Northrup (1988) p.45.

³⁰ Hoffmann (2014), chapters 5 and 6.

³¹ Ibid, p.121.

³² Native lands were governed under customary right, following the June 3, 1906 and May 31, 1934 decrees (Mpoyi 2013).

³³ Sub-Chiefdoms were instituted by the law of May 2, 1910.

systemically designating domestic slaves, former slaves, or marginal segments of their population for conscription as *soldats travailleurs* (worker soldiers) in the *Forces Publiques*.³⁴ However, the incessantly increasing labour demands of the colonial state, particularly during the two World Wars, led to an ambiguous and often compromised relation of the chiefs with their population, or to multiple forms of resistance.

2.1.2.2. Resistance

Of all the Belgian Congo, the populations of eastern Congo opposed one of the fiercest resistances to the colonial occupation. Resistance in the region started early on, as a continuation of the resistance against the Rwandan invaders and the slave raids by the Zanzibari and *arabises*. The “*pacification*” of the Southern areas of Kivu (that correspond to the current province of South Kivu) required significant military efforts, in particular in the bellicose Kingdoms of Bushi and in particular the chiefdoms of Kabare and Ngweshe, who opposed severe resistance to colonial rule and the taxes imposed by the colonial state up to the onset of the first World War.³⁵ The colonial authorities in Costermansville (the former name of Bukavu) used both military force and political manoeuvring to quell the violent resistance. Brutal retaliations were organized against rebellious chiefs, rebellious chiefdoms were broken apart and incorporated into different administrative entities, and cooperative chiefs were given ascendancy over rebellious ones in the crafting of the colonial native authorities.³⁶ In many cases, this accentuated pre-existing rivalries between chiefs and often led to violence, with “rebel” chiefs sending punitive expeditions to collaborating villages, and the colonial state in turn organizing violent punitive expeditions in areas under the rule of rebel chiefs.³⁷

Resistance took multiple forms, from overt resistance by hosting armed factions, to more “passive” forms of resistance against the colonially imposed taxes and forced works. In the hinterland, in the forests behind the Mitumba mountain range, and

³⁴ Northrup (1988) p.44.

³⁵ For example, Lieutenant Tondeur of the Free State was assassinated in 1902 by men from Kabare, which led to a brutal repression by the colonial state (Hoffmann 2014 p.156).

³⁶ Hoffmann (2014) p.155.

³⁷ This was particularly the case for Mwami Kabare, who organized the resistance before fleeing to Buloho (Hoffmann 2014 p.156.)

particularly in the area of Butembo, a fierce resistance was conducted by the remaining columns of rebel *arabises*. As a result of the disrupting presence of these militias, Butembo had undergone severe political fracturing, and competition between rival chiefs had often taken violent forms, through alliances with armed factions. An economy of plunder and predation emerged, in conjunction with contraband of weapons and rubber, and a famous local warlord emerged as the strongman of the region, Nkijo Kingumwa. Supported by several chiefs in the area, he was targeted by punitive expeditions of the *Forces Publiques*, which also targeted the populations believed to be in association with him in 1911 and 1912.³⁸

Thus, we have seen that, during the second half of the 19th century and the early colonial period, two “macro-logics” of armed mobilization emerged in the region, and would prove highly resilient throughout the 20th century and in the wars of the 1990s. An accumulative or extractive logic of conscription of labour on a large scale was instilled by the Zanzibari rulers, and then significantly expanded by the colonial state. Through a violent and conflictual process, local chiefs became one of the colonial state’s most important “handles” to mobilize labour on a large scale, and were incorporated into the very architecture of the colonial state. On the other hand, the violence of the colonial penetration, the heavy taxation that the colonial state exerted, and the political engineering that the colonial authorities engaged in sparked several armed resistance movements from the polities of eastern Congo. In conjunction with these processes of large scale mobilization and resistance, economies of predation and protection emerged in remote areas and became closely imbricated with existing forms of social and political organization, with the figure of the warlord emerging as a new form of authority. The nexus between established forms of authority, external forms of power and violent actors would remain prevalent throughout the 20th century.

2.1.3. Political Power and Rebellion after Independence

The dramatic post-colonial history of the former Belgian Congo has had a tendency to defy all classifications and comparisons, breeding an entire vocabulary seeking to capture its convoluted trajectory. Even Frantz Fanon, the “cold surgeon” of African

³⁸ Hoffmann (2014) p.163.

post-colonial political psyche, seemed to have surrendered to the aura of catastrophism that surrounds the country when he stated that “Africa has the shape of a gun, and its trigger is the Congo”. While often adding obscurity rather than dissipating it, this language reflects a reality of extremes, in a country that has alternated between violent civil wars and abusive, autocratic and exploitative forms of power. In this section, we shortly point out a few of the salient features of this post-colonial trajectory that will inform our understanding of the contemporary period, in particular the ‘politics of exclusion’ and the social entrenchment of armed rebellion in certain parts of eastern Congo.

The complexity of the post-colonial trajectory of the Congo is tied to several factors. First, the country’s vastness and extreme geological diversity have been a structural hindrance to the effective projection and centralization of state power, as Herbst (2000) has argued. The distant provinces of the East proved particularly difficult to control both militarily and administratively, as had been the case under colonial rule. Second, the colonial origins of the state and its political architecture resulted in structural imbalances that underpinned the repeated crises that the country underwent (Young & Turner 1985; Young 1994). In particular, the ethno-territorial basis of political power structurally shaped aggregate political interests and the lines of political competition in the post-colonial era, a feature that would take abrasive turn in the wars of the 1990s.

The crisis that shook the Congo after its Independence represents a *critical juncture* that shaped the dynamics of both political and military contention and resistance of the post-colonial state. Following Independence, when political power was devolved to a nascent political class with great haste, the country fell into a deep crisis that reflected both the weakness of its political institutions and the numerous vested interests that underpinned political control over the country’s territory and resources. These included the colonial interests that controlled the majority of the countries industries and companies, international diplomatic interests in the context of the cold war, but also the emerging interests of the Congolese business and political class, organized around ethno-territorial constituencies.

As Kisangani (2012) argues, the wars of secession that followed the Independence of Congo were consequences of what he calls the “politics of exclusion”, that have been

a dominant feature of political competition in post-Independence Congo. The politics of exclusion corresponds to a winner takes all configuration of political power playing out in the provincial and national arenas, where each “party” is an ethno-territorial constituency. Exclusion at the “top” entails exclusion of entire ethno-territorial constituencies, thus creating the impetus not only for excluded elites to resort to violent methods, but also the structural conditions for entire ethno-territorial constituencies to follow because their “exclusion” is felt not only at a political level, but also at an economic and social one. Following Independence, political turmoil quickly turned into violent conflict with the secessions of the provinces of Katanga (1960-1963), Kasai (1960-1962), and the rebellions of Kwilu (1964-1965) and rebellion of the eastern provinces (1964-1966).³⁹ Both those rebellions were tied to national level politics, in particular the progressive exclusion of the Lumumbist MNC/L “nationalist” party from government,⁴⁰ but also to provincial level political competition between different ethno-territorial constituencies (Ngonzolo-Ntalaja 2002).

The eastern Rebellion was initiated in Fizi and Uvira, two territories of South Kivu. The excluded former Lumumbists sent lieutenants Gaston Soumialot and Laurent Desire Kabila to spark a rebellion in Fizi and Uvira, where they found a receptive ear in the disgruntled Babembe and Bafuliro ethnic group leaders who had been marginalized in provincial politics. As Kisangani (2012 p.78) argues, several factors converged to create propitious grounds for rebellion, including the economic deprivation of large sections of the youth, a crumbling state, as well as an “ideology” inspired by socialist precepts and incarnated by the charismatic figures of Patrice Lumumba and Pierre Mulele. However, as Verhaegen (1969) notes, ideology seems to have been less of a factor than the mobilizing power of the tight social networks of the Bembe and Fuliro, combined with the use of a particular ‘social technology’ of insurgency known as the *dawa*,⁴¹ that led to large-scale recruitments of *Simba*, or *Mayi-Mayi*, as the combatants of the rebel army were called. The rebellion spread all

³⁹ The Kwilu rebellion started on Jan 6, 1964, while the eastern Rebellion started on April 15, 1964.

⁴⁰ On September 14, 1960, Patrice Lumumba was deposed by a military coup by Mobutu, before being assassinated. Lumumba’s party was then progressively excluded from national and provincial politics (Kisangani 2012 p.65).

⁴¹ The *dawa* is one of the rituals carried out by the Simba rebellion to protect combatants against enemy fire that came in many forms and had a large array of strategic and social functions (Verhaegen 1969 pp.548-564). We come back to these practices in Chapter 4.

the way to Stanleyville (current Kisangani), but met severe opposition by the other ethno-territorial constituencies of South Kivu, in particular the Shi and Rega who feared losing their power in the provincial government. The rebel occupation of large territories of eastern Congo sparked the emergence of multiple sub-conflicts, of various scales and configurations, whose complexity are evocative of those of the 1990s in the region, and which intensified the polarization of ethnic identities. The eastern Rebellion was eventually crushed in 1966 by the central government forces, with the active support of the United States and Belgium who provided material, logistical and ground support to the Mobutu regime,⁴² although small pockets of resistance, in the form of small armed organizations, remained throughout the Kivus. The rebellion, however, had significant consequences on the region, setting in places mechanisms that would resurface in the 1990s crisis. These included deep antagonisms between ethnic groups that fought bitterly during the rebellion, in particular between the Rwandophone populations of the Highlands of Uvira, known as the Banyamulenge, who provided crucial military support to the regime to counter the rebellion that had found a deep social anchorage in the neighbouring ethnic groups of the Fuliuro and Babembe (Verhaegen 1969). This led to a deep social entrenchment of idioms and practices of armed resistance that would provide a strong template for the wars of the 1990s.

2.2. The Congo Wars

We have reviewed some of the episodes of large-scale recruitment of labour for war as well as violent resistance movements that constitute important historical antecedents to the wars of the 1990s and 2000s, which are the focus of this study. Here we present a historical background to the analysis presented in the empirical chapters, looking in turn at key antecedents to ethnic wars at the end of the Mobutu era, the two Congo wars from 1996-2003, and the post-war period from 2003 to 2012. The objective of this section is not to provide a detailed account of the Congo Wars, which

⁴² Kisangani (2012) p.87.

have been the topic of several recent publications,⁴³ but rather to highlight the key events and points of contention in order to situate the analysis.

2.2.1. Precursors to the First Congo War

The introduction of multi-party politics in the early 1990s created new political space for opposition movements at the provincial and national levels and significantly enhanced pressure on the already crumbling regime of Mobutu. Contrarily to the caricatural tone of many depictions of Mobutu's reign, Mobutu had crafted an extensive apparatus of power over the Congolese population, in particular through his party and his ruthless control over the security forces (Young and Turner 1985; Tull 2003, 2005). The legacy of the Mobutist state can still be felt today. Despite displaying all the features of a weak or failed state, recent studies have showed the continued importance of the Congolese state in structuring and regulating political, economic and social life in the Congo, including in the rebellious eastern provinces (Englebert & Tull 2013; Hoffmann & Vlassenroot 2014).

In the early 1990s, however, the bankruptcy of the state and the loss of blind military support by external backers provoked the loss of Mobutu's two key handles over power, the resort to external military interventions to quell armed rebellions on one side and control over the state administration and party on the other. Facing an increasingly desperate situation, Mobutu resorted to administrative reorganizations and immersion into provincial politics to counter the emergence of national opposition movements, through a strategy that came to be known as *geopolitique*, the appointment of "local" ethno-territorial leaders to provincial positions, instead of "external" governors (Turner 2005 p.119). Given that provincial politics were centred on ethno-territorial competition, this caused the immediate exacerbation of inter-ethnic antagonisms that resulted from years of "politics of exclusion".

The opening of multi-party politics, and the strategy of *geopolitique* proved to be particularly incendiary in the provinces of North and South Kivu, where longstanding

⁴³ See for example Turner (2005), Reyntjens (2009), Prunier (2009), Stearns (2012) and Rift Valley Institute's (2013) *Usalama Project: Understanding Congolese Armed Groups*.

ethno-territorial competition over political power and control over resources had repeatedly taken a violent turn. The ownership of the lucrative land - the main asset in a region rich with mines, cattle and export crops - had been the object of a particularly fierce competition since Mobutu's Bakajika Law of 1967 and the law of 1973⁴⁴ that had facilitated large scale land buy-ups by networks of elites often closely associated with the Mobutist regime. In many cases, those who benefitted from these buyups were 'ethnic foreigners', which created deep resentment among the 'indigenous' ethno-territorial groups whose customary land tenure rights were being directly threatened (Turner 2005).

In addition to the thorny issue of land ownership, political contention was sharply polarized around citizenship, another key dimension that Mobutu had strategically manipulated throughout his reign. As recognition of citizenship entailed the right to constitute a customary entity and claim "customary" ownership over land, the issue of the citizenship of a large Rwandophone population living in both North and South Kivu became a key point of tension. Indeed, the "autochthonous" (indigenous) ethno-territorial entities saw it as a threat to their power in territories where Rwandophones constituted a majority, in particular the territories of Masisi and Rutshuru in North Kivu. As political parties had not been authorized, the main vehicles of political organization in these territories were the *mutuelles*, identity-based associations that functioned as de-facto parties, such as the Hutu dominated *Mutuelle d'Agriculteurs des Virunga* (MAGRIVI). The tension reached a climax with the organization of a census to determine the nationality of the Rwandophone populations in the East, as part of the *Conference Nationale Souveraine* (CNS), the institution in charge of supervising the democratic transition, leading to the "ethnic" Masisi war of 1993 in North Kivu that pitted Rwandophone militias against "autochthonous" ethnic groups, an episode that we will come back to in Chapter 7.

⁴⁴ Before 1967 and 1973, land was divided between state owned land, which could be ceded to private users through various conventions, and Native Land, ruled by customary law. The 1973 Land Act changes this status, as all land came under the sole ownership of the state. However, the former Native Land became State land on which local communities exert a right of usage, which includes a right to inhabit, cultivate and exploit in accordance with local customs (article 388 of the 1973 land rights law). But the law that was supposed to delimitate collective and individual ownerships of land in such contexts was never passed, and Native communities were unable to legally claim of ownership over their land, either individually or collectively, which facilitated predation and buy-ups (Mpoyi 2013).

In the province of South Kivu, similar tensions over access to land, citizenship and identity were simmering, particularly between the so-called Banyamulenge⁴⁵ Rwandophone populations of the Highlands of the territories of Uvira and Fizi and the neighbouring Bembe and Fuliro ethnic groups, whose rivalry had taken a militarized character since the rebellions of the 1960s. As in North Kivu, provincial ethnic tensions were brought to a national scale in the early 1990s with the *Conférence Nationale Souveraine* (CNS). In 1995, the transition parliament from the CNS adopted a resolution calling for all “Rwandan Refugees” to leave the territory of Zaire, a call that was echoed in the territories of Uvira and Fizi by Bembe leaders who called on the population to take up arms and chase the Rwandophone populations out of the province.

These provincial tensions were exacerbated by the arrival in the early summer of 1994 of around a million refugees fleeing the crisis in neighbouring Rwanda, which caused a spill-over of the Rwandan conflict dynamics into eastern Congo, as is often the case with large scale refugee crises that constitute an important mechanisms of conflict diffusion.⁴⁶ The presence of the ex-*Forces Armées Rwandaises* (ex-FAR) and the genocidal militias among the refugees, who found a logistical base in the massive refugee camps that popped up along the border, as well as the destabilizing effects of the refugees on local economic and social balances, soon led to a regional crisis.

2.2.2. The AFDL War in eastern Congo

The First Congo War started after a public announcement by the governor of South Kivu that all Banyamulenge were requested to leave the province of South Kivu within a week, and a rapid escalation of “ethnic” violence between the Banyamulenge and the Bembe militias in Uvira and Fizi. Banyamulenge fighters seized the town of Uvira on October 24, 1996, and launched the rebellion that took the name of *Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo* (AFDL), which regrouped a heterogeneous coalition of actors. On one side, Banyamulenge military actors reacting

⁴⁵ The Banyamulenge (the people from Mulenge) differed from the Rwandophones in North Kivu in that they had arrived in the region in the 19th century, while the North Kivu Rwandophones started settling in the area in the 1930s.

⁴⁶ See Gleditsch & Salehyan (2006).

to the provincial and national threat of eviction, temporarily allied with Rwanda, whose initial objective was to destroy the operational command of the Rwandan Hutu armed forces in the refugee camps along the border, but soon changed their objective to deposing the Mobutu regime, an objective that gathered support by a range of other countries. The official leader of the AFDL was Laurent Desire Kabila, a veteran of the 1960s Mulelist and Simba rebellions, who had maintained a revolutionary organization in the Highlands of Fizi in South Kivu until 1984, before going into exile. Contacted in Dar-Es-Salaam, Kabila was groomed by the Rwandans to take the lead of the rebellion, allegedly because they saw in him an experienced yet manipulable leader (Stearns 2012). With substantial military support from Rwanda, the AFDL moved swiftly to take control of the eastern provinces, facing meagre opposition by the disbanding Zairian military although there were pockets of fierce resistance,⁴⁷ and then marched on to Kinshasa, that fell into the hands of the AFDL on May 17, 1997, after Laurent Desire Kabila declared himself the new leader of the country.

Several features of the AFDL rebellion and rule in the eastern province bear importance for the analysis. First, the AFDL engaged in large-scale recruitments in the eastern Provinces, benefitting from the initial popularity of its anti-Mobutist objective, which resonated strongly in the aggrieved population. In many areas, the recruitments bore a spontaneous character, with scores of youth ‘jumping into the trucks’ of the AFDL, allured by the general euphoria that surrounded the perspective of a ‘second independence’, but also promises of financial reward for recruitment (Jourdan 2011). In other cases, recruitment necessitated more elaborate negotiations, such as in areas where armed organizations were already operating, in particular in Butembo where the AFDL negotiated with the Tembo customary authorities and militias before obtaining the authorization to recruit. In the eastern Provinces, the euphoria surrounding the toppling of Mobutu’s regime was, however, balanced with scepticism regarding the presence of Rwandan troops on the Congolese soil, interpreted by many as an act of invasion, quickly leading to opposition and resistance to the AFDL. From July 1997, an armed insurgency emerged in the Kivus and took

⁴⁷ These included the ex-*Forces Armees Rwandaises*, the Congolese Hutu militias of the Kalehe Highlands as well as the Tembo militias around Bunyakiri, who initially opposed a fierce resistance to the AFDL. We will come back to these in Chapters 4 and 5.

the name of *Mayi-Mayi*, in reference to the 1960s rebellions. This movement will be the focus of chapters 4 and 5.

2.2.3. The Second Congo War of 1998-2003

The second Congo War erupted when Laurent Desire Kabila turned against his foreign backers, particularly Rwanda and Uganda, ordering that all Rwandan troops leave the country in July 1998. After a failed attempt at deposing Kabila through a speedy military intervention, Rwanda and Uganda backed the creation in August 1998 of a new large-scale politico-military movement, which took the name *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie* (RCD) and quickly took control of the eastern provinces of Congo. The second Congo War lasted until the Sun City Agreements of April 19, 2002, which marked the beginning of a process of integration of the rebel factions into a transition government, as part of a process that would lead to the national elections of 2006.

The Second Congo war involved a dizzying array of national and international actors, with more than 12 African countries involved in military operations, earning the surname of “Africa’s World War” (Prunier 2009). Territorial control quickly became the key stake of the war, with three main actors carving up the territory: The national government in the West and South, Jean Pierre Bemba’s *Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo* (MLC) in the North and North West, and the RCD in the East, which broke into two main branches, the RCD-Goma that controlled the Kivu provinces and the RCD-Kisangani (later RCD–ML) that controlled the Province Orientale, following a fallout between the two main sponsors of the RCD, Uganda and Rwanda. Following the 1999 Lusaka Cease Fire Agreement, that initiated the diplomatic dialogue that would tumultuously lead to the Sun City Agreement of 2002, the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) was deployed in the Congo in 1999-2000, which would later take the name United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) from 2010. While the complexity of the game of alliances, counter-alliances between this array of major actors and dozens of smaller armed factions is

beyond the scope of this chapter, a few key features of the conflict, particularly concerning the way that it played out in South and North Kivu, must be highlighted.

In North and South Kivu, the main lines of armed conflict generally reflected the national level opposition between the Kinshasa government and Kigali, who each supported arrays of proxy forces in the eastern provinces. The *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie* (RCD, later RCD-Goma), controlled the main cities of Bukavu and Goma, as well as the main strategic axes throughout the province. In the rural areas, however, it faced a war of attrition led by several opposing armed factions, many of them receiving logistical and military support from the Kinshasa government and its allies. The first of these were the ex-*Forces Armees Rwandaises* (FAR-Rwandan Armed Forces) and their ancillary militias, who had reorganized in the deep forests of North and South Kivu to form the Army For the Liberation of Rwanda (ALIR), which later became the *Forces Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda* (FDLR). Commanding over several thousand heavily armed and trained combatants, the FDLR continued to pose a major security threat to Kagame's regime in Rwanda, which launched regular attacks against the FDLR.

The second cluster of resistance was the Mayi-Mayi movement, initially an uncoordinated resistance movement that had emerged in opposition first to the AFDL and then the RCD. However, the Kinshasa government soon started to support the movement logistically and materially, in particular through General Luetcha and a series of instructors who were sent to South Kivu to structure the movement into a coherent and efficient force, although that objective was never achieved. The dynamics of mobilization and the complex insertion of the Mayi-Mayi militia in the rural societies of the Kivu will be the focus of Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

While the international war between the Kinshasa government on one side, and Rwanda and Uganda, each supporting several armed organizations represented the central polarizing axis of the conflict, a highly complex mosaic of smaller armed conflicts emerged 'inside' the larger conflict. These were tied either to longstanding political competition between ethno-territorial constituencies over ownership of land that resurfaced as a result of the breakdown of the state enforced political order, as has been emphasized by Autesserre (2010), but also to the development of a militarized

political economy, focused on the extraction of resources. Both the provinces of North and South Kivu were rich with mineral deposits, from Gold in the South Kivu “Gold Belt”,⁴⁸ to Tourmaline, Cassiterite, and Colombite–Tantalite (coltan) throughout the region. As the Congolese state no longer controlled the rural areas, a fierce competition between armed groups for the control and taxation of these lucrative mines incessantly changed the military configuration of the region.

Coalitions of “power, profit and protection”⁴⁹ tying armed actors on the ground, regional business operatives and politicians emerged, consolidating a trans-border business of mineral smuggling that became one of the region’s most profitable economic activities, often with direct involvement of actors at the highest level of the Rwanda, Ugandan or Burundian states, and a constellation of intermediaries. Competition for territorial control reached a peak during the Coltan Boom of 2000, which triggered a “rush” for the control of the coltan mines.⁵⁰ In addition to control and taxation of the mines, the armed factions operating in the rural areas engaged in a multiplicity of economic activities, from cultivation of cash crops - including marijuana - to taxation of trade, households and agricultural output, entrenching ‘economies of violence’ that would become a central feature of the rural Kivu’s (Laudati 2013).

2.2.4. War and Peace in the Post- Sun City era

The second Congo War came to an end in 2003, after a long and faltering peace process initiated by the Lusaka cease-fire Agreement of June 1999 and ended by the Sun City Peace Deals of 2002, the deployment of an international peacekeeping force, and the assassination of Laurent Desire Kabila, to whom his son Joseph succeeded. The peace was conditioned on a power sharing agreement with the rebel factions, the merging and integration of the warring parties into the Congolese state, both through the integration of the “rebel” political parties into the transition government in view of the

⁴⁸ The South Kivu Gold Belt Stretches from Walungu to Maniema, with high concentrations in the Kamituga and Kitutu areas of the territory of Mwenga.

⁴⁹ This expression is borrowed from (Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers 2004 p.21).

⁵⁰ The Coltan Boom was a sharp rise in the price of Columbite-Tantalite (Coltan) tied to speculation over the release of the Playstation 2 (De Failly 2001). The sharp rise in military competition and conflict for control of Coltan producing mines was documented and analysed by Sanchez de la Sierra (2016).

democratic elections to be held in 2006, but also the integration of the rebel militaries into a new army, the *Forces Armees de la Republique Democratique du Congo* (FARDC), which was created in 2003. Here, we shortly present the main politico-military developments of the post-war era as they provide the background for chapters 7 and 8. In particular, we show how the nexus between military control, political seating and control over business networks became the dominant feature of the post-war era, entrenching processes of large scale resource mobilization, whose manifestations will be explored in this dissertation. At the same time, continued insecurity in the rural areas, and resistance to these processes of large-scale accumulation and control sparked several armed resistance movements.

Despite the ‘official’ end of the war, most of the ingredients that had caused the initial war were still present, and gave rise to several large-scale rebellions. The elite networks that had thrived under RCD rule and extended their control over regional business saw the integration of the RCD and the elections as a threat to their political and economic clout in the region. Indeed, given the extreme unpopularity of the RCD in the eastern provinces, democratic elections entailed the loss of the political seating that underpinned their economic power, but also the threat of possible retaliation against the Tutsi community as a whole. This was all the more concerning that the Hutu elites that had been co-opted by the RCD, in particular the powerful governor of North Kivu, Eugene Serufuli, were being courted by the Kinshasa government (Stearns 2012). These concerns echoed directly with the Rwandan authorities, the regional patrons of these networks of power.

The loss of political control over the eastern Provinces entailed the possibility of a renewed security threat for the Rwandan authorities, as the FDLR armed group was far from dismantled in eastern Congo. This concatenation of issues polarized sharply around the integration of the former RCD troops into the national army that was being overseen by the United Nations Peacekeeping Operation, and could potentially entail the loss of military supremacy over the region. As a result, the Rwandan authorities threw their weight behind the creation of a new politico-military movement, the *Congres National pour la Defense du Peuple* (CNDP - National Congress for the Defence of the People). Backed by the elite networks and military support from Rwanda and headed by Laurent Nkunda, the CNDP soon became the most powerful

military player in eastern DRC, holding in check the process of military integration. The former RCD officers who had been integrated into the FARDC had already shown their power in 2004, when they seized the South Kivu capital of Bukavu. From 2006, they consolidated their military control over the mineral and cattle rich area of Masisi in North Kivu, engaging in repeated military confrontations against the national army, the FARDC.

The CNDP insurgency sparked the formation of another large-scale politico-military formation to counter its influence in North Kivu, *the Union des Patriotes Résistants Congolais* (PARECO). The PARECO was initially a coalition of elites from several ethnic groups, in particular the Hunde, Nande and Hutu who felt threatened by the rise of the CNDP's military power, in particular in the lucrative territories of Walikale and Masisi in North Kivu. These Hutu elites had consolidated their power in the late years of the RCD, when the Rwandese and Tutsi had offered them prominent positions in the RCD as part of a strategy to isolate the Rwandan rebels of the FDLR. The most powerful of these Hutu players was Eugene Serufuli, the former governor of North Kivu, who had consolidated an extensive network of business and military connections, as well as a solid power base in the rural Hutu communities of the Highlands of Masisi and Kalehe. From 2006 to 2008, numerous military confrontations occurred in the region between the CNDP, the FARDC and the PARECO, in complex games of shifting alliances, further destabilizing the region.

The creation of the CNDP and PARECO was one among many failures of a flawed series of military integration and demobilization programs, which were supposed to be cornerstones of a durable peace process and a strong national army, the FARDC, but instead came to symbolize the repeated failures of international and national efforts at stabilizing eastern DRC. Among the numerous armed factions that had mushroomed in the eastern provinces during the Second Congo War, only a fraction had been 'successfully' integrated into the national army or demobilized. The creation of the FARDC and the integration of former warring factions was carried out unevenly and hastily, generating a highly volatile game of integration and defection of armed factions, and the incessant launching of new armed rebellions. For leaders of armed groups and their political and economic backers, launching these rebellions constituted an important bargaining chip to obtain better positions in the state military and

administration (Baaz & Verweijen 2013; Baaz, Stearns & Verweijen 2013). The objective of these armed groups was rarely to subvert the political order or achieve territorial secession, but rather to obtain better inclusion into the military and administrative organs of the state and higher delegation of powers, another manifestation of the persisting – if surprising – role of the Congolese state as a central referent and regulator in the region (Englebert & Tull 2013 p.9).

The Mayi-Mayi movement, on the other hand, significantly lost in power as a result of the integration program. The movement had fallen prey to internal infightings, rivalries and “collinisme”⁵¹ since its inception, making it more vulnerable to leadership and rank division strategies.⁵² While General Padiri, the Commander in Chief of the Mayi-Mayi of eastern Congo as well as several other high profile leaders of the movement were given high office in Kinshasa, many commanders of the Mayi-Mayi movement were parked in integration camps where they found themselves “*dispo*”, that is, nominally integrated into the national army but without any real functions and receiving little or no salary. This created widespread resentment among the Mayi-Mayi, who felt that the years of effort they had put into the liberation of the country amounted to nothing. Furthermore, deception on the military front was matched by deception on the political scene. Many of the Mayi-Mayi armed groups had morphed into political parties in view of the end of the war, hoping to transform their military successes into political clout, but were side-lined in the reshuffling of the political cards that followed the peace treaty, perhaps because of a lack of political experience and connections.⁵³

2.2.5. The post-Goma Conference era

The Accords de Goma of 2009, that followed the failed Goma Conference of 2008 and entailed the integration of the CNDP, PARECO and a range of armed factions into the

⁵¹ “Collinisme” refers to internal rivalries and infightings between different factions, in particular factions coming from different areas, villages or “*collines*” (Hills).

⁵² Integration of armed factions often requires separating the members of an armed organization from their leaders and from the base, to break hierarchies of command.

⁵³ Mayi-Mayi political parties were given 13 out of the 620 parliamentary seats, four of the 63 ministerial positions, and one of the 11 provincial governorships. (Stearns et Al. 2013b. p.26).

national army did little to quell the dynamics of armed mobilization and conflict in eastern DRC, whose fundamental causes remained unaltered. The FARDC's military efforts – often with the support of MONUSCO - were geared towards dislodging the Rwandan FDLR in the rural areas, but with very limited success. These operations often created havoc in the rural areas, disturbing fragile ad-hoc politico-military equilibriums that in certain areas had brought a modicum of stability, and triggered retaliatory violence by the FDLR on civilian populations (Sanchez de la Sierra 2016).

The integration of the CNDP, PARECO and other warring factions soon reproduced the same configurations as before, with ex-CNDP commanders, tied to the elite networks of business and politics, taking the upper hand in the positions of military command, and creating additional frustration for the armed factions that were left aside. Replacing Laurent Nkunda, General Bosco Ntaganda became the new strongman of these power networks, controlling important parts of the mineral trade and elaborate parallel systems of taxation (Stearns 2012). Attempts to break these networks of power led to a new large-scale rebellion in 2012, the Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23). The M23 proved even more threatening than its predecessor, seizing the town of Goma in November 2012, before being defeated by the MONUSCO and FARDC. As the M23 had been a replica of the CNDP, the Nyatura movement echoed the PARECO, reforming in the Hutu populated Highlands of South Kivu and soon gaining prominence in Masisi territory, an aspect to which we will come back in chapters 7 and 8.

In addition, a new large-scale insurrection known as the *Raia Mutomboki* gained prominence in 2011 in the territory of Shabunda, in South Kivu. Contrarily to other large scale armed factions such as the M23 and PARECO, whose emergence was tied to elite politics, the Raia Mutomboki was a highly decentralized, ad-hoc type movement, that mobilized on a large-scale through social networks embedded in the rural Rega communities of the territory of Shabunda, in South Kivu (Stearns & al. 2013; Botiveau & Stearns 2013; Vogel 2014). The Raia Mutomboki had first emerged in 2005 in the Southern territories of Shabunda, under the leadership of Jean Musumba, a former Mayi-Mayi fighter who set up the auto defence movement in response to the widespread insecurity that gripped rural South Kivu in 2005. The movement then remained dormant until 2011, when it re-emerged as a result of renewed widespread

insecurity resulting from the temporary withdrawal of FARDC troops from the rural areas of South Kivu. Spreading to Northern Shabunda, and then into Kalehe territory, the movement attracted significant popular support and mobilized on a large scale, before falling prey to the dynamics of fragmentation that have characterized many of the armed movements that operated in the region. We will come back to the specific dynamics of mobilization of this movement in Chapter 5.

In addition to these dynamics of armed mobilization and conflict that operated on a territorial, provincial and regional scale, a myriad of armed conflicts emerged ‘within’ the broader conflict, often tied to longstanding local conflicts over customary authority and land tenure rights that had taken a militarized turn during the war (Autesserre 2010). These ‘local’ armed conflicts were the manifestation of the entrenchment the ‘militarization of public space’ (Reyntjens 2005, 2012), and of violence as what Englebert & Tull (2013 p.6) call a ‘structuring force’ in the region. As violence has become a coherent strategy of ‘contestation and negotiation’ by a range of different actors, it has also brought about a profound reconfiguration of political order (Tull 2003, 2005), as well as a broad social transformation (Raeymaekers & Vlassenroot 2004). As the objective of this thesis is precisely to see in which ways these transformations have affected dynamics of participation, we will come back to these issues throughout the thesis.

2.2.6. Labour in a militarized political economy

In recent years, the ‘conflict minerals’ paradigm has dominated accounts of the region, promoting a monolithic conception of labour relations in eastern Congo, seen almost exclusively through the lens of coercive exploitation (Autesserre 2012; Verweijen 2013). Yet the political economy that has emerged in rural areas as a result of the war and the ways it has transformed longstanding modes of labour organization are still poorly understood. As the objective of this thesis is precisely to uncover the modes of control over labour that have emerged as a result of militarization, we will not discuss this issue extensively here but simply present a few salient features of the relation between militarized mining and the political economy of labour.

As previously mentioned, the Second Congo War caused the entrenchment of ‘networks of power, profit and protection’ in rural eastern DRC, focused on the extraction of resources from the most lucrative sectors of the economy, in particular cattle raising, cash crop production and the mining sector. In the mineral rich rural areas of eastern DRC, armed groups started competing for military control over mining sites, a competition that became particularly acute during the Coltan Boom of 2000, although other minerals – in particular cassiterite and gold – also attracted significant interest (De Faily 2001; Nest, Grignon & Kisangani 2006; Sanchez de la Sierra 2016). While brute force and coercion undoubtedly represents one of the key modes of imposition of revenue extraction by armed groups, recent in-depth research has shown that the modes of taxation and reorganization of economic activity by which armed groups generate revenue are far more complex and variegated than brute force. Indeed, they range from direct reorganization of property rights, taxation of entry and exit from mining sites, but also more elaborate forms of ‘indirect taxation’ through a range of governance arrangements with local authorities and economic actors (Mampilly 2011; Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly 2014; Gafaro, Ibáñez & Justino 2014; Sanchez de la Sierra 2016). In eastern DRC, such institutional arrangements between armed factions, economic actors and local authorities display significant variation, which can be explained by several factors. First, the modes of taxation established by armed groups is dependent on their level of military control over mining areas. Those mining sites that fall under heavy military contestation by several armed groups tend to experience much more exploitative forms of revenue generation, which are associated to higher levels of violence (Sanchez de la Sierra 2016). In contrast, armed groups that establish durable monopolies of violence over mining sites tend to reduce their levels of revenue extraction and behave as ‘proto states’, levying less economically burdensome taxes and engaging in a range of modes of reorganization of economic activity. While one of the central objectives of armed groups is to develop such monopolies of violence and maximise their territorial control, their relative lack of capital and resources and the highly difficult terrain of eastern Congo – composed mainly of deep forests and high mountains - represent profound structural impediments to the development of large and centralized armed groups. In this context, commanders and sub-factions have a strong incentive to behave opportunistically and breakaway from command to

appropriate mineral resources, which has been one of the drivers of the fragmentation of eastern Congolese armed groups, although this is not the only factor.⁵⁴

Adding to the variation of the political economy of rural eastern DRC are the variegated ways in which armed groups insert themselves within the socio-political entities that constitute rural eastern DRC. Once again, these present much more nuanced and variegated characteristics than what the exploitative and autocratic depiction of ‘rebel rule’ often suggest, depending on the pre-existing relation between the armed groups and these entities, the relation with these entities and the state, and the modes of resource extraction used by armed groups. While autocratic and exploitative forms of rule are rife, many armed groups share elaborate social and political ties with authority structures in rural eastern DRC, and are often an integral part of the governance structures (Stearns & Botiveau 2013; Usalama Project 2013, 2015; Hoffmann 2014; Hoffmann & Vlassenroot 2014). We will come back to this aspect extensively during the thesis, as it constitutes one of the central lines of analytical inquiry.

Furthermore, the acute military competition for control over the mineral rich areas of rural eastern DRC altered and accelerated deep transformations in the organization of labour in the mining sector. As in many countries across the continent, the 1980s witnessed a profound crisis of the Congolese public sector that affected the eastern Congolese mining industry. As the large state owned mining companies in the east went bankrupt, the already fragile legal and institutional framework that regulated the mining sector in the east collapsed, plunging large parts of the sector into the informal economy (De Failly 2001; Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers 2004). The acute economic and social crisis that hit the rural populations of the east, and the liberalization of the mining sector in 1982 created a large rush of poor, rural populations towards the mining sector, in search for – highly precarious – livelihoods.

⁵⁴ Other factors include the dynamics of military-integration and defection previously mentioned (Baaz, Stearns & Verweijen 2013), as well as what Staniland (2015) calls the ‘social-institutional’ basis of armed groups, which explains the high level of ex-ante decentralization and fragmentation of armed groups: As armed groups often emanate from pre-existing socio-political entities, the ‘historic’ decentralization and fragmentation of the socio-political landscape of eastern DRC explains that the armed groups emerging from these entities follow the same pattern. This aspect will be analyzed throughout the thesis.

The growth of the artisanal and small-scale mining sectors in the 1980s was significantly accelerated by the Congolese wars. In addition to the increase in demand for minerals such as coltan, the extreme deprivation caused by the war increased the inpouring of labour into the sector. Human and material destruction, insecurity and the cutting of conventional trade routes between rural and urban areas for agricultural products plunged the region's population into acute levels of poverty and deprivation. With the mining sector quickly becoming a key component of military competition, labour was in high demand in the mines, attracting people from far flung regions, in particular in the mineral rich territories of Mwenga, Shabunda, Walungu and Kalehe in South Kivu.

The end of the war and the demobilization of thousands of combatants - often ill-trained and poorly educated – generated a large class of deprived youth, whose economic deprivation was accentuated by the social ostracism resulting from their participation in the war and the violence. As in the Mano River area, these ex-combatants congregated in urban centres, working low-skilled jobs in the informal economy, and entering the artisanal mining sector in great numbers (Hoffman D. 2011, 2013). As Danny Hoffman has skilfully noted in his studies of the Mano River wars, working in the mines bore many similarities to participating in the armed groups and the war, an activity which was often equally conceived as a form of labour (Hoffman D. 2011). As he argues, both the artisanal mining sector and the economy of violence correspond to post-fordist 'just in time' modes of production, characterized by a high level of mobility and adaptability of the labour force.

Given that, in many rural areas, the armed conflict did not end with the war, and armed groups continued to compete for military control over mining sites, a form of co-dependency between the mining sector and the economy of violence developed. Demobilized soldiers working in the mines could easily be re-mobilized through financial incentives as well as social network pressure – an aspect which will be explored in this thesis – to work as soldiers in the armed groups. In turn, the repeated rounds of demobilization meant that when demobilized, these ex-combatants would once again join the mining sector. This thesis will pay particular attention to the dynamics of the movement of labour between the 'informal' low skill sectors of the rural economy on one side, and the armed groups and war economy on the other.

Together with military control over mining areas and the modes of governance developed by armed groups to organize economic activity, the dynamics of the labour market constitutes a central dimension of the militarized political economy of the east.

While this militarized political economy persists to this day, the situation of the mining economy varies drastically according to different areas. First, the mining sector does not necessarily represent the main source of revenue of armed groups, which have diversified their modes of revenue generation (Laudati 2013; Autesserre 2012), and in many cases do not operate in the mining sector at all. Furthermore, a large number of mining areas are no longer under the military control of non-state armed organizations, and are secured by the state military, police, usually in combination with private security companies. This is the case both of areas that have moved to industrial mining, but also of a great number of artisanal mining areas, which are no longer – or only very rarely – subjected to military competition or control. While the state security forces are regularly accused of various forms of illegal taxation and extortive practices, such mining areas have seen a restored presence of the state, and reorganization of the legal and institutional framework around mining - not simply in the formal sector, but also in the informal sector. Comparing the organization and practices of artisanal mining in eastern Congo and Tanzania, Bryceson and Geenan (2016) find that they are in fact strikingly similar despite the legacy and ongoing effect of the eastern Congolese armed conflict.

2.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have examined some of the driving logics of both recruitment of labour and armed mobilization in the history of eastern Congo. We have seen that, since the pre-colonial era, the recruitment of combatants for war related purposes was the result of both large-scale dynamics of labour mobilization on one side, and the formation of decentralized protective and/or resistance movements on the other. We have also provided the historical backdrop to the Congolese Wars and the post-war era, showing in particular how the nexus between political competition, military control and resource accumulation became one of the dominant features of the era. In the following chapters, we will take a closer look at how these somewhat contradictory

logics of accumulation on one side, and protection on the other, shaped processes of armed mobilization in the region, with a particular focus on the Mayi-Mayi movement in chapters 4-6, and the armed groups that emerged from the Hutu communities in chapters 7 and 8.

Chapter Three

Considerations on Methods

“We can talk about anything military, but we cannot talk about politics”

Major Muhindo Changoco, Mayi-Mayi Commander

In this chapter, we succinctly present the methods used to carry out our analysis of participation in armed organizations. We focus on the methodological issues associated with the qualitative chapters, as those associated specifically with the quantitative analysis are discussed in the quantitative chapter. The chapter starts by exposing the Mixed Methods Approach used in the dissertation, followed by a brief justification of the case studies. Then, we discuss some of the main epistemological and ethical concerns associated with carrying out research on African conflicts, as well as the particular methodological difficulties associated with reconstituting local histories of armed mobilization in polarized social contexts.

3.1. The mixed methods approach

This thesis uses a Mixed Methods Research (MMR) approach to analyse the process of participation in armed organizations, combining a qualitative analysis with a quantitative analysis of participation in armed organizations. Methodologically, we make an effort to both separate and integrate the qualitative and quantitative approaches. A deliberate choice was made to separate the quantitative chapter from the qualitative ones, following a recognition of the difficulty of reconciling methods that rest on very different ontological and epistemological bases, and correspond to very different intellectual and academic “cultures” (Goertz & Mahoney 2012). The

separation was thus made to maintain a certain “internal” methodological consistency in both approaches.

However, an effort is made to allow a dialogue between the two approaches, through what Thaler calls a *connected complementarity* in his typology of mixed methods (Thaler 2015 p.8). While not fully integrated, which would require that the findings of the two methodologies be presented simultaneously, or fully separated (when the complementarity is discussed only in the conclusion), the *connected complementarity* brings the results of both methods in dialogue with one another throughout the chapters. The survey design was set up through several pilot projects carried out concomitantly to the qualitative fieldwork, using an iterative process. Thus, the quantitative analysis closely reflects the questions discussed in the qualitative chapters. For example, as the qualitative chapters pay particular attention to processes whereby armed mobilization is mediated by institutional and social structures, the quantitative chapter proposes an analysis of the effects of institutional and social mediation on an individual’s propensity to participate in armed organizations.

The analysis of participation undertaken in the qualitative empirical chapters is based on Process-Tracing and Historical Contextualization, as detailed by Bennett and George (2005 pp.205-232). The process-tracing approach allows to identify and trace both macro-structural processes of armed mobilization, but also meso and micro processes that lead to participation, and their articulations and inter-dependencies. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 focus on the identification of two distinct macro-logics of armed mobilization in the Mayi-Mayi movement, by bringing several examples taken from all over South Kivu into comparative focus. In contrast, Chapters 6, 7 and 8 adopt a narrower geographical focus, which enables a much closer historical contextualization of the processes of armed mobilization, and a careful analysis of their articulation with the context in which they occur and the multiple factors that affect them.

3.2. Justification of the case

The armed groups that have emerged in the eastern Congo display great variation, from local self-defence groups and petty gangs to large-scale rebel organizations and national armies. Many armed groups that are referred to as unitary entities display high internal fractionalization, and encompass numerous sub-groups that vary drastically in terms of size, military capacity, internal organization and institutionalization, and relation with the institutional and social environment in which they evolve. As a result, processes of recruitment in the region have been extremely varied, providing a privileged context in which to understand their multiple dimensions and carry out comparisons. Furthermore, the political fragmentation of the region, owing to its geographic extension as well as the highly variegated institutional trajectories of the different socio-polities that constitute it, reinforces the variation in the ways armed mobilization has affected different areas.

The case studies that are presented in the qualitative sections have been selected in order to ensure maximum “within case variation”, which allows for a more controlled form of comparison of processes (Bennett & George 2005 pp.151-179). The region of the Midlands of Kalehe that is the focus of Chapter 6 was selected on the basis of its geographical proximity to the provincial capital of Bukavu and the relatively strong presence of the state apparatus, which has influenced the capacity of armed groups to recruit combatants. The Highlands of Kalehe, whose history of armed mobilization is explored in Chapters 7 and 8, were selected because of their relative isolation from centres of power and economic activity, as well as their specific demography, which introduced specific dynamics of armed mobilization. These cases are justified and presented more thoroughly in the introduction of each corresponding chapter. A third case was initially included, that of the Raia Mutomboki and Mayi-Mayi mobilizations in the areas of Kalonge and Bunyakiri. However, due to a security incident involving several academic researchers, I was not able to go there in person. Interviews concerning this area were nevertheless carried out in the provincial capital of Bukavu, and examples from this area are used in chapters 4 and 5. Such security concerns are part of the broader logistical, epistemological and ethical challenges associated with

carrying out research in African conflict zones, the most salient of which we now turn to.

3.3. “Understanding” Africa: Ontology and Positionality

3.3.1. Fitting Uncomfortable shoes

I first arrived in eastern Congo in late 2011, when I carried out a first reconnaissance trip for my thesis research while at the same time working for a research project based at Colombia University. As it appeared to me when I was about to cross the border from Rwanda, the Congo displayed one of the most beautiful sceneries that I had ever witnessed: Huge mountains and active volcanoes, bordered by lush forests, towering over and mirrored by the majestic Lake Kivu. I initially felt a very peculiar feeling, a kind of electric aura, stemming from my awareness of the history of human suffering and violence that had afflicted the region, and the grandiose and tragic history of the Congo which I was about to enter. Despite the fact that I had already extensively travelled the Continent, crossing the border into the largest country in central Africa spelled and embodied adventure.

Little did I realize at the time how historically trodden, and politically charged, those enthusiastic steps were. I was coming to the Congo to humbly attempt to “understand” the war that had been affecting the region for decades. But as a white man, I was following the steps of generations of white men who had come to “understand” the region, and whose footsteps had left a durable imprint. Soon, the exploration of eastern Congo also became an exploration of the genealogy and history of my problematic positionality.

In eastern Congo, being a white man remains a position of privilege, one that is directly tied to the long and tortuous history of race and gender, which finds its origins in the brutal history of the colonial conquest and occupation. I personally felt this even more acutely than in West Africa, where I had extensively travelled, perhaps because of the strong presence of the United Nations and humanitarian industry, which in many senses exacerbated these racial cleavages. Indeed, as Autesserre (2014) has shown in

her ethnography of Peacekeeping Operations, the sharp social divide between expatriates and “locals” often maps onto pre-existing histories of racial tensions. Few areas that I know display this phenomenon as acutely as eastern Congo, where the Congolese population is among the poorest and most deprived in the world, and the Humanitarian and Development sector is the most important provider of jobs, which imbues its workers with significant economic and social power that often takes a racial dimension, as a majority of them are white. Inevitably, as a result of the association of academia with the development industry, I also fell into this category. For an avid reader of post-colonial theory, this made me uneasy, yet I must recognize that it constituted a form of social capital that at certain times was useful for navigating the areas where I conducted fieldwork, in particular because it constituted a form of protection, an aspect to which I will come back.

3.3.2. The academics of the mirror: The village, the chief and the community

In addition to this particular positionality that inevitably shaped my social interactions during fieldwork, the way in which I collected and analysed information was also affected by modes of knowledge production *in* and *on* the region. As Autesserre (2012) has cogently argued, the narratives that are forged in the policy and humanitarian spheres of eastern DRC are strongly shaped by pre-established narratives, which often remain prevalent given the situation of relative social isolation in which the expats in such “NGO-poles” live with regards to Congolese societies.

Given that such narratives are prevalent in policy discourse, and are thus relayed by powerful actors, they tend to be adopted and discursively redeployed by a range of local actors. While this is often done strategically, they can in some cases come to constitute the very categories through which people make sense of their own lives. In a region where the livelihood of the population has become highly dependent on the “international community”, and where academic research shapes NGO and policy agendas, a particular form of “academics of the mirror”⁵⁵ can arise, whereby local actors are strategically adapting and responding to the discursive categories that are deployed by the academic and development communities.

⁵⁵ This is a reference to the « politics of the mirror » described by Chabal and Daloz (1999).

Obtaining valid information in such a context therefore requires a preliminary analysis of the genealogy of the concepts that are used to explain the region, as well as their analytical validity, as they can reveal more about dominant narratives than about what is actually going on. Many of the pre-conceived ideas that continue to shape the understanding of the political and social life on the African continent are, in my opinion, direct heritages of colonial mental frameworks of governance, whose genealogy can be traced to early anthropologists. Perhaps the most ingrained trope is that of the African Village, which historically has been construed as the centre of rural African life and community, or that of the Chief, when conceived as a form of timeless traditional authority. Although extensive scholarship has deconstructed the Orientalist ontologies on which such tropes are based, Villages and Chiefs remain among the default conceptual categories through which social and political life is understood and narrated, and remain prevalent in NGO reports, policy discourse and even academia on the region. Similarly, I came to realize that the concept of “community” was somewhat analytically problematic because of the implicit signification it carried. As it was one of the central concepts of numerous NGO projects, it was being used by a wide range of actors making all sorts of claims, and therefore carried an implicit political signification. As a result, it was often more confusing than revealing as a concept during interviews, and I realized that perhaps I too had been influenced by such longstanding tropes.

3.4. Researching Armed Conflict: Methodological and Ethical Considerations

Beyond these aspects, another range of methodological challenges arose from the fact that the field research was carried out in an active conflict zone. Here, we review a few of these challenges, in particular access to the research sites and informants, as well as various limitations to the data gathered.

3.4.1. Accessing the “field” and respondents

Before arriving to eastern DRC in late 2011, I had never been to an active conflict zone, which present very specific security, financial and logistical constraints. Indeed,

while the towns of Bukavu and Goma were generally safe, owing to a large state and NGO presence, the rural areas displayed much more volatile security situations. My first research trips outside of the towns of Bukavu and Goma were in the territory of Mwenga, where I was initially conducting research for Columbia University and an International NGO. While I was able to access some very remote areas and carry out interviews and collect data, I remained limited in my movements by the security protocols of the NGO, which required that I travel in a 4X4 of the NGO and spend the night in larger towns. As a result, I was somewhat affected by what Judith Verweijen has called the ‘car window syndrome’, a relatively cocooned environment that, although necessary for security purposes, tends to amplify the problems of positionality previously mentioned.

However, as soon as the work with the NGO ended, and in subsequent trips to the region, I started travelling to rural areas by ‘public transport’, on minibuses and motorcycle-taxis, as well as on foot, and sleeping in small hotels or houses in the rural areas. While this generated some security and logistical challenges, it allowed me to gain a closer view of the region. I was particularly marked by the bustling life that prevailed despite and “within” the armed conflict, and the relative ease with which the region could be navigated. Undoubtedly, this was due in part to the fact that, contrarily to conflict zones such as Somalia or Northern Mali, “westerners” are rarely direct targets of the warring factions in the region, and a form of protection derives from the social “status” of Westerners in the region that was previously mentioned.

The security situation, however, was highly variable and fluid. *Coups de balles* (gunshots) were regular, and on three occasions, I was forced to leave a village or town precipitously for security reasons. The tension was particularly palpable in the summer and fall of 2012 as a result of the intensification of fighting between the national army and the M23 rebellion around Goma, which threatened to spill over to South Kivu. In the Midlands and Highlands of Kalehe where I was at the time, rumours abounded that the M23 was about to seize the entire province, and armed groups were re-mobilizing at an accelerated pace. Perhaps as collateral effect of this climate of tension and the pressure it created on authorities, I was arrested three times by the Congolese Army and Intelligence services and questioned extensively on my work.

In such a tense environment, access to key informants was often difficult. In the Kalehe Highlands, the Congolese Army was carrying out a counter-insurgency operation against the Nyatura armed group that I was trying to study. Although it was possible, I decided at the time not to go to their military base. Similarly, in the Midlands of Kalehe, the group that I was studying was being remobilized by its commander, Colonel Cisayura, while I was carrying out interviews. This led to some confusion, as I was “activating” the same networks of ex-combatants that the commander was remobilizing, earning me some tense explanations with state and military authorities who were closely monitoring ex-combatants and attempting to quell the remobilization. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, I also had to cancel a trip to the areas of Bunyakiri and Kalonge, where I had the intention of studying the Raia Mutomboki mobilization, following a security incident involving several foreign researchers.

While initially quite daunting, I progressively learned to navigate rural South Kivu, and realized that many actors who seemed inaccessible could in fact be interviewed. This was confirmed by a stream of excellent academic work that came out during my fieldwork, and was based on thorough fieldwork in very risky areas, in particular the Usalama project on Congolese Armed Groups chaired by Jason Stearns, or the rich and detailed work of Judith Verweijen or Justine Brabant, among others.

3.4.2. Reconstituting histories of armed mobilization

« Unfortunately, contemporary social science is often ill equipped to understand the constitutive role of symbols, myths, metaphors, and rhetorical strategies, preferring instead the apparent solidity of institutional arrangements, the regularity of codified rules, or the reassurance of abstract models. Much that is important and subtle falls through the grid of standard modes and methods and is ignored. Interpretive daring is precluded. My method, if it can be called that, is not unlike Hanna Arendt's description of her own approach. She charmingly dubbed it perlenfischerei, « pearl fishing ». (...) The important point is to remain open to one's subject matter, to see where it is going and follow - not to impose a prefabricated formula over diverse and paradoxical material »

Jean Bethke Elshtain (1987)

3.4.2.1. The ethical imperative

Perhaps the most significant methodological challenge that I encountered when carrying out this research was time. In a region with such rich and variegated history, where more than 20 years of conflict has made the understanding of an extremely dense set of events particularly difficult, attempting to humbly follow Hannah Arendt's method of "*perlenfischerei*" requires a lot of time. In the nine months that I spent in eastern DRC, around three months were spent in the rural areas, mainly because of the time it took to set up the data collection project in Bukavu (where I was also conducting interviews), and the difficulty and risks associated with spending long periods of time in remote areas. Despite these limitations, the ethos that guided the field research was inspired by Jean Bethke Elshtain's advice to not stick to the safety of pre-existing models and conceptualizations and simply seek to confirm or infirm them, but rather engage with the linguistic, cultural and emotional complexity and paradoxes that inevitably surrounds such an extreme event as civil war.

This required not only an awareness of my positionality, but also an ethical approach to the interactions and relations with the people who are the subjects of the research. In a context where academic research sometimes mirrors the other extractive industries present in the region, with scores of large scale surveys being carried out at a high pace and often superficial consideration for the social context in which they occur, adopting a non-instrumentalist and ethical approach to research requires fully acknowledging the multi-faceted nature of the research relation and the social context in which it is inscribed. This involves developing and nurturing relations of mutual respect and friendship, yet not in an instrumental fashion. In such contexts where the gaps of experiences are so steep, and various forms of heavy trauma might have affected those with whom the relations are established, this can require significant time, effort and attentiveness. Yet it is precisely through these relations that I started gaining an understanding of the social and emotional complexity of the human experience of war, and the ways in which it was experienced in that part of the world.

Perhaps as a result of a form of initial reluctance or timidity to talk about such traumatic events, intertwined with a bit of fear of the reactions that could emerge, I initially took large precautions before addressing certain topics in interviews and discussions. However, I progressively realized, not without some surprise, that people were often ready and open to talk about sensitive issues, owing perhaps to a longstanding culture of debate in the region. However, the readiness to discuss such events varied tremendously from one person to another, as many displayed either a form of reluctance, or timidity, while others seemed eager to share their experiences of the war.

3.4.2.2. Getting lost in translation and dodging standardized answers

The qualitative material collected for this thesis is based on 126 “formal” interviews, interspersed with numerous “informal” discussions recorded in field notes, carried out during three trips to the province of South Kivu between the fall of 2011 and the summer of 2013, totalling 9 months of fieldwork in the area. In addition, qualitative interviews were carried out by the surveyors with the village authorities of each of the 134 villages where the survey was carried out. While these additional interviews primarily served the purpose of triangulating the data collected through the survey,

and were not used as primary sources for the qualitative chapters of this thesis, some examples are brought in from these interviews. In such cases, it is explicitly pointed out in next to the interview. In the following section, I only refer to those interviews that I personally carried out.

The interviews were semi-structured: Themes and questions were prepared in advance and adapted to particular contexts, but a large space was left for the multiple directions the interviews could take. The interviews were carried out both with “active” agents of recruitment into armed organizations - armed group commanders, recruiters and ex-combatants – and with a range of other actors involved or affected by armed mobilization. The interviews varied widely in terms of length and quality, with most interviews lasting a few hours - usually between 2 and 5 hours - while others were spread out over several days, and in some cases several weeks. In bringing together the material collected through interviews, particular attention was given to triangulating the information as best possible by comparing different interviews and cross checking with additional sources, in particular academic publications as well as NGO and United Nation reports and documents.

Both in the way they were carried out and in their content, the interviews were inevitably influenced by the temporal and geographical proximity of the events that were discussed, which in certain cases were unfolding in real time. This gave rise to a number of methodological challenges in ascertaining the “validity” of the information gathered. The most immediate of these were those of *translating and understanding* the vernacular narrative reconstitutions that were collected. Beyond the difficulties created by the language barrier, that at times required the intermediation of a translator - usually a local acquaintance capable of translating, or one of the Congolese researchers tied to the research project-, this necessitated something of a linguistic understanding of the ways in which events are narrated and presented in different areas, and by different actors. While a full linguistic analysis was beyond the scope of this thesis, and a great deal of variation existed, some patterns started emerging while I was conducting interviews.

One of the first of such patterns I noticed was the prevalence of “grand narratives”, and a tendency to conflate “local” histories with regional and national histories, which

sometimes made it difficult to obtain local and contextualized information. While this reflects a normal process of appropriation of these narratives, it could sometimes lead to some confusion, for example when questions concerning “local” Mayi-Mayi groups were answered in consideration of the Mayi-Mayi movement as a whole. This led to a lot of fine-tuning and adaptation of the qualitative interviews, but also the survey where a lot of attention was given to the formulation of questions, to avoid such conflations.

Furthermore, I also noticed that some answers displayed a somewhat consensual or standardized character. This owed perhaps to the documented tendency of rural agrarian societies with strong oral traditions to relay “consensual histories” that reflect implicit hierarchies of authority and allow less space for individual nuances. However, in areas where people had already been subjected to numerous interviews and surveys, this was also a result of the “academics of the mirror” described earlier, whereby standardized narratives and concepts become prevalent and can also carry political and economic weight, such as the emphasis on victimization, rather than agency, in the narration of experience of war. Particular attention was given to repeatedly reformulating questions and focusing them specifically on the interviewee, as well as on specific events.

3.4.2.3. *Looking into « architectures of silences and non-truths »*

These idiosyncratic elements of language and discourse translation were enhanced by the polarizing effect that years of armed conflict had imprinted on the region, deeply penetrating public discourse and popular narratives, and, as a result, the ways in which people made sense of war-related events. As several authors have argued, the “logic” of polarization during civil wars affects all the political, social and discursive spaces of a society.⁵⁶ As a result, when conducting and analysing narrative reconstructions of war-related events, the first element to take into consideration is the positionality of the interviewee and the implicit hierarchies and positions that their narratives might be reflecting or advancing. In certain cases, these might be relatively straightforward to identify. In other cases, these polarized narratives are intertwined with variegated

⁵⁶ See for example Kalyvas (2006) and Wood (2009).

collective and personal experiences of violence and conflict, making them more difficult to ascribe to fixed or established positionalities or intentionalities. The silence that surrounds the traumatic events that inevitably occur during civil wars also constitutes one of the methodological challenges in reconstituting local histories of armed conflict (Wood 2003 p.40). Together, these factors create complex “architectures of silence and non-truths”, which surround recollections and claims related to wartime events. A few of the driving factors of these can be briefly pointed out.

First, what people chose to talk about could be affected by what was going on in a context where armed conflict was still on-going. This depended on a large number of factors tied to the configuration of the conflict. The same person could speak very openly about one particular group, and completely refuse to talk about another.

Second, the recollection and restitution of war-related events can be affected by the personal experience of individuals with regards to these events, and can bear the marks of various forms of personal or psychological trauma. Violent and traumatic events or experiences can be voluntarily or involuntarily omitted, but also lead to a large array of memory distortions. While innovative methods have been developed to deal with the recollection of such traumatic events,⁵⁷ I noticed that several respondents, in particular ex-combatants, were affected by such trauma, and took this factor into account when ascertaining the validity of their testimonies. Beyond traumatic experiences, a host of factors tie the personal experience of war-related events to the types of narrative recollections that emerge, and thus require a close range analysis.

Third, given the temporal proximity of events, individual narratives often echoed politicized and “partisan” narratives deployed at a larger scale, which themselves had very specific genealogies. As an example, respondents often referred to ethnic groups as if they constituted unitary agents of political, or social action – *i.e. The Tutsi have attacked us*. Such narratives drew on deeply engrained ethno-territorial conceptions of authority and identity, tied to the particular history of eastern DRC, but also to their

⁵⁷ For example, the 2013 eastern Congo Initiative and Harvard Humanitarian Initiative report *We Came back With Empty Hands* uses innovative psychology methods to help recollection of violent and traumatic events by child soldiers in eastern DRC.

reinforcement during wars in which ethnicity was often a highly salient line of polarization.

Fourth, the sheer speed at which very dense set of events unfold during armed conflicts, a consequence of the speed of military action, often make it particularly difficult to reconstitute sequences of events. This is all the more the case that participants and witnesses of events are often themselves in crisis situations when they unfold, and can thus have limited recollection of the events. In a region that has been undergoing such violence for more than 20 years, particular attention must be paid to temporally situating events mentioned by respondents, in order to avoid the very common risk of mixing up years, groups and areas. This was done through a thorough attention to triangulation, and the discarding of material that wasn't clearly temporally and geographically situated.

Carrying out the interviews, and *interpreting* the collected material therefore required a close attention to their linguistic and idiomatic framings, as well as the ways in which they could be affected by the polarizing effects of the war. Perhaps the interviews that required the most intensive of such efforts were with military leaders and commanders, some of which lasted up to three days. Some of these commanders displayed a very calm and composed attitude towards the interviews. Other commanders, however, were more difficult to interview because of the underlying game of power in which the interviews were inevitably nested. As elites and power wielders in the military sphere, these commanders often have to constantly perform and display their power, particularly in a context where competition is so fierce and death so swift. As a result, the "space" of the interview was sometimes hard to negotiate, and I had to make efforts to find as neutral a ground as possible. Some commanders insisted that their heavily armed "escorts" be present during interviews and engaged in direct intimidations, creating a climate less propitious to interviews.

Yet such performances and almost theatrical displays of power gave some insight into the nature of the power exerted by these commanders, a key interrogation of this thesis. Indeed, such power is often an elaborate conjunction of military and strategic ability, combined with the capacity to induce fear, but also more elaborate forms of

charismatic authority.⁵⁸ This was visible during the interview with Major Muhindo Changoco, one of the most prominent Mayi-Mayi “witchdoctors”. When I first saw this small and lean man of around 40 years old, who initially appeared very reserved and uneasy, I wondered how he had commanded up several thousand men in his Mayi-Mayi Kalehe group. The interview, which lasted two full days, gave me some hints. Indeed, throughout the interview, Major Muhindo Changoco performed various rituals, that incessantly interrupted the questions and answers, and made the interview particularly slow and long, yet nevertheless of very good quality. Muhindo repeatedly expressed a form of lassitude or irritation at my questions which in his words “*weren’t in the spirit of the Mayi-Mayi*“, which he argued lay in the rituals he was carrying out and the prophetic and esoteric parables in which his answers were imbued. While I was initially slightly destabilized by these rituals, that included cutting off the leg of a live chicken, I came realized that, far from superfluous “cultural” folklore and paraphernalia, these rituals and idioms were in fact the very source of his charismatic authority, that was inseparable from his military power and functions. As a result, leaving them aside to enter the “rational space” in which my interviews attempted to direct him constituted a surrendering of the very basis of his power, and the entrance into a zone of rationality and discursive power in which I was more at ease than him and that, given the positionality of white men that we have seen in the region, also carried significant social power.

⁵⁸ See Hoffmann (2010). This aspect is discussed throughout the thesis.

3.5. Conclusion

These elements constitute some of the dimensions of the “architectures of silence and non-truths” that characterize personal and collective recollections of war-related events. While fully disentangling them is almost impossible given the multiplicity of individual and collective process at play, I nevertheless attempted to work against the more debilitating ones, not to uncover an ‘underlying’ truth, but to ascertain the validity and relative strength of the empirical material. In many senses, this was as much a human and emotional endeavour as an academic and linguistic one, as these narratives were tied and evolved with my relations to the people whom I interrogated and discovered the region with. In no way do I consider the understanding of the experience of war that I have gathered through these interactions as definitive, but rather see them as the beginning of a path of understanding, one that has been immensely rich and humbling. In addition to the methodological challenges discussed in this chapter, a large number of other methodological challenges presented themselves during the fieldwork and the writing, which, when important, are discussed in the chapters.

Chapter Four

Grassroots Processes of Armed Mobilization in The Mayi-Mayi movement

“Placed under the same circumstances, all men will behave the same”

Priest of Irambo, South Kivu

The two chapters that constitute the first part of the dissertation focus on the processes of recruitment and control of combatants in the Mayi-Mayi movement. Contrarily to Chapter 7 and Chapter 8, that adopt a narrow geographical focus in order to understand how armed mobilization is inscribed in the history of specific regions, the two chapters that constitute the current section are focused on identifying macro-processes of armed mobilization, which is done by bringing examples from different areas of South Kivu and different periods into comparative focus. While the chapter focuses on mobilization into the Mayi-Mayi movement, examples are taken from other armed mobilizations in the region as well.

Together, the two chapters advance the argument that participation in the Mayi-Mayi armed movement is tied to two concurring macro-processes of armed mobilization. On one hand, the Mayi-Mayi movement bore the features of a social movement, one that was able to provoke armed mobilization on a large scale as a result of its capacity to formulate a clear mobilizing message, drawing on longstanding cultural frames to formulate a novel political project as well as a “praxis” of insurgent collective action. In the rural areas of Kalehe, this mobilizing message articulated with the imperative

of security provision to the decentralized rural communities in a context of crisis. As a result, the strength of the insurgent mobilization owed to the fact that it was mediated and “appropriated” by the socio-political entities that formed the basis of the South Kivutian societies, although this process was far from linear or homogenous.

The second “macro-logic of armed mobilization corresponds to a more accumulative and control focused one, symptomatic of the insertion of the Mayi-Mayi movement into a militarized political economy, where control over resources and populations becomes the key focus of politico-military competition. Rather than the grassroots social movement that it had been in certain areas, the Mayi-Mayi movement became a vehicle of accumulation and control over resources, and in particular labour.

Importantly, these two macro-logics of armed mobilization represent two “dimensions” of the process of armed mobilization, but should not be understood as separate. Indeed, they do not play out separately or in temporal succession, but rather concomitantly, often leading to tensions that we will seek to flesh out and understand. Chapters 7, 8 and 9, which take a close range historical approach to armed mobilization in specific regions of South Kivu, will then allow us to see how they play out and articulate in specific configurations.

The main empirical focus of these two chapters is the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement and armed rebellion against the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Democratie* (RCD), which took control of eastern DRC between 1998 and 2003. As mentioned in the historical introduction, the Mayi-Mayi movement was never a fully unified movement, but rather a broad constellation of civilian, military and political actors, who coalesced under the Mayi-Mayi banner and then broke into a multiplicity of armed factions, whose trajectories have been highly variable and heterogeneous. Because of this heterogeneity, it is difficult to provide a single, linear historical account of the movement, which is not the purpose of these chapters. We will focus on the province of South Kivu, and in particular on the territories of Kalehe and Mwenga, with some examples taken from the territory of Shabunda and Walungu.

In this chapter, we start by discussing the Mayi-Mayi movement’s features as those of a social movement, looking in particular at the framing of the movement’s core

objectives and their inscription in eastern DRC's socio-cultural frameworks. We will then see the way in which the Mayi-Mayi mobilization played out in both urban and rural contexts of the province of South Kivu, and in particular the way in which it was mediated by pre-existing forms of social and socio-political organization.

4.1. The Mayi-Mayi Insurgency as a social movement

As mentioned in the theoretical chapter, insurgencies can be conceived as a particular type of social movements, albeit ones for which the constraints to effective collective action are more acute, as a result of the use and threat of violence. In this section, we will show that the Mayi-Mayi movement fits at least partially the definition of social movements as “actions (...) based on dense social networks and effective connective structures and draw on legitimate, action oriented cultural frames” (Tarrow 2010). Indeed, the Mayi-Mayi insurgency owed its mobilizing strength to the articulation of a clear, simple political claim that underpinned the call for collective action which resonated profoundly in existing cultural frames, and to the fact that the mobilization was at least partially articulated around pre-existing structures of authority and social organization, setting in motion dense social networks.

4.1.1. Strength and modularity of an insurgent repertoire

The strength of the Mayi-Mayi mobilization owed in part to the simple, yet powerful message that it carried at its core: The Congolese people must defend, by any means necessary, their land against invasions by foreigners. This message, which constituted the main rallying call of the Mayi-Mayi, was based on an ontological distinction between “*autochtones*” - conceived as righteous bearers of the land - and “foreigners” (Jackson 2006). This simple message, and the moral obligation to defend the land that naturally derived from it, carried the strength that scholars of contentious politics have identified as necessary for successful mobilizations across socio-cultural boundaries, owing in particular to its modularity – i.e. its adaptability to different socio-cultural environments (Tarrow 2010). Indeed, in the fragmented political landscape of eastern Congo, where ethno-territorial and cultural boundaries tend to hinder political mobilization, such a message appealed to longstanding supra-ethnic conceptions of

nationality, but could also be appropriated and adapted to the differentiated ethnic identities of the region.

This insurgent identity drew on a longstanding repertoire of resistance to foreign occupation, dating back to the resistance against Rwandan expansionism in the 19th century, as well as the resistance movements against the colonial invasion and occupation, such as the Kitawala Movement of the 1940s, but also to the Mayi-Mayi and Mulelist rebellions of the 1960s (Jourdan 2011; Iniguez de Heredia 2013). The figure of the Mai-Mai fighter therefore constituted what Scott (1990) has called a “hidden transcript of resistance and rebellion”, which was summoned by the leaders of the new revolt against the RCD.

Furthermore, the Mayi-Mayi formulated their claims in a discourse that summoned a range of longstanding mythologies, beliefs and norms that were re-appropriated and “set into motion”, as Hoffmann (2014) has argued. These included ancient beliefs about the correspondence of the spiritual and material world and the existence of a supreme being that were shared by several societies of eastern Congo,⁵⁹ as well as references to Christian theology and myths, in which the Mayi-Mayi political claims and insurgent identity was discursively embedded, imbuing it with a mythical and religious aura (Misako 2008). As a prominent Mayi-Mayi witchdoctor claimed in an interview: “*God was the First Mai-Mai*”.⁶⁰ These cultural repertoires were not always invoked instrumentally, and the success of the Mayi-Mayi message was not just tied to their invocation. After all, people constantly invoke such cultural frames, without necessarily obtaining attention. Rather, as we will see by analysing how the Mayi-Mayi mobilization spread, it is the negotiation and appropriation of the Mai-Mai message by different actors, owing to its modularity and capacity to adapt to cultural frames, but most importantly its political relevance in a context of crisis, which explains its success. Rather than constituting a “cultural capital” that the Mayi-Mayi could instrumentally deploy, these cultural frames were part of the *moral economy* in which the political message of the Mayi-Mayi was articulated and discursively negotiated with the population (Hoffmann 2014).

⁵⁹ The Supreme Being - called *Ongo* by the Batembo, or *Kimbiligiti* by the Rega - is part of the beliefs of several communities of the region (Biebuyck 1976; Newbury 1991 - Quoted in Hoffmann (2015 p.15).

⁶⁰ Interview with Major Muhindo, Bagira, June 2013.

While crouched in longstanding idioms and repertoires of contention, the strength of the Mayi-Mayi discourse owed as much to the novelty of the political project that it proposed. This political project was framed in the contemporary language of development and progress, that had permeated the official discourse of the Congolese State, and that the Mayi-Mayi also shared with the Development and Humanitarian industries whose presence in eastern DRC increased significantly with the war (Hoffmann 2007). By reclaiming of the land of the ancestors, the Mayi-Mayi also offered to develop and modernize the Congo. It was therefore as much the use of culturally resonant frameworks and idioms as the formulation of novel political claims in the language of development and progress that explains the strength of the Mayi-Mayi message.

Furthermore, an essential feature of the Mayi-Mayi repertoire was the range of rituals and practices known as the *dawa*, whose role was to make soldiers invulnerable. The name Mayi-Mayi was itself a reference to a cleansing ritual whereby sacred water (Mayi-Mayi, water in Kiswahili) would be sprinkled on combatants to make them invulnerable. Reports of the use of protective rituals, talismans and amulets in wars on the African continent and more specifically in Congo date back to the colonial era, such as the Batela revolt in 1895, the Maji-Maji insurgency in modern Tanganyika from 1905-1907, the *Kitawala* millenarianist resistance movement of 1944 in Walikale, and more recently the Mulelist rebellion in the Kwilu and the Simba rebellion in Fizi Uvira (Verhaegen 1969). They are also widely used in contemporary African armed conflicts, from the Sierra Leone Conflict (Keen 2005; Wlodarczyk 2009) to the conflict in Central African Republic. Despite their widespread use, these rituals have persistently suffered from a form of cultural and intellectual racism that has cast them as them epitome of irrationality or barbarism, which has hindered a deeper understanding of their role and function.

Recent scholarship, however, has brought the study of these so called “magical” practices into social science studies of warfare, demonstrating that these practices were neither irrational nor obscure, but served specific strategic and military functions, relating to military tactics and objectives, the internal organization of armed groups and to their relation with the social environment (Jourdan 2011; Titeca 2010;

Wlodarczyk 2009). Indeed, access to a powerful ritual allows a group to enhance their military efficiency, maintain internal cohesion and obtain resources from its social, political and economic environment, conferring them a significant strategic advantage in contexts of low technology warfare (Wlodarczyk 2009).

Therefore, the *dawa* used by the Mayi-Mayi is neither a cultural ornament, nor the manifestation of a type of “false consciousness”,⁶¹ but in fact the central “social technology” that enabled the insurgent collective action. Indeed, adding to the articulation of grievances into cultural frames and idioms, it channelled them towards a clear *praxis* of insurgent collective action. As the Mayi-Mayi fighter represented a cultural repertoire of contention, the *dawa* constituted a “practical” repertoire of contention, whose strength is also intimately tied to its modularity. Central to the effectiveness of the *dawa* are the behavioural prescriptions that must be followed for it to be effective in combat, called *conditions*. While *docteurs* (witchdoctors) in charge of crafting the *conditions* of the *dawa* pointed to their spiritual origins during interviews, many observers have noted that these conditions had the function of controlling the behaviour of combatants, not only with regards to the internal organization of armed groups but also with regards to the civilian populations that surrounded them (Verhaegen 1969; Jourdan 2011; Kisangani 2012). These prescriptions can thus represent one of the ways in which communal values and ethics can be prescribed to combatants, thus forming a mechanism of communal governance over the behaviour of soldiers, also lodged in the *moral economy* tying combatants to their wider social environment.

As a result of these dense socio-cultural meanings, participation in the Mayi-Mayi was experienced by many as a way to *perform* participation in a moral community, but also in a fundamentally novel political project. All of these attributes of the Mai-Mai message, cultural repertoire and *dawa* were not intrinsic to the movement, but rather emerged as a result of discursive and political negotiations throughout the social history of the Mai-Mai movement.

⁶¹ As Hoffmann argues, the very designation these rituals as magic is more revelatory of their status as what Foucault calls “subjugated knowledges” in the colonially crafted hierarchy of knowledges (Hoffmann 2007 pp.18-19).

4.2. Social processes of armed mobilization

We have seen that one of the strengths of the Mayi-Mayi insurgency was its capacity to formulate a clear *praxis* of insurgent collective action that drew on historically embedded cultural frames of resistance, while formulating a novel and original political message. Beyond these idiomatic and discursive characteristics, however, it was the fact that the call to resistance was initially relayed and mediated by existing structures of socio-political organization that enabled widespread support and rapid mobilization in the region. As seen in the theoretical section, the appropriation of pre-existing social networks and structures of socio-political organization is a determining element of the success of social movements (Mc Adam, Tarrow & Tilly 2001; Staniland 2012). This mediation was also central in framing and “adapting” the movement’s objectives and message to different socio-cultural frameworks. But the “social architecture” of the Mayi-Mayi mobilization varied extensively across different regions, owing to the highly variegated social and institutional histories of South Kivu, and the way in which the Mayi-Mayi “social movement” adapted to them. In this section, we identify some of the social processes at play in the mobilization.

4.2.1. Mobilization in Bukavu

Bukavu, the provincial capital of South Kivu and former colonial capital of the Kivu province, has historically been a hotbed of civilian and armed resistance movements, dating back to pre-colonial resistance movements against Rwandan expansionism on the Western Shores of Lake Kivu, as seen in the historical section. Following the turmoil caused by the first Congo War, resentment had been mounting in the eastern Provinces as a result of the perceived “invasion” of eastern Congo by the Rwandan troops and their Banyamulenge “allies”. Despite pockets of resistance to the AFDL, in particular in Butembo, The AFDL’s rebellion was initially “tolerated” in the region because of widespread resentment against Mobutu and a general consensus around the necessity to put an end to his 30-year rule (Turner 2005).

However, following Laurent Desire Kabila’s accession to power, this very unstable equilibrium quickly faltered as the Rwandan Patriotic Army continued to occupy

eastern Congo and carry out military operations, fostering deep resentment towards what was generally considered as an invasion, reinforced by the fact that Kabila named James Kabarebe, the Rwandan general who had led the attack on Kinshasa, as chief of Staff of the newly born *Forces Armees Congolaises*, the new national army (Prunier 2009 p.175). Resentment was enhanced by the appointment of several Rwandophones in prominent political and military positions in the East, and the tension soon took a military turn, with dozens of armed factions forming in rural South Kivu and North Kivu to oppose AFDL rule, with more or less coordination by the elites in Bukavu. These loosely coordinated forces that would progressively take the name of Mayi-Mayi started a fierce insurgency against the AFDL that lasted from July 7, 1997 to July 1998, just before the RCD rebellion, and caused several thousand deaths (Kisangani 2012 p.135). Furthermore, rather than appeasing the tension, Laurent Desire Kabila sharply antagonized the Mayi-Mayi insurgency, dismissing it as an international conspiracy and conducting military operations against the militias, which exacerbated tensions and even led to the Mayi-Mayi attacking and shortly occupying Bukavu on December 11, 1997 (Prunier 2009 pp.174-175).

In Bukavu, public resentment was further fuelled by several assassinations of prominent public figures, In particular that of the Archbishop of Bukavu Christophe Munzihirwa, a widely respected public figure who had vocally criticized the Rwandan military occupation of eastern DRC and called for resistance. His assassination in on October 29, 1996 was widely believed to have been carried out by Rwandans. The tension further escalated when the RCD rebellion seized Bukavu in August 1998 and launched a fierce campaign of repression. Public criticism of the movement was curtailed by the systematic detention of “intellectuals”⁶² and critics of the RCD, but also outright assassinations and massacres, the largest of which was the massacre of Kasika in the territory of Mwenga, on August 14 1998.⁶³

The first civilian resistance movements that emerged were composed in part of former Lumumbists and Mulelists, who had maintained small clandestine resistance

⁶² In DRC, the term intellectual is colloquially used to designate most leaders and public figures.

⁶³ Following an ambush by Mayi-Mayi forces on August 23, 1998, the RCD retaliated against the population, assassinating 37 people at the Church of Kasika and several more in the surrounding villages on August 24 (Turner 2005 p.93). The massacre was followed by the assassination of the Chief Mwami Mubeza of Lwindi, an important customary chief.

organizations such as the *Service de Liaison de l'Armée Populaire* (SLAP- Liaison Service of the Popular Army), and who brought with them their experience and set up the initial networks that would become the backbone of the Bukavu branch of the larger Mayi-Mayi movement. In the town of Bukavu, a core number of activists emerged as the foundational base of the movement, carry out the tasks of coordination and organization that are fundamental to the success of social movements (Tarrow 2007). According to Mackalele Ntumulo, who was in charge of logistics in the movement, there were around 35 to 40 core activists in Bukavu.⁶⁴ Many of these were Shi civil society leaders, as well as businessmen and politicians. These core activists had monthly reunions to coordinate activities, which took place around 23h in secret locations. They played a crucial role in penetrating and activating social networks to garner support for the movement, and spark the mobilization.

According to those in charge of mobilizing combatants, the task of finding recruits was relatively straightforward in the initial days of mobilization, owing to the poor level of development of the RCD repressive apparatus as well as widespread support of the population. Based in Bagira - one of the three communes of Bukavu - the recruiters would circulate with relative ease in all the communes and neighbourhoods of Bukavu. Muganga, one of the recruiters of the time, recalls mobilizing “*Neighbourhood by neighbourhood, avenue by avenue, youth by youth*”.⁶⁵ He and several other recruiters would carry out small, discreet meetings in different neighbourhoods, in schools, hospitals and churches, to raise awareness about the nascent resistance movement. The purpose of these semi-clandestine meetings was to garner support for the movement, attract resources in the form of donations - money, food equipment - but also to recruit volunteers for the military branch of the movement. In parallel, the movement set up a secret radio, the *radio des patriotes* (patriot radio), an essential tool for the communication of the movement, to which they asked people to tune into to “*get the real news of the occupation, but also to learn how to resist it*”.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Interview with Mackalele Ntumulo, Bagira, June 2013.

⁶⁵ Interview with Muganga Murhiminya, Bagira, June 2013.

⁶⁶ According to Denis, who was responsible for the Itinerant Radio, broadcasts would be held at regular times, in particular at 22h at night. They would broadcast news about the number of people assassinated or arrested by the RCD, as well as nationalist appeals to join the resistance. The radio was hosted

According to these recruiters, they mainly used “snowballing” methods in the initial days of the mobilization, with the *bouche a oreille* (hearsay) being the main vector of information circulation, also serving as a vouching mechanism to enter the movement. Muganga, a former recruiter in the city of Bukavu, recalls:

*“When we recruited a person, we immediately asked him to find two other people in his entourage (...) It was a condition for joining the movement, they had to find the two other people before they even entered; with this system, we were sure that those who were brought to us were worthy of confidence; In those times, it went very quickly, because the youth were very sensible to our cause and very eager to resist the invader; The youth participated massively, so we had no shortage of new recruits; in some neighbourhoods, like here in Bagira, we just had to wait and recruits would arrive on their own through this system”*⁶⁷

This reliance on existing social networks as a both a mobilization and vouching mechanism would prove to be one of the most persistent methods of recruitment of the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement, as will be emphasized throughout this chapter. Furthermore, as in many urban-based resistance movements, the town’s universities represented one of the most fertile grounds for recruiting aspiring combatants, as they concentrated educated and skilled youth with acute political awareness. Although the recruitment was carried out clandestinely, recruiters and former students recruited during that period recall a great effervescence around the resistance movement, with the powerful student unions working as relays to mobilize students, and several hundreds of students being mobilized in the major universities of Bukavu. In many instances, the call to arms was – unofficially - supported by key actors, such as University professors, or the Catholic Church, which played an important role in bolstering support for the Mayi-Mayi movement (Bwenge 2003). Jacques Nyakasali, who was mobilized when he was university student and eventually became the Executive Secretary of the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe, recalls how he was mobilized:

clandestinely, and the people responsible for it would move around Bukavu to avoid being caught. Interview with Denis, Bagira, June 2013.

⁶⁷ Interview with Muganga Murhiminya, Bukavu, June 2013.

“I have always loved my country. I was ready when the RCD arrived, but I didn’t really know what to do. I was living on campus for my 3rd year of Graduat; I was wondering with some friends how we could do this, how are we going to make it. A professor came to us one day when we were talking about these issues and asked us why are you not doing anything? You are young and you could be very helpful. We told him that, unfortunately, we had never done the military service, and that if we had done it we would have already gone. The professor told us that no, we could still do something. It was him who recruited us, me and 15 of my colleagues. At the time, I wasn’t entirely sure, because I was nurturing the dream of entering the catholic seminar (...) I spoke to the priest who was counselling me at the time, and he told me that, were he not in the orders, he would definitely join the resistance, and that I should join. That is how I left for Bunyakiri to join the group of Padiri”⁶⁸

In order to channel recruits, Several clandestine recruitment houses were set up in the town of Bukavu, where new recruits would congregate before being sent by bus to the rural areas where the movement had set up military camps (initially mostly in the territories of Mwenga and Kalehe), with around 200 new recruits leaving every week during the initial 6 months of the mobilization.⁶⁹

The initial phase of popular mobilization through institutions was, however, quickly stalled by a brutal campaign of repression and infiltration of the institutions and networks through which recruitments were being carried out. In the Universities, pro-RCD directors were appointed and tasked with quelling the haemorrhage of students leaving for the resistance. The *Jeunesses Etudiantes* (Student Youth), a RCD sponsored student association, served as a vehicle to infiltrate the student recruitment networks. As a result, University recruitments channels were soon broken off, forcing city-based recruiters into deeper clandestinity, and to adopt new tactics, as they could “no longer arrive in the institutions”.⁷⁰ Those suspected of being associated to the

⁶⁸ Interview with Jacques Nyakasali, Bagira, June 2013.

⁶⁹ This figure was advanced by Muganga Murhiminya.

⁷⁰ Interview with Muganga M, Bagira, June 2013.

Mayi-Mayi movement were arrested, beaten and even assassinated, breaking off many of the recruitment networks by using reverse snowball methods of repression.⁷¹

As a result, the Bukavu based recruiters adapted their tactics and abandoned the “snowballing” method of recruitment, deemed too risky in a context where the RCD “*had planted spies everywhere*”, in favour of methods of individual recruitment. As a result of the progressive implantation of the RCD state apparatus in the city, penetrating the “social space” of potential recruits became a much more complex task, even within the context of relative anonymity of a larger city like Bukavu. Denis, one of the recruiters, recalled that:

*“Even in a city like Bukavu, people know who you are, especially if you are moving in a neighbourhood. A lot of people had started to work directly or indirectly for the RCD, and they reported every suspicious movement. In our neighbourhood, Bagira, they weren’t so strong because everyone was for the resistance, and people who would give information to the enemy would be immediately spotted. But in the rest of the city it became more complicated, because one is never sure (...) we learned, and we became more prudent”*⁷²

Individual recruitments necessitated a more thorough work of preliminary research and “scanning” of potential recruits than the snowballing techniques, requiring the gathering of information on a potential recruit’s entourage, family and acquaintances, a difficult task to carry out clandestinely. Recruiters argued that, to a certain extent, they favoured those youth who were a bit isolated, because getting close to them was easier, and approaching them “*would make less noise in the neighbourhood if something went wrong*”.⁷³ Following a period of initial screening and research, various approach tactics would be deployed. Muganga recounts how he would carry out such recruitments in the Commune of Bagira:

⁷¹ Denis recalled that his own brother, who was also part of the Mayi-Mayi recruitment networks, was arrested by the RCD. The RCD asked him to give 10 names, or indicate houses where the recruitments were being carried out, which he refused to do and as a result was severely beaten.

⁷² Interview with Denis, Bagira, June 2013.

⁷³ Interview with Denis, Bagira, June 2013.

“We would observe a young guy in the neighbourhood for a while, see his behaviour and the people he hanged out with, try to get some information about who he was, what he was up to, who was his family (...). Then we would approach him discretely and progressively, to make sure not to scare him off. There were several techniques; if we knew a relative, we would try to go through the relatives, but this had its own risks (...). One technique I used very often was to get close to the youngster with a radio. When I approach him discretely, I try to find some news, and sometimes put the Patriot Radio on. Something where he could hear the harm being done by the RCD. I would then observe the reaction of the youngster, and if I felt he was responding negatively, I would start testing him with questions: Petit, do you think this is normal what is happening to our country? What are you going to do about this? We would usually talk for a while, and I would observe him and what he said, to see if he had the heart of a patriot. Then, if I see that he seems to be solid, I would tell him about our resistance, and give 300 francs and send him to spend the night in Kadutu, where we had a house. The next day, he was off to the forest”⁷⁴

The recruiters interviewed indicated that, by 1999, they had more or less stopped recruiting in the cities, for several reasons: First, the RCD intelligence services had by then deeply extended their infiltration of the town's institutions, and it had become difficult to carry out new recruitments in the town. Second, the movement already had a sufficient amount of recruits, and many of those who had been recruited into the RCD Army had started defecting to join the Mayi-Mayi, providing sufficient numbers of recruits to the movement.

We have seen that the initial phase of the urban based recruitments displayed some of the of core attributes of a social movement: A simple yet powerful mobilizing message, relayed by a core number of activists who strategically used pre-existing social networks, embedded in the town's neighbourhoods and institutions, to drive mobilization and recruitment into the armed groups. We now turn to the rural areas, the central focus of this dissertation.

⁷⁴ Interview with Muganga, Bagira, June 2013.

4.2.2. Mobilization in rural South Kivu

We now turn to an analysis of the dynamics of mobilization and recruitment of combatants into the Mayi-Mayi movement in the rural areas of South Kivu, with an empirical focus on the territories of Mwenga, Kalehe and Shabunda, where fieldwork and interview were carried out for this study. The objective here is to delineate the elements that allow us to identify the Mayi-Mayi mobilization as a social movement, albeit one that was quickly permeated by the more accumulative and control focused dynamics that will be analysed in the following chapter. We will focus in particular on the role of pre-existing forms of socio-political organizations in relaying and mediating the mobilization, and the negotiated process through which a novel insurgent identity emerged, that incorporating pre-existing social and communal identities. The “shape” of the mobilization, however, was highly dependent on the pre-existing structures of socio-political of different regions, and the ways in which the resistance movement activated these pre-existing structures. Importantly, the mediation of the mobilization by institutions and social networks at a very micro-scale was not incompatible with “high level” political manoeuvring, but rather reflected the inter-connectedness of so called “local” dimensions of armed mobilization with regional and national level processes.

As noted earlier, the AFDL rebellion of 1996 threatened the already fragile political equilibrium in the province of South Kivu. As many of the high ranking officials of the AFDL were Congolese Rwandophones, in particular the so-called *Banyamulenge* Congolese Rwandophones of South Kivu who had been in longstanding political and military conflict against the Babembe of Uvira, ethno-territorial competition that had been playing out in the provincial arena soon took a militarized turn, with elites mobilizing resistance through the ethno-territorial channels of power. This was the case, for example, of the Bembe militias that mushroomed throughout the territories of Uvira and Fizi in 1997-1998, in direct opposition to the threat posed by the newly acquired political power of the Banyamulenge elites (Vlassenroot 2013).

4.2.2.1. Mobilization in the territory of Walungu

An example of the articulation of provincial level politics and the social basis of armed mobilization was that of the *Mudundu 40*, an armed group that emerged in the territory of Walungu in 1997-1998. According to several witnesses, the decision to form the *Mudundu 40* was taken after a series of meetings in Bukavu where prominent Bashi civil society leaders and businessmen expressed their concern that the territory of Walungu - the administrative entity that regrouped several of the “traditional” Shi Kingdoms - could not be “protected” from the Rwandan invasion by the armed factions of Uvira and Kalehe. Other reasons invoked were the desecration of the Shi Royal Tombs by Rwandophone elements (Turner 2005 p.95; Tull 2005 p.197). Odilon Bwenda Mwuzi, the initiator of the Mudundu 40, and Albert Kahasa, the second military commander who would become the famous “Fokker Mike” and later break away from the Mudundu 40, made an “alliance” with the King of Walungu, *Mwami* (King) Ntadabaye in early 1997 to implant and develop a militia in the territory of Walungu. The movement started in the town of Bukavu, more precisely in Bagira, in the *Astiba*, and then moved to set camp in the territory of Walungu.

According to former members of the Mudundu 40 as well as interlocutors interviewed in Walungu, the fact that the Mudundu 40 had the support of the Mwami (King) of Walungu allowed it to mobilize a large number of combatants. The Bashi Kingdoms, as seen in the historical introduction, were among the most centralized political entities of the area since the pre-colonial era, but had also obtained prominent positions in provincial and national politics in the post-colonial era, closely articulating elite level politics with the rural basis of the ethno-territorial constituency. According to several interviews, the resistance movement also had the support of the Catholic Church in Walungu, who helped with the mobilization. A local notable of Walungu Centre, the main town of the territory of Walungu, remembers:

At the beginning, the movement (Mudundu 40) was supported by the church. Here in Walungu, people would go to church, and the priest would talk to us about the invasion that was going on in the area, that this AFDL that we were hearing about was in fact a trick of the Rwandans to seize the land of the Bashi. He would ask us what should we do about it? (...)

His language was a bit concealed, he was not telling people to directly participate; he said that we the Bashi had always known how to resist the invaders, and those who have the courage should do something about it, that there were people waiting for them outside. This excited the spirit of the youth, and many joined the movement”⁷⁵

This excerpt points to the close articulation of several important features of the resistance movement. First, the mediation of pre-existing structure of authority and social organization, in this case the church and the local Catholic Priest, which conferred legitimacy to the movement. Then, the clear articulation of the call for mobilization in longstanding cultural frames of resistance, through the reference to an ethno-political identity – the Bashi- and to previous phases of resistance. Finally, the popular dimension of the recruitment, enhanced by a form of excitement on the part of the recruited youth. The Mudundu 40 represents one among several examples where elite level decisions to mobilize are mediated through established channels of authority and social networks, conferring to the movement a social character, in addition to an elite driven one. The elite coalition behind the Mudundu 40 would however fracture around 2000, when a fraction of the movement chose to collaborate with the RCD-Goma, who nominated Patient Mwendanga - a businessman and alleged high-ranking leader of the Mudundu 40 - as Governor of South Kivu in 2001 (Tull 2005 p.197). Another fraction of “hardliners” in the civil and military branches of the Mudundu 40 refused to ally with the RCD, and continued the armed resistance under the leadership of Fokker Mike.

4.2.2.2. Mobilization in the territory of Mwenga

In the territory of Mwenga, adjacent to that of Walungu, the mobilization was significantly different, owing to the very different socio-political history of the territory, the presence of an important mining industry as well as a large number of armed organizations of various scales that had set base in the area. Since pre-colonial times, many of the “forest societies” West of the Mitumba mountain range were characterized by much lower levels of political centralization than the societies of the

⁷⁵ Interview with Hotel Owner, Walungu Centre, 31/10/2011.

Rift Valley area (Newbury 1992). What Biebuyck (1972) calls the « Rega cluster », a complex ensemble of clan based, relatively autonomous yet closely inter-connected societies that coalesced under the ethno-territorial banner of the Rega under colonial rule, formed a majority of the territories of Mwenga and Shabunda. Historically, these lineage-based societies had been less affected by the penetration of the Swahili slave-raiders, and the clan-based nature of the societies had not been fundamentally altered by the colonial imposition of more hierarchical forms of authority (Verhaegen 1969 Vol. II p.29).

During the late colonial and post-colonial era, however, the region was affected by the development of the mining industry around the “Gold Belt”, along which the main roads were build, as well as the main urban centres of Kamituga and Kitutu. The mining camps along the gold belt progressively turned into villages and towns, and peasants started pouring into artisanal mining after the liberalization of the Gold mining sector in 1982, leading to the emergence of large mining communities (Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers 2004, p.121).

During the First and Second Congo wars, armed factions found in the mountains and deep jungles of the region a natural hideout, causing widespread insecurity in a region that had been relatively spared from large-scale warfare. These included the ex-FAR and Rwandan militias that set camp in the remote forests of Mwenga to find cover from the attacks of the Rwandan Patriotic Army and the AFDL. Somewhat surprisingly given the violent reputation of these armed factions, many testimonies from residents of the territories of Mwenga and Shabunda point to various forms of cohabitation between the Rwandan armed factions and the Rega populations of the region in the first stages of the war. In several areas, the Rwandans were given land to cultivate, and married into local families.⁷⁶ In exchange, the armed factions often provided a form of protection in the context of widespread insecurity that prevailed in the region.

When the AFDL rebellion progressed into Mwenga, it took control of the larger mining towns, in particular Kamituga and Kitutu and a range of smaller mining

⁷⁶ This was attested in numerous interviews in the territories of Mwenga and Shabunda.

centres. The AFDL were initially able to recruit a large number of youth in the larger towns, playing on the euphoria that accompanied the prospect of political change. The AFDL and then RCD occupations were marked by a sharp militarization of the mining industry, as military control over mining sites became a key objective of competing armed factions, particularly during the period of the Coltan boom (Vlassenroot & Raeymaekers 2004; Sanchez de la Sierra 2016).

In the territory of Mwenga, The AFDL and RCD occupations did not lead to a unified resistance movement, owing perhaps to the more decentralized structures of socio-political organization in the region, and to the lack of the social and cultural implantation of traditions of armed resistance that existed in Butembo or Bubembe, in the territories of Kalehe and Uvira. Furthermore, many of the Mayi-Mayi groups that evolved in Mwenga initially came from other territories, in particular the Bembe militias who had crossed over from Itombwe, and the Tembo Mayi-Mayi who had crossed over from Shabunda into Mwenga.⁷⁷ A sign of ingrained ethno-territorial conceptions of authority, many interviewees emphasized the ethnic foreignness of the Mayi-Mayi militias and the fact that, as a result, they could not legitimately occupy territory of the area. This was also emphasized in numerous interviews in the areas of Shabunda that had undergone “external” Mayi-Mayi occupations. In contrast, the Raia Mutomboki were often considered legitimate as a result of their “home-grown” character. While having “local” origins did not immediately confer legitimacy and popular support, ethnic and even communal “foreignness” seems to have constituted a serious obstacle, an aspect that is confirmed in the quantitative analysis. This negative perception of the Mayi-Mayi was reinforced by the authoritarian behaviour that the Mayi-Mayi groups often displayed, on which we will return in the following chapter. Yet most interviewees made a clear distinction between the groups they had encountered, and the idealized “real Mayi-Mayi”, whose cause was considered to be legitimate and just, and whose actions were considered morally righteous. Thus, despite the fact that in Mwenga the Mayi-Mayi mobilization was not mediated on a large scale by established authorities as in other areas, the core message of the movement and the cultural frames in which it had been formulated had nevertheless transcended ethno-territorial boundaries.

⁷⁷ Interview with ANR official, Kitutu, 20/10/2011.

In several areas of Mwenga, however, the arrival of external Mayi-Mayi did spur the formation of local Mayi-Mayi groups, which in some cases did display the features of social movements in their modes of propagation, activation of pre-existing social network, and discursive appropriation. The survey data tells us that, among all the reported Mai-Mai groups in the territory of Mwenga, 23% originated locally.⁷⁸ This was the case in the Basile Chiefdom, and particularly in the Bashimwenda 1 Grouping, where several a local Mayi-Mayi groups were formed. The following testimonies were collected in two villages of the Bashimwenda 1 Grouping, and highlight some of the social processes at play in the constitution of the movement and the recruitment of combatants. We quote them extensively before discussing the processes they highlight:

Village of Kasese (55 recruited in the village)⁷⁹

« The auto-defence initiative came from a few members of the village who were a little bit intellectual. When they exposed the idea to our local chiefs, these approved and followed the initiative, but in a secretive way, because none of the chiefs wanted their name to be cited. The initiative continued to the point where school teachers, close to the initiators, started talking up the morale of their students (...) this did not cause any problems, because the local chiefs were informed and supportive, and the family chiefs had been informed during the Barza (Village Assembly)⁸⁰ and had agreed. This form of initiation was much increased during the period of foreign aggression. From the regular discussions between all men in the village as well as their adult sons, several strategic decisions were taken. First, to confront the attackers, particularly the RCD who committed massacres wherever they went, we needed to get close to all the Hutu who were present in the area: The village leaders talked to their

⁷⁸ This means that it is either a person or group of people of a given town or village, or one from the neighboring villages, who initiated and organized the armed group. For more details see Chapter 9.

⁷⁹ Source: Village Survey.

⁸⁰ The *barza* is one of the “traditional” communal institutions in eastern DRC. It usually takes the form of a gathering of a village’s men, in the evening around a fire or under a tree, to discuss important matters and take decisions.

*representatives (...) several training were organized with them, for the population of the village. Because some villages didn't have enough people, they had to link up with other villages to consolidate the base (...) as this initiative was gathering strength, a delegation was sent to the Chiefdom to inform it and ask for moral and material support. The Chiefdom encouraged the idea, but didn't want to pronounce itself directly.*⁸¹

Village of Mazimingi (35 recruits)

"In Mazimingi, the defence initiative came from neighbouring villages, who had tried out such initiatives in order to guarantee their own security, in particular the village of Kalundu. Everything started when a group of youth from the village were chatted up by youth from neighbouring villages. The group had several people within it, but in particular those who had already been Mayi-Mayi and had come back, in collaboration with those who were poorly intellectual. The initiative had progressively been supported by the chiefs, who became involved in it. (...) Recruitment was clandestine at first, but became voluntary after the cause of the movement was explained to the population, because the RCD controlled almost all the centres in the area. The population started supporting the initiative when they realized that it was for the public good, that the objective was to bring security to all the villages (...) the recruitment wasn't destined to everybody, we had to convince those who could directly contribute something to the movement, not only strength. That's why several hunters of the area had been approached and convinced, because they knew the most remote parts of the area. Some local elders, as well as those same hunters, knew very well about the roots and the leaves that are needed to protect against bullets, as well as to poison spears and arrows in order to kill them instantly. (...) They carried out rituals and ceremonies to summon the ancestors to protect their tattooed children, and help them secure their land and its multiples riches (...) there was no real link

⁸¹ Surveyor Interview with former Mayi-Mayi member in Kasese, 16/05/2013.

between the initiation societies and this group, because the initiation is done by the wise ones and Kimbiligiti, the spirit of the ancestors, and the ancestors do not recognize the Mayi-Mayi. However, it is true that it is these same wise men and sorcerers who develop these traditional plants that are used as gri-gri (fetishes); but this is only a certain number of these wises (sages) who cannot have a real link with traditional initiation. (...) The relation between these groups and the authorities remained calm throughout the existence of the group, because they were the children of the village. There weren't really any taxes, because each of the participants lived his life and ate at his home, but the chiefs did ask for a little something in each household”⁸²

For both these villages, the “local” origins of the mobilization was confirmed in both the village surveys and household surveys. Similar testimonies were collected in the neighbouring villages, as well as in several villages in the territory of Shabunda.⁸³ Although the apparent seamlessness of these descriptions must be taken with a measure of critical distance, as they can be distorted by the tendency to relate ‘consensual histories’, a few key elements can be gathered from these two accounts.

First, the mobilizations were in both cases transmitted through the tight social linkages between the rural villages in the Grouping, in particular through the youth. Several other testimonies gathered in other villages of Mwenga point to a similar youth based transmission of the movement, which was also a central feature of the Raia Mutomboki movement (Stearns 2013; Vogel 2014). Vogel (2014) shows that the Raia Mutomboki called the act of going from village to village and rounding up youth into the movement *arsenal*.

The testimonies also illustrate the negotiated character of the mobilization, that involved in both cases the consultation and discussion of the initiative with various

⁸² Surveyor Interview with Village Chief of Mazimingi and his advisors, 22/04/2013.

⁸³ These include Kisubimusokolo, Mulambozi and Mizulo in Mwenga. In Shabunda, in the villages of Nduma, Nkuni, Ntuku, Lulingu, Musweli and several others of the region, a similar movement of autodefense, which later took the name of Mayi-Mayi, had been organized by local leaders and state administrators, who used established channels of authority to mobilize combatants. Source: Surveyor Interviews.

village authorities and groups, as well as the intervention and “vouching” of key institutions, such as the chief and the *barza*. The first account points out that the *barza* - the traditional institutional forum for village level decision-making in Rega societies - was convened much more regularly during this period of crisis and mobilization, suggesting accrued organizational efforts to deal with the crisis. Furthermore, the accounts reveal the ambiguous and shifting positioning of the chiefs, which only gradually gave their support to the movement, and often covertly because of the risks of retaliation.

The accounts also point to the activation of collective resource mobilization mechanisms. While the “intellectuals” provided the discursive support, local specialist knowledge is summoned, such the geographical knowledge of the hunters and the “forest” knowledge of the elders in concocting potions. The resources that are lacking - in particular the military knowledge - are sought from the outside, in these cases through the solicitation of the FDLR present in the area. This specialist knowledge, as well as the protection that the FDLR could provide is partly “internalized” through the insertion of the FDLR into the rural communities, which, as mentioned before, occurred in many rural areas before the end of the second Congo war.

Finally, these accounts illustrate the efforts that were made to inscribe the movement’s purpose in the rural *moral economies* of the Rega societies of Mwenga. The blessing of the elders and the institutional “vouching” through the consultation of the *barza* constitute a form of appropriation of the resistance movement by existing communal authorities. Resistance to the foreign invasion is re-framed as a collective moral obligation, and as a result, participation becomes constitutive of communal identity. Such processes, however, are neither linear nor seamless, and one must be careful not to project idealized conceptions of African communal life and collective action onto a very nuanced and fractured reality.

The second example seems to carry something of a contradiction with regards to the religious and spiritual rituals that are carried out to provide legitimacy to the movement. Indeed, the chief of Mazimongi alludes on one side to local elders summoning ancestors to protect the combatants, yet on the other insists that the Mayi-Mayi could not be recognized by *Kimbiligiti*, the central divinity of the Rega religious

creed (Biebuyck 1972). This alludes to the highly differentiated nature of the process of mobilization, whereby certain actors step in to take advantage of novel opportunities, while others remain much less involved. For the fabrication of the *dawa*, interviews with *feticheurs* and *doctors* (witchdoctors) of the Mayi-Mayi movement as well as close witnesses point to the intervention of a number of *entrepreneurs* in spiritual affairs, who stepped in to participate in the fabrication of the *antiballes* (anti-bullet potions), which initially seems to have been produced in a decentralized fashion in the regions where the Mayi-Mayi resistance took a local anchorage.

A former Mayi-Mayi “doctor” from Mwenga recalled that local and regional “specialists” would be called in by Mayi-Mayi initiators or commanders to pool their knowledge of plants and leaves, and participate in long “research” sessions to develop the *antiballes*, which could last several months.⁸⁴ However, chiefs, elders and various spiritual leaders interviewed in Mwenga thoroughly insisted that the spiritual leaders associated with Rega traditions, in particular those responsible for the Rega initiation ceremonies, were not involved in the preparation of these “medicines”. Separate interviews with prominent Mayi-Mayi witchdoctors, in particular Major Muhindo Changoco, one of the foremost witchdoctors of the Mayi-Mayi Padiri, also point to a dissociation between those involved in the preparation of the Mayi-Mayi *dawa* and the “traditional” spiritual leaders and healers; “*We would ask some remedies to the guerisseurs (traditional healers), but none of them could know about the anti-machetes or the anti-balles; these were born inside the Mayi-Mayi movement*”.⁸⁵ According to Major Muhindo Changoco and several other interviews, the first *dawas* to emerge within the movement carried a large number of conditions, which as we have seen served the function of controlling the behaviour of the combatants. Interviews with non-combatants attest that the population was well aware of these conditions, and often referred to them, suggesting that these conditions were initially nested in the wider relations of reciprocity and accountability that tied the combatants to the communities from which they had emerged. For example, a village chief of the territory of Shabunda in which a “local” Mayi-Mayi group had emerged stated that “*The Mayi-*

⁸⁴ Interview with ex-Mayi-Mayi, Kitutu, 22/10/2011.

⁸⁵ Interview with Major Muhindo Changoco, Bagira, 14/06/2013.

Mayi were our sons, and the sons of the neighbouring villages, and they could not harm us because of their fetiches".⁸⁶ This might have been reflective of the initial anchorage of the Mayi-Mayi movement in local *moral communities*, or at least of efforts by those involved in the constitution of local chapters of the movement to seek legitimacy by sending such signals of good behaviour. Interestingly, while the Mayi-Mayi movement was not inscribed in the Rega "traditional" cosmogony, the Raia Mutomboki, who emerged from Rega communities in Southern Shabunda, were considered by many Rega interviewed as the "*breath of Kimbiligiti*" (the central deity), enjoying a much closer association with Rega traditional cosmogony.

The Mayi-Mayi movement therefore took a form of social anchorage in certain areas, as it was appropriated by local actors who activated pre-existing channels of labour mobilization, and deployed discursive efforts to inscribe the movement within local idiomatic and moral frameworks. This was not always the case: In other configurations, the Mayi-Mayi inserted themselves at the margins of rural communities, constituting a form of rural "counter order", which we will explore in the following chapter. Furthermore, the very capacity to organize collective action was not an innate feature of rural communities in South Kivu. While larger centres and towns were controlled by larger armed groups, many smaller villages did not have the social and institutional capacity to organize such collective action. Indeed, the two examples previously presented were old villages with an agrarian base, characterized by dense social relations and the longstanding existence of the Rega institutions of social and political organization, an important pre-condition to effective collective action. In the mining camps and towns that had emerged in the Territory of Mwenga as a result of the boom of the mining industry, such pre-conditions for collective action were often absent.

4.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have identified some of the social processes of armed mobilization of the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement, in both urban and rural settings. We have seen that, in the initial phases of the mobilization, the Mayi-Mayi movement displayed

⁸⁶ Surveyor Interview with Village Chief of Nduma, 15/06/2013.

some of the features of a social movement, as it was mediated by pre-existing social networks and “appropriated” by various pre-existing social entities, although it was a fundamentally novel endeavour. These served to mediate and percolate the fundamentally novel political message that the Mayi-Mayi movement carried, and in many cases initially triggered widespread adherence, and a “popular” form of participation. This remained highly variegated, according to the different socio-political histories of different regions, which we have alluded to in this chapter but which will be explored with more depth in the following chapters. These grassroots dimensions of the Mayi-Mayi armed insurrections, however, do not entirely capture the logics at play in the mobilization. As we will argue in the following chapter, the Mayi-Mayi movement also displayed a strong accumulative logic, focused on the control of resources - both material and human - that often came into contradiction with their social basis.

Photo 1: The town of Kitutu in the territory of Mwenga



Chapter Five

Capture and Control in the Mai-Mai Movement

In the previous chapter, we have seen that the Mayi-Mayi movement displayed some of the characteristics of a social movement, as it was - at least partially - mediated by pre-existing social entities, and characterized by efforts to inscribe the movement in the decentralized socio-political entities of eastern DRC, although this was far from uniform or linear. Yet, as previously mentioned, this was not the only macro-logic at play in the expansion of the movement and the recruitment of combatants. From the onset, and increasingly as the movement developed, it displayed a more accumulative and control focused behaviour with regards to both material and human resources.

In the war of attrition that played out between the RCD and the constellation of armed factions allied with the Kinshasa government, control over territory quickly became the central object of military competition, not only because it allowed to weight on the political and diplomatic fronts of the war, but also because it commanded access to substantial resources, through control and taxation of the economy and the population (Sanchez de la Sierra 2016). In a context of low-technology warfare, labour (combatants, porters, cooks) - was a crucial aspect of military success, and became the object of a fierce competition between warring factions that reinforced the polarizing effects of the war. This accumulative or extractive rationale echoed a long history of large-scale mobilization of labour in the region, explored in the historical introduction, which in the 1990s progressively took the form of a militarized political economy. As discussed in the theoretical framework, the task of discerning a single, unitary “extracting” actor is made more difficult in a context of political and military fragmentation. However, the “industrial” scale at which recruitments into armed groups occurred suggests that such a logic was at play, albeit operating in a

decentralized fashion, through the numerous armed faction that were present in the region.

In this chapter, we will explore how this political economy of labour accumulation has shaped the “social architecture” of recruitment and control of combatants, using examples from the Mayi-Mayi movement during the war against the RCD, as well as other examples brought into comparative focus. We will see in particular how novel forms of labour accumulation and control came into articulation – or superseded – longstanding modes of labour mobilization in the region. The chapter is organized into two sections. The first section traces the attempts to centralize the Mayi-Mayi movement, during which the recruitment of combatants became subject to various forms of systematization and rationalization. Taking into account the grassroots and socially entrenched dimensions of the mobilization, we will then look at how these two, somewhat conflicting logics played out often concomitantly, and how they played out in an increasingly polarized context.

5.1. Centralization and fragmentation of the Mayi-Mayi movement

The Mayi-Mayi resistance movement that had emerged in July of 1997 against the AFDL, and intensified when the RCD seized the eastern Provinces of DRC, was submitted to opposing processes of centralization and fragmentation, with great variation according to the different geographical areas in which it operated. In South Kivu, the military structure of the movement coalesced around two main poles: The Mayi-Mayi of General Padiri based in Kalehe and Shabunda on one side, and the Mayi-Mayi of General Dunia based in Uvira and Fizi on the other.⁸⁷

In Kalehe, particularly in the area of Bunyakiri, the home of the Tembo ethno-territorial constituency, the Mayi-Mayi movement was structured around the militias that had emerged during the “ethnic” wars of 1993-1995, known as the *Batiri* or the *Katuku*, who had strong ties with Tembo customary authorities. When the AFDL

⁸⁷ Lwecha commanded over the *Secteur Operationnel Est*, which comprised the territories of Uvira, Fizi, Mwenga (although Mwenga was under contested control) and parts of Northern Katanga. (Stearns et al. 2013a p.23).

rebellion broke out, these militias had initially confronted the rebellion, before an alliance was struck between Tembo authorities and the AFDL,⁸⁸ whereby parts of the Tembo armed factions joined the AFDL in toppling the Mobutu regime. A segment of these militias, however, refused to join the AFDL, and kept their military positions in rural Kalehe, under the leadership of Padiri Bulenda. While these militias had emerged in an ad-hoc fashion, years of fighting against the Congolese Hutu militias of the Kalehe Highlands and then against the AFDL had structured their ranks and hardened their combatants. Several of these factions had started engaging in various forms of economies plunder and protection, particularly in the Kalehe Highlands as we will see in Chapter 7.

When the anti AFDL Mayi-Mayi insurgency broke out in 1997, and the RCD rebellion followed, these militias came to form the backbone of the armed resistance in South Kivu. Many former officers and soldiers of the Mobutist army had joined their ranks, particularly after the severe repression of former FAZ officers by the RCD,⁸⁹ and brought with them their knowledge of how to organize, train and structure a professional army. Furthermore, the Mayi-Mayi movement of Kalehe was in close contact with the Bukavu based resistance, and “received” a large number of the youth who had been clandestinely mobilized in Bukavu.⁹⁰ As these recruits often had university level education, many were given important administrative positions in the movement. The centralization and structuration of the Mayi-Mayi of Kalehe was significantly enhanced after the Kinshasa government started supporting the movement logistically and militarily, sending instructors to coordinate the different factions. Padiri Bulenda, a Tembo who had started off as a *Katuku*, imposed himself as the leader of the Mayi-Mayi in Kalehe after facing severe competition. In 1999, he was proclaimed *General de Brigade* by Laurent-Desire Kabila, in charge of commanding all Mayi-Mayi forces in eastern DRC. Under his command, the Mayi-Mayi adopted a structure mirroring that of the defunct Zairian army in the East, organized into divisions, brigades, battalions, companies, platoons and sections (Hoffmann 2007 p.58).

⁸⁸ The Bitale agreement was sealed on December 4, 1996 (Hoffmann 2014 p.218).

⁸⁹ On August 2nd, 1998, the high-ranking officers of the former *Forces Armées Zairoises* in South Kivu were summoned to the airport of Kavumu for a meeting, and were assassinated by the RCD, although some managed to escape.

⁹⁰ Interview with Jacques Nyakasala, Bagira, 12/06/2013.

The centralization of military command was accompanied by an effort to centralize resource mobilization, which echoed the long history of resource extraction in the region and required the establishment of an elaborate system of governance of civilian populations, which effectively became an effort to build a fully functioning state. Padiri himself conceived the role of the movement as that of restoring the authority of the state (Hoffmann 2007 p.97). At the centre of the structure was the *Etat Major Politico-Militaire* (Politico-Military headquarters). A rudimentary *administration des Forets* (Forest Administration) was set up at the military headquarters of the armed group in the Village of Mangaa, with a civilian administrator at its head, although Padiri had a tendency to rule in an autocratic and personalized manner (Morvan 2005 p.56).

The governance of civilian populations combined direct modes of administration, and more decentralized forms of administration through local chiefs. Deploying soldiers in the various *axes* (roads) that it controlled, the group set up an elaborate system of taxation to finance its war effort, with some sectors of the economy coming under direct control by the movement, while others were left to more decentralized forms of taxation through intermediaries. For example, the regulation and taxation of the mining sector was highly centralized, with Padiri deploying soldiers to each mine under his control to collect taxes in kind or in cash, which were directly channelled back to his headquarters.⁹¹ On the other hand, the collection of compulsory Household Taxes - known as *effort de guerre* or *ration* (War Effort) - was usually delegated to local chiefs, under the threat of violence. The collection of resources, both taxes and the recruitment of soldiers, was further reinforced by the development of a state-like administrative apparatus, with the Bureau of Coordination of Internal Affairs that seconded the Politico-Military Headquarters and took care of relations with civilian and customary authorities, and local *Comites de Soutien* (Support Committees) being established in most villages to supervise the collection of resources.⁹² In addition to creating a state like apparatus, Padiri's Mayi-Mayi movement closely reproduced "statist" discourses and modes of rule (Hoffmann & Vlassenroot 2014). The

⁹¹ For a detailed analysis of the modes of taxation of the mining sector see Sanchez de la Sierra (2015).

⁹² From April 2001, these became the *Comites de Securite Civile* (Civilian Security Committees). Morvan (2005 p.56), Hoffmann (2007 p.98).

mobilization of combatants for the movement must therefore be understood in light of this institutionalized effort to mobilize resources.

Despite Padiri's group thorough efforts to centralize command over the Mayi-Mayi movement, and the discursive efforts of Padiri to portray the movement as unified, effective control over the constellation of Mayi-Mayi armed factions in South and North Kivu was never achieved, owing to the huge logistical and organizational constraints associated with controlling armed groups spread over such a vast and impenetrable area, and to the game of incessant rivalry, coalitions and internal revolts that characterized the movement. In the territories of Mwenga, Shabunda and Kalehe, armed factions nominally under the command of General Padiri enjoyed a high level of autonomy, regularly breaking off from the central chain of command. This was the case, for example, of the group that came to be known as the *Mayi-Mayi Kalehe* under the command of Muhindo Changoco, who had been deployed to the Southern Highlands of Kalehe and soon rebelled against Padiri's authority, to which we will come back to in Chapter 6.⁹³ While they didn't enjoy the same military capacity and troop numbers, these smaller groups engaged in various forms of taxation and rule over civilian populations, often with the recourse to civilian intermediaries, with varying levels of success and legitimacy.

5.1.2. Building the Mayi-Mayi Army

As we have seen, the centralization of the Mayi-Mayi movement was part of the attempt to create a structured resistance to the RCD in eastern DRC. While guerrilla tactics of hit-and-run prevailed on the ground, the objective, which was never fully achieved, was to create a full-fledged army that could oppose a united and cohesive front to the RCD. The imperative of obtaining a large military force and bringing it under centralized command drove a more accumulative approach to the recruitment of combatants, which often conflicted with the "grassroots" and popular logic of mobilization that had been driving the mobilization of ad-hoc, decentralized groups explored in the previous chapter. Testimonies from the territory of Kalehe point out

⁹³ Major Muhindu Changoco was Padiri Bulenda's *commandant des opérations*. Changoco subsequently broke off from Padiri's group with 300 soldiers, and set up his base in Katasomwa, in the Grouping of Mubugu, in the Southern Highlands of Kalehe.

that, at the beginning of the mobilization against the AFDL, it seemed to have the popular character of the type identified in the previous section. However, the mobilization soon took a different character, of which we will identify some of the features here.

In interviews, Mayi-Mayi commanders systematically emphasized the need to create a single, unified chain of command, including commanders who had broken away from Padiri's group. When asked what happened with the small, ad-hoc self-defence groups that had proliferated in the early days of the resistance, they responded that they were either incorporated into the movement, or dismantled. Colonel Mbangu, a high-ranking officer in Padiri's group who would subsequently form several other armed groups, formulated this imperative in an interview, reflecting on the period of "conquest" of the Mayi-Mayi Padiri:

*"If we entered a village and found a group there, we immediately captured that group and we put it in our own troops; those within the group who want to fight, we take them with us, and those who don't they just return to civilian life. There is no question of leaving the village groups there (...) they represent a danger for us because we can never know if they were real Mayi-Mayi, or if they were enemies"*⁹⁴

Similarly, Jacques Nyakasali, who was attached to the administration (Bureau 2) of Padiri's group, and subsequently became executive secretary of the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe of Major Muhindo Changoco, argued that:

*"There was only one thing that we could say to these smaller groups: If you are real Mayi-Mayi, then join us; if you are not real Mayi-Mayi, and don't join us, then you are rebels, and we must fight and capture you (...) we could not leave them there"*⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Interview with Colonel Mbangu, Bagira, 19/06/2013.

⁹⁵ Interview with Jacques Nyakasali, Bagira, 12/06/2013.

The apparent simplicity of the dichotomist rhetoric of these excerpts, typical of wartime narratives, underscores the logic of capture and control of smaller groups that stemmed from a strategic imperative, that of dismantling autonomous groups that had the potential of joining the enemy's side, but also an accumulative logic towards labour. Small, village level auto-defence groups were often explicitly targeted for "capture", as were other armed groups, because they represented pre-constituted "labour pools" and allowed to bypass the organization of burdensome recruitment campaigns. The absorption of pre-constituted groups was systematic with Padiri's group, but many of the smaller splinter groups also displayed the same type of accumulative approach to recruitment. Major Muhindo Changoco, who commanded the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe, recalled "capturing" several smaller groups, in particular Congolese Hutu militias in the Kalehe Highlands.⁹⁶

The absorption and "capture" of small, ad-hoc groups often involved breaking the communal logic that tied these groups to their social environments. This was often a conflictual process. Despite the tendency of Mayi-Mayi officers and leaders to deny or minimize episodes of internal dissent or popular resistance to the movement, several commanders admitted that their centralisation efforts were regularly resisted by the smaller, "village" type organisations. Jacques Nyakasali recalls:

*"It happened quite often that these groups of villagers refused to join our movement (...) There were many reasons, specific to each group, but the main one that we found was that they didn't want to leave their villages. If they refused, we would immediately engage in combat, and capture them. We were afraid that if they stayed in their villages they would harass villagers, and tarnish the reputation of the movement, so we had to stop them from doing that. Once we had captured them, it was easier, because they went and convinced the others to join our movement"*⁹⁷

The severing of communal ties was enhanced by a set of measures designed to induce compliance among the novel recruits and establish various forms of social and psychological control over them. These measures included transferring the recruits

⁹⁶ Interview with Major Muhindo Changoco, Bagira, June 2013.

⁹⁷ Interview with Jacques Nyakasali, Bagira, June 2013.

away from their home areas, but also military trainings and initiation ceremonies, in particular the initiation to the Mayi-Mayi *dawa*, which served the purpose of psychologically embedding the Mayi-Mayi hierarchy into the recruits and, according to Colonel Mbangu, “*giving the real Mayi-Mayi ideology to these uneducated villagers*”. These rituals were often violent. For example, several former recruits of Major Muhindo’s group recall having been buried in the ground for up to three weeks,⁹⁸ a ritual that Muhindo himself presented as “*a way to recognize the people who have the real heart of the Mayi-Mayi*. This coerced severing of social ties and induction of compliance to the Mayi-Mayi hierarchy contrasted with the “spirit” in which many of these recruits had initially been mobilized. Combatants that followed this sequence of mobilization - from a communal or popular mobilization into a local group, then an absorption into a larger group - recall the sharp contrast:

*“The youth of our village had formed a group, but we didn’t really fight against the enemy. But then Changoco’s group arrived and told us to join the real Mayi-Mayi movement. Some of us didn’t want to go because it meant leaving to a faraway place. They captured a few of us forcefully, and told us that if we didn’t join we would be considered as rebels and taken prisoners. Immediately we left the village; there was a lot of suffering. I was beaten several times. I did a long time without returning to my village “*⁹⁹

The use of force was by no means limited to the absorption and capture of pre-constituted groups. Numerous testimonies collected for this project, as well as reports, articles and studies attest to the widespread and repeated use of violence by the Mayi-Mayi movement to recruit civilians, which was sharply enhanced after the RCD had extended its military control and counter-insurgency measures to Mayi-Mayi strongholds, in particular the area of Bunyakiri. A resident of Bunyakiri recalls that, when the RCD advanced into the region of Bunyakiri in May 1999, the Mayi-Mayi militias who had been based all around the town were forced deeper into the forest,

⁹⁸ Interviews with ex-Mayi-Mayi combatants, region of Lemera-Kasheke- Nyabibwe.

⁹⁹ Interview with former Mayi-Mayi Changoco combatant, Bukavu, 14/08/2012.

from where they started conducting raids and violent recruitments, leading to a shift in public perceptions of the movement.¹⁰⁰ A former resident of Bunyakiri recalls:

*“Padiri’s group would take people against their will, by force. Before, many had joined, in 1996, to stop the AFDL; and the population and authorities had called to the Mayi-Mayi to help them; but then when they started controlling the area, it was terrible. They took things by force, and asked for food. They took youth by force; the only way out was to go away as far as possible, to Bukavu or Goma; many, including myself, fled at that moment, and have been waiting for the area to calm down. If a family had money, the first thing they did would be to send off their children, so that they don’t get captured”*¹⁰¹

5.2.2. Recruitment as Taxation

In the areas under Mayi-Mayi military control, the recruitment of combatants for the Mayi-Mayi movement was also mediated by local chiefs, which gave rise to a political economy of recruitment that echoed the long history of mediated conscriptions of the region. Padiri himself gave public directives to all authorities and families of the areas under his control that they should give their sons to the movement (Hoffmann 2007). Smaller groups, although not commanding the type of resources of Padiri’s group, often reproduced this process and required that villages under their control provide recruits, negotiating the provision of recruits at the village level rather than at the individual level, as a form of taxation. In practice, the process of mobilization was much more messy and conflictual, and often backed by the recourse to violence and force, applied not only to individuals but also to villages and groups. As has been the case historically, the mobilization of labour was one of the main functions of local chiefs, who could face heavy sanctions if they didn’t meet the quotas imposed by armed groups. A resident of Bunyakiri recalls:

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Simeon Lukeno Bikanaba, Bukavu, 12/08/2012.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

“The Mayi-Mayi had requested that the village authorities help them recruit soldiers. What choice did they have? But it didn’t really work. The youth were fleeing the neighbourhood. First, they had asked for the volunteers, who had been gathered up by the chief; but then the volunteers fled; when the chief had drawn up a list of those who had to be recruited, these had already fled. Then the others were fleeing; so they started capturing people by force in the village, with the help of the chief who didn’t want to be sanctioned”¹⁰²

Another resident of Bunyakiri recalls that:

“If a village contributed soldiers to a group, the group wouldn’t attack and pillage that village. On the contrary, villages that didn’t give soldiers, or other things, were targeted. In many villages, the chiefs would encourage some people to participate, so that the group didn’t attack the village. Each village had its programme of contribution: Either money, either combatants, sometimes both. It was the chief who took care of the program. When I was recruited, the chief told us that the commander had told him” If you don’t give children, then you are going to face the consequences“; what could we do? The chief could denounce us to the group if we didn’t accept”¹⁰³

In the territory of Shabunda, where Padiri set up his base after being dislodged from Kalehe by the RCD, similar processes were reported. A former bodyguard of general Padiri recalls:

“In the area of Shabunda-Katchungu, we would organize recruitments. There had been negotiations between the chiefs and the Mayi-Mayi commanders. At 5am, we would stop by every household in a village, and recruit half of the young men. If there is only one youth, we check if his parents are still young; if they are, we take him by force. If not, if he is

¹⁰² Interview with Bunyakiri resident, Bukavu, 13/08/2012.

¹⁰³ Interview with former Mayi-Mayi combatant, recruited in Bunyakiri, Bukavu, 14/08/ 2012.

almost a head of family, we don't take him. The chiefs had made a big reunion, after the advance of the RCD. They are the ones who gave this idea to the Mayi-Mayi. After reunions with the different village chiefs, each had gone to raise awareness in his village, and each household had to give the first-born son to the movement. I would say that there was about 60 % of voluntary, 40% of forced”¹⁰⁴

These excerpts point to the transactional nature of the recruitments, played out at several levels of negotiation – between the Mayi-Mayi and village authorities, between the village authorities and the inhabitants, between the families and the recruits. A political economy of recruitment therefore surfaced, with several layers, inter-village, intra-village, and intra-household. The excerpt of Padiri's former bodyguard reveals that there were demographic considerations in the recruitment of combatants, as they spared households with insufficient men to avoid destroying the demographic capacity of the population.

As a transaction, in many cases a form of taxation, recruitment reflected power relations in villages and households. As has often been the case in large-scale conscriptions, families with more financial means or social capital could dodge recruitment either by sending their children off to the city, paying a fine to the group, or asking chiefs not to draft their family members. This was not limited to male recruits for military purposes: many testimonies pointed to the fact that the same type of bargaining happened for young girls, who would be taken as “wives” by the armed factions. Even in cases where recruitments were voluntary, symbolic payments were often made to a recruits family or entourage to acknowledge the transaction.

Once a person was integrated into a group, his entourage or family could still claim her or him back by negotiating with the group and paying a “liberation fee”, although these tended to be particularly high given that groups had a significant bargaining advantage in such configurations. A university graduate who experienced the emergence of the Mayi-Mayi movement in Bunyakiri recalls:

¹⁰⁴ Interview with former bodyguard of general Padiri, Bukavu, 13/08/2012. This was confirmed by separate interviews carried out by surveyors in the area of Katchungu.

“When a child was captured by the Mayi-Mayi, it was possible to get him back by paying a large amount of money. For poor families, this was impossible. But for families who had a little more means, they would ask the armed groups for the liberation of their children, and they had to pay, sometimes an entire cow (...) Sometimes, families would get together to help out a family who didn’t have enough money to pay for their children. And it also often happened that families would amass the sum, and then the commanders would just take it, and not give the child back. They only gave the child back if he was weak”¹⁰⁵

5.2. Recruitment and Control in a Polarized social Context

We have seen that, in areas under control by the Mayi-Mayi armed factions, the mobilization of combatants was often institutionalized and deputized to local chiefs under the threat of force, constituting a form of taxation that gave rise to multiple levels of negotiation within pre-existing social entities. This was also the case in the areas under control by the RCD, in particular with the creation of the Local Defence, a paramilitary force that mobilized youth at a decentralized level through the intermediation of established state and customary authorities with the objective of both providing additional manpower but also preventing youth from joining the Mayi-Mayi.¹⁰⁶ Control of the population, and in particular the youth, was thus a central feature of the conflict that was playing out.

In most areas, however, control over the populations by opposing forces was partial and contested, and the conflict permeated deep into societies, initiating a sharp social fracture and polarization, a distinctive feature of civil wars (Kalyvas 2006, Wood 2008). The RCD developed an apparatus of control over the population, comprising military presence and the co-option of the state apparatus of security, the co-option of established authorities through the repression of critical intellectuals and leaders and their replacement by “complacent” state and customary leaders, the development of

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Simeon Lukeno Bikanaba, Bukavu, 12/08/2012.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with former Local Defense Commanders and recruits. See chapter on the Kalehe Midlands.

civilian defence initiative (in particular the Local Defence) and the extension of an intelligence service that “infiltrated” deep into Congolese society. As a result, the Mayi-Mayi were often forced out of urban centres and strategic areas into the remote forest areas of rural South Kivu, from which they conducted a guerrilla war of attrition against the RCD. The combination of the physical displacement of the Mayi-Mayi from the societies in which they had emerged, the internal structuration of the movement that we have previously exposed, as well as the counter-insurgency carried out by the RCD sharply enhanced the division between the Mayi-Mayi and the societies from which they had emerged.

Yet even in such contexts, the Mayi-Mayi continued to exert a multi-faceted influence over the rural societies of South Kivu, of which the recruitment and control over combatants was a central component. This stemmed from a subtle combination of their “appropriation” of social networks embedded in the societies of rural Kivu, and the role they came to play at the margins - and sometimes at the centre - of the war-torn Kivutian societies, as both an exit option for many youth of the region, and a counter authority to RCD rule. In this highly polarized social context, the social insertion of combatants into the rural societies was at the crux of two, somewhat opposing forces. On one side, the necessity to stimulate support among the population, on which such rebel movements are dependant for resources, by continuing to emphasize the movement’s inscription within a the *moral economy* of the rural South Kivu societies, as seen in the previous chapter. On the other side, the necessity to establish a social and spatial separation between the combatants and the population, as a result of the imperative of maintaining a corporate form of control over combatants, and preserving the movement from the RCD’s counter insurgency and infiltration tactics. Interestingly, the *dawa*, which constituted a practical repertoire of insurgency that the Mayi-Mayi had deployed, came to reflect this ambiguous social positioning of the Mayi-Mayi fighters, and the more corporate approach to the control of combatants. Indeed, the *conditions* associated to the *dawa* progressively reflected less the norms of good relations with the population than the necessity to maintain control over combatants and maintain a social and spatial separation with the population.¹⁰⁷ In Padiri’s Mai-Mai group, affairs relating to the *dawa* were even institutionalized into

¹⁰⁷ This is based on a study of the conditions presented by Major Muhindo Changoco.

the administration, with the creation of a *Bureau 6*, in charge of spiritual matters, an attempt to centralized the control over what effectively constituted a separate chain of command, presiding over up to 100 *doctors* in charge of preserving the secret of the *dawa* and administering it to different groups (Hoffmann 2007 p.98). We will now identify some of the social processes of recruitment of combatants in such highly polarized contexts, with a particular attention to how the transformed political economy affected the “social architecture” of recruitment, but also to the individual dimensions of the mobilization of combatants, in line with our theoretical framework.

5.2.1. Recruitment through networks of family and peer

In the areas that had come under military and administrative control of the RCD, it became much more difficult for the Mayi-Mayi to approach potential recruits given the relatively “confined” social settings of rural towns and villages and the extension of the RCD’s networks of spies and informants. As the recruitments became clandestine, pre-existing social networks became essential channels of recruitment of combatants, and were strategically used by armed groups to obtain new recruits. Jacques Nyakasali, who was in charge of recruitment for the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe, pointed to the “spontaneous” role of these networks in the initial days of the mobilization, but also their continued role in the context of the RCD repression:

In Bunyakiri, when I was still with Padiri, a lot of natives joined our movement in the beginning; If a youth came to us, we would ask him if he knew other people who would be interested to join, some of his brothers, but it was almost automatic, they would come in groups (...). Some of them would be integrated directly as combatants, others would be sent back into the population to give us information on troop movements and the positions of the RCD (...) when the RCD controlled the “milieu”, then it was more difficult. There were about 80% of the chiefs who were with the RCD, and the RCD always had their ANR (intelligence services) in the area to verify movements. But we were still recruiting. We would send the youth we recruited into the area as civilians so that they would sensitize their siblings and friends; this was done in a clandestine way, but as

*people were already familiar with the movement and held it in their heart, it worked well (...)*¹⁰⁸

Family and peer networks therefore represented privileged conduits for carrying out recruitments, but should not be conceived too mechanistically. Mobilizations that were mediated through these channels retained a highly negotiated character, which could lead to conflicts or ruptures in these networks, particularly in a context where people who were seen to be associated with such activities could be spotted by RCD informants and targeted for retaliation, regardless of their real implication. This was enhanced by the fact that, in many areas, the Mayi-Mayi were not considered as “natives” - such as the Bembe Mayi-Mayi militias in the Rega areas of the territory of Mwenga, or the Tembo militias that operated in Havu areas of Kalehe - or had lost their popularity as a result of their violence. In such contexts, family and community networks could entirely “shut off”, with those seen to be associated with the Mayi-Mayi being prevented from “penetrating” the social space of potential recruits. A native of the Grouping of Mubugu in the Territory of Kalehe, one of the homes of the Mayi-Mayi movement, recalls how he attempted to protect his sons and nephews from recruitment:

“The Mayi-Mayi were born in this area. Many people I know, cousins, friends, were part of the Mayi-Mayi. I was never a Mayi-Mayi because I do not like the matters of war. At the beginning people thought that the Mayi-Mayi were good because they said they were protecting us from this invasion, but soon we realized that they were doing crazy things, harassing people and taking everything they wanted, even imprisoning people to ask for ransoms (...) Two of my nephews were with them. For us, and their parents, it was as if they were dead, we had given up on them. They were still coming back to the area from time to time, as if they were not militaries but we knew that they were with the Mayi-Mayi. When they came back in the area we were afraid because even though they didn’t have their weapons we knew that they were dangerous (...) they were trying to chat up other youth from the area who hadn’t joined. We couldn’t do

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Jacques Nyakasali, Bagira, June 2013.

much because we were afraid of the Mayi-Mayi but we were trying to get them not to join (...) we told them that they should not listen to their brothers and cousins in the movement, that they were lying to them and what awaited them was just a life of suffering.”¹⁰⁹

These network based strategies of recruitment came into articulation with the potential recruit's individual motives and desires to participate, which, as argued in the theoretical framework, are multiple and irreducible to single or discrete categories. As seen in the theoretical framework, several authors have emphasized the role of economic deprivation and social marginalization, and the resulting attraction for a better life as major determinants for participation (Jourdan 2004, 2011; Richards 1996; Van Acker & Vlassenroot 2001a, 2001b). For youth evolving in the confined social environments of rural South Kivu, which offered little in terms of economic stability and social integration as a result of the crisis that was affecting eastern DRC, the emergence of armed factions represented a way of “opting out” from their positions of marginality, but also experiencing new forms of community and citizenship (Vlassenroot & Van Acker 2001a; Amuri Misago 2003; Jourdan 2011).

In interviews, Mayi-Mayi commanders repeatedly pointed to recruits arriving voluntarily to the group as a result of either their ‘frustration’, or specific events that cast them as outcasts from their hometowns and villages. The following example, exposed by Jacques Nyakasali, points to the combination of such a socially isolating and financially burdensome event with the types of negotiations that the Mayi-Mayi operated at the margins of the rural societies:

“There was a village in Mubugu not far from one of our bases. One day, a boy arrived and said that he wanted to join because he had impregnated a woman. We did a little inquiry and we realized that it was true. This is a difficult position for a country boy because he was poor and unable to take the woman in marriage. We sent a delegation to both families to see what could we done, and we found an arrangement whereby his family

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Mubugu resident, Numbi, October 2012.

gave something to the family of the impregnated woman, and he stayed with us”¹¹⁰

These testimonies point to articulation of the experiences of deprivation or marginalization, and the strategies of recruitment by armed groups. In many cases, marginalization and grievance were experienced and expressed collectively, as well as the appeal for the “exit” option that the Mayi-Mayi represented. These were often reinforced by the charisma of armed group leaders who were popular among certain segments of the youth, reinforced through discussions and collective admiration of leaders’ military feats. An individual’s decision to join is therefore rarely taken *ex nihilo*, but rather nested in collective and socially mediated processes of psycho-social communication, *persuasion*, and pressure. Behind or rather “within” the activation of social networks, an ensemble of processes of social influence and persuasion occurred. The testimony of a young boy in Lemera, who was mobilized after being clandestinely convinced by his brother, bears some insight onto the inter-connectedness of the different factors and mechanisms at play in the mobilization:

*“The Mayi-Mayi had done a campaign of “sensibilisation” (awareness raising) in the area; they said that they were going to send us to school if we joined the resistance. My family was not capable of paying my tuition fees for school, so I was interested. (...) My older brother was a Mayi-Mayi with that group (...) I would see him around here, but my family refused to see him because they didn’t want anything to do with him anymore (...) It was him who really **interested** me to join the Mayi-Mayi. He was a doctor for the movement, he was responsible for the fetiches and water. He was always telling me that I would have a good life with the Mayi-Mayi and get a salary and education (...) He was telling me about the fact that the commanders treated them well, that they ate meat every day. So I decided to go (...) I can say that I went because I trusted him even though I had heard many stories about the Mayi-Mayi. But then when we arrived to the mountain where they gathered us, we saw that they had brought weapons, and they started giving them to us so that we could learn to use them (...)*

¹¹⁰ Interview with Jacques Nyakasali, Bagira, June 2013.

*There was no possibility of leaving at that moment. I had no choice; I had left secretly, without telling my parents or my family”*¹¹¹

This testimony (quoted only partially) points to several, intertwined “pull” factors which are not discrete or mutually exclusive but, combined, seem to have led to the decision to participate. While the youth points to the grievance related to not being able to go to school and the resulting attraction for the Mayi-Mayi, the decisive factor seems to have been the influence of his brother, whose repeated visits and efforts to construe participation in the group as something desirable persuaded the young man. The coercive element - in this case, his “capture” by the armed group - only occurred after he was convinced by his brother to participate, and isolated from his social environment. An interview with the older brother confirmed this version of the sequence of events, although he said that it was his commander who had sent him to take his younger brother. The testimony therefore points to both the use of pre-existing social networks, but also to the social *influence* that this allowed to exert on the younger brother, which articulated with the young man’s feeling of deprivation. While this concerns only one case, groups that had a large number of combatants could significantly exploit the networks they had access to in order to exert of form of influence, an aspect that is explored in the quantitative chapter.

When interrogated about their recruitment strategies, the leaders of the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe- Major Muhindo Changoco, Colonel Cisayura as well as colonel Mbangu- pointed to this use of pre-existing social networks of family and peer to deploy discursive and persuasive strategies of recruitment in the areas under control by the RCD. While it is important to remain wary of the testimonies of leaders of armed groups, which often carry a strong “dominant” bias, Major Muhindo Changoco, the commander of the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe said that their main strategy was the use of “testimonies”, which he defined in the following way:

*“We didn’t do any “sensibilisations” of the population to recruit soldiers, but instead we used **testimonies** (...) the people who were witnesses to our exploits, and the strength of our dawa, would join the*

¹¹¹ Interview with Mayi-Mayi ex-combatant, Lemera, November 2012.

movement on their own (...) When we were not in combat, the recruits would go back to their villages to testify of the strength of our dawa, and our military feats against the RCD (...) and do some demonstrations of the strength of our antiballes (anti-bullet devices) (...) That was enough to convince many youth to join us”¹¹²

The insistence on the strength of the *dawa* as the persuasive factor that transpires in this interview is not surprising given that Changoco was one of the most renowned witchdoctors of the Mayi-Mayi movement. Nevertheless, it attests to the deployment of discursive efforts, in conjunction with the use of social networks, to obtain recruits.

5.2.2. Control over recruits

We have seen that, in areas where the Mayi-Mayi did not have a strong military hold, and were thus unable to set up various modes of administration over rural populations to levy taxes and recruit combatants in a systematic and institutionalized fashion, the recruitment of soldiers was often carried out through social networks, which mediated processes of persuasion and coercion, and articulated with individual and collective factors. Such networks also served to exert control over combatants, who in a highly polarized context were susceptible to be captured by the RCD’s own networks of spies, or attempt to escape the harsh living conditions in the Mayi-Mayi. This form of control over recruits, which superseded the “direct” control that was exerted in the spatially and socially confined context of armed camps and factions, where direct coercion was prevalent, was part of the larger modes of influence that the Mayi-Mayi exerted over the societies through their networks of support and the multi-faceted interactions they engaged in with populations. Almost all Mayi-Mayi ex-combatants referred to the situation of confinement to which they were subjugated, both within the group but also in the areas in which the group operated. A former Mayi-Mayi from Major Muhindo Changoco’s group recalls:

“As soon as we had entered this movement, we could not leave it. We could try to escape, but if we did they would find us and beat us severely

¹¹² Interview with Major Muhindo Changoco, June 2013.

for days; they can find you easily in the neighbourhood; Even if you go to Kabamba, or Minova, even in Bukavu they will find you. And they will hurt your family. The commanders were afraid that those who left would reveal the secret of the Mayi-Mayi, so they had all the strategies to catch you and bring you back. You just have to be spotted in the milieu and their ANR (informants) will know that you are back here”¹¹³

Control over the armed group members was tied to the group’s knowledge of the social entourage and family of the recruit, on which pressure could be exerted. It was also enabled by the elaborate networks of informants that the Mayi-Mayi groups would set up. These could consist of the Mayi-Mayi kinship or peer networks, but often included a larger set of people who had multiple types of connections with the Mayi-Mayi. In many cases, these were tied to trade networks with which the groups carried out business. For example, a trader moving from Mayi-Mayi held territory, engaging in various forms of trade with the Mayi-Mayi, could also serve as an informant for the group. In places such as mining towns, that were the object of repeated fighting between the Mayi-Mayi and the RCD for military control, the social climate was particularly tense as association with one group could be denounced to the other and entail retaliation. Usually portrayed as the epitome of arbitrary violence, the targeting of civilians was often the manifestation of the deep rootedness of such forms of control that armed factions come to exert on societies in periods of civil war. A former Mayi-Mayi recruited in Kalonge describes the networks of informants that existed during the period when the RCD controlled the centre:

“People are paid to look over the activities of the population; if you leave the group, then the ANR (intelligence) of the group will spot you; they are the younger brothers of a commander, or various family of the group. They will spot you and denounce you to the group. (...) But even someone whom you know can spot you and then decide to make a little money and he will denounce you to the group. So you have to leave far or they will capture you again (...) in my group, there were 3 escapees who had left one night. A few days later, they were spotted in a neighbouring town. I

¹¹³ Interview with former Mayi-Mayi in Muhindo’s group. Lwege, August 2012.

was sent with two others to capture them. When we brought them back to the camp, two of them were beaten to death and the other was severely injured”¹¹⁴

The father from Mubugu whose testimony we have already partially covered before also alluded to this point:

“If a youth runs away from the group, then he is in severe danger. Even those who will try to help him out will be in severe danger, unless people gather enough money to pay the commander, but it’s not even sure that he will accept. It did happen a few times that some people that I know gave shelter to youth that had fled the group, and had organized to quickly send them away. If they stayed in the “milieu”, they would eventually be captured by the group, and why not even killed”¹¹⁵

This control over the population was not total, and played out in a context where the RCD was also seeking to establish its control over the population, through the co-optation of chiefs and the planting of informants throughout the society. In the areas that it controlled militarily, the RCD often resorted to local chiefs to obtain information on combatants, further intensifying the polarization between those civilians associated with the Mayi-Mayi and the rest of the population. A former RCD combatant in the area of Kalonge recalls:

“We knew that the population was supporting the Mayi-Mayi; the population itself was like a combatant. In order to catch and kill them, we had to go through the chiefs; we would corrupt a chief and ask him to give us the names of those who were the Mayi-Mayi in the village. That’s how we captured them”¹¹⁶

The infiltration of the population through spies and informants was a risky task, with numerous people testifying to the violent repression that came upon those perceived

¹¹⁴ Interview with ex-Mayi-Mayi from the Padiri group, Bukavu, August 2012.

¹¹⁵ Interview with resident of Mubugu, Numbi, October 2012.

¹¹⁶ Interview with former RCD combatant from Kalonge, Bukavu, August 2012.

to be associated with the Mayi-Mayi. In certain areas, as in the village of Nduma in Shabunda, the RCD had ordered that all those caught with a tattoo (the proof that someone had undergone a *dawa* initiation ceremony) should be considered as an enemy.¹¹⁷ The *dawa* therefore also served the function of a marker, which perhaps was done intentionally, in order to create the type of social separation with the population that was necessary in a context of acute polarization. Certain *conditions* of the *dawa* also seem to have reflected this imperative of social separation from the population that served a strategic function. A former Mayi-Mayi interviewed in Lwege recalls:

*“Initially, I would come back regularly to the village; it was always clandestine and there were a lot of conditions; I could not stay in my home, I couldn’t talk to anyone, not even my wife, and I had to carry out some rituals before being able to get close to my house, where I just had to drop something off for my family without being seen or engaging with anyone. But one day I went back with 5 others of the same village, but the RCD had some lists; they knew that we were Mayi-Mayi. One of us was killed, I managed to escape. After that, I never came back to the village while I was a soldier.”*¹¹⁸

5.3. Conclusion

These two first chapters have allowed us to delineate the contours of two central ‘macro-logics’ of armed mobilization and participation during the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement against the RCD in South Kivu. In Chapter 4, we have seen that the Mayi-Mayi movement displayed some of the characteristics of a social movement. Through the articulation of a simple yet novel mobilizing message in longstanding cultural frames, and the development of a ‘practical’ repertoire of insurgent collective action, the movement was able craft the ‘modularity’ necessary to mobilize across the fragmented ethno-political landscape of eastern DRC, although its mobilizing capacity varied significantly in different areas. The strength of the mobilization owed to its

¹¹⁷ Surveyor interview with chief of Nduma, 15/06/2013.

¹¹⁸ Interview with ex-Mayi Mayi, Lwege, August 2012.

‘appropriation’ and mediation by pre-existing social networks. In the town of Bukavu, these included networks embedded in the town’s neighbourhoods and universities, that provided important mobilizing platforms, as has been the case with many insurgencies on the continent (Reno 2012). In rural areas, the call to arms articulated in variegated ways with the imperative of organizing security and protection to the rural socio-polities in a context of crisis and the sharp rise in insecurity. Self-defence groups formed across the rural areas, often emanating from the fragmented and decentralized socio-polities that characterize the region, and using social networks embedded in rural villages to mobilize resources and labour. In some cases, these groups ‘appropriated’ the insurgent Mayi-Mayi identity, but this varied strongly according to different areas.

In Chapter 5, we have shown that, concomitantly to the ‘grassroots’ dynamic of mobilization, a more accumulative and extractive logic of labour started implanting itself, and was progressively reinforced by the efforts to centralize and structure the insurgent movement. This translated into much more coercive and violent modes of recruitment, either through forced abductions of soldiers or through the ‘capture’ of locally formed groups. It also translated into significantly more coercive modes of control over recruits, which often implied a ‘breaking’ of the communal logic that had driven the many of the localized mobilizations. Thus, while many of the initial mobilizations had been driven by a ‘protective’ impetus and initially remained inscribed within rural ‘moral economies’, this more accumulative logic of labour mobilization significantly changed the ‘social architecture’ of mobilization. Furthermore, this logic was systematized and institutionalized in the areas that fell under military control by the Mayi-Mayi movement. The efforts of Padiri’s movement in particular to create a state-like administration in the areas that fell under its control reproduced longstanding modes of rule and resource mobilization in the region (Hoffmann 2014), in particular the use of chiefs as ‘handles’ to mobilize combatants, and gave rise to complex politics of recruitment within villages. The fragmentation of the movement that resulted from constant infighting and competition gave rise to variegated patterns of insertion of the smaller Mayi-Mayi groups into the areas where they operated, but these groups also displayed accumulative approaches to the recruitment of combatants. In the context of enhanced social polarization resulting from the civil war and counter-insurgency tactics by the RCD, social networks

remained important vectors of recruitment of combatants, which were strategically instrumentalised by commanders.

While this chapter has allowed to identify two ‘macro-logics’ of armed mobilization, and delineate the ways they operated across the three levels of analysis that constitute our theoretical framework, a closer focus is necessary to identify the ways in which they both play out in specific social and institutional configurations. Accordingly, the following chapters adopt a narrower geographical focus, and closely trace processes of armed mobilization in the Midlands and the Highlands of the territory of Kalehe.

Chapter Six

Cisayura's Men: Armed Mobilisation in the Kalehe Midlands

“The man on whom you have inquired, the Mayi-Mayi man, is still abandoned to his sad fate“

SMS by Lieutenant Colonel Cisayura

In this chapter, we analyse the armed mobilizations that occurred during the rule of the RCD in the Midlands of the territory of Kalehe, with a particular focus on the towns of Kasheke and Lemera in the Grouping of Mbinga Sud. The objective of the chapter is to provide a closer historical contextualization of the processes identified in Chapters 4 and 5, in particular the articulation between large-scale dynamics of resource mobilization and the ‘protective’ logic of mobilization. We analyse the armed mobilizations that occurred in this area at the three levels of analysis exposed in the theoretical framework: First as a shift in the political economy of labour mobilization and control induced by the war, which translated into a changing ‘social architecture’ of recruitment and control over combatants, and finally as an individual process of adaptation to these evolving conditions.

We start by analysing the Local Defence mobilization in the Grouping of Mbinga Sud, during which the RCD co-opted state channels of resource mobilization to conscribe the youth, and the gradual loss of control of both the RCD and the customary authorities over large fringes of the recruited youth that followed the conscription into the Local Defence. We then take a closer look at the second round of armed mobilization by the former Local Defence leader Cisayura, who re-mobilized the ex-Local Defence to form an insurgent Mayi-Mayi armed group. This second mobilization will be understood as part of the constitution of a ‘counter-authority’ in the region, whereby the Mayi-Mayi used their channels of penetration into the societies

of the Midlands of Mbinga Sud to create support networks, mobilize resources, recruit and exert control over combatants. The fieldwork for this chapter was carried out from August to November of 2012, in Coastal Kalehe and the Midlands of Kalehe, with a particular focus on the region that surround the small towns of Kasheke and Lemera.

6.1. Background to the Armed Conflict in Kalehe

The lakeshore area of Kalehe and the eastern slopes of the Mitumba mountain range of the Mbinga Sud Grouping, an area known as the *Moyen-Plateaux* (Midlands), experienced a markedly different institutional trajectory than the areas west of the Mitumba mountain range, owing to a much deeper integration into the colonial state and colonial agricultural capitalism. The Bahavu “ethnic” group who populated the area had obtained a relatively privileged position in the colonially crafted ethno-territorial order, as the Buhavu chiefdom, created in 1928, was given authority over all land and people of what now constitutes the territory of Kalehe, including the Batembo and Barongeronge chiefdoms and their people (Hoffmann 2014 p.182). The accessibility of the lakeshore and western slopes of Kalehe territory from the colonial capital Costermansville, and the favourable climate of the region attracted colonial agricultural entrepreneurs. Under colonial rule, the area mostly fell under what Boone (2014) calls a “statist” land tenure regime, where the colonial state directly reallocated land to colonial agricultural capitalists, pushing local populations into wage labour contracts and “importing” additional labour,¹¹⁹ particularly from Rwanda, in sharp contrast with decentralized systems of customary land tenure that prevailed west of the Mitumba mountain range.

The pre-emption of land allocation prerogatives by the colonial state, the concentration of land ownership and the resulting “proletarianization” of rural populations, whose livelihoods became more dependent on wages or precarious work contracts in the plantations rather than smallholding production eroded the authority of customary chiefs, whose role was reduced to organizing the mobilization of resources - taxes and labour - for the state and the colonial economy, and maintaining order. The

¹¹⁹ For a more detailed analysis of the land related conflicts in Kalehe see Vlassenroot and Higgins (2005), Claessens (2012), and APC-LPI (2012).

concentration of land ownership was reinforced in the post-colonial era, with a small class of *grands propriétaires* (large landowners) acquiring most of the arable land from the colonial landholders¹²⁰ and constituting a small landed elite, while the majority of the population was confined to customarily allocated *parcelles* (small parcels of land) in the villages and towns of the area, and driven to work in the plantations to be able to sustain themselves.

6.1.1. War and polarization under the AFDL and the RCD

This rampant social fracture between a landed elite with close ties to the central state and customary authorities on one side, and a progressively marginalized youth on the other was exacerbated during the 1980s and 1990s, when the economic crisis was amplified by a security and humanitarian crisis caused by the arrival of millions of Rwandan refugees in the region, and provided one of the central axes of social and political polarization during the wars of the 1990s, and in particular the rule of the RCD from 1998 to 2003.

Violent conflict started in the area with the arrival of the AFDL in the Grouping of Mbinga Sud in 1996, which set up a base in the small town of Lemera at the fringes of the Kahuzi-Biega National Park, from which it launched military operations in the Southern Highlands of Kalehe where ex-Rwandan Armed Forces (FAR) and Interhamwe militias had found refuge. Considering the AFDL coalition as a foreign invasion, the Tembo militias that had formed during the Masisi war of 1993 allied with disbanding *Zairian Armed Forces* and Rwandan Hutu militias to stall the progression of the AFDL, conducting military operations on the AFDL positions in the midlands of Kalehe. This complex constellation of armed groups also started occupying land and pillaging cattle in the Highlands and Midlands of Kalehe, many of which belonged to Havu landlords, who were accused by the militias of collaboration with the AFDL.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Interview with Muganga Bicinga, Village Chief of Kasheke, November 2012.

¹²¹ Interview with Village Chief of Kasheke. The AFDL eventually joined forces with Tembo militias to topple the Mobutu regime following the Bitale Agreement of December 4, 1996 (Hoffmann 2014 p.218).

This pattern of geographic separation between the Highlands and Midlands of the Grouping of Mbinga Sud was reproduced during the RCD rebellion, as Mayi-Mayi militia under the command of Muhindu Changoco, in evolving alliances with the various Hutu militias, took control of the Highlands from where they conducted military operations on the Midlands and Lowlands of Kalehe to attack RCD positions. This further entrenched a line of military confrontation that would profoundly, if temporarily, reorganised economic activity in the region. Access to land in the Highlands was cut off for the Havu landowners and workers by the presence of the Mayi-Mayi militia, who conducted regular attacks on Havu populations, considered to be allied with the RCD.¹²²

6.2. Mobilization and counter-Mobilization under RCD rule

When the RCD rebellion seized the state apparatus in Goma and Bukavu, state and customary authorities were compelled to either accept the new rulers or enter the resistance. In the coastal areas of Kalehe, the authorities had little choice but to align to the RCD or face retaliation, which could come swiftly because of the proximity of Bukavu and the connectedness of the region in terms of roads and infrastructure. Furthermore, the main priority of the Mbinga Sud Grouping state and customary authorities was the restoration of security, as the repeated attacks and population displacements were putting their authority under significant pressure. As a result, many of the state and customary authorities of the Grouping of Mbinga Sud strategically sided with the RCD, and actively sought protection against the Mayi-Mayi and Hutu militias who mounted regular attacks on the plantations in the Highlands to steal cattle, as well as on the Havu populations of the Midlands and coastal areas, often accused by the Mayi-Mayi of supporting the RCD. The Village Chiefs of Kasheke and Lemera made an official request at the Bureau of Kalehe Territory for the RCD to detach soldiers to their circumscriptions to provide protection, facilitated the set-up of an RCD military camp, and organized food collections and contributions to support the RCD troops.¹²³ The RCD military presence was, however, insufficient to counter infiltrations and night raids by Interhamwe and Mayi-Mayi

¹²² Interview with Pasteur Nyamigogo, Lemera, November 2012.

¹²³ Interview with Village Chief of Kasheke, November 2012.

elements, and a more comprehensive effort was required, involving the mobilization of civilians to ensure security.¹²⁴

The mobilization of civilians for security provision proved to be a delicate and risky endeavour. On the one hand, the RCD army was proving incapable of restoring security to the region, making the mobilization of additional means a necessity if the authorities were to maintain their control over the population, and in particular the youth, who were being targeted by clandestine recruitments into Mayi-Mayi groups. On the other, mobilizing civilians in such a tense context could lead to unforeseeable outcomes, including further organized resistance. As the ANR agent of Nyamucubi and former leader of the Local Defence recalls:

“We had to watch the formation of groups very closely, even the ones we formed ourselves; the youth were very rebellious at the time and many were being interested by the Mayi-Mayi ideology.”¹²⁵

Indeed, rampant frustration at the economic and security situation as well as the perceived collusion of local authorities with the RCD were driving support for the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement, particularly among the youth. Shortly after the arrival of the RCD, Jean Paul Eneondo Sido, a native of Kasheke who had returned to his home area after the RCD took control of Goma, had started to muster up resistance against the RCD among the local youth, and gathered a small group of ex-*Forces Armées Zairoises* soldiers, as well as ex-AFDL *Kadogo* (soldiers) and a few other youth, to form a small Mayi-Mayi group, with whom he took off to the bush and established ties with the Tembo Mayi-Mayi groups of the Highlands and the grouping of Mubugu.¹²⁶ This group, as well as Major Muhindo’s group in the Highlands of Mbinga Sud, were conducting clandestine recruitments among the youth. The formation of civilian defence initiatives was not just a way to use local resources – in particular labour – to provide a modicum of security to the population, but was also a means to exert control over the local youth, both by the RCD and the customary authorities.

¹²⁴ Interview with ANR representative and former Local Defense leader, Kasheke, November 2012.

¹²⁵ Interview with ANR official, Nyamucubi, October 2012.

¹²⁶ Interview with Muganga Bicinga, Village Chief de Kasheke, November 2012.

Mobilization into ad-hoc civilian defence groups had begun long before the arrival of the RCD, as part of a range of initiatives to counter the insecurity that had spread in the area since the arrival of the Rwandan refugees in 1994 and particularly the AFDL in 1996,¹²⁷ with more or less coordination by local authorities. Throughout Mbinga Sud Grouping and coastal Kalehe, local authorities and youth had started organizing neighbourhood patrols and vigilante groups, which started monitoring irregular activity, and using machetes and spears to deter assailants in the case of attacks. In Kasheke, it was unclear who first initiated these patrols, as the chief of Kasheke claims that he and his adjuncts had first set up the system, while Cisayura Bienvenue, who would become the leader of the Kasheke Local Defence and subsequently a Mayi-Mayi commander, contends that he has formed the first group on his own, and that he was later approached by local authorities who wanted to support his group.¹²⁸ Cisayura, a Native of Nyamutwe, a sub-village of Kasheke, traces his initiative to form a small self-defence initiative directly to the personal experience of violence:

*“When I saw the Interhamwe make the village suffer, that’s when I decided to do something. I myself had been a victim of the Interhamwe, they burnt our houses in Nyamutwe. So I chatted up some youth in the village (...) the movement was my initiative; then the Village Chief saw that our activity was good, and they decided to start supporting us”*¹²⁹

With the advent of the RCD rebellion in 1998 and the intensification of violence in the region, renewed efforts were made to mobilize civilians into more structured auto-defence organizations, under direct supervision of the RCD and state authorities. In 1998, the Kalehe Territory Administrator, as well as prominent RCD commanders in Kalehe, Colonel Kazungu and Colonel Mulamba, sent out the order that each village should organize its security by mobilizing all able bodied men and forming self-defence groups, which would complement the security provided by the RCD

¹²⁷ Many interviewees date the sharp rise in insecurity to the arrival of the AFDL, arguing that, despite being disruptive, the arrival of the refugees in 1994 did not create insecurity in the coastal areas of Kalehe, contrarily to other regions.

¹²⁸ Interview with Colonel Cisayura Kavumu, June 2013.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

military.¹³⁰ A concerted effort to mobilize resources and labour by the apparatus of state and customary authority thus led to the emergence of civilian defence organizations called *rondes*, who carried out the same type of tasks as the ad-hoc vigilante groups, but under close supervision by state, customary and military authorities. The men were organized by village, neighbourhood or avenue, under the supervision of Village Chiefs and their adjuncts, themselves under the command of the police and RCD military.

The youth whom had formed the first ad-hoc patrols were integrated into these *rondes*, but mobilization was extended, as in most towns and villages all able men were required to take part.¹³¹ The mobilization therefore resembled longstanding modes of labour mobilization, which as we have seen had formed an integral part of the constitution of political authority in the region, and was mediated by social mechanisms of community, family and peer pressure. Indeed, while most authorities and participants claimed that participation in the *rondes* was voluntary, numerous interviews point out that refusal to participate entailed sanctions.¹³² For example, in the village of Kiniezire, in Mbinga Nord, the youth mobilized into these *rondes* would themselves seek out those who were reluctant to participate and bring them to the Village Chief, whom, after discussing the motives for not participating, would either compel them to participate or impose a fine, or in certain cases refer them to the police.¹³³ Many participants in these organizations, however, stressed that their main motive for participation was the experience of direct harm on their families or entourage resulting from attacks, and the resulting desire to protect their communities.

Although these *rondes* were organized as part of a Grouping and Territory level initiative to reinforce defence, the mobilization initially retained a highly “local” character, and a low level of institutionalisation and professionalization. Participating in the *rondes* was a part time activity, as participants usually continued to carry out their “normal” activities during the day, and joined the *rondes* in the evening and

¹³⁰ Interview with ANR official and former leader of the Local Defence, Kasheke, November 2012.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Interview with *Rondes* leaders and participants in Lemera, Kasheke, Nyamucubi, Nyabibwe, Mukwidja and Kiniezire. September-November 2012.

¹³³ Interview with Chief of Kiniezire and leaders of Kiniezire self-defence organization, Kiniezire, October 2012.

nights, when the risk of attacks was highest. Apart from those who were tasked with providing direct support to RCD troops, there were very few deployments beyond the local circumscription, the village or neighbourhood, and as a result the youth remained closely integrated to their familial and community structures, “*staying and eating in their homes*”.¹³⁴ Most interviews point to “normal” relations between the men mobilized into the *rondes*, and the rest of the population, often attributed to the communal character of their participation. In addition, small contributions were usually organized at the village and neighbourhood levels, with each household asked to contribute some money to equip the *rondes* with whistles, torches and batteries.¹³⁵ This first stage of territory wide decentralized mobilization, which lasted around 4-6 months, was therefore closely orchestrated by and integrated into established structures of authority and social organization. This, however, did not last, as the decentralized mobilization soon turned into a more centralized military conscription.

6.2.1. The Local Defence mobilization in Mbinga Sud

In parallel to the establishment of these decentralized self-defence organizations, further initiatives were taken by the RCD leadership to step up mobilization into its army and create a more professional and institutionalized paramilitary force to counter the various insurgencies that the RCD was facing. In late 1998, the RCD launched the Local Defence Initiative, a provincial strategy initiated by the RCD governor of North Kivu, Eugene Serufuli, and the governor of South Kivu, Norbert Bashengezi Kantitima, to provide a decentralized security system relying on the sub-provincial resource mobilization capacities of the state and local authorities. The initiative was actively supported and relayed by the Kalehe territory and Mbinga Sud Grouping authorities, as well as by many village chiefs and their collaborators, several of whom had been actively lobbying the RCD for a more comprehensive protection strategy.¹³⁶ Following a meeting at the office of the grouping chief, the Village Chief of Kasheke Muganga Bicinga and his adjuncts, as well as the sub-Village Chiefs, organized a

¹³⁴ Interview with chief of Kasheke, November 2012.

¹³⁵ Interview with Rondes leaders and participants in Lemera, Kasheke, Nyamucubi, Nyabibwe, Mukwidja and Kiniezire. September-November 2012.

¹³⁶ Interviews with chief of Kasheke, November 2012.

sensibilisation (awareness raising) of the population of the 8 sub-villages of Kasheke to recruit youth to staff the Local Defence initiative.

According to these authorities and several interviewed residents, recruitment into the Local Defence was done strictly on a volunteering basis. According to the chiefs and authorities who carried out the mobilization, recruits didn't correspond to a particular social profile, nor were they recruited with particular attention to their credentials. For to a Pastor in Lemera, the Local Defence youth were "*a mix of good elements, and some bad elements*".¹³⁷ Both recruiters and the local authorities insisted that the purpose of the Local Defence was population and community protection. A Local Defence Instructor in Kasheke recalled:

*"I suffered personal attacks from the Interhamwe, that's why I decided to join the Rondes, and then the Local Defence. My brother in law had been assassinated, my house and neighbourhood had been pillaged and burned, and my little sister had been raped. It was the Neighbourhood Chiefs who brought the youth to the training of the Local Defence. Our objective was to protect our families, protect our communities. I was trained as a Local Defence in Nyabibwe, and then deployed in Kasheke. We had weapons, we would carry out rondes in the entire area, organized by axes."*¹³⁸

Around 120-130 youth from the Kasheke area were recruited into the Local Defence initiative, and sent off to RCD bases in Lwiro or Kalehe, where they received three months of military training before being redeployed in the region, in Kasheke but also in various other "*axes*" of Kalehe littoral and Midlands. For many of the mobilized youth, this represented the first severing of ties with their social environment, and a first contact with the harsh and competitive environment of the RCD military. Many insisted on the discriminating treatment they received from RCD troops during and after the training. A former member of the Local Defence recalls that "*we were treated like slaves by the RCD soldiers; they would even spit at us and we could do nothing*".¹³⁹ Competitions were organized to evaluate the military ability of recruits, at which

¹³⁷ Interview with Pasteur Nyamigogo, November 2012.

¹³⁸ Interview with ANR official and former Local Defense Instructor, Kasheke, November 2012.

¹³⁹ Interview with ex-Local Defence and ex-Mayi-Mayi combatant, Lemera, November 2012.

Cisayura Bienvenue earned the reputation of a sharpshooter.¹⁴⁰ After the training, the Local Defence were deployed in coastal Kalehe, the Midlands and the Highlands, but not necessarily according to their area of origin. The communal logic that had characterized the constitution of the *rondes*, where participants remained spatially inscribed in their villages or neighbourhoods was no longer systematic in the Local Defence, generating frustration among many recruits.

Contrarily to the *rondes* whose role was mainly to deter attacks, The Local Defence represented a real paramilitary force. In Kasheke and Lemera, the Local Defence assisted the RCD in conducting attacks on *Interhamwe* militia and Mayi-Mayi positions in the Kahuzi Biega National Park, as well as in the Midlands and Highlands, serving as reconnaissance scouts, but also engaging in combat with enemy troops. The rest of the time, they conducted patrols in the area of Kasheke, or staffed roadblocks set up to control population movements.¹⁴¹ Firearms had been distributed to the Local Defence, but they were often closely monitored by the RCD military authorities. In several towns and villages of the area, the Local Defence were required to hand in their weapons during the day to the local RCD commander or ANR (intelligence services) officer, who would hand them back to the Local Defence for the evening patrols. Because of the scarcity of weapons, rotations of weapons were established. In Kasheke, Cisayura Bienvenue was in charge of the only weapon that had been distributed to the Local Defence as a result of his sharpshooting abilities and military feats.

Testimonies from families and residents point to a change in the behaviour and attitude of the youth during the period of redeployment that followed the training. Although the Local Defence remained close to their social environment after redeployment, often sleeping in their own homes and dependant on contributions collected in the village or neighbourhood to sustain themselves, many testimonies point to the fact that “*their behaviour changed, they started behaving a bit like bandits*”.¹⁴² A local resident recalls:

¹⁴⁰ Interview with Cisayura Bienvenue, June 2013.

¹⁴¹ Interview with former Local Defence commanders, Kasheke and Lemera, November 2012.

¹⁴² Interview with chief of Kasheke, November 2012.

*“The youth of the Local Defence had already changed their behaviour; they harassed people, often to obtain something to eat or some money; if you weren’t one of their relatives, you were likely to be harassed by them if you met them on the way; We the population couldn’t do much about it, but we complained several times to the chiefs”.*¹⁴³

According to former members, frustration was rife in the ranks of the Local Defence, as a result of poor living conditions, but also repeated harassment and humiliation by RCD troops. State and customary authorities, whose authority formed an integral part of the apparatus of RCD control over the Local Defence, were often perceived as treacherous and abusive as a result of their collusion with the RCD. Defiance towards both the RCD command and the local authorities who collaborated with the rulers was widespread, and included a wide range of practices, such as refusing to wear the RCD uniforms and insignia, or taking them off when officials were absent.¹⁴⁴ These “everyday practices” echoed longstanding idioms and repertoires of resistance,¹⁴⁵ often framed as a continuation of age-old resistance of the people of eastern Congo against external invaders, and in particular their Rwandan neighbours. A priest who was in service in the Parish of Nyabibwe at the time when the RCD controlled the town argued:

*“In those days everyone was resisting; some resisted by refusing to obey order by RCD commanders, and by refusing to go to the forced works. Others resisted by covertly burning the peanuts in their fields, so that the harvest didn’t give anything. The Shi and we have always known how to resist the Rwandans. Each time we spot a Rwandan way of doing things, then we start the resistance; and the Rwandans become afraid because they know that we are resisting”*¹⁴⁶

According to a local RCD commander and several local chiefs, concern about the Local Defence recruits was growing, as insubordination or defection were clear and

¹⁴³ Interview with local shopkeeper, Lemera, November 2012.

¹⁴⁴ Interview with ex-Local Defence in Butale, October 2012.

¹⁴⁵ See Iniguez de Heredia (2013).

¹⁴⁶ Interview with former Priest of Nyabibwe, Irambo, August 2012.

present threats as a result of the presence within the environment of Mayi-Mayi members, whom, as we will see, often had close social ties with members of the Local Defence.¹⁴⁷

The Local Defence was therefore a comprehensive effort to mobilize resources at a decentralized level, yet on a large scale, through established channels of state and customary authority. Importantly, the Local Defence initiative was not only directed towards potential soldiers, but also included trainings for local authorities, village and neighbourhood chiefs, who were also included in the military and “ideological” trainings of the RCD, designed to enhance compliance to RCD rule. In addition to mobilizing resources, the Local Defence thus constituted an effort to enhance the RCD’s control over the population, albeit one that would soon show its limits.

6.2.2. Military integration and the defection

Around the year 2000, the RCD leadership and the provincial governors of North and South Kivu pushed for the full integration of the Local Defence into the RCD army, which suffered from very low levels of direct recruitment because of its unpopularity, and was under significant military pressure by the multiple fronts and insurgencies it was dealing with. This was part of a broader effort to boost the troop numbers of the RCD, which included a public campaign for recruitment throughout eastern DRC (Human Rights Watch 2001). As numerous youth had been mobilized into the Local Defence, they represented pre-constituted labour pools that were easier to corral into the army, as part of a large-scale effort of labour conscription that echoed the long history of large-scale military conscriptions in the region. The Local Defence were already an integral part of the RCD military apparatus, serving as essential auxiliaries and frequently requisitioned to assist RCD troops on various military fronts. There remained, however, a difference in status, but also a difference in “ideology”, which a new round of training by the RCD was intended to bridge. The Local Defence that had been dispersed in various *axes* in the area of Kasheke were rounded up a second time and sent to a second training in Mushake, Masisi, preceding full integration into *songambe*, as the RCD army was referred to locally. The objective of the Mushake

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Colonel Cisayura, June 2013.

training, contrarily to the first training that had focused on military tactics, was to “*give us the ideology of the RCD, and change our mentality, to get us out of the mentality of the Local Defence, and into the mentality of the RCD*” according to Cisayura. Interestingly, the shift from a discursive focus on community protection, which had formed the backbone of the “ideology” of the Local Defence, to one focused on the military and territorial expansion of the RCD was systematically presented by former Local Defence as the main cause for defection from the RCD army:

*“it was then that we realized that the ideology of the RCD was not to protect us, but to conquer us; They showed us that the RCD was purely Rwandan, and that their ambition was to sell the country; when we realized that we were conquered, many attempted to run away, but that could lead to beatings or imprisonment or even death”*¹⁴⁸

More prosaic motives accompanied these acute feelings of deception, such as the bad “treatment” the Local Defence received in Mushake, where financial compensation was meagre and denigration by RCD officers systematic. According to several testimonies, the atmosphere at the Mushake camp was very tense, with frequent fights breaking out between RCD soldiers and the Local Defence. Cisayura, who had imposed himself as the leader of the Local Defence in Kasheke, was active in stirring up resentment against the RCD in the camp, which soon led to a series of defections. One night, after a fight between RCD soldiers and Local Defence from his Kasheke group, he fled with 84 of the Kasheke youth, taking 47 weapons and heading back to the Kalehe Midlands.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ Interview ex-Mai Mai, Lemera, November 2012.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Colonel Cisayura, June 2013.

Photo 2: The town of Lemera in the Midlands of Kalehe



6.3. Cisayura's mobilization in Lemera and Kasheke

We now turn to the second period of focus of this chapter, the re-mobilization of Local Defence recruits by Cisayura and the Mayi-Mayi. This period represents a critical juncture in the history of the Midlands of Mbinga Sud, one that has durably affected the structure of authority and social organization in the region, entrenching military networks that were repeatedly reactivated in subsequent rounds of armed mobilization. In this section, we will present the mobilization led by Cisayura as a struggle for control over the youth of the region and their productive capacity, waged on one side by the RCD and collaborating local authorities who resorted to coercive means and various mechanisms of social control to attempt to quell the mobilization, and on the other by Cisayura and his group, who used a subtle mix of persuasion and coercion to mobilize recruits. The struggle for control over the youth was part of the wider war that was playing out in the region, and had permeated and polarized all spheres of

economic, political and social activity. We will pay particular attention to the individual and collective social processes at play during the mobilization of Cisayura's group, and then show how they were tied to the constitution of a "counter" authority in the Highlands and Midlands of Kalehe.

6.3.1. Confusion and counter-insurgency in the aftermath of the defection

In the Mbinga Sud Grouping, a period of confusion seems to have followed the defection of large numbers of Local Defence recruits. Former Local Defence recruits recall that, after these defections, they went in different directions, with some fleeing towards Bukavu or Goma where anonymity allowed some protection against recapture by the RCD, while others returned to their home towns or villages and attempted to settle back into civilian life.¹⁵⁰ The return of the Local Defence recruits put local authorities in a difficult position, as their hierarchy required them to report the defectors to the RCD command,¹⁵¹ while the population had often actively requested the return of these "reluctant recruits".¹⁵² The confusion led to different responses by Local Authorities in different localities of the Mbinga Sud Grouping. In Nyabibwe for example, the Grouping Chief and Village Chief initially accepted the return of the defectors, which were encouraged to return to civilian life and tasked with staffing the local *rondes* that were still taking place. However, a few weeks later, RCD troops, with the alleged support of these very same authorities recaptured the returnees, who were sent to staff Local Defence units in the Kalehe Highlands.¹⁵³

In Kasheke and Lemera, the situation that followed the defection from the Mushake training was similarly tense and ambiguous. Cisayura, the leader of the Kasheke Local Defence, claims that, after spearheading the defection from the camp in Mushake, he immediately led his group of 86 Local Defence into the forest to form his own Mayi-Mayi group. Most other testimonies, however, suggest that the transition wasn't as

¹⁵⁰ Interviews with former Local Defence members in Lemera, Kasheke, Nyamucubi, Nyabibwe, Mukwidja and Kiniezire, September-November 2012.

¹⁵¹ Interview with former Local Defence Commanders, Kasheke and Nyamucubi, September-November 2012.

¹⁵² This expression is borrowed from HRW (2001).

¹⁵³ Interview with former Local Defence Leader and participants in Nyabibwe, October 2012.

seamless, and that a fierce struggle for control over the former recruits took place between local authorities and Cisayura's nascent group.

The exact military configuration during this period remains unclear, as accounts are sometimes contradictory, owing, to the density of events that were unfolding at a quick pace, but perhaps also to competition for authority between different Mayi-Mayi commanders, who all claim to have been the sole leaders at the time. From what has been gathered during fieldwork and interviews, it appears that, following their defection, Cisayura and a group of former Local Defence spent an initial period in Kasheke and Lemera, semi-clandestinely circulating the area to carry out recruitments and preparing a military base in the forests of the Midlands to the north of Lemera. Cisayura and his group were in contact with the Mayi-Mayi group led by Muhindu Changoco, which was active in the Mubugu Grouping.¹⁵⁴ While Cisayura and his group made at least one trip to meet the Mayi-Mayi of Changoco in Mubugu, and received both training and Mayi-Mayi initiation rituals which usually entail a form of allegiance to the Mayi-Mayi hierarchy of command, Cisayura operated his group autonomously from Changoco for two years, before being absorbed into Changoco's group, from 2002 to 2004, when all groups were integrated into the national government.¹⁵⁵

The Village Chiefs of Kasheke and Lemera and the local ANR (intelligence services) were aware of the risk that the Mayi-Mayi infiltrations and recruitment was posing to the area, and actively sought to quell the recruitments by Cisayura and his men. Several reunions were held in Kasheke and Lemera with local notables to discuss the actions of Cisayura and his group, and Sub-Village chiefs called for residents to discourage their family members from joining the Mayi-Mayi rebellion and report suspicious activities.¹⁵⁶ The behaviour of the former Local Defence was closely monitored, both by customary authorities and their adjuncts, and the state police services and their informants. However, the paucity of the RCD security system, and the absence of a comprehensive counter-insurgency strategy in Kasheke and Lemera

¹⁵⁴ Muhindo Changoco had broken off from Padiri's movement to form a large Mayi-Mayi armed group in the Kalehe Highlands, known as the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe.

¹⁵⁵ Interview with Colonel Cisayura and Major Muhindo Changoco, June 2013.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with chief of Kasheke, and the sub-village chief of Nyamutwe, November 2012.

allowed Cisayura and his networks of recruiters to dodge attempts at stopping their recruitments.

6.3.2. Crafting control: Individual and collective processes of participation

We will now take a closer look at the social processes at play during the armed mobilization led by Cisayura and his group, conceived as a battle for control over the youth by established authorities on one side, and the nascent group of Cisayura on the other. The remobilization led by Cisayura in the aftermath of the defection is the result of a set of individual and collective social processes that should be understood not as separate or mutually exclusive, but as profoundly intertwined and inter-dependant, as argued in the theoretical framework.

The task of discerning the importance of different categories of individual and collective motivations for decisions involving such high levels of emotions is a difficult task, as multiple and often conflicting motives coalesce. Yet individual motivations to follow Cisayura's call to arms cannot be separated from the group dynamics at play among the former Local Defence, and are often indiscernible in testimonies by former participants, where the "we" is much more prevalent than the "I" in the narratives. Forged during the collective experience of the Local Defence and the trainings and deployments in the RCD army, these group dynamics remained prevalent after the defection, as the former recruits were reported to "*always hang out together*",¹⁵⁷ and presumably exert high levels of social influence on each other, which has been argued as a prime determinant of individual participation in violent collective action (Mc Doom 2013).

6.3.2.1. Collective experience and the appeal of the Military Career

In their testimonies, former Mayi-Mayi recruits of Kasheke and Lemera emphasize the collective experience of hardship, stigmatisation and marginalization experienced as a group in the Local Defence and the RCD army, which triggered deep resentment and

¹⁵⁷ Interview with Sub-Village Chief of Nyamutwe, November 2012.

feelings of revenge against RCD commanders, although these collective grievances were often formulated in “standard” lines of anti-RCD Mayi-Mayi discourse.

Tied to these grievances was the appeal of the military career and the opportunities it created for these youth in a context of warfare, a result of their individual and collective socialization into the militarized environment of the RCD. The forging of “militarized subjectivities” (Hoffmann K. 2007) as a result of this socialization is consistent with accounts that emphasize the conception of war as a form of labour or as a “way of life” (Hoffman D. 2012), which can present a strong appeal for youth in periods of acute economic and social distress.

This appeal for the particular type of lifestyle and opportunities that the military career enabled is referred to by the local authorities and notables who were active in trying to oppose the mobilization, but also the families and entourage of the defectors of the Local Defence, who emphasized their loss of influence and authority over their sons and relatives, a symptom of the broader loss of traction of the established social order on the lives of these youth. The father of a former Local Defence who was recruited into Cisayura’s group recalls:

“He had already changed when he was part of the Local Defence, and he didn’t want to hear anything from us; He refused to work in the fields again, and he didn’t want to leave the military career because he had become something of a bandit; He was always out and about and hanging out with his friends from the Local Defence, and we were only hearing trouble from that group; And then he disappeared and we learned that he had joined the Mayi-Mayi movement, so we declined any responsibility over him ” ¹⁵⁸

Several other testimonies by family members of recruits point to the decision to join the Mayi-Mayi rebellion as a turning point in the progressive social differentiation that had been growing between these youth and their entourage. The decision to join the Mayi-Mayi rebellion of Cisayura was therefore not simply the result of individual

¹⁵⁸ Interview with family of Mayi-Mayi combatant, Nyamutwe, November 2012.

predispositions or individually experienced grievances, but rather constituted through the collective experience of both exclusion and hardship in the ranks of the RCD and the shift in outlook that resulted from socialization into the “military career”.

6.3.2.2. *The « aura » of Cisayura*

The role of individuals has often been side-lined in recent accounts of mobilization for violent collective action, but it shouldn't be underestimated as a factor, as recent accounts focusing on the role of charismatic leadership and individual personalities of armed group commanders have shown.¹⁵⁹ This type of charismatic influence, however, should not be understood solely through the lens of individual characteristics or personality traits of the leaders and commanders, but rather as part of the collective processes at play in the formation of insurgent collective identities, and the role these individuals play in orienting collective decision making processes.

Following his defection from the RCD and the period of constitution of his Mayi-Mayi group, Cisayura developed a significant level of popularity among certain segments of the population of the Kasheke and Lemera areas, and in particular the youth. Growing popular resentment stemming from the catastrophic security and economic situation, but also the perceived betrayal by local authorities who had sided with the RCD fostered a tacit - and sometimes active - support for the Mayi-Mayi resistance across eastern DRC. As is often the case during military occupation by a force perceived to be foreign,¹⁶⁰ the large-scale conscription of soldiers during the Local Defence represented a tipping point in popular resentment and support for the resistance. However, most of the Mayi-Mayi groups that had been active in the Highlands and Midlands of Kalehe and who exerted a direct influence on the lives of the Havu populations were perceived to be foreign to the area - either Hunde or Tembo - which constituted a barrier for support. Indeed, many perceived their intrusive and violent presence as an attempt by the Hunde or Tembo ethnic groups to conquer Havu territory, a symptom of the deeply engrained territorialized conceptions of ethnicity

¹⁵⁹ See Hoffmann, K. (2010) for the role of general Padiri, or Stearns et al. (2013b) for the role of Yakutumba.

¹⁶⁰ Parallels can be drawn with German occupation of continental Europe during the Second World War, where the imposition of forced conscription boosted support for the resistance.

and authority in eastern DRC (Hoffmann K. 2014). As a Havu and “son of the soil”, Cisayura represented a more familiar and legitimate figure for the Havu populations of the Midlands and littoral areas, who had forged a reputation through his military ability and fearlessness and the fact that he had managed to significantly reduce the number of attacks on Lemera and Kasheke from Interhamwe militias as the leader of the *rondes* and Local Defence. His act of outright defiance and rebellion was therefore perceived by many as a legitimate act of courage, although this feeling changes according to the different interviewees, as it was particularly prevalent among the youth but much less so among the customary and state authorities. Many interviewees also emphasize his sense of fairness as a leader of the Local Defence, drawing a much more complex portrait than those usually drawn of warlords and military commanders in the area.

The aura of Cisayura seems to have been particularly magnetic for the former Local Defence, for whom his leadership and authority had been forged amidst the collective experience of conscription and integration in the RCD. Several former Local Defence recruits pointed to the influence of Cisayura on their decision to join the Mayi-Mayi rebellion, although the language used to describe this influence is often shrouded in metaphors. As a former Mayi-Mayi recalls:

*“Cisayura was our chief in the Local Defence; he is our brother and our father, and he showed us that we had to resist the negative system of the RCD (...) he has done many great things for us; So when he came to us to tell us to come with him to the forest, and explained to us what was in him, (his motivation), we saw that what he had in him was also in us, so we accepted his “mot d’ordre”(order) and went with him”*¹⁶¹

Another recruit recalls

“Cisayura was our chief; we followed him because we knew that he was good; The RCD was always trying to hold us (control us), and we saw that

¹⁶¹ Interview with Mayi-Mayi ex-combattant, Lemera, November 2012.

this could not be good, so when Cisayura called we answered present immediately; He just had to ask us and we came”¹⁶²

Testimonies by non-participants, from customary authorities to the entourage of combatants, also emphasize the crucial agency of Cisayura in the mobilization. Cisayura’s charisma therefore seems to have been an important factor in the decision to join the Mayi-Mayi insurgency, yet it should not be understood as simply one of individual admiration or attraction, but as part of the complex and multi-faceted relation that had developed between Cisayura and his group, a combination of social ties created before the war and reinforced through the common experience of conscription and hardship, the progressive establishment of an internal group hierarchy during the rondes and the Local Defence, but also genuine admiration towards the character and achievements of Cisayura.

6.3.2.3. Coercion and social pressure for mobilization

We have attempted to uncover some of the factors of *attraction* that influenced individual’s decisions to participate in Cisayura’s mobilization, both the appeal for the livelihood opportunities opened by the military career and the role of Cisayura’s charismatic leadership, which were experienced not only individually but collectively by the former Local Defence. The social processes of the mobilization into Cisayura’s Mayi-Mayi group were not, however, devoid of various forms of coercion, which, as we will attempt to show, were intricately tied in to the relations of dependence and social influence that had been forged within the group. Indeed, after remobilizing a core number of followers who joined voluntarily, Cisayura proceeded to recruit the rest of the former Local Defence members of Kasheke, often resorting to coercion.

Among the actors interviewed in the Kasheke and Lemera areas during the field research, the customary authorities and *notables* were the most vociferous about the fact that Cisayura and his group had used violence, threats and coercion to remobilize those former Local Defence who had refused to join Cisayura’s newly formed Mayi-Mayi group. Considering the high level of political and social polarization generated

¹⁶² Interview with ex-Mayi-Mayi combatant, Nyamutwe, November 2012.

by the armed mobilization and the violence wielded by the Mayi-Mayi, which was particularly acute during the period of fieldwork as Cisayura was actively trying to remobilize ex-combatants in the area,¹⁶³ the testimonies of these authorities must be taken with a level of critical distance. However, several other testimonies, including from former participants, point to the use of threat and coercion in the mobilization of reluctant. The Village Chief of Kasheke contends that direct force and various types of threats were used by Cisayura's group to remobilize the former Local Defence, including the beating of reluctant former members, as well as physical violence and threats on members of the recruits' entourage:

*“When Cisayura remobilized the Local Defence for his group of Mayi-Mayi, some joined voluntarily, but those who refused to join had no choice; It's as if the Mayi-Mayi thought that these ones would be a menace to their group if they stayed in the population (...) They beat up a young man close to the centre of Kasheke one day (...) For another one, it was the entire family who was visited at night, and they beat them up and threatened to kill them if he didn't enter; for a youth of Nyamutwe (Cisayura's home village) the Mayi-Mayi even abducted the father and put him in the prison of the group, and the boy had to join the group for his father to be liberated”*¹⁶⁴

Testimonies by former Local Defence who were recruited into Cisayura's group point to less direct forms of coercion, percolated through the social networks of individuals and peer groups, particularly through the group of former Local Defence themselves. A former Mayi-Mayi of Cisayura recalls:

“I heard that Cisayura was asking his men to join him in the forest (...) I didn't really care at first because everybody knew that I had decided to leave the military career and that I was at ease. But the others (former Local Defence) were in the area, and I would see them; Some told me that if I didn't join them, they would come and get me; They made the joke that

¹⁶³ As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, Cisayura was actively remobilizing ex-Mayi-Mayi soldiers at the time of the interviews, in the fall of 2012.

¹⁶⁴ Interview with chief of Kasheke, November 2012.

the Mayi-Mayi would come and get me and my family, which made me think and be afraid, because they all knew where I lived and they knew my family; One day a friend of mine told me that Cisayura was looking for me and that he did not accept that others could leave his group without his permission; I knew that at any moment they could make a move and capture me (...) What could I do? If I left they could harass my family. So I contacted the others, and one night I left and joined the group”¹⁶⁵

Coercion and the threat of physical violence and punishment, like the factors of *attraction* for the group described earlier, were therefore socially mediated, both by the group of former members of the Local Defence, which exerted a form of peer pressure among each other, but also through wider networks of influence and coercion that the Mayi-Mayi group was developing to establish itself as a form of “counter authority” in the areas of Kasheke and Lemera.

6.3.3. The Mayi-Mayi Kalehe and the constitution of a counter-authority

In the preceding sections, we have analysed some of the social processes at play during the mobilization led by Cisayura in the aftermath of the defection from the RCD that combined various socially mediated processes of attraction and coercion. Yet the recruitments by Cisayura’s group - who would fuse with Changoco’s group in 2002 to form the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe - must also be understood in the light of the emergence of a Mayi-Mayi “counter” authority in the region. Indeed, in the period that followed the constitution of his group, Cisayura developed an extensive and multi-faceted influence over economic, social and political life in the Midlands and Coastal areas of Kalehe. Based in the area around Lemera, his group, which eventually reached 500 men, became active in all the of Highlands, Midlands, and coastal areas of Kalehe, extending its area of activity all the way to Kabamba, and carrying out attacks as far out as Kavumu, Bukavu’s airport.¹⁶⁶ While the group established full military control over several villages in the area surrounding Lemera - and several times in the town

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Ex-Mayi-Mayi combatant, Lemera, November 2012.

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Colonel Cisayura, June 2013.

of Lemera as well - it also exerted strong influence over towns and villages under RCD control.

In the areas it controlled, the group engaged in the type revenue generating practices that are typical of rule by non-state armed groups in eastern DRC. The group set up *barrieres* (road blocks) to tax population movements and trades, fined access to trading centres and markets, set up sentinels at strategic spots to levy daily contributions from agricultural production in the fields or forest products such as charcoal at the fringes of the Kahuzi Biega national park.¹⁶⁷ Taxes on households were also levied, a weekly cash or in kind contribution called *ration*, which was usually collected by the local authorities - Village of Neighbourhood chiefs, under direct threat of violence in the case of non-compliance. A Priest of Lemera remembers:

*“It was compulsory for all residents of the areas under their control to provide the ration. If someone refused to give it, the chief would have to report it to the group, and that person was immediately visited by the group, who would pillage his goods and put him in prison until someone from his entourage paid the ransom”*¹⁶⁸

The group also engaged in various other forms of ‘taxation through disruption’, for example by arresting civilians on arbitrary charges or adjudicating private disputes through an ad-hoc tribunal, which gave them justifications to detain people and impose a ransom for their liberation. Although often depicted as authoritarian, the rule of the group was strategically negotiated and instrumentalized by civilians, who actively solicited the group to settle private scores or obtain advantages,¹⁶⁹ as Verweijen (2013) has shown is often the case in militarized contexts. Cisayura himself noted that *“all day civilians would come to me to give me presents, to thank me for the protection that I had brought, and to obtain favours”*.¹⁷⁰ These transactions that had a highly personalized character were central to the recognition of Cisayura as a local authority.

¹⁶⁷ These were all detailed in the interview with Colonel Cisayura.

¹⁶⁸ Interview with Pasteur Nyamigogo, Lemera, November 2012.

¹⁶⁹ This was the case of a local notable who was detained in the armed group’s “prison” for several days and freed after his family paid a ransom. Interview with JP Cirundu, Lemera, November 2012.

¹⁷⁰ Interview with Colonel Cisayura, June 2013.

As for the Local Defence and the RCD, the recruitment and control over combatants was a central aspect of the group's rule. Despite its "local" character, Cisayura's group quickly started displaying the type of accumulative approach to recruitment that was detailed in the previous section. Cisayura himself provided an example:

*"I captured a group of Hutu who had left from Walungu to go back to the Highlands; they were coming by car. This was one month after we had left the RCD. That group of Hutu were also Local Defence, but from the Highlands; when they heard that that a new Hutu resistance was born in the Highlands, they decided to defect from their camp in Walungu; We captured them on the road when they were on their way to the Highlands; there was some resistance, but they saw that we were strong; That's how I got 500 soldiers in my group."*¹⁷¹

While several testimonies pointed to the fact that the group severely punished those who attempted to escape, control over members was more complex than straightforward coercion, and symptomatic of the multi-faceted influence that the group exerted over the Havu societies of the Midlands and Coastal Kalehe. In areas where the RCD maintained military and administrative control, as in most of the larger towns of coastal Kalehe, the influence of the Mayi-Mayi was more covert and clandestine, but nevertheless significant. The fact that Cisayura and his men were natives of the area gave them much deep channels of penetration into the Havu societies of coastal Kalehe. Taking advantage of the paucity of the RCD military presence, whose soldiers were mostly active during the day but confined to their camps at night, Cisayura's group could "*move in all corners*"¹⁷² of coastal Kalehe, using a subtle mix of persuasion and coercion to obtain resources from the populations, not only recruits but also various types of contributions in food or other resources, forming elaborate support networks in the region. These *contributions* served the ambivalent function of both alleged support for the movement and protection from punitive operations from the group, which came swiftly in cases of refusal to contribute, or when civilians provided information to the RCD. A priest in Irambo declared that:

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

“At the time, you just had to be seen with people associated with the RCD for the Mayi-Mayi to believe you were collaborating with the Tutsi, and therefore an enemy”¹⁷³

In the highly polarized context of the RCD led counter-insurgency, these *contributions* were key to establishing relations of debt and dependence of individuals and households towards the group. Testimonies from local residents present during this period point to the hardships generated by the necessity of contributing taxes to two separate and competing authorities, one active during the day, and the other mostly at night.¹⁷⁴ Through this covert but powerful presence in the population, a subtle mix of coercion, relations and influence, Cisayura and the Mayi-Mayi group thus developed the foundations of an *authority*, which even the customary authorities, despite their collusion with the RCD, were forced to recognize and take into consideration.

The relation between Cisayura’s Mayi-Mayi group and the Havu populations of the Midlands and coastal areas of Kalehe was therefore more complex than what a story focused simply on the accumulative and coercive aspects of the group’s presence would suggest, as the group developed elaborate relations with the population, which included various forms of coercion, but also support, in a highly polarized context. Indeed, the Mayi-Mayi would continuously send “spies” into the population, soldiers “disguised” as civilians. As Cisayura detailed:

“At that time, I had 500 soldiers. Those who had weapons were sent to fight. The others were sent as civilian spies into the population, they would give me reports about the positions of the RCD, as well as the traitors”¹⁷⁵

At the same time, the RCD was also sending spies and informants, creating a highly polarized social context where people were often forced to declare allegiances or face retaliation by one or the other group. RCD retaliations and indiscriminate violence, however, tended to enhance support for the Mayi-Mayi among various segments of

¹⁷³ Interview with priest, Irambo, November 2012.

¹⁷⁴ Several interviewees detailed the “visits” that the Mayi-Mayi would carry out at night, often to obtain contributions from the population.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Colonel Cisayura, June 2013.

the population. For example, interviews with priests in the parishes of Irambo, Ihusi, Nyabibwe and Minova pointed to active - yet unofficial- support of many Catholic priests for the Mayi-Mayi movement. The priest who was responsible for the parish of Nyabibwe, one of the strategic centres of the Kalehe littoral area, attests to the climate of deep polarization:

“In Nyabibwe, the RCD had an intelligence service to know who was with the Mayi-Mayi. They carried out massacres; One day, they killed 6 people, including one of my catechists, in the forest of eucalyptus next to the lake. If you were called to the hill (where the military camp is), it was as if it was the end for you (...) The Mayi-Mayi attacked Nyabibwe several times; in late 1998, there was a terrible attack, combats lasted three days. I managed to not get killed; and then the RCD was telling me that if I am invincible like that then I must be with the Mayi-Mayi. And then they said we will soon find out whether you are invincible. Several times they ordered me to come to the camp but I never went, because I knew that my death was waiting for me up there. I am very lucky to be alive; everyone was fed up with the RCD; they were colonizers, and they were killing us. So we supported the Mayi-Mayi”¹⁷⁶

The priest went on to describe his relation with the Mayi-Mayi:

“The Mayi-Mayi were hiding in the mountains and forests; But they were also present in every neighbourhood, and village through their ANR; it can be a young guy from the neighbourhood, who will report to them (...) I knew that if something happened, the Mayi-Mayi commanders would be informed, so people had to be careful with that too. They would carry out infiltrations and attacks, and they carried out a lot of massacres (...) It was because they were hiding in the population that the RCD would engage in reprisals. But everyone was supporting the Mayi-Mayi. Sometimes you

¹⁷⁶ Interview with former Priest of Nyabibwe, Irambo, October 2012.

gave a little something; or you could also tell things that you knew. I myself buried numerous Mayi-Mayi soldiers who died in battle. “

In 2002, Cisayura's group was absorbed into Changoco's Mayi-Mayi Kalehe group, with Cisayura becoming the second in command of the group, and maintaining his positions in the Midlands of the Mbinga Sud Grouping. As most of the Mayi-Mayi groups operating in South Kivu, Cisayura and his men eventually joined the army integration program in 2004. However, the networks that the group had forged did not disappear with the integration, and Cisayura, after defecting from the Army in 2004-5, quickly remobilized the soldiers who had demobilized and took back his military positions, illustrating the entrenchment of the processes of armed mobilization and the group's networks. He would further integrate the national army, and then defect and remobilize several times, as was the case in the fall of 2012, while I was conducting interviews.

6.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have traced the two rounds of armed mobilizations that occurred in the Midlands of Kalehe during the period of RCD rule, providing a closer historical contextualization of the 'macro factors' identified in the previous chapters and the manifestations they had on the social architecture and individual dimensions of participation. We have seen that the initial mobilizations were driven by the necessity of providing protection to the villages and towns of the Midlands and Lowlands of Kalehe in a context of acute crisis and repeated attacks by armed factions. The constitution of civilian security organizations was orchestrated by the RCD, who used longstanding and institutionalized modes of decentralized security provision, in particular the local chiefs. The 'social architecture' of this mobilization reflected the pre-existing social structures of the region, as it 'activated' communal modes of resource mobilization and social control over recruits.

In contrast, the Local Defence mobilization, illustrated the limitations of such institutionalized modes of mobilization and control over labour, particularly when the RCD attempted to corral this large labour force into its army, which sparked

widespread defections and resistance from the mobilized youth, and the constitution of an insurgent group by Cisayura. In a context of acute social polarization, where the RCD attempted to exert control over the youth through their intelligence networks and by co-opting local chiefs, the Mayi-Mayi group of Cisayura used their deep channels of penetration into the societies of the region to develop a form of ‘counter-authority’ in the region, using a subtle balance of coercion and attraction to support and exert control over recruits.

Several salient points emerge from this chapter and shed light on the central questions of this dissertation. In particular, we have found evidence that the individual factors that drive participation evolve over time and as a result of the transformative effects of the armed conflict. Indeed, while the desire to protect their entourage provided the guiding motivation for participation in the first, locally formed groups, the sentiment of being ‘captured’ as the Local Defence were corralled into the RCD army - a manifestation of the ‘accumulative’ logic that was at play – sparked their decision to defect from the army. However, their experience in the Local Defence had progressively socialized them into a more militarized environment, which changed their outlook and provided novel opportunities, and articulated with a genuine resentment against the RCD and motivated several to join Cisayura in forming a local rebel Mayi-Mayi group. Protection, however, did not disappear as a factor in this second phase of mobilization, but rather than the communal protection that had driven the first mobilizations, personal protection, and protection of their entourage, drove the second. Indeed, under the threat of both the recapture into the RCD, and the coercive pressure exerted by Cisayura’s group on their entourage to remobilize, they had little choice but to join. This constitutes an example of what Richard (2014) ‘recruitment for protection’ which is intimately tied to the coercive pressure that armed actors exert on societies to obtain recruits (Kalyvas & Kocher 2007).

The chapter also illustrated the progressive social implantation of armed groups in rural societies. Given the configuration of the region, where military intervention by the RCD was facilitated by the proximity to the larger towns and roads, the Mayi-Mayi group was not able to establish durable military control in the region, intermittently controlling certain villages but based mainly in remote hideouts. Yet, through the clandestine influence exerted through the social networks it had access to as a result

of its largely Havu membership, the group was able to exert a covert yet significant influence, developing networks of support, both through coercive methods, but also as a result of genuine support from segments of the population. The mobilization in the Midlands of Kalehe represents one among many configurations of the insertion of armed groups into the rural societies of Kalehe. We now turn to the case of the Highlands of Kalehe, which, although geographically close to the Midlands, presents a sharply different configuration of the insertion of armed organizations into rural societies.

Chapter Seven

Armed Mobilization in the Highlands of Kalehe

The two chapters that constitute this part of the dissertation (Chapter 7 and Chapter 8) provide a close range analysis of armed mobilization and control in the Northern Highlands of the territory of Kalehe, a remote region of the province of South Kivu that has been embroiled in a series of violent conflicts since the early 1990s. The analysis focuses on the ways in which the process of armed mobilization is shaped by established structures of authority and social organization, themselves inscribed in specific political economies, but also how, in turn, these are reconfigured by the process of armed mobilization. The chapter focuses specifically on the armed organizations that emerged from the so-called Hutu Rwandophone societies of the Kalehe Highlands, the *Combattants*, *PARECO* and *Nyatura* armed groups and their offshoots.

The chapter starts by showing how the initial rounds of large-scale mobilization were reflective of the decentralized and agrarian nature of the Rwandophone societies of the Highlands, which came under severe existential threat in the early 1990s. These grassroots organizations were progressively absorbed into larger politico-military movements, and as a result became imbricated in the regional economy of predation and protection. While exerting multiple forms of violence and predation, these organizations continued to play an important role with regards to the civilian authorities and populations of the Highlands, constituting their only means of protection, but also a key vehicle for the advancement of political claims.

Participation in these organizations will be analysed in the light of the evolving relation between these organizations and the civilian authorities and populations of the Highlands. While in the first episodes of armed mobilization, participation was

reflective of the deep rootedness of these organizations in the agrarian societies of the Highlands, it progressively changed as these organizations came to play a multi-faceted role in the region. Indeed, in a context of growing commodification of labour, a result of both the expansion of the mining industry and the concomitant implantation of an economy of predation and protection, participation in armed organizations became a form of employment for an economically deprived underclass. However, this did not entail a complete dissociation from the rural communities from which those armed organizations had initially emerged. Repeated threats to the rural Rwandophone communities in a context of persistent inter-ethnic strife, and militarized competition over land solidified their political role as protectors of rural livelihoods and vehicle for political claims. We will argue that, rather than a destruction of the agrarian societies of the Kalehe Highlands, these organizations have triggered a re-adaptation of the societies around their presence, and the emergence of new “war communities”.

As the chapter traces these processes of adaptation and social transformation, it interrogates the principal lens through which the conflicts of the Kalehe Highlands have been analysed and understood, that of “communal conflict” between clearly demarcated ethnic groups.¹⁷⁷ Indeed, what little attention has been paid to this isolated region has predominantly framed the armed conflicts as communal conflicts, often construing communities as clearly identified, unitary agents of political action and conflict.¹⁷⁸ In a highly polarized political context where communal protection is a central tenet of discursive justifications of violence, an uncritical use of the term is unhelpful as it can reproduce politically charged discourses. However, it begs an understanding of the social basis of these communal identities, which, as we will see, are powerful mobilizers in the region. In tracing the social transformations of the region resulting from war, we will therefore pay attention to the emergence of these communal identities.

¹⁷⁷ In the Highlands of Kalehe, these include the two Rwandophone ethnic groups, the Hutu and Tutsi, as well as the Tembo and the Havu whose ethno-territorial constituencies lie on both sides of the Highlands.

¹⁷⁸ The academic or policy literature on this isolated region of the territory of Kalehe is very scarce. The most detailed published literature has been produced by the Bukavu based NGO *Action pour la Paix et la Concorde*, in association with the Life and Peace Institute.

The analysis puts an emphasis on a historical understanding of the process of armed mobilization, and is divided in two separate chapters. The first chapter traces the establishment of the Rwandophone societies of the Kalehe Highlands and their insertion into the political economy of South Kivu. It then shows how the social and political characteristics of these societies shaped the armed mobilizations of the 1990s and 2000s, in particular the *Combatants* mobilizations of the Masisi war and the *PARECO* mobilization.

The second chapter focuses on the most recent episode of large-scale armed mobilization in the Kalehe Highlands, the emergence of the *Nyatura* movement in 2011-2012. It analyses the specificities of armed mobilization in the context of an already militarized political economy, where military control is an essential feature of ethno-territorial political competition. The chapter then explores how militarized politics trickle down into a militarized social body, where mechanisms of large-scale armed mobilization are imbricated into mechanisms of communal organization. The chapter is based on fieldwork carried out in the Kalehe Highlands in the fall of 2012, with additional interviews carried out in Bukavu in June 2013.

7.1. Background to the Highlands Conflicts

7.1.1. The Highlands: A frontier within a frontier region

“The people of the Highlands are pioneers”

Honore de Numbi

The Highlands of Kalehe sit at the crest of the Mitumba mountain range and constitute a frontier “within” a frontier region (Mathys 2014), having played the ambivalent role of both a separation and connection point between two large socio-political complexes, the Great Lakes societies to the East and the forest societies of the Congo basin to the west (Newbury 1992). Opposing forces of integration and isolation have shaped the region’s history. In the pre-colonial and early colonial times, the Highlands of the Mitumba mountain range were dominated by dense bamboo forests that prevented the establishment of settlements. The Havu of the eastern slopes of the Mitumba mountain range didn’t show much interest in this region, while the Tembo, who occupied the western slopes of the Mitumba mountain range, were known to practice hunting and gathering in the area. The only settlements that existed seem to have been either resting points in trade routes or hunting trails, or outposts where dignitaries paused during their tax collection tours.

The late colonial period marked the beginning of a drastic change in the region as the colonial authorities incorporated the Highlands into their regional policy of *mise en valeur* (development), encouraging the establishment of cattle raising farms in the Highlands of Masisi and Kalehe, which displayed exceptionally favourable conditions for cattle raising. The Highlands progressively became one of the most lucrative areas of the regional economy, prompting economic development and in-migration of labour. In the late colonial period, a mining industry developed in the area following the discovery of significant mining deposits around the towns of Numbi and Ngungu.

The development of cattle ranching and the associated forest clearing and in-migration continued in the post-colonial era, arguably becoming the most lucrative activity in the entire region. The lucrativeness of the cattle raising industry and the mining sector of

the Highlands led to severe conflicts over ownership of the land, but also initiatives by the Congolese state to control and regulate the economic activity of the Highlands; in the 1980s, a *poste d'encadrement administratif* (Administrative Outpost) was set up in the centre of Numbi to control and tax the cattle market and the trade in minerals. In contrast, the wars of the 1990s and 2000s had the opposite effect of re-isolating the region. The Highlands have provided an advantageous geographical configuration for rebel organizations, as their remoteness and extensive range provide a hideout, but also a natural conduit through which armed factions can move through the region. As a result, local businessmen point to a breakdown of the Highlands economy between 1994 and 2009.

7.1.2. Land, Taxes, and Political Representation in the Highlands

“Here, all politics revolve around is land”

Celestin Seburikande, Chief of Lowa-Numbi

As a result of their economic attractiveness, the Kalehe Highlands, and particularly the northern areas of the Kalehe Highlands, known as the *Cinq Collines* (Five Hills) have been the at the centre of a range of conflicts that have mostly revolved around two axes: Authority over the land of the lucrative Five Hills and the associated right to exert taxes on the area's economic production, and the taxation and political representation of the populations of the Highlands, in particular the Rwandophone population which constitutes a majority in the region. We will start by presenting the conflict over customary authority over the northern Highlands of Kalehe, known as the Conflict of the Five Hills, and then expose the conflicts that have arisen as a result of the presence of a Rwandophone population.

7.1.2.1. The Conflict of the Five Hills: Land and Customary Authority

The Five Hills, a reference to the five “Villages”¹⁷⁹ that roughly encompass the northern area of the Kalehe Highlands, have been the subject of a longstanding conflict between the Tembo Grouping of Ziralo on one side, and the Havu Grouping of Buzi (both part of the Chiefdom of Buhavu), which sit on opposite sides of the Mitumba mountain range and both claim the right to customary authority over the Five Hills. Customary authority commands access to substantial resources as it entails the right to allocate land, to adjudicate land disputes and to levy annual customary taxes on the land.

The conflict over the Five Hills is part a larger set of longstanding conflicts over the delimitation of administrative boundaries in the territory of Kalehe between the Havu and the Tembo ethno-territorial constituencies. Like many conflicts over land and customary authority in eastern DRC, the Five Hills conflict dates back to the colonial partition of rural eastern DRC into ethno-territorial constituencies. Under colonial rule, the different ethno-polities of Kalehe had been subsumed under the authority of the Buhavu chiefdom in 1928, instituting a centralized, territorially bound and hierarchical model of political authority that contrasted with the decentralized and fluid polities that had characterized the region in the pre-colonial era (Hoffmann K. 2014 p.182; Newbury 1992). This generated political grievances by the “ethnic” groups that were subjected to the Bahavu chiefdom, in particular the Tembo who repeatedly complained of unfair taxation and political marginalization as a result of their subjection to the Bahavu authorities.¹⁸⁰ From 1945, Tembo leaders had been pushing for the creation of a separate Tembo territory, the Territory of Bunyakiri, on the basis of what they perceive as a legitimate right to self-administer their own ethno-territorial constituency. In the midst of a long and tortuous history of administrative reconfigurations, a territory of Bunyakiri was erected twice, once in the immediate aftermath of the independence, before Mobutu’s second republic, and again in 1999, during the RCD rule.

¹⁷⁹ The Village is the smallest administrative subdivision of the Congolese state; some of these villages are in fact small towns, such as Numbi or Lumbishi. The Five Hills are Numbi, Luzirantaka, Ngandjo/Bulagiza, Lumbishi and Shanje.

¹⁸⁰ APC (2009).

Because of their economic attractiveness, the Five Hills were a central stake in these administrative and jurisdictional battles, and repeatedly changed administrative status. When the Bahavu Chiefdom was created in 1928, The Five Hills were incorporated as a sub-Grouping of Buzi, while Buzi was relegated from Chiefdom to Grouping within the Bahavu Chiefdom. In 1961, Ziralo and the *Five Hills* were removed from the Buzi Grouping and incorporated into the newly created Bunyakiri territory (a Tembo territory), only to then be “returned” to the Buzi Grouping in 1968, following Mobutu’s dissolution of the territory of Bunyakiri (Hoffmann K. 2014 p.207). Resenting this state of affairs, the Tembo authorities of Ziralo obtained in the administrative reconfiguration of 1978 the *autonomisation* of Ziralo, under Chief Chabango Chanda, through an *arrête* by the governor of South Kivu.¹⁸¹ Attempts by the chief of Buzi, Hubert Sangara, to reclaim the status of Buzi as a Chiefdom and integrate Buzi-Ziralo as a Grouping were then stalled, and finally ruled out by a decision of the *tribunal de Grande Instance de Bukavu* in 1985. Further reconfigurations during RCD rule led to the upgrading of Buzi into a chiefdom and the *Five Hills* into a Grouping, called the Grouping of Myanzi, with Boniface Buhuzu as its chief. After the war, however, the Grouping was relegated back to a Village in 2006.¹⁸²

To this day, confusion remains as to whom had the legitimate authority to administer the Five Hills, which both the Grouping of Buzi (Havu) and the Grouping of Ziralo (Tembo) claim as part of their purview. However, “effective” power over the Five Hills has progressively tilted to the side of Buzi, as the chiefs of Buzi - Hubert Sangara, and then his son Raymond Sangara¹⁸³- cultivated powerful allies, in particular Tutsi landowners with political connections in Kigali and Kinshasa, establishing de-facto authority over the Five Hills.

¹⁸¹ Op cit. p.19.

¹⁸² In 2006, the Government of National Union pronounced the dissolution of the territory of Bunyakiri and the Grouping of Myanzi.

¹⁸³ Raymond Sangara Bera succeeded to his father, Hubert Sangara, after his death in 1990.

7.1.2.2. Land Ownership and Political Representation of the Rwandophones

Imbricated in the conflict over rights of administration of the Five Hills, a second longstanding line of conflict in the region has been the presence, since the colonial era, of a large Rwandophone population in the Highlands, and their claims to citizenship, political representation, and rights to own land.

In contrast to the *Banyamulenge* population of the Highlands of the territories of Fizi and Uvira in Southern South Kivu, whose first wave of migration into the region dates back to the 19th century,¹⁸⁴ the first Rwandophone populations arrived in the coastal areas of Kalehe in the late 1930s as part of *Mission D'Immigration des Banyarwanda* (Mission of Immigration of the People of Rwanda), a settlement program orchestrated by the colonial authorities to provide a more docile labour force for the development of Kivu.¹⁸⁵ These migrant workers started acquiring land in the Kalehe Highlands, where most land was still covered in forests, striking deals with Havu authorities for the customary acquisition of land. With subsequent waves of - mostly Hutu - migrant labourers from Rwanda arriving in the 1950s to work on the colonial coastal plantations, a pattern of migration and settlement took shape, with new migrants following family or community networks and settling in the Highlands, where land was still available.

The Rwandophone settlers obtained land through the customary system of land acquisition, with the payment of an initial tribute called *Kalinzi*, which conferred the right of usage of the land, conditional on yearly tributes (the *mutulo*) to Havu customary authorities.¹⁸⁶ The granting of customary usufruct rights over land formed the backbone of the structure of authority that emerged within the Rwandophone populations of the Highlands. The first families who claimed clearance rights and obtained customary usufruct over land became the representatives of the Havu customary authorities over the Rwandophone populations of the Highlands, in charge of collecting annual customary tributes, with Elias Buhuzu becoming the customary representative over the Rwandophone populations in the Northern Highlands. As the

¹⁸⁴ Vlassenroot (2013 p.16).

¹⁸⁵ Interview with Havu authorities, Minova, October 2012.

¹⁸⁶ Interview with Havu authorities, Kalehe littoral; APC-LPI (2009 p.25).

customary tributes were then hereditarily passed on to heirs, these families - such as the Buhuzu, Rugona or Lwahisha - progressively formed a landed class, the core structure of the Rwandophone societies of the Highlands.

Following political turmoil in Rwanda in the late 1950s, a second large wave of Rwandans started migrating towards the Highlands in the 1960s, this time mostly composed of poor Tutsi pastoralists fleeing Rwanda with their cattle, who were directed towards the Highlands by the Havu customary authorities and “integrated” into the system of decentralized authority over the Rwandophone populations under the coordination of Elias Buhuzu. A third wave of Rwandophone migrants arrived after the 1973 coup in Rwanda and was mainly constituted of smallholding Tutsis who followed the networks of those arriving before them. By the 1970s, the majority of the population of the Highlands was Rwandophone, mostly Hutus.

Tensions over land ownership were exacerbated when, following the Bakajika law of 1966 and the land law of 1973 whereby the Congolese state reclaimed ownership of all land and proceeded to redistribute ownership and usage rights, King Hubert Sangara of Buzi facilitated large scale land purchases in the most lucrative areas of the Highlands by regional and national elites, many of them Tutsis. This generated a differentiated landscape of ownership in the Highlands. On one side, large private *concessions*, mostly owned by business or political elites residing in Goma, Kigali or Kinshasa, concentrated mainly around the town of Numbi.¹⁸⁷ On the other, smallholding peasants with either customarily ceded rights of land usage, a dominant configuration in the Southern parts of the Kalehe Highlands and around the town of Lumbishi, or more fragile claims to a form of “squatting rights”. These emerged from longstanding *lugabane* or *conventions* - (often informal) contractual agreements between labourers and landowners, whereby the labourers were granted a small piece of land for self-exploitation in exchange work on the owner’s land.¹⁸⁸ As many of these arrangements dated back several decades and were passed on through generations, they are now interpreted as a form of effective ownership over the land,

¹⁸⁷ Interview with Havu Landowner, Numbi, October 2012.

¹⁸⁸ Interviews with Landowners and labourers, Numbi, Lumbishi and Shandje, October 2012.

nested in social relations between landowners and labourers, but without any official recognition, making them particularly vulnerable.

This fragile “architecture” of property relations that underpinned the organization of the Rwandophone societies of the Highlands was repeatedly jeopardized by regional and national events, including the conflict of the Five Hills. Following the 1985 adjudication that the Five Hills were part of the Ziralo Grouping, which effectively annulled the rights of usage that Rwandophone populations had negotiated with Havu landowners, the Rwandophones refused to recognize the authority of Chabanga Chanda, the new chief of Ziralo, and to pay the customary tributes on land in the 1980s.¹⁸⁹ Rwandophone populations of the Highlands started mounting claims to autonomy and self-administration, requesting their own customary administrative entity. These requests were backed by the fact that the Rwandophones had virtually no representation in the higher echelons of customary or provincial state institutions in South Kivu. These tensions were exacerbated in the explosive political climate of the 1990s, eventually leading to the Masisi war and the first round of armed mobilization in the region.

7.2. Armed Mobilization in the Highlands of Kalehe

In this section, we will analyse the armed mobilizations of the 1990s, in particular the Masisi War that spread to the Kalehe Highlands in 1993-1994, the arrival of the Hutu militias following the Rwandan genocide and the outbreak of violence it initiated, the first and second Congo wars as well as the post-war CNDP and PARECO mobilizations. While an exhaustive analysis of each of these key episodes would be too long, the section seeks to identify the social and institutional mechanisms of the repeated rounds of armed mobilization, and the progressive adaptation of the populations of the Highlands to a militarized political economy.

¹⁸⁹ APC-LPI (2009).

7.2.1. Armed Mobilization in the early 1990s: The Masisi War and the Rwandan Genocide

The first round of armed mobilization and armed conflict that took place in the Highlands was tied to the propagation of the Masisi War; from 1993-1995, inter-ethnic violence spread all across the Highlands of Masisi and Kalehe, initiating a logic of mobilization and militarization that would be repeatedly “activated” in the following two decades.

As mentioned in the previous section, the presence of a majority Rwandophone population in the prosperous Highlands of Kalehe, as well as in the neighbouring Highlands of Masisi in North Kivu, had progressively become a source of regional tension, as competing “native” customary authorities claimed rights over the land that these populations were occupying, but were seeing their power over these areas waning as a result of the growth of the Rwandan population, as well the rise of Rwandan business and political networks in North Kivu, who were mounting claims to political and fiscal autonomy. These tensions were exacerbated in the early 1990s as Marechal Mobutu, whose authoritarian rule over the country was being jeopardized, started engaging in what was known as *geopolitique*, the strategic appointment of local politicians to provincial governorate posts.¹⁹⁰ Threatened by the prospect of the introduction of multi-party politics as a result of the *Conference Nationale Souveraine* (CNS- National Sovereign Conference) of 1990-1992 because of the demographic majority of Rwandophones in territories such as Masisi, politicians and leaders of the so-called “autochthonous” groups of North Kivu - the Nande, Hunde and Nyanga - attempted to counter the rise in power of Rwandophone elites, stirring up popular resentment against the Rwandophones, discursively pitted as “foreigners” against the “autochtones”, from which they were accused of stealing the land.¹⁹¹ The threat to Rwandophone livelihoods was accentuated by the debate on citizenship, as the CNS organized a census to ascertain the nationality of populations living in the East, on the basis of the 1981 law. As the 1981 law’s definition of citizenship excluded most of

¹⁹⁰ Previously, ethnic “foreigners” were appointed to these positions to reduce ethnic strife (Jackson 2006).

¹⁹¹ For a more detailed analysis of the discursive underpinnings of the Autochtones vs allogene discourse, see historical chapter as well as Jackson (2006).

the Congolese Rwandophones,¹⁹² the census represented a direct threat to the Rwandophone population's livelihoods, as rights to land usage was conditional on citizenship. On both sides of the Rwandophone/"autochthones" divide, militias started being formed in 1992-1993, as youth wings of local parties on the autochthonous side, and through the conduit of the *Mutuelle d'Agriculteurs des Virunga* (MAGRIVI) on the Rwandophone side. Rumours abounded on both sides about plans to exterminate each other, leading to regular skirmishes and a climate of omnipresent tension. The first outburst of violence happened in Ntoto, a village of the territory of Walikale in North Kivu, in 1993, where several Hutus were killed in the market, spurring a chain of retaliatory violence and armed mobilization in the territories of Walikale and especially Masisi, which left more than 6000 people dead in 6 months.

The speed and extensiveness of the armed mobilization that the Ntoto events triggered should be understood in the light of the context of structural stress in which the Hutu rural populations found themselves, entirely dependent on fragile and versatile property arrangements with "autochthone" landlords and authorities. The armed mobilization of 1993 wasn't a coordinated movement, but rather one that took the shape of the decentralized rural agrarian communities of Masisi, with small groups of *Combatants* and *Bakobwa*, as the Hutu militias were called, sprouting in numerous villages and towns of the Highlands of Masisi. Local notables - schoolteachers, clerks, and various leaders - stepped in as leaders and often played key roles in organizing the mobilization. Stearns (2013) shows that the initial leaders of these mobilizations – such as Zabuloni Munyantware, Mayanga Wa Gishuba, Turinkinko - reflected the initial civilian nature of the mobilization, which was also displayed by the low levels of technology of the groups, who were armed with machetes and spears.

The spread of the violence of the Masisi war to the territory of Kalehe can be explained by the similar underlying conditions that prevailed in the Highlands of Masisi and Kalehe, and the dense social networks that connected the neighbouring Hutu societies of Masisi and the societies of the Northern Kalehe Highlands. Although violence did not immediately erupt in the Highlands of Kalehe - the first "major" incident in Kalehe

¹⁹² In order to claim citizenship according to this law, one had to provide evidence that 2 of his direct ancestors had been residents in the Congo before 1908.

happened in October 1994 - ¹⁹³ the fear and paranoia was deeply felt and accentuated by the arrival of numerous displaced Hutu fleeing Masisi. As a farmer from Lumbishi recalls:

“Everyone was scared, because we knew the violence was very close and could arrive here very quickly; We were hearing so many stories of massacres, mothers being raped, houses burned, the children killed, so we were already fearing for our lives (...) The assassins were already there, many people were coming into town and telling us that they were already in the mountains very close to here, pillaging our cows and destroying our fields; And there were a lot of Tembo youth joining those groups, so we knew what to expect” ¹⁹⁴

Indeed, the anti-Rwandan militias that had formed in Masisi, such as the *Bangilima*, the *Katuku* and the *Batiri* ¹⁹⁵ had started conducting raids on cattle in the Kalehe Highlands. In the Grouping of Ziralo, tensions soon escalated between the Tembo and Rwandophone populations, which had lived in close yet tense cohabitation in the area. Hutu armed groups started recruiting in the Highlands towns of Lumbishi and Shanje in 1995, according to the chief of Lumbishi.¹⁹⁶ According to several sources, the MAGRIVI - A Hutu association that spearheaded the mobilization in North Kivu - which had established itself in the Kalehe Highlands in early 1992, as well as in Ziralo and in the Mbingas¹⁹⁷ - had started agitating the youth in towns such as Lumbishi and Shanje in 1993-1994, in preparation for the formation of the militias.¹⁹⁸

As for the Masisi War, a specific set of events triggered an escalation in violence and mobilization in the Ziralo Grouping and Kalehe Highlands. On October 25, 1994, a Hutu was assassinated by the Batiri militia in Katale, sparking anger within the Hutu

¹⁹³ APC- LPI (2009).

¹⁹⁴ Interview with farmers on the road between Numbi and Lumbishi, October 2012.

¹⁹⁵ The Batiri were ad-hoc militias, initially created by the Hunde of Masisi, but quickly joined by many Nyanga and then Tembo groups. Local Tembo chapters of the Batiri then emerged in Kalehe (APC-LPI 2009 p.19).

¹⁹⁶ Interview with Chief of Lumbishi, October 2012.

¹⁹⁷ APC-LPI (2009 p.26).

¹⁹⁸ Interview with ANR representative, Numbi, October 2012.

community.¹⁹⁹ But the event that set fire to the region was the assassination, on February 17, 1995, of a local Hutu notable of Lumbishi, Bugabo Burasharira, concomitantly to a series of assassination and pillages in the area, attributed to the Batiri militia.²⁰⁰ This sparked retaliatory attacks on Tembo houses in the villages of Chambombo, Lurere, Mianda and Tushunguti in the Grouping of Ziralo, setting forth a set of tit-for-tat attacks in the region. In Tushunguti, Kachihonda Makoni, a local Tembo notable, was assassinated with members of his family during one of these attacks, further escalating the tensions. The *Bakowba* and *Combattants* militia on the Hutu side, and the *Batiri* and *Katuku* militia on the Tembo side, saw their numbers increase substantially as local chiefs and community leaders encouraged youth to join the militias.

As Stearns (2013) argued about Masisi, the initial round of mobilization in the Kalehe Highlands was rooted in peasant community structures, encouraged by leaders and notables and mediated by families and peer groups, in particular the youth. According to the chief of Lumbishi, the *Combatants* groups that formed in Lumbishi were a “local movement”, composed of voluntaries who took up arms to protect the land of the Hutus against the menace of the Tembo militias, with the support of the population and the involvement of the authorities.²⁰¹ As in Masisi, the leaders of the 1995 armed mobilization in the Highlands of Kalehe - such as Gwigwi, Bisagwira, and Rutambuka - would become the commanders of subsequent rounds of mobilization, in particular the PARECO and Nyatura mobilizations. Along with them, an entire generation of youth were mobilized and took part in combat, and would constitute the first strata of militarized labour in the region. The violence of 1995 led to around 1000 deaths in the area,²⁰² and spread to Ramba, the Highlands of Bushengeshenge, the Grouping of Ziralo and the northern Highlands.

As noted by APC (2009) and Stearns (2013), these mobilizations enhanced the geographic divide between Rwandophone and Tembo populations in Ziralo, as ethnic violence forced Rwandophone populations to flee the ethnically mixed areas of the

¹⁹⁹ APC-LPI (2009 p.20).

²⁰⁰ According to the chief of Lumbishi and his Nyumbakumi, the Batiri killed a total of 21 people in Lumbishi in 1995.

²⁰¹ Interview with Chief of Lumbishi, October 2012.

²⁰² This figure is not confirmed but was advanced by a security expert in the region.

Western Midlands of Ziralo (which became Tembo in majority), while the Tembo fled the towns of Lumbishi, Shanje and Numbi, which became Rwandophone in majority. To this day, the ethno-geographic divide remains strong. According to a Hutu peasant of the Highlands:

*“The Highlands, where one can plant the haricot (beans), belong to the Hutu. You cannot find Tembos there. Lower, (on the western slopes of the mountain range), where one can plant the manioc, that belongs to the Tembo”*²⁰³

The violence subsided in late 1995, after a mediation was carried out by the governor of South Kivu, which led to a cease-fire. In the highly tense context of the mid-1990s, however, the militias did not disarm, and would soon be remobilized in the context of the 1990s regional wars.

7.2.2. The Rwandan genocide and its aftermath

The arrival of a large number of Rwandan refugees following the 1994 Rwandan genocide, and, in their midst, of heavily armed *ex-Forces Armées Rwandaises* (Rwandan Armed Forces, ex-FAR) and their ancillary militias, further contributed to the militarization and destabilisation of the Highlands. The Rwandan war had already affected the Rwandophone populations of eastern DRC, as both the Habyarimana regime and the Rwandan Patriotic Front had developed recruitment networks among the Rwandophone populations of eastern DRC, including in the Highlands of Masisi and Kalehe (Stearns 2013). Upon their arrival in the coastal areas of Kalehe, where they were initially installed in refugee camps, the Rwandan armed factions started contacting Congolese Hutu populations in the Highlands, who started providing food, in some cases in exchange for weapons.²⁰⁴

As a result, the social climate between the Hutu and Tutsi in the Highlands started polarizing, and many Tutsis started leaving the Highlands to return to Rwanda from

²⁰³ Interview with Hutu peasant, Lumbishi, October 2012.

²⁰⁴ APC-LPI (2009).

late 1994, either selling their land or entrusting it to local Havu, which would create conflicts upon their return (Ansoms, Claessens & Mudinga 2013). Tensions escalated drastically in 1996, when the Rwandan Patriotic Army started conducting military raids on the refugee camps of the Lake Kivu shores, pushing the ex-FAR and Rwandan militias into the Highlands, where they arrived by thousands and started spreading havoc, targeting Tutsis and burning down Numbi, the “capital of the Highlands”, which had the largest concentration of Tutsis in the Kalehe Highlands.²⁰⁵ Most witnesses describe this period as a time of unprecedented crisis, particularly in the eastern areas of the Highlands and Midlands that had been relatively spared of the violence of the Hutu/Tembo conflict. As a farmer of Bulagiza recalls:

“This was the first time that we heard the coup de balles (gunshots), never before had these things been heard around here; Many families fled, but at the time we had no organization, we didn’t know where or how to flee”

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Most interviews point to a clear targeting of Tutsis, and trace the ethnic polarization in the Kalehe Highlands to this period. The current Chief of Numbi, a Tutsi, recalls:

*“When the Rwandan Hutu arrived, they started arming the Congolese Hutu of the Highlands. The Hutu then became the masters of the Highlands, and they started attacking numerous families, in particular the Tutsis, who were fleeing the violence, and taking their land and seizing their goods. After a few years, the Hutus were chased away by the AFDL, but the Hutus had formed groups of bandits, such as Rutambuka and his bandits who continued to pillage”*²⁰⁷

According to the authorities of Lumbishi, the Rwandan Hutu militias arrived in Lumbishi in 1996, more than a year after the cease-fire that had followed the Hutu-Tembo ethnic conflict. The arrival of the Rwandan armed factions in the Congolese Hutu areas did not, however, cause automatic identification or appraisal by the Hutu

²⁰⁵ Interview with Celestin Seburikande, Chief of Numbi, October 2012.

²⁰⁶ Interview with Havu landowner of Numbi, October 2012.

²⁰⁷ Interview with Chief of Numbi, October 2012.

Congolese populations, partly because of the violent behaviour of these militias, who often didn't spare the Hutu Congolese areas, causing deep fractures in the Hutu societies of the Highlands. The Hutu militias of Lumbishi - the *Combattants* - had kept concealed weapons, and the heavily armed Rwandan armed factions found a receptive ear in numerous disaffected Hutu youth of the Highlands, whose prospect of economic livelihood and social integration in the context of land saturation and political marginalization were dire, and were easily influenced by the ideologies of scapegoatism and ethnic hatred which the Rwandan armed factions carried. A former *Combattant* who was mobilized in Lumbishi, recalls having been trained by an Ex-FAR lieutenant:

*“When our Rwandan cousins arrived to the Highlands, they informed us that the Tutsis had the plan of conquering us and reducing us to slavery; they gave us their ideology. Us, the Congolese Hutu, we didn't have this “mentality” of attacking the Tutsis, who were living with us. But when they came, this changed, and they started attacking the Tutsis”*²⁰⁸

Numerous armed groups of various size were formed, either by ex-FAZ soldiers or Congolese Hutu militia men. Taking advantage of the difficult terrain and relative isolation, these opportunistic groups started raiding cattle and pillaging isolated villages, developing the economy of pillage that would become endemic in the Highlands. Most interviewees establish a clear distinction between participation in the community self-defence initiatives (during the Tembo-Hutu conflict, and subsequently with the Nyatura), and participation in these types of gangs and armed groups. While participation in the former was attributed to defence of the land and the community, participation in the latter was often attributed to economic deprivation and landlessness, with several interviewees identifying the “rebels” as the “sans terre” (without land).²⁰⁹ Yet, despite the fact that a difference was established between these two types of groups and the participants they attracted, the reality seems to have been much more blurred, with many of the self-defence groups and their participants

²⁰⁸ Interview with Hutu peasant and ex-combatant, Numbi, October 2012.

²⁰⁹ The lack of land as a determinant of participation has been identified by the chiefs of Numbi, Shandje, Lumbishi, and their councillors, as well as in interviews with ex-combatants or sibling and kins of combatants.

developing into more violent and predatory organisations. As we will see, the interdependence of the “protective” function of armed groups and their more predatory activities would become a central feature of the political economy of the Highlands.

7.2.3. Amplification and extension during the Congolese Wars

The two Congolese wars of 1996-1997 and 1998-2003 had profound consequences on the region, tying local dynamics of armed conflict to national level dynamics of war. When the AFDL took control of Goma in 1996, it started mounting attacks on the Rwandan Hutu armed faction, many of whom had taken refuge in the Highlands. In order to boost its ranks and break support for the *genocidaire* armed forces within the Congolese Hutu population, the AFDL used its military and political strength to co-opt the Congolese Hutu elites in Masisi, managing to obtain the support of the vice president of the *Combattants*, Robert Seninga, who integrated several hundred of troops into the AFDL. The Congolese Hutu military and political leadership was, however, sharply divided, with another branch led by Bigembe Turinkinko and Hassan Mugabo opposing the AFDL under the *Mongol* banner, and forging an alliance with the Rwandan Hutu rebels regrouped into the new politico-military movement called ALIR²¹⁰ (Stearns 2013 pp.15-16).

In the Kalehe Highlands, the progression of the AFDL quickly became enmeshed with land ownership disputes. As previously mentioned, many Tutsi landowners had fled the Highlands following the threats posed by the arrival of the Rwandan Hutu armed factions, entrusting their land to intermediaries, through leases and conventions. Benefitting from the AFDL advance, several Tutsi landowners started returning to the Highlands, and claiming back their land, which had often been sold by the intermediaries, initiating ownership disputes with the new owners or occupiers of the land (Ansoms, Claessens & Mudinga 2013). In a militarized environment, this led to clashes, as some military factions within the AFDL backed the Tutsi landowners, forcefully seizing land from the - often Hutu - families that had settled on it, initiating a perverse logic of ethnically polarized violent land acquisitions that would become of

²¹⁰ This movement regrouped ex-Rwandan Armed Forces officers, but also ex Rwandan militia leaders (Interhamwe), and would later become the *Forces Democratiques de Liberation du Rwanda* (FDLR).

a central component of repeated violence in the region. In interviews with Hutu representatives, these were often associated to a larger Tutsi “grand scheme” to seize all of eastern Congo, and expropriate the Hutu communities. According to the mediator of the *Centre de Dialogue et de Mediation* (Centre for Dialogue and Mediation) of Numbi, the AFDL was initially systematically targeting the Hutu population, which it associated with the Hutu armed groups it was combatting.²¹¹

The RCD rebellion of 1998 further intensified the game of military and ethno-political alliances in North and South Kivu. While some sections of the Congolese Hutu militias allied with the coalition of forces backed by the Kinshasa government - which included the FDLR, the constellation of Mayi-Mayi groups, and the Congolese Hutu militia of Bigembe - a large majority of the Rwandophones in the Highlands of Masisi and Kalehe sided with the RCD-Goma rebellion (Stearns 2013; Hoffmann K. 2014). Furthermore, The RCD-G and Rwanda eventually chose to co-opt the Congolese Hutu leadership in North Kivu in order to drive out the FDLR. Eugene Serufuli, a Congolese Hutu from Masisi, was appointed governor of North Kivu, which enabled the consolidation of substantial political and economic power by the Hutu elite in Goma. To consolidate his power base in the Hutu societies of the Highlands, Serufuli launched the *Tous pour la Paix et le Developpement* association (TPD - All for Peace and Development). The TPD set up local branches in most Hutu villages of the Highlands, channelling rural development programs and organizing the resettlement of Congolese Tutsis that had fled to Rwanda. To further consolidate its power base, the RCD started replacing Village Chiefs by Hutu and Tutsi, reducing the power of the “native” customary authorities. Several testimonies point to the effectiveness of this strategy in bolstering popular support for the RCD-Goma. According to the director of the CDM, the nomination of Serufuli as governor of North Kivu immediately reduced tension and violence between the RCD and the Congolese Hutu armed groups in the Highlands. However, it led to further fractures in the Hutu societies of the Highlands, in part because the FDLR conducted retaliatory attacks against Congolese civilian populations in response for their alleged collusion with the RCD. According to the chief of Lumbishi, the FDLR carried out an attack on

²¹¹ Interview with *Action pour la paix et la Concorde* representative and director of the Numbi *Centre de Dialogue et de Mediation*, Numbi, October 2012.

Lumbishi in 1998, “*pillaging systematically and burning down all the houses of the village*”.²¹²

In order to consolidate its power in Kalehe where the Mayi-Mayi resistance was strong, particularly in the Bunyakiri area, the RCD elevated Bunyakiri to the status of a Territory, granting the Tembo ethno-political constituency their long requested political autonomy in the hope it would reduce support for the Mayi-Mayi insurgency, which had strong ties with Tembo customary authorities (APC-LPI 2009 p.13). The RCD also elevated the Buzi Grouping to the status of Chiefdom, under Raymond Sangara, and the Five Hills to the status of a Grouping (The Myanzi Grouping) with a Tutsi chief at its head (Boniface Buhuzu), facilitating direct control over the mineral rich area at the time of the coltan boom of 2000.²¹³ A new round of large scale land acquisitions in the Highlands by high ranking political authorities of the RCD-G, such as Bizima Karaha or Eugene Serufuli, was facilitated by the Buzi authorities and the Chief of the Myanzi Grouping Boniface Buhuzu, causing further expropriations of smallholding peasants.²¹⁴ This further tied the region to regional and national level politics, as these influential landowners would regularly weight in to local disputes in order to ensure the protection of their acquired land.

When the war ended and a transition government incorporating the former rebel factions was formed, the political dynamics shifted significantly in eastern DRC. The unity of the RCD-G as a movement was threatened by the move of a large part of the movement’s administrators to Kinshasa, and the prospects of military integration and democratic elections in the East. As a result, Eugene Serufuli made thorough efforts to consolidate his power base in the East, in particular by developing and intensifying his influence over grassroots politics, through his TPD movement, but also through the Local Defence Forces that he had set up. This phase was crucial in further integrating rural community politics into a larger, regional power nexus, controlled by elite Hutu power brokers. Indeed, resources were distributed through these elite networks to rural community leaders – credit, money, cattle - in “exchange” for

²¹² Interview with Chief of Lumbishi, October 2012.

²¹³ According to the chief of Numbi, the RCD had initially been looking for Tourmaline in the area around Numbi, before switching to Coltan in 2000.

²¹⁴ Interview with landowner, Numbi, October 2012.

resource mobilization, in particular taxes and labour. Stearns (2013) recounts that, in order to gain influence over the military integration process, Serufuli organized a mobilization of the Local Defence forces in 2003, in view of weighting in on the military integration process. The means used are telling: Local leaders and Nyumbakumi (hill chiefs and neighbourhood chiefs), representing the entire rural architecture of political power of the Hutu community, were directly provided with money and weapons, and charged with recruiting soldiers in rural areas. These resource mobilization networks that connected rural Hutu societies of the Highlands to the central nodes of political power in Goma would become crucial in further rounds of mobilization, in particular the PARECO mobilization.

7.2.4. Post War Mobilizations: The PARECO

The PARECO movement, which emerged in 2007, represented a further step in the political and social reorganization of the region. The PARECO - *Union des Patriotes Résistants Congolais* - was a politico-military movement that emerged in the post 2006 elections era and the emergence of the CNDP, and eventually became the most powerful vehicle of Congolese Hutu interests in the region. The military strength of the CNDP, due to its backing by Rwanda and its access to the networks of mobilization of the RCD, was a direct menace to the Kinshasa government, who, after clashes between the CNDP and FARDC that turned in favour of the former in 2006, attempted to co-opt the CNDP by integrating it into the army. The army integration program, which offered CNDP commanders the highest ranks in the FARDC's eastern commands, crystallized the grievances of a range of actors who opposed the rise in both military and political power of the CNDP. At the military level, these included the former Hutu dominated armed groups that had fought on the side of the Kinshasa government during the second Congo war, such as the Hutu Mayi-Mayi groups under the leadership of Mugabo, who had been integrated into the FARDC in the transition period but often side-lined and marginalized. At the level of territorial politics, opponents to the CNDP included a broad coalition of mid ranking politicians and leaders who were seeing their position threatened by the rise of this new player, from local Hutu political leaders who had benefited from the RCD era such as Bigembe Turinkinko, to leaders of the so-called "native" ethnic groups (Hunde, Nyanga, Tembo) who had accumulated grievances against what many considered as a foreign

invasion. But, as argued by Stearns (2013), it was the involvement of the larger politicians, such as Dieudonne Bakungu Mithondeke, a Hunde politician, and former RCD Hutu elites, in particular the Eugene Serufuli himself, that put the crucial political and financial weight behind the PARECO movement.

In order to build a broad military and political coalition, PARECO leaders started using their influence over the networks they had forged under RCD rule, which ran deep into the military, business and political spheres in North and South Kivu, and in which the CNDP had tapped for its mobilization. While the CNDP, using financial means, had been able to mobilize a large number of ex-combatants in the Highlands of Masisi and Kalehe, resentment was rife within the ranks as a result of poor conditions and perceived marginalisation.²¹⁵ Dieudonne Bakungu Mithondeke, a fiercely anti-CNDP Hunde politician, stirred resentment among integrated Mayi-Mayi soldiers, fostering defections from army ranks. Military leaders of the Hutu rebellions, such as General Janvier Mayanga wa Bishuga, or Zabuloni Munyantware in North Kivu, or Colonel Gwi Gwi Busogi in South Kivu, activated their former chains of command and provoked defection from the ranks of the national army (FARDC). Eugene Serufuli, the former governor of North Kivu, also used his influence over the former Local Defence Forces to provoke defections towards the PARECO, as well as the deep channels of influence developed by the TPD to garner support at the grassroots level in rural North and South Kivu, and recruit additional soldiers. Although it would progressively build up into a Hutu organization, the PARECO was initially a multi-ethnic movement, with prominent Hunde political and military leaders weighing in to mobilize support and troops for the movement. In August 2007, the army integration program broke down, and heavy fighting started between PARECO and CNDP armed factions. Complex games of alliances and opposition ensued between the different factions of the FARDC, the CNDP and the PARECO, with the FARDC repeatedly providing support to the PARECO.

In the Highlands of Kalehe, the PARECO movement inserted itself at the nexus between land ownership, political power and military force that had become the central node of the political economy of the region. Because of their much smaller

²¹⁵ Interview with director of PARECO-PAP, Minova, October 2012.

demographic weight in the Kalehe Highlands, the Hutu population had not been able to obtain the type of political clout that the much larger Hutu community of Masisi had obtained under Eugene Serufuli's rule in North Kivu. As a result, rural Hutu populations remained highly vulnerable to land expropriations, often carried out with the backing of the CNDP that had established a military base in Numbi in 2008, in part to protect the assets of - often Tutsi- political and military elites, but also weighting on land disputes which had taken an ethnic character in the Highlands.²¹⁶

The South Kivu chapter of the PARECO, that had emerged under the leadership of the former leaders of the Hutu militia of the ethnic wars of the 1990s - in particular Gwi Gwi, Rutambuka and Nsabimana - started weighting militarily on the game of land control and political power of the Highlands. Installing their headquarters in the town of Shandje, the PARECO extended to their military control to Luzirantaka, Lumbishi, and, on several occasions, Numbi. This led to a de facto isolation of the main Hutu towns of the Kalehe Highlands, which were administered autonomously by the PARECO, in collaboration with Hutu civilian leaders.²¹⁷ A PARECO police, led by "Inspector" Ngundiye Bestro, operated in Shandje and Luzirantaka, symbolizing the separate administration of the Hutu villages of the Highlands.²¹⁸

In interviews, attitudes towards the PARECO military presence in 2008 diverged sharply. The authorities of Lumbishi stated that the purpose of the movement was communal protection "*against the Tutsi aggression*".²¹⁹ In other interviews, the PARECO occupation was portrayed as brutal and arbitrary as a result of the undisciplined recruits in its ranks. Former PARECO commanders and members admitted that recruitment procedures were lax, allowing a large number of "bad elements" to enter the ranks, and that there was very little training before deployment, which was attributed to the haste of the mobilization and the need to rapidly boost troop numbers.²²⁰ The large numbers of ex-combatants that populated the Highlands

²¹⁶ Interview with Landowner, Numbi, October 2012.

²¹⁷ Interview with head of PARECO-PAP, Minova, October 2012.

²¹⁸ The PARECO police was then dismantled in late 2008, with most officers integrating the national police. Interview with Numbi Police Chief.

²¹⁹ Interview with chief of Lumbishi, October 2012.

²²⁰ Interview with PARECO ex-combatants and police chief of Numbi, October 2012.

constituted prime recruitment pools for the PARECO, who also became enmeshed with the economy of pillaging and racketeering that had developed in the region.

Recruitment superseded pre-constituted ex-combatant networks,²²¹ mobilizing another “layer” of combatants from rural Hutu populations, sometimes with the active intermediation of Hutu civilian leaders. According to some interviewees, injunctions to provide soldiers to the movement were relayed by the authorities in Shandje and Lumbishi, on the basis of the necessity to provide protection to the Hutu populations of the Highlands, although this does not necessarily entail support by these authorities. Furthermore, the PARECO of the Kalehe Highlands were considered deeply “ethnicist” by non-Hutu interviewees, several of whom recall having been intimidated because of their non-Hutu status.

The fighting escalated until late 2008, with the CNDP threatening to capture Goma on October 6, 2008. The political process that had been set up to attempt to solve the crisis, the Goma Conference, ended with the March 23, 2009 Agreements, that started the military integration of both the CNDP and PARECO troops, and the end of the rebel occupation of the Kalehe Highlands. It did not, however, fundamentally solve the underlying causes of the crisis, and, as we will see, led to a new round of mobilization in the Kalehe Highlands.

7.5. Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen that violent conflicts that have affected the Highlands of Kalehe were a conjunction of longstanding conflicts over land and identity and regional and national processes of politico-military competition and control. Focusing on the Hutu populations of the Kalehe Highlands, we have seen that the initial episodes of armed mobilization reflected the decentralized and agrarian basis of the Hutu societies. The repeated wars that affected the region following the Rwandan refugee crisis and the Congolese wars, however, sparked the progressive integration of this isolated area into regional dynamics of politico-military competition. Armed mobilization reinforced mechanisms of autonomous organization of the Hutu societies

²²¹ Stearns (2013) notes that around a third of the PARECO recruits were ex-combatants.

of the Highlands, but also entrenched a logic militarization in those societies. While this chapter adopted historical angle to trace the repeated rounds of armed mobilization in the Kalehe Highlands, the following chapter on the Nyatura mobilization of 2011, a direct continuation of the dynamics of armed mobilization identified in this chapter, provides a closer view of the “social architecture” of armed mobilization in the context of an already militarized political economy. The broader conclusion on these two chapters is provided at the end of chapter 8.

Photo 3: The town of Numbi





Chapter Eight

The Nyatura Mobilizations of 2011-2012

“Here, we have the culture of self-defence; in front of any need or problem, people have the reflex of taking things in their own hands”

Hutu agricultural worker and ex-combatant

In August 2011, the town of Lumbishi was shaken by a call to arms that rallied dozens of combatants and gave birth to a new armed movement in the Hutu societies of the Highlands, known as the Nyatura - a Kinyarwanda term that means “to hit hard in order to correct”. The emergence of yet another rebellion in the Kalehe Highlands, in the very same town where the first armed mobilization had occurred, speaks to the entrenchment of dynamics of violence in eastern Congo, which in many senses seem to have become “intractable”. Yet it raises the question that is at the heart of this study: Given that almost twenty years separate the first mobilizations from the Nyatura rebellion, during which widespread war, violence and destruction have ravaged the Kalehe Highlands, what has changed? How does the Nyatura mobilization differ from the initial mobilizations of the 1990s?

This chapter provides a close-range analysis of the two initial phases of the Nyatura mobilization in 2011 and 2012, situating the social processes of armed mobilization within the reconfigured “social architecture” of the region resulting from the progressive adaptation of the Kalehe Highlands societies to the entrenchment of a militarized political economy. In particular, we will argue that the Nyatura mobilization is a manifestation of the transformation of the Hutu societies into a “de-facto” ethno territorial constituency, inserted in the regional political economy of power and protection. We have seen that, while the armed mobilizations of the early 1990s had an ad-hoc, grassroots character that reflected the decentralized nature of the agrarian societies of the Highlands, the ascending role played by Hutu elites in the

RCD and then the PARECO movement brought the Hutu societies of the Kalehe Highlands into regional dynamics of power, profit and protection organized around ethno-territorial constituencies. The culture of autonomous political organization that the Hutu populations of the Highlands had developed as a result of persistent political marginalization in South Kivu therefore became bound to larger processes of politico-military accumulation and control. The Nyatura mobilization of 2011 and 2012 are thus at the crux of two, somewhat opposed logics: On one side, the new forms of control that armed organizations have come to exert on the rural societies of eastern DRC, and in particular on military labour. On the other, they remain part of a wider effort by the Hutu ethno-territorial constituency to organize protection in the face of repeated existential threats. Participation in the Nyatura armed factions is therefore not only representative of the entrenchment of violence as a form of labour, but inscribed - albeit problematically - in the militarized “communities” of the Highlands.

This chapter is divided into three sections. First, we trace the underlying causes of the emergence of the Nyatura movement to the nexus between two factors: On one side, the exacerbation of existential threats to the Hutu societies of the Highlands of Kalehe due to a sharp increase in violent land seizures, which threatened the very basis of these societies and activated mechanisms of communal protection, of which armed factions are an essential part. On the other, the more prosaic agendas of the movement’s military leaders in the context of a highly volatile and politicized process of army integration. As we will see, both aspects are mutually dependant, a result of the nexus between access to resources by ethno-territorial constituencies, political control and military hierarchy, that characterize the novel political economy of eastern DRC. The second and third parts trace the “social architectures” of two distinct rounds of armed mobilization by the Nyatura movement in the Hutu societies of the Kalehe Highlands, with the objective of understanding the particular mechanisms through which participants are recruited in a context where military actors have become embedded in society.

8.1. Structural and Proximate Causes of the Nyatura Mobilization

8.1.1. Military Integration and “Military Business”²²²

In their efforts to justify their insurgency, the leaders of the Nyatura movement, most of them former PARECO commanders,²²³ advanced the frustration that followed the military integration program as one of the main motives for creating the rebel movement, making the Nyatura movement look like a replica of the PARECO movement. Indeed, the distribution of military ranks and positions that had been agreed in the *Accords de Goma* of 2009 and hastily implemented through a military integration program reflected the balance of power between armed groups, contributing to the volatility of the national army (Baaz & Verweijen 2013; Baaz, Stearns & Verweijen 2013). As the second most important armed group after the CNDP in 2008-2009, the integrated PARECO found themselves under the command of former CNDP commanders against whom they had been fighting, creating strong resentment from PARECO officers. Furthermore, the “treatment” of ex-PARECO soldiers in the national army, where salaries were often delayed or withheld and living conditions were dire in comparison to the “treatment” of their ex-CNDP counterparts added to the general frustration.²²⁴

The stakes of military integration went beyond the issue of status and military rank, as a result of the inter-dependence of military territorial control and economic activity that had become a central feature of the political economy of eastern DRC. As military control entailed control over economic activity, usually in the form of various extra-legal taxation schemes, protection arrangements and business ventures controlled by military actors (Verweijen 2013), the issue of territorial deployment of military units was highly politicized, as entire equilibriums of protection arrangements depended on them. Following the Goma conference and military integration, the former military

²²² This expression is borrowed from Verweijen (2013).

²²³ These included Gwi Gwi, Rutambuka, Bisagwira Muhindi, Colonel Karume Kenge, Bahati Ntuba Yoruka, all former PARECO commanders. A notable exception was Fikiri, a young civilian from Numbi who would become the spokesperson for the Nyatura movement in 2012-2013, and then a Colonel in the FARDC.

²²⁴ Interview with ex-PARECO soldiers, Numbi, Lumbishi, Minova, Nyabibwe, September-November 2012.

head of the PARECO South Kivu, Colonel Gwi Busogi, had been affected to the strategic town of Nyabibwe, from where he commanded the 24th FARDC *secteur* composed mainly of former PARECO soldiers loyal to him. Situated at the foot of the Kalehe Highlands, Nyabibwe was a key military position not only because of its proximity to major mining sites and trade routes, but also because the military position enabled quick military interventions in the Hutu populated Highlands of South Kivu, in particular in the town of Shandje that had been the centre of the PARECO's operational command in the South Kivu Highlands. As a result of this military deployment, the protection arrangements that had developed between PARECO military and Hutu business owners, which constituted an important tenet of the relation between military actors and the wider Hutu "community", were temporarily maintained and expanded.²²⁵

The fragility of these arrangements was revealed in 2011, when a series of events built up to the Nyatura mobilization in August 2011. First, as part of the *regimentation* program of 2011,²²⁶ several ex-PARECO battalions were sent to the integration camp of Luberizi in Uvira territory, causing a significant reduction of the number of "Hutu" military in the Highlands. Furthermore, many former PARECO officers, often self-appointed, were laid off during the *regimentation* program, further enhancing resentment within the ranks of the ex-PARECO (Stearns 2013). But it was the arrest in Nyabibwe of the former military commander of the PARECO movement in South Kivu, Colonel Gwi-Gwi Busogi, which triggered the revolt. His arrest for illegal trafficking threatened the entire economy of protection that had developed around the ex-PARECO integrated troops, and was perceived by many ex-PARECO as an attempt by the FARDC leadership to destroy the Hutu military organization, and, by extension, the Hutu community of eastern DRC. The arrest of Gwi-Gwi triggered the defection of dozens of ex-PARECO soldiers, mainly from the Luberizi integration camp in Uvira Territory, many of whom moved back towards the Highlands of Masisi and Kalehe, and in particular Lumbishi where Matias Kalume Kenge, an ex-PARECO officer integrated into the 24th *secteur* in Uvira but without any effective responsibilities

²²⁵ These protection arrangements were pointed out in conversations with business owners in Nyabibwe, Kalungu, and Numbi.

²²⁶ This program objective was to reduce and rationalize the army structure by creating regiments instead of battalions, in an effort to streamline what was a bloated and inefficient army.

(“dispo”), had initiated the call to arms in July and August 2011,²²⁷ sparking the beginning of the Nyatura movement.

8.1.2. “Community protection”

While discontent in the ex-PARECO was an important factor, it is not sufficient in itself to explain the emergence of the Nyatura movement. Nor does the emphasis on the “greed” of military actors fully capture the intricate interdependence of the Hutu “community” and the Hutu military that formed the basis for the mobilization. As we have seen, the Hutu armed organizations had emerged in the 1990s as a result of the political marginalization of the Hutu populations and the situation of extreme existential threat that the ethnic and regional wars had provoked. In many instances, those auto-defence organizations had morphed into larger military ventures that had entered the regional war economy and broader military coalitions, losing the relation to their rural bases, as the example of the PARECO movement has shown. But the climate of insecurity that prevailed in the post Goma Conference era revived the demand for a form of “communitarian” security provision.

According to several sources, a series of meetings of Hutu community leaders of the Kalehe Highlands in 2011 led to a call for the return of the ex-PARECO troops to the region following their transfer to Luberizi and the insecurity and instability this had generated for the Hutu populations of the Highlands.²²⁸ The Hutu leaders include both the Hutu Sub-village chiefs and neighbourhood chiefs as well as organizations such as the *La Communaute Hutu* (Hutu Community Association) and the Hutu Civil Society organization, which both have representatives in most villages the Highlands of Kalehe.²²⁹ They also include religious leaders and representatives of different corporations - mining, agricultural workers - as well as Hutu notables, gathering up to 70 people per meeting.²³⁰

²²⁷ While the Nyatura movement was launched in August 2011, ex-PARECO defectors had been congregating in the town of Lumbishi since July 2011. MONUSCO report and interview with Colonel Bruce, Numbi, October 2012.

²²⁸ Interview with protection officer, Numbi, October 2012.

²²⁹ The current president of the Hutu community in the Kalehe Highlands is Nibamwe Muyaga Jean, while the leader of the Hutu Civil Society organization is Sengimana Monde.

²³⁰ Interview with representative of the *Communaute Hutu*, Numbi, October 2012.

The meetings of 2011 were organized in reaction to evictions of Hutu families that were taking place in the central Highlands, in the vicinity of Ngungu, Kabingu and Luzirantaka. Often carried out by ex-CNDP elements integrated in the FARDC, they threatened once again the fragile equilibrium that supported the livelihoods of many Hutu families in the region. Indeed, contrarily to the “Hauts plateaux du Sud” and the Lumbishi and Shandje areas the customary land tenure regime prevailed and Hutu landowners had purchased the land customarily, land in the northern Highlands had in large part been *domanialise* (de facto sold out of the customary system of land tenure and sold to private owners under the statist regime²³¹) and was owned by large landowners who had acquired it during the waves of acquisition of 1975-1985 and 1998-2003.²³² We have seen in the previous chapter that many Hutus had settled on these lands as agricultural labourers, establishing contractual agreements with local landowners that conferred a sense of entitlement and “squatter” rights to these families. Furthermore, the Tutsi that had fled the region during the periods of PARECO military control over the Highlands, had either sold their land or entrusted someone to take care of it through informal deals and contracts, a situation that led to many encroachments and land seizures by opportunists (Ansoms, Claessens & Mudinga 2013). After 2009 and the Goma Conference, many Tutsi families returned to the area and reclaimed the land they allegedly owned, which triggered numerous land conflicts as well as violent evictions of Hutu families, often with the support of ex-CNDP soldiers. For example, in Fungamwaka, a sub-village in the vicinity of Numbi, a Tutsi landowner contracted ex-CNDP militaries to forcefully evict Hutu families from the land in 2009.²³³ In early 2011, a Hunde landowner evicted Hutu families who had long occupied land near Ngungu in neighbouring Masisi, leading to tit-for-tat attacks between ex-CNDP FARDC soldiers and Hutu peasants.²³⁴ These violent evictions caused population displacements towards Lumbishi. The arrival of a large number of displaced populations in the summer of 2011 added to the agitation in a town that had historically

²³¹ In the situation of legal pluralism that prevails in most of the DRC regarding land tenure, the registration of land at the state cadastre to obtain a land title is usually accompanied by a withdrawal from the customary land tenure regime by a substantial payment to the landholding customary authority. Through this process, the land is withdrawn from the legal jurisdiction of customary authorities, which tends to consolidate property rights, although confusions often remain (Mpoyi 2013).

²³² Interview with local landowner, Numbi, October 2012. Also see Ansoms, Claessens and Mudinga (2013).

²³³ Interview with former Chief of Fungamwaka sub-village, Numbi, October 2012.

²³⁴ APC (2011).

been a hotbed of rebellions, and where defecting ex-PARECO soldiers had been congregating.

Adding to the mounting pressure, an important episode of the conflict of the Five Hills took place in 2011 and further threatened the fragile political arrangements that underpinned the Hutu societies of the Highlands. In August 2011, the *Chef de Groupement* (chief of Grouping) of Buzi Raymond Sangara replaced the Village Chief of Lowa-Numbi, whose authority extended to the sub-Villages of Lumbishi, Luzirantaka, Shandje and Mutuza, covering the area referred to as the Five Hills. As seen in the previous chapter, historically, the King of Buzi Raymond Sangara had appointed Elias Buhuzu, a Tutsi, as the chief of Numbi, in charge with collecting the customary taxes on land. The Buhuzu family had become crucial intermediaries for the - often Tutsi - landowning elites who had acquired land in the area. After Boniface Buhuzu family abdicated in 2003, the chief of Numbi was replaced by a Hutu, granting, for the first time in the region, an official position to a Hutu in the Highlands of South Kivu. However, the appointment of a Hutu in a context of acute ethnic strife threatened the – mostly Tutsi - landholding elites. As a result of alleged lobbying by these elites, Raymond Sangara replaced the chief of Lowa-Numbi in July 2011 by Celestin Seburikande, a Tutsi and former counsellor of Boniface Buhuzu.²³⁵ In the highly tense climate of the “land grabbing” and evictions of 2011, this replacement was seen by many Hutu leaders as an attempt to further destabilize the Hutu community by seizing their land and assets to distribute them to Tutsis arriving from Rwanda.²³⁶

While the nomination of Seburikande was met with little resistance in Numbi Centre, where the elite interests in land were concentrated and a large Tutsi population lived, it was met with much more resistance in the ethnically homogenous Hutu *sub-villages* of Shandje, Lumbishi and Luzirantaka that putatively fell under the authority of chief of Lowa-Numbi. In these *sub villages* (that can reach the size of small towns), customary representatives (although not officially recognized by the state) were exclusively Hutu, and had acquired a significant level of administrative autonomy that

²³⁵ Raymond Sangara designated his own son as the chief of Numbi. As his son was studying in Belgium, he appointed Celestin Seburikande as his interim.

²³⁶ Interview with representative of the Hutu Community, Numbi, October 2012.

had been reinforced by the isolating effects of the wars, constituting these sub-villages as a de facto ethno-territorial constituency. In Lumbishi for example, the Sub-Village Chief sat atop a ramified architecture of governance and social organization, from the Hill Chiefs (22 in the case of Lumbishi) to the Family Chiefs, the lowest echelon of authority around which the basic social unit, the family, organized around rights over land.²³⁷ This social architecture formed the landed basis of the Hutu peasant communities in the areas where the customary land tenure system prevailed, and, as we will see, also provided the basis for the armed mobilizations.

When the Tutsi chief of Numbi, Celestin Seburikande, replaced the *Chef de Sous village* of Lumbishi in August 2011 in an attempt to assert his authority, the new chef de sous village was assassinated two days later, allegedly by Nyatura elements.²³⁸ While the connection between the Nyatura and the Hutu authorities of Lumbishi was denied by the Lumbishi authorities during interviews, many interviewees assert that the assassination was the reflection of the refusal of the Hutu authorities in Lumbishi to recognize the authority of the Tutsi chief of Numbi, Seburikande. This episode provides a clear example of the sharp “ethnic” rift between the centre of official customary authority of Lowa-Numbi, where a Tutsi chief was in place, and the Hutu sub-villages of the Five Hills, which, although officially dependant on the authority of Lowa-Numbi, acted as de-facto separate ethno-political constituencies. The constitution of the Nyatura movement would clearly mark this rift, as Seburikande recalls:

*“It was extremely difficult to govern in Lumbishi and Shanje; the rebellion has broken my authority over those areas; just a few months ago I could not even set foot in Lumbishi without an army escort, at the risk of my own life”*²³⁹

²³⁷ Such a “family” could include several households, the defining character of a family being the customary entitlement to use the land.

²³⁸ The chief of police of Numbi, in charge with the investigation for the assassination, said that it hadn’t been possible to identify the culprits, mostly because of the difficulty of conducting investigations in Lumbishi. Interview with Police Chief of Numbi, October 2012-July 2015.

²³⁹ Interview with Chief of Lowa-Numbi, October 2012.

This de-facto autonomy was most visible in the elaborate systems of protection and defence that the populations of the Highlands built, which ran sharply along ethnic lines. The protection systems of the Hutu populations included systems of communication, first using relays and then through radio systems, in particular the system known as *Motorola*, whereby hundreds of Talkie Walkie relays circulate information about movement of armed groups, theft of cattle or other hazards.²⁴⁰ Other such security systems included the construction of hideouts for people and assets and the preparation of escape routes for the population.²⁴¹ These systems, however, often remained insufficient in a context of heavy militarization, and the formation of armed factions remained one of the only ways to guarantee protection.

The fact that, in 2011, the Hutu community association had asked for the return of the Hutu armed elements suggests that it played a role in mediating communitarian demands for the provision of security. The Sub-Village Chief of Lumbishi denied all implication, or tie, with the Nyatura mobilization, as did most other Hutu authorities, perhaps not surprisingly given that, at the time of the interviews, the FARDC were carrying out a counter-insurgency operation against the Nyatura. Yet there is little doubt that the leaders of the Nyatura movement were close to at least some Hutu leaders, from which, as we have seen, they had initially emerged. Bisagwira, the “political” leader of the Nyatura movement, was considered as a “notable” in the region, including by state and military officials in the Highlands.²⁴² The Nyatura mobilisation should therefore be seen in the light of the multiple and complex relations of inter-dependence between civilian and military actors that has resulted from the prolonged conflict in the region.

The Social Architecture of the Nyatura mobilizations

Now that we have identified both the structural and proximate causes of the Nyatura rebellion, we turn to an analysis of what we have called the “social architecture” of armed mobilization. We focus on two episodes of armed mobilization of the Nyatura

²⁴⁰ Interview with representative of the Hutu Community, Numbi, October 2012.

²⁴¹ Interview with intelligence officer, Numbi, October 2012.

²⁴² Interview with Police Chief of Numbi, October 2012.

movement. The first corresponds to the formative months of the movement, during which it took hold in the vicinity of Lumbishi before being forced into hiding by repeated counter-insurgency operations of the FARDC. The second occurred close to a year after, in the early summer of 2012, as a reaction to the arrival of Raia Mutomboki militia in the Highlands of Northern Kalehe. Given that the field research for this chapter was conducted while Nyatura elements were still operating in the region, we acknowledge that the interviews on which this section is based are likely to have been affected by the limitations inherent to field research in highly polarized contexts discussed in the methodology section.²⁴³

The analysis focuses on the relation between the social processes of recruitment and control of combatants, and the wider “social architecture” in which they occurred, of which we have exposed several of the characteristics. The first of these social processes of armed mobilization was the “activation” of ex-combatant networks that, as a result of the previous rounds of mobilization in the area, had become entrenched in the very social fabric of the societies of the Highlands. We will then show that the mobilization was “deeper” and more extensive than the sole recruitment of ex-combatants, bringing in new recruits as a result of a larger political effort to mobilize support from the Hutu populations of the Highlands. Finally, we will see that these mechanisms were exacerbated during the “crisis” mobilization against the Raia Mutomboki, which displayed distinct features.

8.2.1. Activating networks of ex-combatants and violent labour

The Nyatura mobilization happened in a significantly different social landscape than the initial mobilizations of the 1990s. Among the range of social processes that had altered the social landscape of the region and underpinned the macro-process known as militarization, the implantation of networks of military labour within these societies played a significant role in shaping the “social architecture” of the armed mobilization. Repeated rounds of armed mobilization in the region had constituted “pools” of military labour, formed of soldiers in the national army, members of armed groups,

²⁴³ At the time of the interviews, in October 2012, the FARDC were carrying out negotiations with Nyatura commanders, following a phase of violent combat.

but also combatants who had demobilized and “reintegrated” civilian life, either directly or through demobilization programs. For ex-combatants, the return to civilian life often meant a situation of poverty, unemployment, and social marginalization that has been thoroughly documented in studies of demobilization. In a context of protracted civil war and on-going armed conflict, the “return” to civilian life was all the more ambivalent as the mechanisms of mobilization - both social and economic and individual-psychological - often retain a strong traction over the lives of demobilized combatants.

This is particularly the case when ex-combatants tend to congregate in social and spatial clusters that reflects and preserves wartime configurations of labour mobilization, that Hoffman (2012) calls “barrack spaces”. The Highlands of Kalehe are an exemplar of this phenomenon, as ex-combatants tend to congregate in small towns and urban centres such as Numbi, Kalungu or Lumbishi, where they mix with a highly mobile workforce that moves fluidly between various labour intensive sectors of the economy, in particular mining, transport, and various types of hustling. In towns such as Numbi and Lumbishi, these youth often form groups or “gangs”, as they are pejoratively designated in the region, who structure and organize the provision of labour to the “informal” economy, in particular the mining economy which attracts a large number of unskilled workers in the region, but also, in some cases, the criminal economy.²⁴⁴ Indeed, many are said to participate in various forms of racketeering, pillaging - in particular raids on cattle - in organizations that function at the nexus between petty gangs and armed factions. In the interviews and discussions carried out in the region, unemployment, lack of land were repeatedly singled out as the root cause of the vicious cycle these young men were trapped in, and their vulnerability to mobilization into rebellions. A member of Numbi civilian security committee explains:

“It is a big problem for us in the Highlands, these gangs of youth. They have no education, and often their families have given up on them. And

²⁴⁴ While residing in the town of Numbi in October 2012, I spent a lot of evenings discussing with the youth gathered in the city centre. Various forms of hustling and petty racketeering were visible, but participation in more organized types of violent venture was mostly muted, and only mentioned indirectly and through rumours.

anyways, what can their family do or offer them? They have no land, they have no real job. So they just do stupid things, maraud and steal, take drugs (...) for the most part they have “touched the weapon” (ex-combatants), and they actually don’t know how to do anything else. It is a real problem, and we as authorities do not know how to deal with them.”

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Similarly, the mother of a combatant points to the conjunction between economic deprivation, the resulting social marginalization experienced her son, and socialization into these groups:

“He was already hanging out with the bandits; we were trying to dissuade him but he was never listening anyways. We told him to get out, but what could we do? He didn’t have a life with us, we had nothing to offer him (...) we didn’t even have any land for ourselves, not even a parcel. We worked on other people’s land and here we are renting. So what could we offer him? With them it was bad for him but with us it was also very bad” ²⁴⁶

As the national army, constituted in large part by ex-PARECO or ex-CNDP was also present in these centres, social relations forged during participation in armed factions often remained strong. As the chief of Numbi recalls about these gangs:

“We call them demobs (demobilized soldiers) but they are not really demob; a rebellion just has to break out, and they immediately join. They still have their weapons, hidden in their houses and in the population, and so they are still like a rebellion that is dormant. If their commanders call them, they will come immediately. It is a very bad situation because they cause a lot of trouble around here” ²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ Interview with Honore, member of the Numbi civilian security council, October 2012.

²⁴⁶ Interview with family of ex-combatants, Numbi, October 2012.

²⁴⁷ Interview with Celestin Seburikande, chief of Lowa Numbi, October 2012.

Former armed group commanders integrated into the national army often retain strong control over their former combatants and the networks in which they are inserted. This is reinforced by the internalized psychological submissiveness to military commanders of ex-combatants, forged during participation in armed organization, which remains strong even after demobilization. As a former PARECO *demob* explains:

*“They (our commanders) just have to call us and we come back”*²⁴⁸

Although one must be wary of an excessively mechanistic or functionalist conception of these networks, as mobilizations have a fundamentally negotiated character, testimonies of the initial Nyatura mobilization of August 2011 point to the quick “activation” of the ex-PARECO networks.²⁴⁹ In Numbi and Shanje, ex-combatants recall having quickly “heard” about the mobilization. As one ex-PARECO recalls:

*“Information was already circulating that there was a new movement before it came, and people were already talking about whether they would join or not (...) After the arrest of Gwi Gwi and the plan to make the Hutu population suffer, people were ready, especially the ex-PARECO who were in town and were very frustrated. We were all frustrated at the time because the mines weren’t giving anything”²⁵⁰ (...) when the movement started in Lumbishi, many went to Lumbishi to inquire about what was going on, to see if there was something for them. Then, it’s as if some people were already working for them (the movement), because they were sensibilizing us around here”*²⁵¹

Other testimonies point to coercion being used, exerted through peer-pressure mechanisms, with reluctant former PARECO demobs being forced to join by their peers. According to a relative of several former PARECO soldiers mobilized into the Nyatura in Shandje:

²⁴⁸ Interview with ex-PARECO, Numbi, October 2012.

²⁴⁹ Interview with Numbi Police chief, October 2012.

²⁵⁰ This is a reference to the temporary national ban on mineral exports in 2011 that halted mining activity in eastern DRC.

²⁵¹ Interview with ex-PARECO, Numbi, October 2012.

*“My nephew (a PARECO demob) was a refractaire (refuzenik); when the others went to Lumbishi, he did not go with them, instead he told us that this didn’t concern him anymore and that he was finished with the military career; but after a moment, they came to get him. He resisted for a while and he even hid, but they finally seized him, in the middle of the day, and took him with them”*²⁵²

While ex-combatants networks undeniably played a strong role in mediating the armed mobilization, which often involved various types of social pressure and coercion towards reluctant recruits, ex-combatants retained agency in the decision to participate. In interviews, the supposedly separate categories of individual motivations for participation exposed in the theoretical chapter – relative deprivation, grievances, incentives, pleasure of agency - were often spelled out together, pointing to their inter-connected character. As the ex-PARECO testimony exposed before shows, rumours of a new rebellion enticed many to see if there was “something for them”, referring to the economic dimensions of participation, but also wider possibilities of social advancement. A testimony by a participant of the civilian security committee, whose role was partly to dissuade such youth from joining rebel groups, points to the intermingled nature of feelings of economic and social deprivation, jealousy, appeal of economic or social advancement and what Wood (2003) calls the *pleasure of agency*, in the form of a youthful enthusiasm for adventure and the promise of a better life. The testimony also points to the conception of the work of war as just another form of labour, inter-changeable with other labour intensive activities:

“A young man who spends an entire month without earning a single dollar will either enter the mines, or enter the rebellion. Like everyone, they want to buy a house or a parcel of land, but these people usually have no land. They see their relatives going to live the big life in Goma, but they are stuck here with nothing. So they want to join the rebellion, to get

²⁵² Interview with Hutu agricultural labourer, Shandje, October 2012.

land, to get ranks, but also to discover the land, to travel around the country. For them, it is an adventure”²⁵³

8.2.2. Beyond ex-combatant networks: Political dimensions of the Nyatura mobilization

Although the mobilization of ex-combatants operated through networks forged and sustained as a result of previous mobilizations and military socialization, these networks, and the ex-combatants they linked together didn’t operate in isolation from the rest of Highland societies, in which ex-combatants are imbricated in more complex ways than the metaphor of the Barracks, which emphasizes a social separation, suggests. Interviews revealed that ex-combatants navigated multiple social spheres rather fluidly, painting a more complex picture than that of complete isolation and marginalization from the rural societies of the Highlands. In the towns of Numbi, Shandje, Lumbishi and their surrounding villages, ex-combatants were not systematically part of the town gangs, but could be found in most spheres of economic and social activity, from agriculture, to teaching, to customary politics.²⁵⁴ Furthermore, even the so-called “gangs” operated in much closer relation with the Kalehe societies. For example, Bahati Kana, a former RCD “Commando” who had become one of the most notorious *coupeur de route* (road cutter/bandit) of the region, was said to be closely connected to several families in the farms of the Highlands, who would offer him hideouts when he was on the run.²⁵⁵

As a result, the re-mobilization of ex-combatants permeated a larger social sphere than those of gangs of ex-combatants. Previous phases of armed mobilization, in particular the Local Defence and the PARECO, had created strong linkages between large-scale mechanisms of mobilization and local communities, and thus ran deep into the Hutu societies of the Kalehe Highlands. This allowed the Nyatura to exert multi-faceted pressures on various *nodes* of the civilian life, not only of ex-combatants, but also on their households and social environment, which was facilitated by the proximity and

²⁵³ Interview with member of the Civilian Security Committee, Numbi, October 2012.

²⁵⁴ In interview with chefs de post and chef de centre, it was noticed that many of the adjuncts of these customary representatives were ex-combatants, sometimes quite young.

²⁵⁵ Follow up interview with police chief of Numbi, July 2015.

daily interaction of populations and ex-combatants. Interviews with *refractaires* – ex-combatants reluctant to join the new rebellion - repeatedly reveal this multi-faceted influence of the armed organization. A former PARECO and Nyatura *refractaire* (refuzenik) from Lumbishi recalls:

“When they made the call for the combatants to rally, I was in Lumbishi, so I saw what was going on, and people were telling me, but I refused to go. I saw one of my former commanders who was going around the area a bit hidden and was talking up people to join the movement. He talked to me several times and told me to join; I told him that I had chosen to quit the military career. He told me that a soldier is a soldier and I have to come. I soon felt that they could do a “movement” to catch me, or ransom my family, so I moved to Numbi. But here as well they are present (...) some people within my family have even told me to join because they didn’t want to pay for me. What could I do? I had to pay them several times for them to leave me alone, but until this day I am restless because I know they can easily come and take me”²⁵⁶

This excerpt is indicative of the multi-dimensional nature of the re-mobilization of ex-combatants, who are not just coerced directly - through direct physical targeting and violence- but also indirectly, through pressure on family and social networks, which often had a strong “economic” component. Indeed, as previously argued, one of the central effects of “militarization” is the development and extension of protection arrangements between individuals and armed actors. Taxation can take the form of provision of labour for the movement, which can be negotiated on an individual or collective-communitarian level. Although I have not recorded interviews in the Kalehe Highlands of individuals or households who experienced recruitments and directly equated them to taxation, many interviewees noted that poorer families, which were unable to contribute financially to the movement, were required by the movement to give young men, suggesting a “politics” of recruitment.

²⁵⁶ Interview with ex-PARECO, Numbi, October 2012.

As previously exposed, the Nyatura mobilization was part of the intricate power game playing out between competing authorities, and the Nyatura represented a bargaining chip for Hutu elites in competition and conflict against “Tutsi” politico-military networks in the area. Although collusion with the Nyatura movement was never directly admitted by Hutu leaders and customary authorities, the mobilization of combatants was mediated by modes of communication which required the backing of at least certain segments of the population and authorities. Several ‘intoxications’ - as tracts and rumours are called in the area- circulated before the Nyatura mobilization, which framed the land grabs, and regimentation program, as a concerted effort by the Tutsis to divide and subjugate the Hutu population and expropriate them from their land, and calling the population to resist. These created a climate of fear and paranoia, as well as the basis for popular support for the movement, pointing to a wider political effort to attract support for the movement.

Playing on this climate of fear, political leaders of the Nyatura movement deployed significant efforts to explain the rationale of the mobilization to leaders and populations in the Highlands, and bolster popular support as well as recruitment. In the Hutu majority towns of Shandje, Luzirantaka and Lumbishi, Bisagwira Muhindi, the leader of the political wing of the Nyatura movement, organized meetings to explain the causes of the rebellion to representatives of the Hutu community.²⁵⁷ These political efforts aimed to inscribe the movement’s efforts within the communal values underpinning the Hutu collective identity of the Highlands, and legitimize the movement. They involved framing the movement’s goals in a language that reflected collective grievances of the Hutu population of the Highlands - in particular by emphasizing the threat to collective livelihoods that the land seizures represented - as well as appealing to pre-existing communal norms of accountability. Bisagwira, the political leader of the movement, was said to insist that the movement’s members would not behave arbitrarily or abuse civilians, insisting that if a soldier were to behave badly, the population should refer them directly to the leadership, which would take heavy sanctions against him.²⁵⁸ Through their historic role in the previous mobilizations, Bisagwira and Gwi Gwi, leader of the military branch, commanded

²⁵⁷ This was reported in several interviews, including FARDC Commander Colonel Bruce, the chief of police of Numbi, the CDM director, as well as the representative of the Hutu community.

²⁵⁸ Interview with CDM director, Numbi, October 2012.

significant authority that went beyond the strict military sphere, representing a real political influence over the Hutu communities of the Highlands.

Tied to the efforts to bolster the legitimacy of the movement among the Hutu community was an effort to mobilize resources beyond those already available through the “activation” of ex-combatant networks. Non ex-combatant recruits from Lumbishi and Shandje did join the movement, although it was difficult to ascertain what proportion of the estimated 500 combatants the movement had at the time were “fresh” recruits. As a result of the highly polarized climate at the moment of the interview, it was also difficult to ascertain the exact role of civilian authorities in supporting the recruitment of new soldiers, chiefly because, as previously mentioned, the chiefs of Lumbishi and Shandje categorically denied that they had any relations with the movement, stating that “*we are not concerned when it comes to this movement*”.²⁵⁹ Yet the chief of police, the representative of the Hutu community, the FARDC commanders and the CDM representative stated that there was no doubt that “some” Hutu civilian authorities were involved in mobilizing resources and providing recruits to the movement, usually in the form of financial and material contributions, or “giving children” to the movement. The chief of Police of Numbi argued that:

*“It is official that some people would give both money, and their children, to the movement. In this area, if a child of a known family is in the movement, and that the family does not report this to the state authorities, it means that his family has accepted to give him, and is not claiming him back. This is a sign of support for the movement”*²⁶⁰

Interestingly, interviews with authorities, participants and relatives of participants often establish a distinction between those recruits that joined the movement by opportunism, whose interest in the movement was attributed to their bad behaviour or ex-combatant status, and those who joined the movement with the legitimate intention of defending their land and community. As one adjunct to the chief of Lumbishi recalls:

²⁵⁹ Interview with sub-village chief of Lumbishi, October 2012.

²⁶⁰ Follow-up interview with Chief of Police of Numbi, July 2015.

“When the movement started, there was a lot of confusion in Lumbishi, people were not sure what to think of this new rebellion, it was creating a lot of disturbance in the area, many people fled from the town. Those who quickly joined the movement were mostly ex-combatants, and the children of the families that weren’t wise²⁶¹ (...) But there were others who did join the movement, who were relatives of wise families (sage), to defend the village against the bandits who were threatening to seize our land; but these didn’t stay long when they realized that the movement wasn’t good”

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Through a discussion, it was established that the “wise” families refer to the relatives of the *chef de collines* (Hill chiefs) of Lumbishi or other local notables affiliated to the landed class of Lumbishi, while those referred to as the “unwise” were either immigrant families, or families that had developed close associations with certain violent actors. This suggests differentiated patterns of support for the movement, revelatory of the class fractures of the societies of the Highlands, but also the fractures tied to the previous rounds of armed mobilization.

The rebellion caused immediate concern among the state authorities of the Highlands, and their first reaction was to attempt to quell the movement’s growth by asking Hutu leaders, and the Hutu population, to discourage participation of their relatives in the movement.²⁶³ During the initial weeks of the mobilization, before the repressive military operations of the FARDC started, the Nyatura were “visible” in the town of Lumbishi, going around town with their weapons and setting up road blocks at the exits of Lumbishi. They also set up positions in Mushebere close to Luzirantaka, as well as in Mudugudu in Ziralo, on the road from Shandje to Cyanbombo, thus starting to re-establish the zone of military control of the PARECO. While not militarily present in Numbi centre, Nyatura elements could be seen in the town of Numbi, suggesting that the group maintained close relations with the wider social environment

²⁶¹ “pas sage” in French.

²⁶² Interview with adjunct to Chief of Lumbishi, October 2012.

²⁶³ This was done through a series of meetings of all state representatives, representatives of the civil society and Hutu community leaders in Numbi.

in the initial period.²⁶⁴ While the state authorities were not in direct communication with the Nyatura commanders, a meeting was organized in Numbi between the FARDC commander who was dispatched to address the Nyatura rebellion, Colonel Chiviri, and Bisagwira, the political leader of the movement, who presented the movements grievances and conditions for cessation to an audience of state and community representatives.

An agreement was not found, and tension escalated as the FARDC started mounting military operations against the Nyatura in Lumbishi, Shandje, and Ziralo. On September 21, 2011, the FARDC chased the Nyatura out of Lumbishi, forcing them to disperse into the more remote areas of the Kalehe Highlands and the Ziralo Grouping, as well as in the territory of Masisi, or to “hide” in the Hutu populations of Lumbishi, Numbi and Shandje. Military and counter-insurgency operations against the Nyatura were then carried out regularly into the fall and winter of 2011, and then from February 2012.²⁶⁵ As many of the integrated FARDC carrying out the operations were former CNDP, which at the time were coming under the command of a new strongman, Bosco Ntaganda, these military operations were often interpreted as a further attempt by Tutsi power to destabilise the Hutu.²⁶⁶ Shortly after the FARDC chased the Nyatura from Lumbishi, counter-insurgency operations, referred to as *bouclage* and *ratissage* were carried out in the towns of Lumbishi and Shandje around September 20, 2011, targeting hidden combatants, arms caches, and support networks of the Nyatura.

Because of the deep ramifications of these networks within Hutu communities, this further polarized the climate, with reports of abuse by FARDC troops against civilians reported. Once again, the position of Hutu leaders seemed ambiguous. While they had declared full cooperation with the government in dismantling the rebellion,²⁶⁷ they showed great reluctance to help the FARDC and police operations in Lumbishi and

²⁶⁴ Interview with Chief of Police of Numbi, October 2012.

²⁶⁵ The first military operation against the Nyatura reported in MONUSCO’s weekly security reports dates back to July 24-26, 2011 (MONUSCO Press conference of August 3rd, 2011). Regular military operations ensued.

²⁶⁶ In interviews, Colonel Civiri was accused several times of being “anti-Hutu”.

²⁶⁷ This was reported by all interviewed participants in the multi-party security meetings on the Nyatura problem that were carried out in Numbi in the fall of 2011.

Shandje, refusing to identify Nyatura combatants and affiliates, which was interpreted as a sign of possible support for the rebellion.²⁶⁸ While the Nyatura movement seems to have remained united in South Kivu during this period, with only on short instance of secession within the group,²⁶⁹ the repression, combined to further “sensibilisations” of the population to drop support for the movement and exert pressure on relatives to leave the movement, seemed to have been relatively successful in temporarily driving a wedge between the Nyatura groups and the population, as the former were forced to flee the region or go into hiding, tracked down by army intelligence networks. Arrests of Nyatura elements, however, revealed the complicated webs of support for the movement. According to the chief of Police of Numbi, the arrest of a Nyatura element would be followed by intense lobbying on military and police authorities for his liberation, by private citizens but also by certain authorities, although no name was mentioned:

*“If a member of the group was arrested, we would see that several people would suddenly start asking for their liberation, including local notables, who argued that they would convince the person not to get back into the movement; we could see that this was the manifestation of a form of clandestine support”*²⁷⁰

According to a FARDC Colonel who was in charge of military operations, negotiations with Hutu community leaders were engaged by the FARDC after the Nyatura were out, although many elements remained dormant.²⁷¹ This was only temporary, as a new round of mobilization would ensue as a result of the Raia Mutomboki “menace”.

²⁶⁸ For example, the Chief of Police of Numbi said that this could indicate support of these authorities for the Nyatura. Given that their reluctance could also be due to threats of retaliation by the Nyatura, we cannot establish for sure whether there was support or not.

²⁶⁹ This was the case of Major Edison, who had defected for 48 hours with his escorts and installed himself in Murambi, sous village Kaloba.

²⁷⁰ Follow up interview with police chief of Numbi, July 2015.

²⁷¹ Interview with Colonel Bruce, Numbi, October 2012.

Photo 4: The town of Shandje in the Kalehe Highlands



8.3. Crisis mobilization under the Raia Mutomboki menace

We now turn to the second phase of the Nyatura mobilization in the Kalehe Highlands, under the menace of the Raia Mutomboki movement. We will argue that, much more than the previous one, this mobilization corresponded to a “crisis” mobilization, which, while activating the same types of mobilization mechanisms than the previous round of mobilization, exacerbated and superseded them.

In the course of 2012, the Raia Mutomboki phenomenon started expanding into Kalehe. The Raia Mutomboki, a loosely coordinated “armed franchise”²⁷² that developed in 2011 in the territory of Shabunda in opposition to the FDLR militia that had taken control of several areas of the territory Shabunda in the wake of the *regimentation* program of 2011.²⁷³ When the FDLR retreated from Shabunda to Kalehe territory as a result of the considerable military pressure of the Raia Mutomboki, the former started following them into Kalehe territory, first into the Grouping of Kalonge, then into the area of Bunyakiri, before moving into Walikale Territory in North Kivu, from which they reached the Highlands of Masisi and then Kalehe in the late spring of 2012. The rapid spread of the movement was due to its loose hierarchy and its “contagion” effect, whereby quasi-autonomous local chapters would be formed and take up the name. As the movement started spreading in the Tembo areas of Kalehe and the Western Midlands of the Mitumba Mountains, subsisting conflicts against Hutu populations of the Midlands and Highlands of Kalehe that dated back to the 1990s resurfaced. Added to this longstanding Tembo resentment against neighbouring Hutu communities, the Raia Mutomboki movement carried as its core “ideology” a racist anti-Rwandan discourse, and the Hutu populations of the Highlands were quickly accused by the Raia Mutomboki of harbouring and hiding the FDLR.

The threat of the Raia Mutomboki started agitating the Highlands of Kalehe in April 2012, when displaced Hutu started arriving from Walikale where the Raia Mutomboki were carrying out attacks against FDLR strongholds. The displaced carried stories of the massacres that the Raia Mutomboki had carried out against Hutu civilians and rumours that the Raia Mutomboki intended to exterminate the Hutu population of the Highlands. Among these rumours, one that was recounted in several interviews was that the Raia Mutomboki had a particular saying to illustrate the fact they made no distinction in their wrath between the FDLR and the Hutu civilian populations: “*One cannot distinguish between a city rat and a country rat*”²⁷⁴

²⁷² Stearns et al. (2013a).

²⁷³ Stearns et al. (2013a).

²⁷⁴ Interview with chief of Lumbishi, Lumbishi, October 2012.

The imminent threat of the Raia Mutomboki triggered an unprecedented round of mobilization by the Nyatura in the Kalehe Highlands. According to several military and civilian observers, several Nyatura commanders were present in Lumbishi when the Raia Mutomboki menace intensified, some of them as civilians and others as integrated into the FARDC, including Bisagwira, Colonel Karume Kage,²⁷⁵ Colonel Bahati Ntibayoruba and Colonel Felix. According to several witnesses, these leaders launched a call to immediately mobilize a large number of Nyatura in Lumbishi, who had kept arms caches in the region. Hundreds²⁷⁶ of Hutu joined the Nyatura in Lumbishi, both “locals”, as well as hundreds of other combatant joining in from Masisi Highlands, and congregating in Lumbishi.

The atmosphere of imminent crisis, and the presence of large numbers of armed Nyatura fighters in Lumbishi generated exceptional dynamics of armed mobilization, making it difficult to ascertain the role of Hutu civilian authorities and communitarian mechanisms of mobilization. Interviews, however, suggest that the power of these civilian leaders was greatly diminished, if not inexistent, in the presence of such an imposing number of armed actors. Nyatura chiefs such as Mathias Kalume Kage, and commandant Malu, reputed for their brutality, took over the area of Lumbishi, leaving little space for dialogue or influence by civilian authorities. Many interviewees report that this was accompanied by a surge of popularity for the Nyatura, and mass recruitments into their ranks. Several interviewees, including the authorities of Lumbishi, recall that the armed factions were in full control of the area at the time, with civilian and state authorities fleeing the area and the town. A shopkeeper who had fled the town just before the first battles describes the atmosphere in the town at the time:

“It was a crisis; the youth were joining massively, even many older people, the soldiers were going around and forcing the reluctant men to join the effort, everybody was preparing for combat, with weapons and everything (...) what could people do? They had to prepare for combat, or else they

²⁷⁵ Several testimonies reported the presence of Karume Kenge; however, the FARDC had declared having killed Karume on December 12, 2011. MONUSCO press release of December 14, 2011.

²⁷⁶ The exact number of combatants mobilized at this period is unclear, with a regional security expert saying that it was in the thousands.

would be exterminated. As a Shi I was able to leave the town, and many others, including women and children, were fleeing the area."²⁷⁷

Interviews attest that Nyatura commanders were carrying out public recruitments in Lumbishi, calling for youth to join the movement and distributing weapons and ammunition. The situation was made even tenser by the fact that FARDC troops were also present in the town, detached from the *bataillon* in Numbi, as well as from the *secteur* in Nyabibwe, and in an ambivalent position towards the looming crisis. Indeed, since early 2012,²⁷⁸ a joint FARDC-MONUSCO military operation had been launched in South Kivu against the FDLR, many of which were tied to Congolese Hutu armed groups in the Kalehe Highlands, with several large FDLR bases in neighbouring Masisi and Walikale. The operation had been suspended in April 2012, but the FARDC remained, at least in principle, in a campaign against the FDLR. Several observers report alliances between the FARDC and both the Raia Mutomboki and the Nyatura, although these have not been confirmed.

Spreading from Walikale to Masisi and then South Kivu, violent clashes started hitting the Kalehe Highlands in June 2012. On June 17 and June 18, heavy combats took place between the Raia Mutomboki and the Nyatura in Lumbishi, leading to the death of 13 Hutu residents and one Hunde in Lumbishi,²⁷⁹ triggering further mobilization and retaliatory violence. The FARDC who were also positioned in Lumbishi, did not directly partake in the fighting but intervened to disperse the combatants. Further violent ensued throughout the summer in several towns and villages of the area, combining direct combats, civilian massacres, and pillaging of goods, such as the massacre of 15 people by Nyatura militia in Ngungu. The violence continued until August 28, 2012, date of the massacre carried out by the Chambombo based Nyatura elements, who killed 6 people and burned the entire village of Rutshu.

A cease fire agreed by the different armed factions was brokered by delegations comprising state representatives, representatives of the different communities, and FARDC commanders, known as the *Campagne Multilaterale de Dialogue et de*

²⁷⁷ Interview with Lumbishi Shopkeeper, Numbi, October 2012.

²⁷⁸ February 16, 2012 is the launch date of Amani Kamilifu.

²⁷⁹ Interview with chief of Lumbishi, October 2012.

Mediation (Multilateral Campaign of Dialogue and Mediation).²⁸⁰ While the crisis mobilization had boosted the ranks of the Nyatura, several observers note that population support for the movement dwindled during the *Campagne*, which also included public speeches to reduce support for the movement, combined with more repressive FARDC operations to disarm the Nyatura. The negotiations led to a first rounding up of Nyatura soldiers, under the initiative of the Congolese Army Chief of Staff, Gabriel Amisi. This *regroupement*²⁸¹ that took place in Mushaku, Masisi Sud, in Sept-Oct 2012, led to a separation of the Nyatura combatants in two groups, where half of these went to fight alongside the FARDC against the M23 insurgency in Ruthshuru - in what was called the “814th Integrated Nyatura Regiment”. In the course of 2013, several other *regroupement* in Murambi, and Nyamununi were organized to integrate the former Nyatura, but many sources point to large scale defections following their transfer to the Province Orientale. The Nyatura movement would know several other reiterations and offshoots, and, far from disappearing with the military integration, it was reported that the Nyatura were still present in Lumbishi in July 2015.

8.4. Conclusion

These two chapters have explored the evolving political economy, and corresponding social architecture in which the repeated rounds of armed mobilization have occurred in the Highlands of Kalehe, with a particular focus on the Hutu societies of this area. Several salient points emerge from the chapter and inform the central interrogation of this dissertation.

First, the chapter sheds light on how two central ‘macro-logics’ have driven armed mobilization in the Hutu societies of the region, a ‘protective’ logic on one side, and a more accumulative logic tied to the insertion of the region into regional dynamics of politico-military competition on the other. The analysis of the social and institutional

²⁸⁰ At the time of the interviews, the negotiations with the Nyatura elements were still ongoing, with Numbi based Colonel Bruce carrying out discussion with Nyatura representatives, and representatives of the Hutu community.

²⁸¹ *Regroupement* is the term used to designate a rounding up of troops in view of their disarmament or integration into the government army.

basis of the Hutu societies has allowed us to refine our understanding of ‘protection’. Indeed, in a context where the livelihoods of the Hutu societies of the Kalehe Highlands rested on a very fragile ‘architecture’ of property rights and relations with the Havu landowners and customary authority, and the exclusion from state and provincial politics provided no political channel to voice grievances, national level debates on land ownership sparked a direct threat to the livelihood basis of these societies. Combined with the direct threat of attacks and massacres when the Masisi war spread to the region, this provided the impetus for the formation of the first wave of ‘ethnic militias’.

These armed groups, however, quickly inserted themselves into the regional economy of violence and predation that developed as a result of the war, as well as regional dynamics of resource accumulation. The constitution and implantation of these armed groups, in particular the PARECO movement, brought the region under more direct forms of control and accumulation by the Hutu elites based in Goma. The armed groups constituted essential vectors of this control, as they facilitated accumulation of both resources and labour. Yet the entrenchment of this logic of accumulation did not break the protective role that the armed groups continued to play vis-à-vis the Hutu societies of the Highlands in a context of repeated and intensifying crisis. Indeed, we have seen that the Nyatura mobilization, although tied to dynamics of elite competition in the military, was nevertheless driven by a renewed demand for protection by the Hutu societies in a context of persistent existential threat to the livelihood basis of these societies. Thus, while the Hutu societies had developed elaborate mechanisms of collective protection to palliate the lack of state provided security, the reconstitution of the armed group remained the only option for protection in the context of a highly militarized society, illustrating the conjunction of these two macro-factors of armed mobilization.

Second, the chapter has allowed us to explore another of the central guiding questions of this dissertation, the question of *how* people are brought to participate in armed groups. Through an analysis of the ‘social architecture’ of the repeated rounds of mobilization in the region, we have seen that modes of recruitment and control over combatants evolved to reflect the progressive implantation of these armed groups into the Hutu societies of the Highlands. The initial mobilizations of the early 1990s

closely reflected the decentralized and agrarian nature of these societies and took a ‘popular’ form. However, the emergence of a ‘militarized’ workforce, a result of the successive rounds armed mobilizations in the region, had spatial and social manifestations in the region, in particular the concentration of ex-combatants in the town centres of the region. The analysis of the Nyatura mobilizations of 2011-2012 showed that the armed group leaders exerted firm control over these networks of ex-combatants, which they were able to quickly remobilize, a process involving both coercion and attraction. Yet we have seen that the mobilization superseded these networks, and that the group was able to mobilize beyond these networks, particularly during the “crisis” mobilization against the Raia Mutomboki.

Third, we have explored some of the individual dimensions of participation. We have seen that grievances, particularly in the form of lack of access to land - one of the most important markers of social status in the societies of the highlands - played an important role in driving youth to join the militia, an aspect that has been underscored by several studies of participation in the region (Van Acker & Vlassenroot 2001a, 2001b; Jourdan 2004). Such grievances took different emotional manifestations, such as jealousy towards those who had left for Goma, and the desire for a form of ‘adventure’. Yet we have seen that such grievances were experienced collectively, within groups of youth, and that this collective aspect played an important role in pushing youth to ‘act’ on such grievances, which came into articulation with the modes of control that the armed groups exerted over these youth. Grievances can therefore be ‘activated’ by social networks, as emphasized by Scacco (2009). This chapter has therefore allowed us to refine our understanding of the causes, and processes, of armed mobilization and participation in armed groups. We now turn to our quantitative analysis of armed mobilization, in which we will pursue the same lines of interrogations into the causes and processes of participation in armed groups.

Chapter Nine

A Quantitative Perspective on Participation

In this chapter, we turn to a quantitative analysis of armed mobilization and participation in armed groups in the province of South Kivu, with the objective of complementing the qualitative approach of the other chapters, and seeing whether we can find statistical evidence for some of the processes of participation and mobilization that we identified. We use original data collected specifically for this thesis through a survey in the province of South Kivu.

We ask three main questions in the chapter, which correspond to the guiding questions of this dissertation. The first is *who joins armed organizations?* This question has guided recent quantitative analyses of armed mobilization. The objective of this approach is to identify individual determinants of participation in violent organizations, by comparing participants to non-participants, but also, thanks to the panel structure of the data, by comparing how the evolution of different individual factors affect participation at different periods of time.

The second guiding question is *how do people join armed organizations?* In line with our multi-level framework of analysis of armed mobilization, we look at how individual determinants of armed mobilization articulate with supra-individual dimensions of mobilization. In particular, we focus on social and institutional mediation of mobilization, i.e. how institutional and social structures mediate armed mobilization and influence an individual's decision to participate.

Finally, we attempt to shed light on the more difficult question of *why do people participate in armed organizations?* While the question of identifying motives of

participation is complex and difficult to ascertain with quantitative data, we take an original approach to it by taking advantage of the panel structure of the data to look at what participation *causes* for an individual. In particular, we look at how participation affects an individual's socio-economic positioning, as well as how it affects an individual's security and the security of his social entourage.

The strength of the analysis rests on two main aspects. First, the panel structure of the data allows for a more dynamic analysis of participation than cross-section type data, as it takes into account temporal variation in the purported individual determinants of participation and the surrounding social, institutional and group-level factors that influence participation. Furthermore, the disaggregated nature of the data allows for very close range identification of effects, overcoming the pitfalls multi-country cross section analyses of civil wars (Blattman & Miguel 2009). This allows to analyse why an individual chooses to participate in certain groups and not others, but also why an individual might participate at certain periods and not others, in particular through the use of fixed effects models. The panel structure of the data therefore allows to address one of the most important aspects of recruitment into armed organizations, its temporal variation, which has been identified by several authors as being a crucial dimension of the understanding of participation (Van Belle 1996; Humphreys & Weinstein 2008 p.453).

The chapter starts by a presentation of the survey and datasets, and delineates the methodological constraints associated with analysing participation, before briefly presenting descriptive statistics on participation. The analysis is then divided into three main sections, which correspond to the guiding questions of the chapter. Section 1 looks at the individual determinants of participation, in order to shed light on *who* participates in armed organizations. Section two looks at the institutional and social mediation of armed mobilization, and provides insight on *how* people participate in armed organizations. Finally, Section 3 of the analysis looks at the individual and collective effects of participation, in order to address the question of *why* people participate in armed organizations.

9.1. Presentation of Survey and Datasets

9.1.1. Survey methodology and implementation

The analysis carried out in this chapter is based on original data collected through a survey carried out in the province of South Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo, between August 2012 and December 2013. The survey was designed and implemented as part of a joint-project led by Raul Sanchez de la Sierra and myself on the economic and social history of eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which comprises several research projects and has been funded by several institutional sources.²⁸² The survey was implemented by 11 Congolese researchers in the province of South Kivu, with an operational base in Bukavu, the provincial capital of South Kivu.²⁸³ Training of surveyors and on site supervision of the implementation was carried out by Gauthier Marchais and Raul Sanchez de Sierra. The logistical constraints associated with the implementation of a large-scale survey in an active Armed Conflict Zone were numerous, mostly tied to problems of access, security, and financial constraints. While an extensive review of these challenges and constraints is beyond the scope this chapter, the following sub-section of the chapter will discuss the key implementation and measurement constraints, and their implications for the analysis.

The survey was implemented in 134 “villages” of the territories of Walungu, Kalehe, Shabunda, Idjwi and Mwenga, using a sampling strategy that was designed to maximise variation in socio-economic conditions of the villages, and various

²⁸² Funding for this project came from the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Private Enterprise Development in Low-Income Country exploratory Grant (PEDL), the International Peace Research Association Foundation (IPRAF), the Centre for the Study of Development Strategies at Columbia University (CSDS), the Earth Institute and the Advanced Consortium in Cooperation and Complexity.

²⁸³ These are: Jean-Paul Zibika Mutacumura, Christian Mastaki Mugaruka, Christian Pole-Pole Bazuzi, Freddy Koleramungu, Aimable Amani Lameke, Simeon Lukeno Bikanaba, Eustache Kulumbwa Lulego, Emmanuel Till Kandate, Floribert Iwaboshi, Salomon Salumu Kombi and Desire Cizungu Bazibube. I thank Raul Sanchez de la Sierra for exceptional help in designing the survey, as well as crucial help in carrying out the analysis. I also thank Soeren Henn for comments on late versions of this chapter.

randomization procedures.²⁸⁴ Figure 1 provides a visualisation of the geographic location of surveyed villages.

In each village, two separate surveys were administered by teams of two surveyors, during a period of 7 days per village. The Household Survey was administered to 8 respondents, representing 8 households in each village, thus achieving a total sample size of 1074 households. A randomization procedure was followed to select both the 8 households to be surveyed in the village, and the respondent to be surveyed within each household.²⁸⁵ Household surveys were focused on the individual “history” of respondents - spanning their economic, social and political life - and lasted between 4 and 6 hours per respondent. The recall nature of the survey meant that, for each variable, individuals were asked to provide either the dates, or the values and/or changes in the value of the variables for each year since 1990. For example, instead of being asked whether they were married and had children, respondents were asked the exact dates of their marriage(s) and children’s birth, allowing to reconstitute their marital history. Similarly, instead of being asked whether they owned land or not, the respondents were asked to give the dates and characteristics of each purchase, sale or loss of land, allowing to reconstitute their land ownership history. Thus, the survey allowed to create a retrospective panel dataset, i.e. one in which each variable contains a temporal dimension. The retrospective panel dataset that is used in this analysis is the same as the one used by Sanchez de la Sierra (2016), although the analysis carried out by Sanchez de la Sierra focuses on different variables. Along with the repeated collection of observations over time, recall survey methods are one of the two ways in which panel datasets can be created (De Nicola & Giné 2014). It presents, however, certain limitations, which are discussed in the following section.

²⁸⁴ As one of the main objectives of the research project was to look at the impact of mineral endowments on armed group’s strategies, the sampled villages were a combination of a random sample of villages with mineral endowments and “matched” agricultural villages displaying similar characteristics. The village sampling was done using an existing database on mineral deposit distribution in South Kivu (IPIS database), complemented with other databases (the International Rescue Committee’s RRMP database, the RGC database) as well as interviews with mining and regional experts, and the survey teams who relayed information about additional mines and villages.

²⁸⁵ In each village, the surveyors drew a list of all households in the village with the help of village authorities. 8 respondents were randomly selected from the list, using a list of random numbers previously drawn, that selects households for any potential village size based on the number in the census. The same procedure was followed to select the respondent within the household.

The second survey, the Village Survey, was administered to the Authorities of the Village, and was focused on the history of the village as a whole, and also spanned economic, social and political aspects. Because of its complexity and the precision of the data required, the Village Survey was carried out throughout the 7 days of presence of the surveyors in a village. On the first day, the surveyors would identify “village specialists”, both the village authorities and security and economic specialists, to whom the survey protocols and questionnaires would be presented. During the following days, the surveyors would help these “village specialists” collect and compile the information from different sources. On the final day, a reunion with all the “specialists” was organized to carry out the final village survey, which lasted the entire day. As for the Household Survey, each question of the Village Survey was asked so as to capture levels and changes for each year since 1990. This allowed to create a retrospective panel dataset, based on recall data. The Household Survey and Village Survey protocols and questionnaires are provided in Appendix 3.

9.1.2. Logistical challenges associated with collecting data in contexts of armed conflict

Surveyor Safety

The most pressing challenges of collecting data in conflict-affected areas are safety - both of the surveyors and respondents - and access. In order to address these challenges, the projects directors, staff and surveyors developed an extensive set of logistical, material and communicational measures to reduce the security risks associated with navigating such a volatile security context as that of rural South Kivu.

First, we ensured that the project members and survey teams bore all the necessary authorizations to carry out the study. Given the sensitivity of the information collected, surveyors were at risk of being stopped, arrested and detained by military and civilian authorities. In order to reduce this risk, the project was presented to the South Kivu provincial authorities, in particular the *Ministere de l'Interieur de la province du Sud-Kivu* (interior ministry of the province of South Kivu), the national army (FARDC), and the *Agence Nationale pour le Renseignement* (the national intelligence services). Following the official authorization of the project by these

authorities, all surveyors and project members were given an ‘ordre de mission’ (mission statement), which carried the official stamps and signatures of these authorities. This procedure was replicated in each of the administrative units of rural South Kivu where the survey took place. Before arriving in a village, the surveyors and project members presented their ordre de mission and authorizations to the civilian and military authorities of both the territories and groupings in which the village was situated, and obtained the official stamps authorizing the survey by these authorities. This procedure was also replicated at the village level, as the surveyors would start by presenting the project and survey in detail to the civilian and military authorities of the village, and obtain their formal authorization (signature and stamp). This considerably reduced the risk of surveyors being suspected of being spies or informants, and being arrested or detained.

Second, a number of measures were taken to reduce the exposure of surveyors to various forms of banditry and abuse by criminal or military actors in the areas of survey implementation. In rural South Kivu, the proliferation of weapons, the difficult terrain and the lack of infrastructure have created a propitious environment for various military or criminal actors to harass the population, often violently. While the surveyors are Congolese citizens from the province of South Kivu, they often weren’t ‘natives’ of the survey areas, which increased their exposure to such harassment. In order to mitigate this risk, a tracking, information and monitoring system was set up to follow closely the movements of surveyors. Before going to a survey village, the surveyors, in coordination with the project supervisor, would start by gathering all available information on the security situation of the village. This included the weekly security briefings of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN-OCHA Sud Kivu), the daily security updates of the International Rescue Committee (IRC Sud Kivu, with whom we had a partnership), as well as daily calls to Congolese civilian and military authorities in Bukavu. The surveyors and project supervisor would also systematically seek information from local military and civilian authorities at the territory and grouping level. An assessment was then made of the security level of the survey villages. Villages that presented a significant security risk were temporarily dropped from the survey, to be revisited later if the security situation improved. Of all of the villages in the initial selection, a total of 3 villages were permanently dropped for security reasons.

In addition to these preventive measures, the surveyors followed strict security protocols for their displacements, communications and accommodation in the implementation areas. First, they were required to spend the night in a village/town that displayed an acceptable level of security, and were not allowed to travel at night. This meant that, for villages that had a higher level of risk, the surveyors were required commute each day between those villages and a larger and safer centre, usually the local town with a national army outpost. The distance between such towns and implementation villages varied significantly, and for more remote villages the costs incurred by the daily travel could be very high, which led to a reduction of the total number of surveyed villages. Furthermore, a strict communication system was set up. Every morning and every evening, each survey team of 2 would send an SMS to the project supervisor indicating their position, as well as the time and destination of any travel planned in the following days. These SMS went through a Frontline SMS program, which allowed to visualize and track surveyor movements in real time. The supervisor would call each team in the evening to evaluate the security of further displacements, and discuss any problem. The project directors would also call each of the survey teams 2-3 times per week. Finally, all teams were equipped with a Thuraya satellite phone, to use in the case of an emergency or to report their position in areas that lacked phone coverage. Despite these measures, surveyors found themselves in difficult situations several times, which were dealt with on a case to case basis. On two occasions, surveyors were forced to flee an area because of unpredicted and imminent armed clashes.

In areas under military control by non-state armed groups, security and access were significantly more complex to address. Indeed, the institutional safeguards - *ordres de mission* and official authorizations - were no longer effective, and often attracted suspicion of collaboration with government forces. As a result, particular efforts were made by the directors, supervisor and surveyors to mitigate risks before entering such areas. Building on the knowledge that these armed groups often have deep social and institutional bases, contact was made with the civilian authorities of these areas to first evaluate the level of risk of the zone, and then send the 'message' to the armed actors that the project members worked neither for the government nor any party involved in the conflict. Contact was then made with representatives of the armed organizations

in order to obtain official authorization from the leadership for surveyors to carry out their research activities. On three occasions, the project decided to post-pone entry into a particular zone because such safeguards and authorizations were not obtained. Yet even when these safeguards were obtained, surveyors could still face suspicion by the members of the armed group or their sub-factions. On five occasions, surveyors were briefly arrested, detained and interrogated, although no violence or harm was reported. On two occasions, the Raia Mutomboki armed group in Northern Shabunda decided to dispatch escorts for the ‘protection’ of the surveyors, which effectively served to control the surveyors’ activities and report back to the group’s hierarchy. Given the level of interference to the survey protocols that such situations generate, it was then decided to drop these observations from the analysis.

Respondent Safety

In addition to the safety of the project members and surveyors, the safety of the respondents and participants in the study was a central concern. The highly polarized social context created by the civil war, and the sensitivity of the questions generated situations of potential risks for the respondents, even though the protocols and survey were fully reviewed and authorized by Columbia University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB protocol AAK0552).

The first measure taken for respondent security was the informed consent of the authorities of the villages in which the survey was carried out. The surveyors would give a full presentation of the survey questionnaire and hand a paper copy to the civilian and military authorities of the survey villages, and present the scientific objectives of the study. The authorities were also informed that the Household Surveys would be carried out in privacy with the households, and that the answers given by individual households would not be accessible either by the respondent, the surveyor or any other person apart from the project directors, and never at the implementation site (See Data Storage section in this chapter). The survey protocols (Appendix 3) also stressed that the surveyors explain to the authorities that, while sensitive issues were addressed in the survey – such as experience or perception of violence or participation in armed groups – none of the armed actors would be named in person, and an anonymization process prevented anyone from tracing back subject

answers to particular subjects, or particular local institutions or figures (chief, armed group etc.).

Second, a range of measures were built into the survey protocols and the survey to both detect and avoid any situation that could lead to the respondent being exposed to risk as a result of her/his participation in the survey. First, the surveyor was instructed to find an isolated place where no-one else than the surveyor could hear the answers of the respondent, and where the respondent himself felt safe. Second, the content of the survey – the different parts, and the different types of questions that would be asked – were presented to the respondent before asking for the informed consent. Furthermore, before each ‘sensitive’ section of the survey (such as security related questions), the surveyors were instructed to repeat to the respondent that he could terminate the survey at any moment, that he had the right to not answer certain questions and that he should report whether any element of the survey or the situation could put him or his relatives at risk. The respondent was also reminded several times during the survey that all the collected information would be anonymized, and that the information provided could not be traced back to him.

In order to ensure that the survey answers could not be traced back to any individual person, the names of the respondents were never recorded. Also, the list of village residents that were drawn for the random selection of survey households were systematically destroyed immediately after selection of the respondents, and the list of selected households was destroyed immediately after identification of the selected households by the surveyor.

Data security and Storage

Integral to the safety of both the surveyors and respondents is the question of data security and storage, as anonymity of the data sources is crucial in ensuring that no-one can be identified by potentially nefarious actors. All data was collected on Personal Digital Assistant (PDA- model PALM Z22) type electronic devices, and no paper-based surveys were used. The parameters of the program used in the Personal Digital Assistants were set to prevent anyone from accessing the collected data directly from the devices. The data security and storage chain was the following: Surveys were

conducted on the PDA devices in the survey villages. After a few survey villages, the surveyors would come back to the provincial capital Bukavu, where the data would safely be transferred from the PDA devices to a project computer. The computer containing the collected data was kept in a safe and guarded project office. Yet even at that stage, the data was still not accessible from the computer, because the program storing the data (Pendragon) required access codes. The data was then sent via internet to computers in London and New York to the project directors, who were the only bearers of the security codes allowing to enter the databases. Upon reception and verification of the data in London and New York, the data was immediately deleted both on the project computer and on the data collection devices. Through this system, it was impossible for any actor to access the data in the zone of implementation or even in the project office in Bukavu – except in the presence of the project directors – barring advanced computer hacking techniques. While there were many instances of lost or faulty data due to collection device problems or computer synchronization problems, there have been no reported incidents where un-authorized project members, or any external actor or individual, accessed or attempted to access the survey data.

9.1.3. Methodological and measurement concerns associated with recall data

One of the strengths of the survey lies in the collection of recall data, which allowed to create panel datasets reconstituting the individual and village “histories” over the last 20 years, enabling a more dynamic analysis than cross-section type datasets (the structure of the datasets is explained in more detail in the following sections). As it was developed at the same time and as part of the same project, the data collection instruments are identical to those used in Sanchez de la Sierra (2016). The collection and use of recall data comes with specific methodological and implementation challenges, requiring several measures to guarantee the quality of data. The following sub-sections first discuss the use of recall data in the literature and its challenges, and second the measures taken in the study to minimize biases arising from the use of recall data.

The use of Recall data: Strength and limitations

This quantitative study relies entirely on the use of recall data, which allows to reconstruct past events, based on the recollection and memory of respondents. In eastern DRC, where historical and administrative documents and records are scarce - due both to the scarcity of historical archiving, but also to the destructions wrought by the war - very little systematic empirical evidence exists of how the war has unfolded, how it has affected economic, social and political activity, and how it has been experienced and perceived by local populations. Recall data is one of the ways in which this gap in historical records and empirical data can be partially filled, yet with important limitations.

The prime resource of the recall data method used in this survey is the memory and recollection of the inhabitants of rural South Kivu. The method takes advantage of the fact that one of the central modes of transmission of knowledge in the region is oral history, and thus follows methods long used by historians, anthropologists and sociologists. Some of the biases arising from the use of oral history and recall data have partially been discussed in the methods chapter of this thesis, in particular the biases arising from the context of social polarization and how it can distort recollections of events as well as narratives. Such biases are likely to be amplified in the case of large scale surveys, which cannot deploy the time or attention to meticulously cross check all sources as qualitative studies do. Nevertheless, the project has sought to deploy a range of safeguards to address and reduce measurement error due to recall data.

The literature on the use of recall data shows us that measurement error associated with recall data varies with the recall period as well as the nature of the recalled events. The cognitive sciences teach us that, the shorter the recall period, the more self-reported answers converge towards the mean of the real distribution (Tourangeau 2000; Kjellsson, Clarke & Gerdtham 2014). Thus, the more a recollected event dates back in time, the more the magnitude of the measurement error increases. This constitutes the first significant challenge to the quality of recall data. Second, armed conflict usually constitutes a period of significant crisis for individuals, which is likely to affect their recollection of the period. While the literature points to the fact that

recalling levels is easier than recalling events (Kjellsson, Clarke & Gerdtham 2014), crisis events are significantly different than other events, and are likely to have particular effects. The literature points to two possible effects of crisis periods on the recollection of events. On one hand, crisis and the traumatic effects they can produce can distort the recollection of events and produce measurement errors (De Nicola & Giné 2014; Tourangeau 2000). On the other hand, the intensity of the events unfolding during violent conflict may also trigger a more vivid recollection of such events, and thus work against measurement error due to the length of the recall period (Bruck et al. 2015 p.46; Wood 2003). Furthermore, in recollecting periods of intense crisis, individuals are more likely to recall events with a better accuracy than attitudes, which are more likely to be affected by the distortive effects of trauma (Viterba 2006 p.14; Schacter 1996). While the data is inevitably affected by measurement error due to the recall period and distortion of the recollection of traumatic events, the literature points to several ways to reduce it, which have been implemented in this study.

Situating events in time: Event Timelines

One of the methods used in this study to reduce measurement error in recall data, and in particular the measurement due to inaccurate recollection of time periods and years, are time cues and event timelines. Time cues are events of common knowledge that are invoked by the surveyor to allow the respondent and surveyor to situate the precise period at which a specific event has occurred. The literature in psychology and economics suggests that the use of time cues can substantially reduce measurement error about the timing of events (Dex 1995; De Nicola & Giné 2014 ; Deaton 2001; Bruck et al. 2015). However, Bruck et al. (2015 p.46) note that, while the use of event timelines does increase the accuracy of measurement, the quality of the events timeline is of particular importance, as inaccurate timelines are likely to enhance measurement errors.

This study paid particular attention to developing accurate event timelines and training surveyors to use them effectively. First, national and regional events timelines were prepared, and served as a baseline for the confection of local – territory and grouping level – timelines that were developed by the surveyors in the areas of implementation. Before the start of the survey in each village, the surveyors would consult the

authorities of the village to develop these timelines, which were then used as temporal references to situate the events recorded in the household survey. These local events timelines would typically include exceptional events in the village history of which residents were likely to have a vivid recollections, such as attacks on the village by armed group, natural disasters such as floods, the discovery of particular minerals (or the coltan boom), or the opening of a school, hospital, market or telephone line. Pilot studies carried out in the first months of the study showed that the using these local events timelines significantly enhanced the accuracy of the recollection of dates and periods of events by respondents. Particular attention was devoted to training the surveyors to the use of these time cues, both during the initial 1 month training that preceded implementation, and then during the implementation itself, as I personally accompanied surveyors for several months to make sure that the time cues were used appropriately.

Cross checking event recollections: Triangulation

The second method used to address the risk of measurement error due to recall is triangulation. Triangulation allows to partially address measurement error due to bad memory of the timing of events. It also allows to reduce measurement error due to the positionality of respondents, which has been discussed in the methodology chapter.

The survey protocol was designed to safeguard against such biases, by multiplying data points and extending the period of data collection and verification as much as possible within the logistical and budgetary constraints. The chief survey was carried out over a period of 7 days in each village, and involved the consultation of between 5 and 10 ‘village experts’, in addition to the village chief. These experts were selected on the basis of their knowledge of the village history, but also the main themes of the survey, in particular security and the economy of the village. In each village, the surveyors would start by presenting the survey questions and the data to be collected by the village experts, and then supervise the gathering of information by these village experts during the entire week. On the final day, a day-long meeting with all village experts would allow to verify the collected information and cross-check different sources, before recording the data. This process allowed to eliminate a large part of the false or dubious information before it was recorded.

Furthermore, in order to reduce the risk that the data collected in the village survey could be biased by the positionality of the village experts, all village survey measures were systematically replicated in the household survey, which was carried out with 8 randomly selected village residents, in complete anonymity. Thus, for all the key variables of the study, there were 9 data points, which were then compiled and compared, allowing to significantly reduce measurement error by triangulation. The qualitative reports, which were compiled during the 7 days of presence of the surveyors in each village, also served as an additional source of triangulation. For key variables of the analysis, the data points observed in the datasets were systematically compared to the information contained in the qualitative report (for example, this was done for the dates of presence of armed groups in villages, as is detailed in the following section). As reported in Sanchez de la Sierra (2016), the data was then benchmarked to data collected from other surveys, as a test of the accuracy of dates. As reported in that paper, the data closely matched both the well known and well documented historical events in the region – the start of the war, the coltan boom, the elections etc - but also ACLED violent event datasets.

Measuring changes Rather than Levels

With regards to those variables that are collected on an individual level (i.e. in the Household Survey), measurement error can be particularly acute for variables that bear a certain level of complexity, as well as those that are measured on a yearly basis, as it is particularly difficult to recall levels. However, as De Nicola and Giné (2014) argue, recalling changes on complex variables is easier than recalling levels. As a result, the survey was re-designed to measure events and changes rather than levels, when possible. For example, rather than being asked to report their level of wealth on a yearly basis, the surveyors recorded the history of the respondent's purchase and sale of key assets – cows, pigs, land, bikes. During pilots and then during the study, it became visible that respondents were much more likely to accurately recall the sale, loss or purchase of particular assets – such as a cows - than remembering their stock of cows for each year. The wealth indicators used in the analysis then compiled these variables.

For those variables where levels were measured, the survey and protocols were designed to limit measurement error due to recall. De Nicola and Giné (2014) show that one of the reasons why measurement error in recall data increases with the length of the recall period is that, for longer recall periods, respondents will use inference instead of memory to estimate levels. However, using the example of fisherman's recollection of their income level, they show that measurement error mostly affects recollection of variations in their income, but not the recollection of their mean income. This is because respondents 'revert to the mean' as the length of the recall period extends, and thus recall the mean with much more accuracy than the variations (De Nicola & Giné 2014 p.58).

For those variables where levels are measured instead of changes, the questions focus on getting an accurate measure of the mean, rather than seeking to estimate the variations around the mean. Additionally, the protocols and questions were formulated so as to elicit the most accurate response possible for the estimation of the means. For example, for taxation levels by armed actors during a given year, the respondents were first asked to recall the maximum that a specific armed group levied in taxes during a given period, and then the minimum during that same period. This usually prompted a discussion between the surveyor and the respondent, that allowed to refresh the memory of the respondent. On that basis, the respondent was then asked to estimate the mean level of taxation by the armed group. The comparison of the 8 data points of the Household Survey with the Village Survey showed that these means were estimated with high levels of accuracy.

9.1.4. Dataset consolidation & methodological concerns

9.1.4.1. Identifying and matching armed organizations

The surveys and datasets are separated into distinct modules, which correspond to different themes.²⁸⁶ In both the Household Survey and the Village survey, an entire

²⁸⁶ The household survey was divided into the following thematic categories: Family history, migration history, professional history, relation to security organizations, ownership of land, investment and credit history, history of taxation.

module was dedicated to security, and consisted of a broad range of questions on the presence, behaviour, activities and respondent perceptions of *all* security organizations present in each village of the survey. The security organizations that were recorded were highly varied. They ranged from small civilian security initiatives, to state security forces (police and military), to large-scale rebel groups.

In preparing the database for the analysis that follows, a particular difficulty arose in *identifying* armed groups. Indeed, as respondents are highly mobile in periods of war, and as several armed factions can successively occupy a village in short periods of time - leading to errors in respondent's assessment of dates - it can become difficult to be sure that different respondents within a village are talking about the exact same groups. To address this problem, an extensive work of triangulation was carried out during and after the data collection, based on the comparison of different household surveys within one village, the Village Survey, my own qualitative fieldwork as well as the village level qualitative reports carried out by survey teams. By individually reviewing each group that each respondent referred to, a variable was created that individually identifies each group that each respondent refers to, and provided that there is sufficient evidence across all sources, matches it with the groups mentioned by other respondents. For example, if two respondents from the same village talk about a Mayi-Mayi group, it is only if there is sufficient evidence -in the dates, in the periods of presence of respondents in the village, in the chief survey and in the qualitative reports - that two observations are given the same group identifier. Groups for which there is insufficient information, as well as groups from other villages than the village where the survey is carried out, are left out of the database used for the analysis.

9.1.4.2. *Structure of the datasets*

Using this group-identifying variable, two main databases were created for the analysis, to allow for a comparison of different groups. The first dataset is an individual*group database, which is used for most of the analyses carried out in this chapter. The structure of the dataset is as follows: each observation corresponds to an individual*group. The following table gives a clearer idea of the dataset:

INDIVIDUAL	GROUP	Marriage? (year)	Participation?(year)
V1.I1 (Village 1, Individual 1)	V1.G1. (Village 1, Group 1)	1992	1999
V1.I1	V1.G2.	1992	2002
V1.I2.	V1.G1.	2003	0
V1.I2. .	V1.G2.	2003	2005

As can be seen, this dataset is not in a panel format, in the sense that the observations are not sorted according to years, although the variables contain information on years, and can thus be used for analyses that have a temporal dimension. For the purpose of simplicity and clarity, most of the analyses carried out in this chapter are done using this database, except for the two final analyses: One uses a ‘simplified’ panel structure, and the final one uses an individual*year panel structure. Given that each variable has a temporal dimension, it is possible to build this individual*year dataset. The construction of the simplified panel used in the third section of the chapter is explained in the introduction of that section.

While the two first analyses were carried out using the individual*group format of the dataset, all the analyses were also carried out using an individual*year panel format of the dataset, in order to verify the validity of the results. The results from the analysis on this panel dataset are not reported in this chapter, but will be made accessible online after publication of a journal article based on this chapter. The Stata do-files that build the final datasets and containing the extensive cleaning of group identifiers can be provided upon request.

9.1.4.3. Methodological Challenges associated with Units of Analysis

The basic units of analysis used to design the survey, the village and the household, necessitate some conceptual and methodological caveats. A village in the survey corresponds to the administrative subdivision of the *Village*, the smallest administrative subdivision officially recognized by the Congolese State. In more

populated villages or in urban centres, a survey village usually corresponds to a sub-village, neighbourhood or an *avenue*, when such villages or towns were too populated to be included as the entity of study and had to be subdivided into smaller units.²⁸⁷ Although not officially recognized in the state administration, sib-villages, neighbourhoods and avenues are widely used by local state administration and chiefs, and thus bear empirical relevance.

However, it is important to consider that, by adopting such units of analysis, one confronts two methodological and ontological problems. First, they reproduce the dominant “shape” of political and social organization, which are historically contingent and often contested, as has been emphasized in the methodological chapter. Second, the processes that are being studied, such as popular mobilization into armed organizations, do not necessarily map onto these administrative grids. In many cases, the village might not be the only relevant level of decision-making for such processes. While the data can be clustered at Grouping, Territory and provincial levels, which for certain elements are more relevant, it is important to be aware that a part of the studied processes are left out by this particular grid, and is part of the limitations of such methods in studying complex socio-political processes.

Furthermore, because of logistical constraints, Household Surveys were exclusively carried out with male subjects. This was a difficult but deliberate choice to maximise the information concerning participation in armed groups. While it is established that women are also recruited by armed organizations, and a growing literature is providing a solid empirical basis for a thorough re-evaluation of the role of women in armed conflict and political violence,²⁸⁸ we evaluated through qualitative interviews with armed group members and experts that a large majority of participants in armed factions in eastern Congo are men.²⁸⁹ As a result, in order to maximise the number of

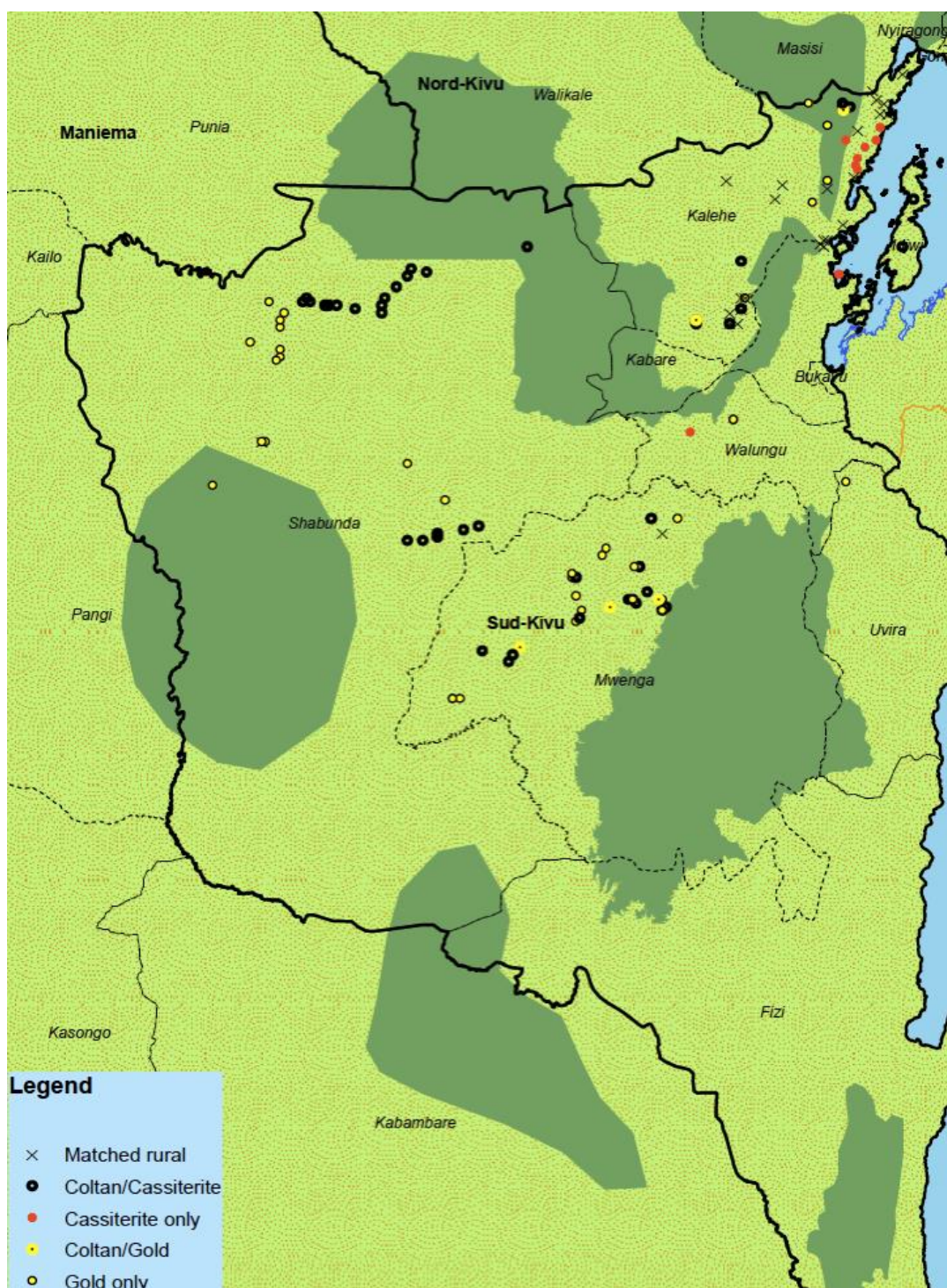
²⁸⁷ Because of constraints on the sampling methodology that is too burdensome to implement in areas with large populations, entities exceeding 500 households had to be subdivided, and a sub-section of the entity was randomly selected to carry out the survey.

²⁸⁸ A burgeoning literature has been re-assessing the role women in violence and armed conflict, de-constructing widespread assumptions regarding women’s assumed passivity in violence, and showing their multi-faceted role as actors and perpetrators (e.g. Alison 2004; Bethke Elshtain’s 1987; Moser & Clark 2001; Sjoberg & Gentry 2007; Viterba 2006; Wood 2003; Parkinson 2013).

²⁸⁹ Several studies also conclude that participants in collective violence are predominantly male, such as Mc Doom (2013 p.463).

participants selected for the Household survey, it was decided that the survey would be restricted to men. Once again, it is important to remain wary of the limitations that this decision entails. Further sample measurement related methodological issues that are specific to some analysis are discussed throughout the following sections.

Figure 1: Surveyed Villages (source: Village Survey data)



9.2. Measuring participation

9.2.1. Definition and Measurement of Participation

The participation variable that will be used in the regression models of this section is a binary variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent has reported participation, and 0 otherwise. Participation is defined as being an active member of an armed group or security organization. As mentioned in the introduction, involvement and participation in armed groups is multi-faceted and complex, and can take many other forms than being an active member: Civilians can work as informants of armed groups, covert supporters, tax collectors, enforcers, business partners and many other roles or functions. The participation category used here does not include all these other roles and functions.

9.2.2. Sample of participants

Both the household survey and village survey took place in rural villages and towns of South Kivu. Thus, the participants that have been recorded in the survey are those that were *present* in the survey villages at the time of the survey. We cannot assume that the sample is representative of *all* participants in armed organizations, nor of each village's group of participants in armed organizations, as it does not include 1) current participants in armed organizations that have left the village 2) the participants that have deceased as a result of their participation 3) the former village dwellers that have participated in armed organizations but are no longer present in the villages. Thus, the sample does not deal with attrition, which constitutes one of the chief challenges with regards to representativity of samples of ex-combatants in survey based studies (Bruck et al. 2016 p.45). The survey sample is thus representative of the sub-groups of *survivors-returnees* - those who have both survived their participation and returned to rural villages after participation - and *participant-dwellers*, those are currently participating in armed organizations but have remained in the village and were present at the time of the survey.

Recent studies of participation in war have estimated that a large number of ex-combatants return to their areas of origin following their demobilization, more than 50% in the case of Sierra Leone (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008 p.444). This is likely to enhance the representativeness of our sample, but we cannot completely rule the possibility that our sub-sample of participants systematically differs from the total population of participants on some variables. For example, it could be the case that participants who were more marginalized in the village before participating are more likely *not* to return to the village following participation. Moreover, it could be the case that those who participated in more violent and less socially accepted groups are less likely to return to their village, as a result of self-selection or various mechanisms of social exclusion. While this constitutes a limitation to the representativeness of the sample of participants, several elements allow to mitigate this concern. First, the fact that the survey was carried out both in rural villages and in larger urban centres of South Kivu (with the notable exception of the provincial capital Bukavu) means that it captures a portion of the population of ex-combatants who have migrated to larger towns. Furthermore, a specific module within the survey is dedicated to *previous participation* - participation in armed groups in other villages or towns than the survey villages.

Contrarily to surveys of ex-combatants, the survey was not designed to target ex-combatants and participants specifically, but male residents of rural South Kivu, of which the samples of participants and non-participants are sub-samples. This has several advantages. First, it allows a close comparison of participants vs non-participants in very similar contexts and conditions - i.e. within the same village, and in some cases the same households. Several studies of participation rely on the separate constitution of a sample of non-combatants, which can introduce biases through the unobserved constant heterogeneities between the sample of combatants and the sample of non-combatants, which are difficult to account for. Having a sample of combatants and non-combatants from the *same* village or household greatly reduces this potential bias, in particular, as we will see, through the inclusion of village and household fixed effects in the regression models.

9.2.3. Mis-Reporting of Participation

A close yet distinct issue affecting the sample of participants in the database is that of mis-reporting of participation. Respondents can mis-report participation in armed groups, either by not declaring participation in any group, or by omitting to report participation in *certain* groups. While the survey protocols were devised so as minimise *involuntary* omissions, *voluntary* omissions and mis-reporting can affect the representativeness of the sub-sample of participants. Qualitative fieldwork as well as existing literature points to several reasons why respondents would systematically omit or mis-report participation to specific groups. For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that respondents are less likely to report participation in groups that exerted more violence towards the population, as well as less socially accepted groups. While this could simply reflect a lower real rate of participation, or the problem discussed in the previous paragraph, we cannot reject the hypothesis that it could be due to voluntary mis-reporting, which is inevitable in a context of acute social polarization.

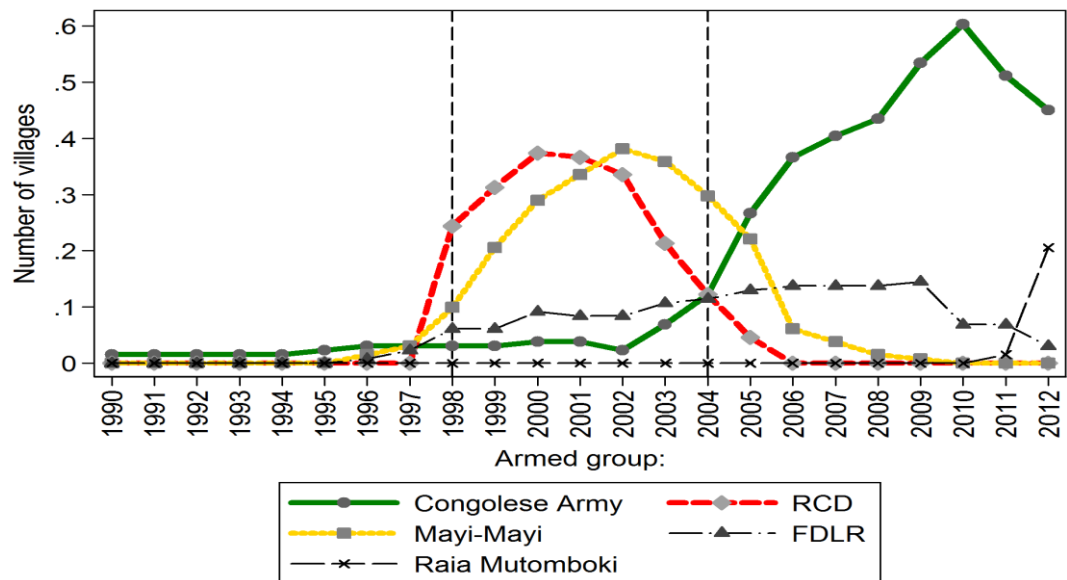
While mis-reporting and under-reporting can bias our estimations of population averages, we devise several strategies to make sure that it doesn't affect our estimations of the effects of different variables on participation. For example, we complement cross section analysis of participants and non-participants with temporal analysis of the individual effects of participation (using individual fixed effects), to make sure that the results are confirmed. We further discuss the ways in which such biases can affect our estimations in the relevant sections of the analysis.

9.3. Participation: Descriptive statistics

9.3.1. Timeline of armed groups in Sample

Figure (2) displays a historical timeline of the “group episodes” in the sample, using the data provided by the Village Survey (i.e. using the information provided by the village authorities). A group episode corresponds to a year where a group was present in a village or its surroundings.²⁹⁰ The y axis thus gives the proportion of the sample villages in which different groups were present in a given year. They closely match the history of the region: The RCD is present from 1998 to 2004; the Mayi-Mayi groups rise sharply in 1998 and progressively lose ground from 2004; The Congolese Army regains control over the East from 2004; the security gap created by military integration programs of *Brassage* in 2005 and *regimentation* in 2011 trigger a sharp rise in both self-defence organizations and armed groups; From 2011, the Raia Mutomboki movement rises sharply in the sample, consistent with the movement’s expansion across the territories of Shabunda and Kalehe.

Figure 2: Timeline of Groups in Sample (source: Village Survey)



²⁹⁰ The guidelines for recording an armed group was that it had been present in the environment of the village or town, meaning that the group’s actions had direct impact on the life of the village or town. Thus, it is not restricted to groups that “occupied” a village, but encompasses groups present in the area surrounding a village.

9.3.2. Profile of Recruiting Groups

Figure (3) shows the total number of episodes of group presence in a village by group name, and the number of those episodes in which a particular group carried out recruitments in the village, based on the Village Survey data. The data reported in this figure is not affected by the sampling issues discussed in the previous section, which concern self-reporting of participation by respondents. As can be seen, most groups did in fact carry out recruitments, but the ones that did so the most, in proportion of their presence in villages, are the AFDL, the Mayi-Mayi, the Raia Mutomboki and the Local Defence.

In the sample of 1084 respondents from 134 villages, around 12% of respondents reported participation in armed groups *present in the survey villages*. If extended to all participants, including those who participated in groups in other areas than the village where they received the survey, the participation rate rises to approximately 20%.

Figure (4) shows the rates of self-reported participation by the respondent, for those groups present in villages (not for previous groups in which the respondent might have participated). As can be seen by comparing both tables, they seem to be presenting significantly different stories of recruitment and participation. This is in part due to the fact that the *participation* table is restricted to those groups that were present in the village. As a result, groups that recruited on their way through an area (such as the AFDL) are not reported. Similarly, given that the survey was not carried out in the provincial capitals of Goma and Bukavu, what we observe here is participation in rural areas (although some larger towns such as Kamituga are included). Groups that recruited heavily in the provincial capitals as opposed to the rural areas are thus likely to be under-represented.

Figure 3: Recruitments by groups (Village Survey Data)

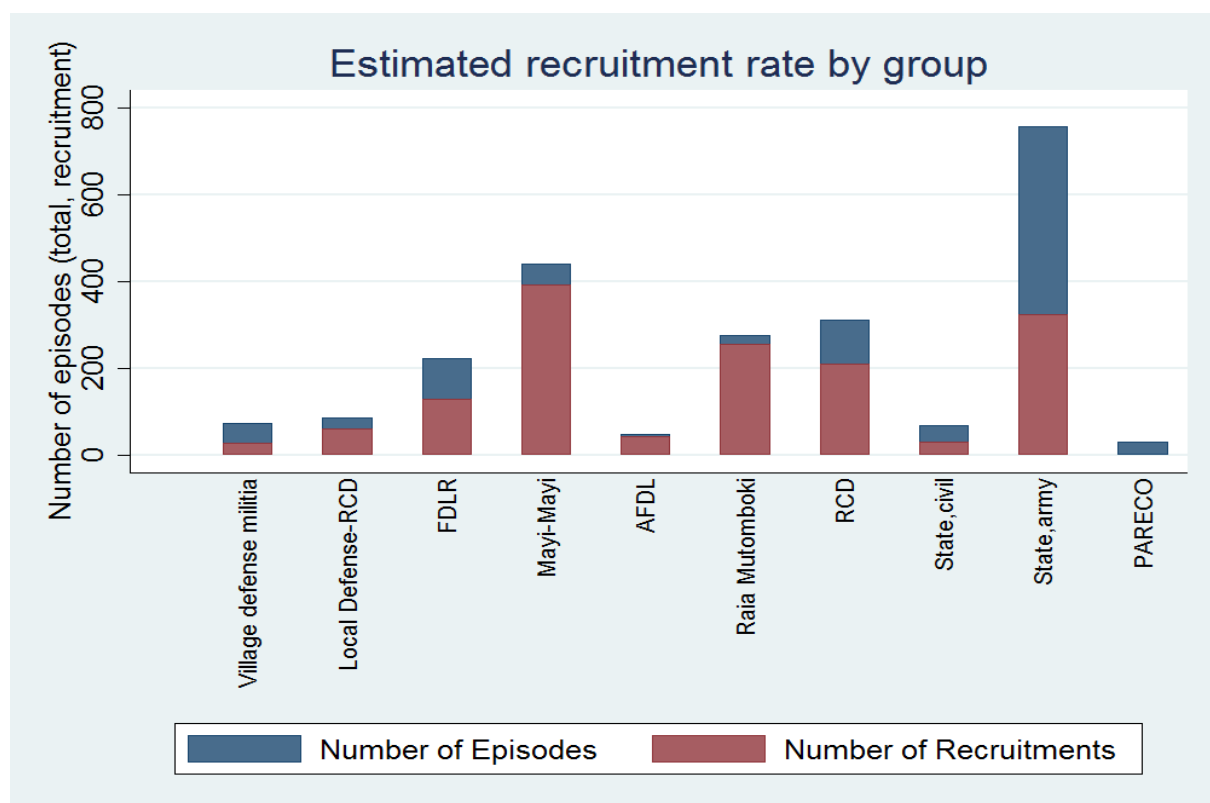
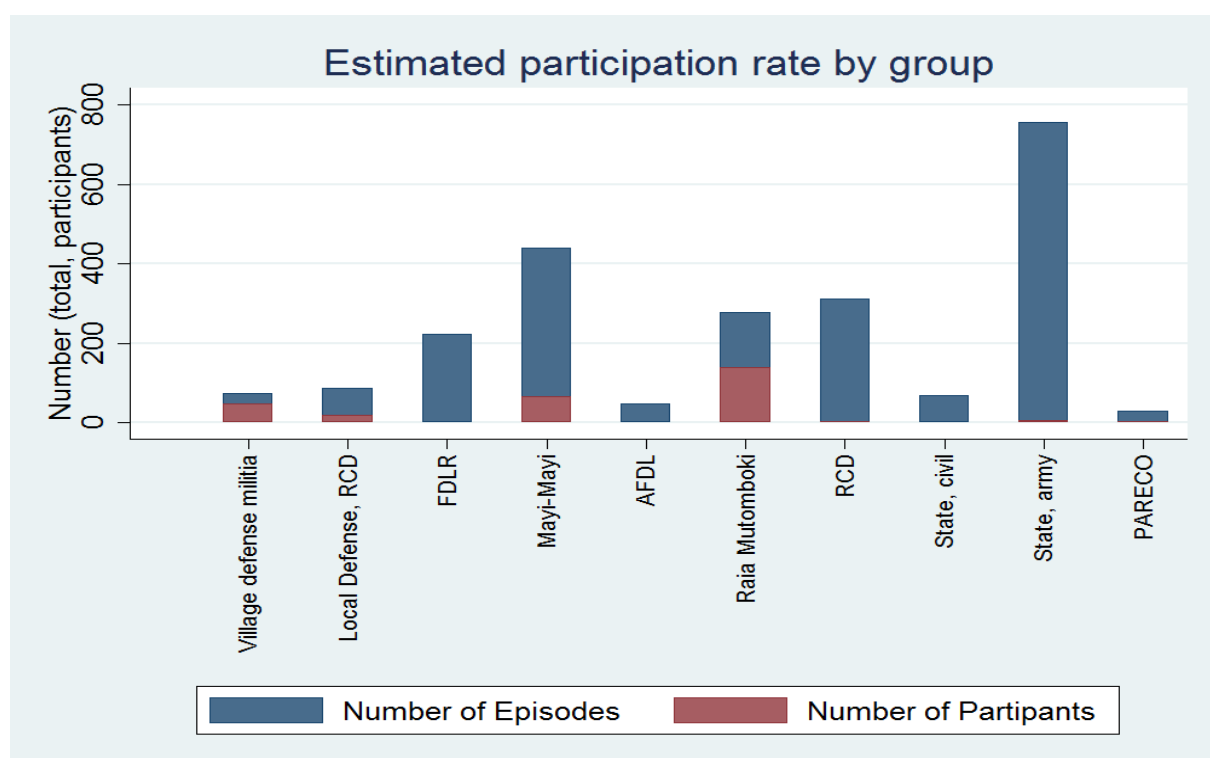


Figure 4: Participation rate by Groups (Household Data)



9.3.3. Profile of Participants

The professional background of the participants in the sample is very diverse. Using the Household Survey data, Figure (5) shows the share of participants within the main occupational sector of respondents in the sample (and not the number of participants by occupational sector). As can be seen, the highest probability of participation is reached for former military or police officers. As seen in the theoretical chapter and qualitative chapters, networks of security professionals often play a crucial role in non-state armed organizations. The rest of the tables shows us that participants can be found in all professional sectors, which corroborates the idea of relatively “ordinary” participants, in contrast to the widespread idea that participants are mostly underemployed and marginalized. We will further analyse this in the following section.

Figure 5: Professional Sector of Participants (Household Survey)

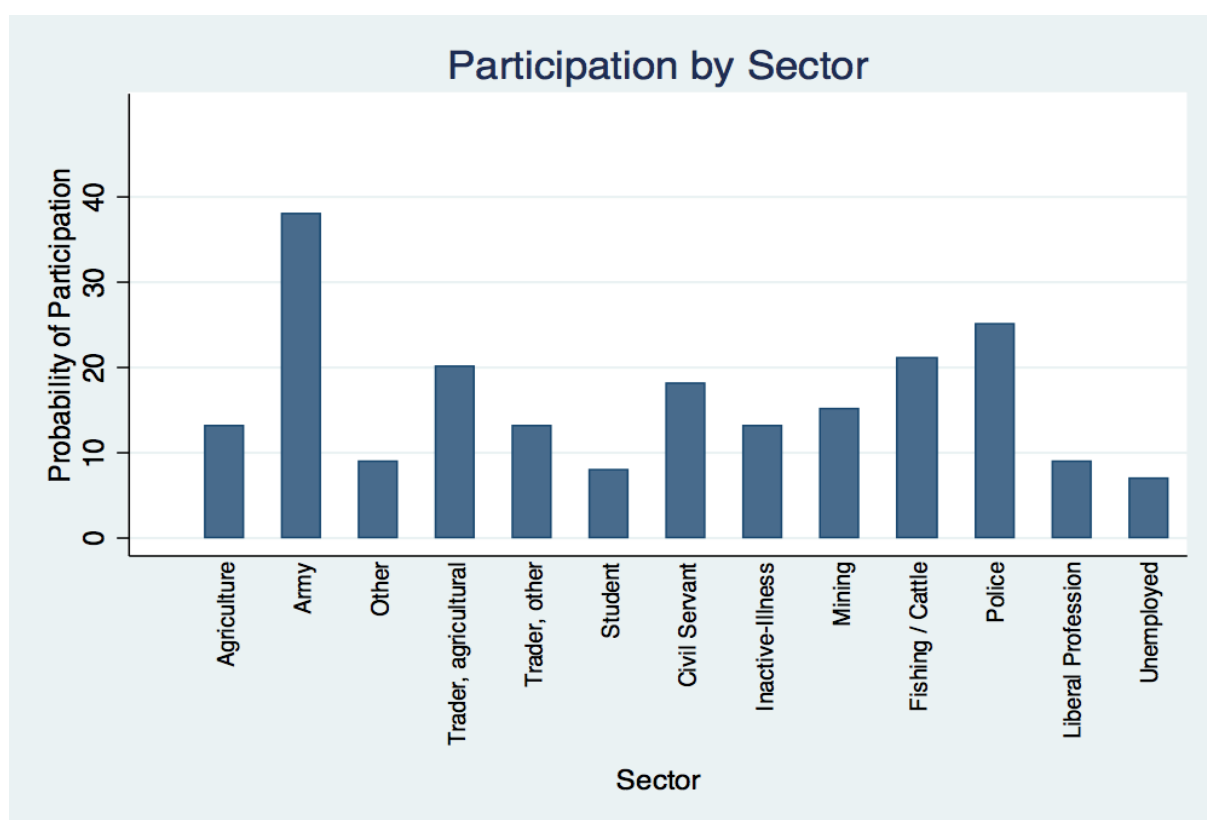


Table (1) presents the main motives of participation, as well as the main motives of departure, for those respondents that declared participation in one of the groups present in the village. It therefore does not include motive of participation in groups that were *not* present in the village. The table reports the percentage of respondents who have declared that each one of the categories was their main motive of participation. The survey questionnaire and protocols were designed to minimize the surveyor's influence on the respondents' answers. The surveyor would ask the question and let the respondent answer, without prompting the respondent with categories of answers. After the interviewee's response, the surveyor would determine whether the answer corresponded to one or several of the pre-recorded categories of answers and would enter them accordingly. The pre-recorded categories of answers were derived from the pilot surveys, which allowed to identify the most recurring motives for participation. However, the survey allowed to enter other motives if one of the respondent's motive did not fit the pre-recorded categories. While this measure is not used in the analysis, they are highly informative. As can be seen, "community protection" is the overwhelming motive of participation in security organizations. Furthermore, only a small percentage of the respondents (4.3%) declare that they were forced to participate. While this can be the result of the sampling bias presented earlier, it attests that participation is a much more complex phenomenon than is often portrayed in studies that focus exclusively on forced participation.

Table (1): Motives of Participation and Departure

MOTIVE OF PARTICIPATION	% of Participants*
Because Everybody participated	0.72
Because I had nothing else to do	6.45
Constrained by force	4.30
Convinced by family	1.43
Convinced by outsider	1.08
Convinced by villager	6.45
Following an attack on my family or community	2.51
For financial advantage	1.79
To be feared	1.43
To find refuge, I was persecuted	0.72
To protect my community	55.91
To protect my goods	7.17
I Wanted revenge	8.60
I Wanted to become a soldier	1.43

MOTIVE OF DEPARTURE	% of Participants*
I left - Bad Living Conditions	10.49
I Left-the Group became too violent	1.40
I Left-I obtained vengeance	3.50
I Left-I was sent off	1.40
I Left-Ran away	9.09
the Group Ceased to Exist	63.64
Other	10.49

*These do not include motives for previous participation or departure (just participation in Groups present in Village). Source: Household Survey.

9.4. SECTION 1: Who Joins Armed Groups?

9.4.1. Research Questions and Rationale

In this section, we carry out an analysis of individual level determinants of participation, in line with the guiding question of *who* participates in armed organizations. In particular, we look at whether grievances (economic, social and related to personal victimization), past-participation, and social ties have an effect on participation in armed groups. We briefly review the existing evidence concerning these factors before moving to the analysis.

As detailed in the theoretical framework, grievances have long been advanced as a central cause for participation in various forms of violent collective action, and in particular in armed conflict on the African continent. In the case of eastern Congo, this thesis has been advanced by Van Acker and Vlassenroot (2000a, 2001b), as well as Jourdan (2004, 2011), among others. Grievances are usually tied to structural processes of poverty, inequality and access to various types of resources, which can translate into various forms of economic, social and political exclusion or marginalization. In rural agrarian-based societies such as those of eastern Congo, land is one of the most important resources, and access to land often conditions an individual's economic livelihood and social integration (Van Acker 2005). As seen in the qualitative chapters, lack of access to land was often advanced as a motive of participation in rebellions during the interviews. Similarly, in rural African societies where dowry is prevalent, marriage is a strong marker of economic integration and social integration. As Richards (1996) has argued, the structural economic crisis of rural Sierra Leonean societies that preceded the war manifested itself socially by the incapacity of young men to meet the high financial demands of marriage, thus finding themselves in situations of social marginalization that bred despair and frustration.

Quantitative studies of participation in violent collective action, however, have yielded mixed results with regards to the role of grievances. Analysing the profile of participants in the Rwandan genocide, Verwimp (2005) found that they did not

significantly differ from non-participants in terms of schooling levels or ownership of land. In contrast, in their analysis of participation in the Sierra Leonean civil war, Humphreys & Weinstein (2008) find that relative economic deprivation (proxied by the quality of house walls), as well as education deficit predict participation in armed organizations. Scacco (2009) finds little evidence for absolute poverty as a predictor of participation in violent rioting during Nigeria's riots in 2001, but finds that relative poverty has a significant effect, but only when interacted with social connectedness. There is therefore mixed empirical evidence concerning a direct causal relation between grievances and participation.

In times of war, a separate category of grievances is the experience of violence, on an individual or an individual's entourage. As we have seen in the qualitative empirical chapters, ex-combatants repeatedly invoke direct victimization or victimization of their entourage as a trigger for their participation. As seen in the theoretical section, several mechanisms can explain the relation between such victimization and participation. On one hand, they can constitute what Richards (2014) calls 'endogenous grievances', i.e. the grievances and frustrations arising as a result of the war itself (rather than pre-existing grievances). However, as Kalyvas and Kocher (2007) have shown, these can also constitute strategies by armed actors to force 'free riders' to take sides, and join armed groups. Surprisingly, quantitative studies of participation in armed groups have rarely emphasized this aspect.

Quantitative studies of armed mobilization present much stronger empirical evidence of a causal relationship between social networks and participation. Humphreys and Weinstein (2008) find strong evidence that having a friend joining a group was a strong predictor of participation in that group. Studying violent riots in Nigeria, Scacco (2009) finds strong evidence of "social connectedness" as a predictor of participation in violent riots. Mc Doom (2013), studying the geographic patterns of participation during the Rwandan genocide in Tare sector in Rwanda, finds that 'micro-space' and micro-social interactions play a strong role in influencing participation, as part of an ensemble of mechanisms of social influence that are mediated by pre-existing social ties. Furthermore, the empirical evidence presented in the qualitative chapters of this thesis attests of the significant role of pre-existing social networks in mobilization and

recruitment, both as a propagative mechanism of armed mobilization, and as a “resource” consciously exploited by armed leaders.

Finally, we also test the role of previous participation in armed groups on the propensity to participate. While this aspect has rarely been explored in quantitative studies of armed mobilization, there is substantial qualitative evidence that ex-combatant and security networks play an important role in re-mobilization. In the case of eastern DRC, this was recently highlighted by Stearns (2013) and Vogel (2014).

9.4.2. Model Setup

We now turn to the econometric estimation of the individual determinants of participation in armed organizations. We use the individual*group structure of the database exposed in the previous section, where each observation gives the relation of an individual to a given group for a range of variables (thus, one individual can have several observations if he experienced the presence of several groups). For each of the independent variables, we construct a *before group episode* observation. Thus, we look at whether the value of a given variable before the arrival of a group in a village has an effect on whether the individual will participate in that given group. Hereafter, participation refers to the binary dependant variable, i.e. the probability of an individual having participated in a given armed group in a given village (thus, an increase in participation means an increase in an individual’s probability of participating in a given armed group in a given village).

We use a linear probability model, which assumes that the relation between the independent variables and the dependant variable is linear. Recent literature on the comparison between linear probability models and logistic models – often favoured for binary outcome variables – have shown that both models yield very similar results, and that the linear probability model fits ‘as well’ as the logistic model, including when the dependant variable is dichotomous (Hellevik 2007). As a result, the comparative advantage of the linear probability model is its interpretability, as an increase in a probability of a dichotomous dependent variable is much more straightforward to interpret than an increase in the log of the odds, which is used in logistic models (Hellevik 2007; King & Zeng 2001; Long 1997). As Von Hippel (2015) suggests, the

logistic model is only preferable to the linear probability model when the probabilities that are being modelled are extreme, which is not the case with the probabilities in this analysis. Furthermore, a number of models used in this section include interaction terms. As Ai and Norton (2003) have argued, the interpretation of interaction terms in non-linear models is much more complicated and tends to generate errors, which makes linear models preferable for models that include interaction terms. However, in order to verify the validity of the results, all analysis were replicated using a logistic model, and yielded very close results. For the purpose of simplicity and conciseness, only the linear probability model specifications are reported in this chapter (both in this section and in the following sections). However, all alternative model specifications will be reported in Marchais and Sanchez de la Sierra (Forthcoming), and do files will be made available online along with the data to allow for replication.

The linear probability model uses the binary variable *participate* as the dependant variable, and a range of independent variables corresponding to the individual determinants of participation whose effect we seek to estimate. The baseline specification is:

$$P_{i,g,v} = \alpha + \beta_1 * X_{i,g,v1} + \beta_2 * X_{i,g,v2} + \dots + \beta_K * X_{i,g,vK} + \varepsilon_{i,g,v}$$

Where:

$P_{i,g,v}$ is the binary dependant variable, that takes the value of 1 if an individual i participated in a group g in a village v .

α is the constant.

$\beta_1 \dots \beta_K$ are the coefficients of the independent variables, which we are seeking to estimate.

$X_{i,g,v1} \dots X_{i,g,vK}$ are the individual determinants of participation. We detail these in the discussion of the results.

$\varepsilon_{i,g,v}$ is the error term for an individual i participated in a group g in a village v .

9.4.2.1. Justification of additional fixed effect models

The baseline model allows us to estimate the effects of the independent variables on the binary dependant variable *Participate* across all the villages in the sample, and we report the output of this model in Table (2). However, there is strong evidence that the villages in the sample are likely to display substantial and systematic differences, owing to the geographical, economic, political and social heterogeneity of the region that we have documented in the introduction and historical chapter. The first model does not allow us to discern whether the estimated effects could be due to systematic differences between villages, which are likely to affect both the dependant and independent variables. For example, when evaluating the effect of wealth on participation, it could be the case that certain villages are wealthier and have many more participants, while others are much poorer and have low numbers of participants, as a result of observed or unobserved village level differences. In such a case, the across village estimation of the effect of wealth on participation is likely to be biased by such village level differences. In order to ascertain whether the estimations of the effects presented in Table (2) might be due to systematic differences between villages, we add a second model that repeats the same regressions, while adding village level fixed effects. These allow us to estimate the mean “within village” effect of the independent variables on participation. The results of the model with village fixed effects are reported in Table (3).

Moreover, the estimated effect of the independent variables on the dependant variable *Participate* could also be due to systematic differences between groups. Indeed, observed and unobserved systematic differences between groups can also have effects on both the independent and dependant variables, which would bias our estimations of their effects. This is also true of time periods. For example, it could be the case that, during a certain period, high levels of marriage coincide with high levels of participation, while in other periods this is not the case. In order to account for both observed and unobserved differences between groups and time periods, we add another model, that repeats the same regressions, but with added group level fixed effects, using the variable that singularly identifies each group in each village at each time period. This allows us to estimate the mean “within group” effect of the

independent variables on participation. The results using the model with group level fixed effects are reported in Table (4).

9.4.2.2. *Rationale of interaction model*

In the final analysis carried out in this section, we add a model that includes an interaction between the main determinants of participation used in the previous models, and the variable *Group Origins*. The literature in political science informs us that the intuition behind conditional hypothesis can be tested through interaction models (Aiken & West 1991; Brambor et al. 2006 p.46). However, as Brambor et al. (2006 p.72) note, it is the responsibility of the researcher to provide theoretical justification for the conditional hypothesis and the direction of causality in the interaction. The insights developed in the qualitative chapters provide the theoretical motivation for the interaction models using *Group Origins* as the conditioning variable. Indeed, we have seen that there exists significant differences between “grassroots” armed organizations and “external” ones, in terms of their relation to the local institutional and social environment, their attitudes towards local populations and their modes of governance. Local groups are often formed to protect the livelihood basis of local communities, rely on mechanisms of communal mobilization to recruit participants, and attract more socially integrated members. External mobilizations, on the other hand, are not necessarily mediated by communal mechanisms, tend to have a more accumulative and coercive character, and tend to attract more economically and socially marginalized participants. Thus, the qualitative chapters provide preliminary empirical evidence for the idea that the relation between relative social and economic deprivation and the propensity to participate is different for local and external groups. This provides the rationale for the conditional hypothesis that will be tested using the interaction models:

- Relative social and economic deprivation has a positive and significant effect on individual propensity to participate in *external groups*.
- Relative social and economic deprivation has a weaker or null effect on the propensity to participate in *local groups*.

We measure relative economic and social deprivation along the 4 dimensions used in the preceding analyses: Marriage, land ownership, absolute and relative wealth, and education. The variables that proxy these dimensions are interacted with the conditioning variable *Group Origins*, which is a binary variable that takes the value of 1 if the group originated within a given village, and the value of 0 if it originated outside of that village (henceforth, these will be referred to as Local and External groups).²⁹¹ The following table illustrates the setup of the interaction model:

Independent Variables	Conditioning Variable: Group Origins	Dependant Variable
Wealth	Local Groups	Probability of individual participation
Land Ownership		
Marriage		
Education level		
Wealth	External Groups	Probability of individual participation
Land Ownership		
Marriage		
Education level		

In order to account for systematic differences between villages, we add village level fixed effects to the model specification, and report the output of all interaction models in Table (5).

Furthermore, the qualitative chapters point to the possibility that the effect of social networks on the propensity to participate in armed groups is also likely to differ according to the origins of the group (local or external). Indeed, local groups are by definition likely to rely on pre-existing family and peer networks to mobilize. External groups, however, might not have access to such networks, and, when they do, their role might not be as effective given the absence of a local social anchorage. To

²⁹¹ This variable was constructed by asking whether the groups were born locally, in the village or town or in its immediate surroundings, or whether arrived from elsewhere. For larger groups with generic names such as the Mayi-Mayi, this question focused on whether the group *that was present in the area* was born locally, not the movement as a whole: A Mayi-Mayi group formed in the village is coded as “local”, while a Mayi-Mayi group arriving from another area is coded as “external”.

ascertain whether social networks produce differentiated effects on participation conditioning on group origins, we include another series of models using interactions between our social network variables and the conditioning variable *Group Origins*, which are reported in Table (5bis).

The analysis and the interpretation of the interaction model follow the rules set out by Brambor et al. (2006) on how to carry out accurate interaction analyses. First, all constitutive terms are included with the interaction terms in the models (Brambor et al. 2006 p.66). Second, the interpretation of the results take into account the fact that the coefficients of the constitutive terms do not represent the average unconditional effect of these variables on the outcome variable, but rather the effect of these variables conditional on group origins (Braumoeller 2004 p.3; Brambor et al. 2006 p.73). Given that the conditioning variable is dichotomous, the interpretation requires looking at the value of the coefficients of the constitutive terms as well as that of the interaction term (Brambor et al. 2006 p.74), as well as reporting the standard errors, which are reported in Table (5) and Table (5bis). Furthermore, the fact that both categories of the conditioning variable are plausible allows to avoid the typical interpretation errors that arise from interaction models (Braumoeller 2004 p.4; Brambor et al. 2006 p.74).

The different categories of variables whose effect on participation we estimate are separated into the following thematic sections. 1) Economic grievances: Wealth and Land ownership. 2) Social grievances: Marriage, education and social ties with established customary authorities. 3) War experiences: victimization related grievances and past participation. 4) Social ties: Kinship with armed group leaders and participants. In order to facilitate the interpretation, we discuss the results thematically, incorporating the results of the four tables in each thematic section, including the models that use interaction terms.

9.4.3. Empirical Results

Economic Grievances: Wealth

We consider the effect of a respondent's wealth on his probability to participate. We use two separate sets of wealth measures from the Household survey to build our two

main indicators of the Respondent's Wealth. The first concerns the Wealth of the Respondent's Father, which we use as a predictor of the individual's wealth, as it has the advantage of being exogenous to the dependant variable of participation. The *Father's Wealth* indicator in Table (2) is a z-score of a series of measures of the respondent's father's Wealth at the time of the respondent's birth, including his assets in livestock (goats) and the size of his family. The second measure of the respondent's Wealth is a z-score of the respondent's assets before the arrival of the group in the village, comprising his assets in livestock (cows, goats and pigs) and his cash savings. In contrast to the father's wealth measure, which is time invariant and therefore a measure of the respondent's "exogenous" wealth, the second measure is variable and captures the respondent's relative wealth before a given group episode.

In Column (1) in Table (2), we look at the evidence of a wealth effect on participation, using *Father's Wealth*, and controlling for the respondent's age before the arrival of the group (all following regressions include an age control). The coefficient of *Father's Wealth* is positive and statistically significant at the 5% level, of a value approximately 0.48%. This suggests a small but positive effect of wealth on participation. In Column (2), we look at the effect of the respondent's *Assets Before Group* on Participation. As can be seen, an increase of one standard deviation in the relative wealth index is associated with a 2.8% increase in participation, but is not statistically significant at any conventional level. Therefore, we do not find evidence of an effect of relative wealth on participation.

The estimated effects of Table (2) could be due to systematic wealth differences between villages, which is plausible in a context where there is high variation in economic development and wealth levels between villages. For example, mining villages and towns are often much wealthier than villages where the dominant economic activity is agriculture. Table (3) presents the results of the model with village level fixed effects, thus accounting for such systematic differences between villages. As can be seen in Column (1) of Table (3), the relation between *Father's Wealth* and participation is inverted. Indeed, the average effect of *Father's Wealth* within villages is negative and statistically significant at the 1% level, although of a small amplitude (-0,952%). This suggests that, on average within villages, poorer respondents are slightly more likely to participate. However, somewhat surprisingly,

the respondent's *Assets Before Group* still yields a positive coefficient, of a higher amplitude (2,18%), and this time statistically significant at the 1% level. This suggests that, within villages, slightly poorer households are more likely to participate, when wealth is measured through the respondent's father's wealth, but those who participate are wealthier than non-participants before the arrival of the group.

These results do not give us a clear idea of the relation between wealth and participation. One possibility that the positive "within village" effect of relative wealth on participation might be reflecting is that there is higher participation during "richer" periods, or for certain types of groups, which would artificially lead us to believe that this is always the case and therefore bias our interpretation of the relation between wealth and participation. In order to see whether this is the case, we use the model with Group level fixed effects, whose output is reported in Table (4). The Father's Wealth coefficients in Column (1) turns negative - although of a smaller amplitude (-0.355%) - and is no longer statistically significant at any conventional level. The coefficient for *Assets Before Group* reported in Column (2) remains positive, but of a much smaller amplitude (0.27%) and is no longer statistically significant at any conventional level. Thus, while we found in Table (2) that, within villages, relative wealth had a positive effect on participation, this effect seems to be affected by systematic differences between groups, or between time periods.

In order to see whether there is a systematic difference between local and external groups in terms of the relation between wealth and participation, we interact our wealth measures with the conditioning variable *Group Origins* (local versus external), and report the results in Table (5). The model uses village level fixed effects as we are interacting a group level variable. As can be seen in Column (1) and Column (2), there is evidence of a differentiated effect of wealth on participation conditioning on *Group Origins*, as both interaction terms are statistically significant. The coefficient of *Father's Wealth* and *Assets Before Group* - our two measures of Wealth - are negative and statistically significant, indicating that, for External groups, there is a negative relation between wealth and participation, which is statistically significant at the 1% level in both cases. There is therefore evidence that, on average "within villages", absolute and relative poverty are associated with an increase in participation in External Groups, thus confirming the hypothesis set out at the beginning of the chapter.

The interaction terms allow us to compute the effects of our wealth variables for Local groups. For the *Father's Wealth* measure in column (1), the effect is positive but close to 0 (0.79%). For the *Assets Before Group* variable in Column (2), the effect is also positive, of 3.09%. There is therefore strong evidence that, on average within villages, slightly wealthier people are more likely to participate in Local Groups, although the effects are of very small amplitude.

We therefore find empirical evidence for the hypothesis that, for groups that form locally, participants are representative of the general population in terms of their wealth, and in fact are very slightly wealthier on average. On the contrary, participants in external groups are poorer on average, using both the measure of exogenous wealth and the measure of relative wealth before the group. This points to two different stories. On one hand, a story of relative deprivation and possibly economic grievances for participation in external groups. On the other, a more homogenous story of participation for locally formed groups, as participants differ only very slightly from non-participants.

Economic Grievances: Land ownership

We extend our analysis of economic grievance by looking at the effect of land on participation. As mentioned in the introduction of this section, land is a crucial resource in rural agrarian societies as well as a strong indicator of wealth and social integration, and lack of land has consistently been advanced as a cause for participation in armed organizations in interviews with ex-combatants.

We consider the effect of land ownership on participation, using a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent was a landowner before the arrival of a group in the village.²⁹² Looking at Column (3) of Table (2), we can see that the estimated effect of land ownership on participation is negative (-2.47%), but not statistically significant at any conventional significance level. Such a negative relation between land ownership and participation could be due to systematic differences between

²⁹² Ownership in this case refers both to private ownership of land and customary “ownership” of land, which correspond to a form of long-term right of usufruct.

villages. It could also be due to different perceptions of the economic and social effects of land deprivation. For example, there might be differences in the way land is valued, and thus the propensity of land deprivation to generate grievances. The model with village level fixed effects reported in Table (3) allows us to control for such systematic village level difference between villages. As can be seen in Column (3), the negative relation is maintained, and becomes statistically significant at the 10% level. Thus, on average within villages, owning land rather than not is associated with a 3.56% decrease in the probability of participation. This result provides support for the hypothesis that relative land deprivation is likely to enhance participation in armed groups.

As with the wealth variables, this effect could be due to systematic differences between time periods, or systematic differences between groups. Using the model with group level fixed effects reported in Table (4), we can see in Column (3) that, on average within groups, owning land rather than not is associated with a 2.38% decrease in participation, and is statistically significant at the 10% level. We therefore find strong evidence that participants are more likely to have been deprived of land before their participation, which further supports the relative deprivation hypothesis.

In order to see whether land has a differentiated effect on participation when conditioning on *Group Origins*, we look at the interaction between land ownership and Group Origins, reported in Column (3) of Table (5). The negative relation between land ownership and participation is confirmed for External Groups, and even slightly stronger than on average for all groups as the coefficient is -4.36%, and statistically significant at the 1% level. The interaction term suggests that, similarly to Wealth, this strong negative effect is annulled for Local groups. However, as the interaction term is not statistically significant at any conventional level, there isn't sufficient evidence of a differentiated effect of land ownership on participation conditioning on Group Origins.

These results therefore provide empirical support for the idea that land deprivation enhances the likelihood of participation in armed organizations. The effect remains strong in the models that use village level and group level fixed effects, suggesting that despite the fact that there are many differences between the sampled villages, and

between different time periods and groups, the negative relation between land ownership and participation is maintained.

Social Grievances: Marriage

We now turn to the variables that we use as indicators of social integration. The distinction between economic and social is made for clarity, but does not entail that they are mutually exclusive. For example, owning land is both an economic asset and a strong marker of social status. Conversely, in societies where dowry is prevalent and can represent a substantial expense relatively to an individual's wealth, it can be used as an indicator of wealth.

Column (4) of Table (2) reports the results of a regression on participation using as a predictor a dummy that takes the value of 1 if the respondent was married *before* the arrival of the group in the village. The coefficient indicates that being married before the group enhances by 3,91% the probability of participating, and is statistically significant at the 10% level. This suggests a somewhat surprising positive correlation between marriage and participation, but one that could be due to systematic wealth or social differences between villages. When looking at the model with village level fixed effects in Table (3), we can see that, while the coefficient remains positive, it is no longer statistically significant at any conventional level. The across village positive relation between marriage and participation therefore seems to be the result of systematic differences between villages. When adding group level fixed effects in Table (4), the coefficient remains positive but isn't statistically significant either. Therefore, contrarily to land ownership, there is insufficient evidence of an effect of marriage on participation. The effect captured across villages indeed seems to be attributable to village level differences.

Table (5), however, shows us that *Group Origins* might be playing a part in this story. Indeed, we can see in Column (4) that, for External groups, the within village effect of marriage on participation is negative, although not statistically significant at any conventional level. As the interaction term is statistically significant, there is evidence that the relation between marriage and participation is different for External and Local groups. The interaction term suggests that it is in fact positive for Local groups,

although not statistically significant (the significance here is the difference between local and external groups). Similarly to the wealth measures, we find evidence that participants in Local Groups are slightly more likely to have been married than non-participants, while in external groups, participants are *less* likely to have been married. In contrast to the wealth results, however, the levels of statistical significance do not allow us to say that there is sufficient evidence in the data for such a relation.

Social Grievances: Education

We pursue our analysis of the relation between different types of grievances and participation by looking at the relation between education levels and participation. We use a numeric variable that gives the level of schooling gap of the respondent before the arrival of a given group, i.e. the number of missed school years of a respondent as compared to a standard benchmark, which is computed with the age, number of years of education and date of group arrival. In Column (5) of Table (2), we can see that, controlling for age before group and age squared, a one year increase in an individual's schooling gap is associated with a 0.699% increase in participation, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. This suggests that educational deprivation is also associated with higher participation. Once again, this could be due to systematic differences between villages in terms of education, which are likely in a region where education infrastructure and provision is very unequally distributed in rural areas. Looking at the model with village level fixed effects in Table (3), we can see that the coefficient is almost unchanged, and statistically significant at the 1% level. Therefore, there is evidence that, on average within villages, relative educational deprivation before the arrival of the group in a village is associated with a higher level of participation, although the effect is very small.

This effect, however, could be due to group level difference, or systematic differences in time periods in levels of education. When looking at the model with group level fixed effects in Table (4), we can see in Column (5) the coefficient becomes negative and of an insignificant amplitude, and not statistically significant at any conventional level. Thus, while we have found that within villages, educational deprivation is slightly associated to participation, the effect seems to be conditional on group level systematic differences.

As with the previous variables, we look at whether this might be due to differentiated patterns of participation in Local vs. External groups. As can be seen in Column (5) of Table (5), on average within villages, the school gap measure is associated with a 0.153% increase in participation for External Groups, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. As the interaction term is statistically significant, there is evidence that the schooling measure has a different effect for local groups, which is actually stronger (around 0.2%), although both these effects remain of very small amplitude.

We therefore find empirical evidence that relative educational deprivation is associated with higher levels of participation, although the effect is quite small in amplitude. However we find that participants in Local groups are slightly more educationally deprived than participants in External groups, although the difference is very small.

Social Grievances: proximity to established authorities

Furthermore, we look at the effect of the respondent's level of "social integration" in rural agrarian societies on participation. Although, as we have seen that rural established political and social order have been deeply affected by the war, customary chiefs retain significant authority in several areas, in part due to the fact that they continue to allocate land through the customary system of land tenure (Van Acker 2005). As a result, being close to the *Mwami* (King) of a given area, or to the village chiefs can condition access to certain economic and social resources and privileges, while relative distance from such authorities can be a sign or cause of social marginalization, although the process leading from one to another is highly variegated. Nevertheless, we use the respondent's family association with established rural customary authorities as a measure of social integration.

The first variable used in Column (6) takes the value of 1 if the respondent's father had direct "biological" kinship with the *Mwami* (King) that ruled over the chiefdom in which the village could be found, and 0 otherwise. The second variable used in Column (6) captures the exact same type of biological association, but with the chief of the surveyed village.

Looking at Columns (6) of Table (2), we can see that, while the respondent's father's kinship with the village chief doesn't yield a statistically significant effect on participation, respondents whose fathers had a biological kinship to their *Mwami* (King) have a 7.74% higher level of participation, a coefficient which is statistically significant at the 1% level. Thus, while there is no evidence that participants are socially closer or further to village authorities when measured by the respondent's parents' kinship ties, there is evidence that they are closer to the *Mwami*. Both the model with village level and group level fixed effects display a positive and statistically significant effect of father's kinship with the *Mwami*. In these models, the measure of the father's kinship with village authorities turns negative, but is not statistically significant.

In Table (5bis) - an extension of Table (5) - we can see the differentiated effects of social ties to established authorities conditioning on *Group Origins*. As can be seen, the father's kinship with village chief is not statistically significant for External groups, nor is the interaction term. There is therefore insufficient evidence of a statistical relationship between the participant's father's ties to village chief and participation. However, we can see that the measure that captures the father's ties with the *Mwami* is negative (-1.6%) and not statistically significant for External Groups, while it is strong (14.6%) and statistically significant at the 1% level for Local groups.

Therefore, when using the father's measures of kinship with established authorities as indicators of social integration, we do not find evidence for the claim that social marginalization enhances participation. Somewhat surprisingly, we find an effect of the father's proximity with customary authorities on participation that is present in the three models. The interaction with Group origins, however, shows us that this is only the case for Local Groups. Rather than social isolation as an individual level determinant of participation, what we seem to be capturing here is the networked dimension of participation, to which the second section of this chapter is dedicated.

Personal Grievances: Victimization

We now turn to a different type of grievance, whose effect has rarely been evaluated in quantitative studies of participation in violent organizations, which is the direct victimization of a person or a person's household on participation. We use a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent or one or more members of his household has experienced a direct attack before the arrival of the group in the village (and thus before potential participation), using data on the respondent's family's history of attacks. As can be seen in Column (7) of Table (2), respondents who have experienced attacks on their households are 5.541% more likely to participate, an estimation that is statistically significant at the 1% level. There is therefore strong evidence that direct victimization is associated with an increase in participation. However, this effect could be due to systematic differences between villages in terms of attack rates and participation rates. The model with village level fixed effects reported in Table (3) shows us, that, on average within villages, the effect of attacks on participation remains positive but drops to 0.288%, and is no longer statistically significant at any conventional level. There is therefore insufficient evidence that, on average "within villages", direct victimization is associated with participation. The effect captured in Table (2) therefore seems to be due to village level differences, particularly the fact that some villages experience higher levels of attacks and higher levels of participation. Furthermore, when adding group level fixed effects in Table (4), the coefficient becomes negative (-2.24%), but isn't statistically significant at any conventional level.

Thus, while Table (2) suggests that there is a positive relation between attacks and participation, these attacks seem to be due to systematic variations in both attacks and participation levels between villages. This indicates that the relation between attacks and participation might not play out at the individual level, which is our focus here, but perhaps at the village level, although these particular models do not allow us to make such a claim. This motivates our inquiry into the village level relation between experience of attacks, armed group formation and participation in Section 3 of this chapter.

Past participation

We then look at a different aspect of an individual's experience of armed conflict: past participation in armed organizations. As has been argued in the theoretical chapter and in several of the qualitative empirical chapters, networks of security professionals and ex-combatants often play a crucial role in armed mobilizations, suggesting the possibility of a strong association between past participation and participation in armed groups.

We use a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent has declared having participated in a security organization before the arrival of the group in the village.²⁹³ Looking at Column (8) of Table (2), we can see that having previously participated is associated with a 30.8% increase in participation, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. This suggests a very strong effect of past participation on the likelihood of participation in a given group. As can be seen in Table (3) and Table (4), the estimated effect remains strong and statistically significant when incorporating both village level and group level fixed effects, -23.7% and 22% respectively, both significant at the 1% level. While not reported here to avoid overburdening the tables, the effect of past participation is strong and statistically significant in both Local and External groups, and is actually stronger for external groups.

Therefore, when accounting for systematic village, group and temporal period differences, there is evidence of a strong association between past participation and participation. Importantly, as we have repeated throughout this section, this does not imply causality, because of the possibility of endogeneity.

Social ties: Kinship with participants

We then look at the effect of social ties on participation. As we have seen in the theoretical section, and reminded at the beginning of this section, social ties have been shown to play a crucial role in armed mobilizations. In the survey, a series of questions

²⁹³ This variable compiles participation in previous village groups (groups present in the village), as well as participation in non-village groups.

were designed to measure an individual's social ties with both leaders and members of armed groups throughout the period of presence of an armed group in a given village, in order to capture temporal variations in social ties between populations and members of armed organizations. In this analysis, we use the measures that correspond to an individual's social relations with leaders and members of the armed group before the arrival of the group in the village. This is done to avoid, as best possible, the endogeneity that would result from including those social ties that develop as a result of the presence of the armed groups, or as a result of participation. We focus on two variables: Biological Kinship and Close Social Ties. The dummy variable *Bio Kinship* takes the value of 1 if the respondent has declared strict biological kinship with at least one member of the group, before the arrival of the group in the village. This measure is used because it further reduces the risk of endogeneity. We also introduce an alternative variable, that slightly extends the *Bio Kinship* variable to the larger family and close friends of an individual. The variable *Close Social Ties* takes the value of 1 if the respondent has declared that at least one member of the armed group was part of his family or a close friend *before* the arrival of the group in the village. A more detailed explanation of the construction of the kinship variables is provided in Appendix 1.

In Column (9) of Table (2), we can see that having biological kinship with a group member enhances the probability of having participated by 30,1%, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. In order to see whether this result could be biased by systematic differences between villages, or groups, we look at the models with village level and group level fixed effects. Table (3) shows us that, on average “within villages”, the effect of *Kinship* remains strong at 25.5% and statistically significant at the 1% level. However, when looking at the model with group level fixed effects in Table (4), we can see in Column (9) that, while the effect of biological kinship on participation remains positive, it is a much smaller amplitude (2.24%), and not statistically significant at any conventional level. Therefore, the strong effects identified in Table (2) and Table (3) seems to be affected by systematic group level differences. In order to see whether the group level fixed effects annul all effects of social ties on participation, we introduce the alternative measure of social ties before the group in Table (4) with the group level fixed effects (As the *Bio Kinship* variable was statistically significant in the previous tables, we did not introduce the alternative

measure to unburden the Tables). As can be seen in Column (10) of Table (4), having a family member or close friend in the group before the arrival or constitution of the group enhances the probability of having participated by 10.1%, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. Thus, while the effect of biological kinship does not hold with group level fixed effects, *Close Social ties* has an effect.

In order to see whether these differences might be due to *Group Origins*, we look at Table (5bis), where both these variables are interacted with the conditioning variable *Group Origins*. As can be seen in Column (6), the coefficient of *Bio Kinship* is not statistically significant for External groups, and the coefficient of the interaction term is not statistically significant. This can be explained by the fact that it is much less likely that residents have biological kinship ties with members of external groups. However, as can be seen in Column (7), the effect of *Close Social Ties* for External Group is positive and statistically significant at the 1% level. As the coefficient of the interaction term is not statistically significant and of a very low amplitude, the effect is very similar for Local groups.

Thus, there is strong evidence in the sample that social ties with members of armed groups are associated with participation. While this is relatively straightforward for local groups, the effect remains for External groups. This is thus consistent with the idea, explored in the qualitative empirical chapters, that external groups use social networks to recruit combatants. In the following section, we will explore this point more specifically.

9.4.4. Section 1 Conclusion

The analysis of the individual determinants of participation has yielded several important results, which allow us to better understand *who* participates in armed organizations. Indeed, we have found evidence for the much discussed idea that grievances are an important factor in understanding participation in armed organizations, an aspect that, as we have seen in the theoretical chapter, has been extensively explored in qualitative and historical studies of armed mobilization, but for which quantitative studies have found mixed evidence. In particular, we have found strong evidence that land deprivation is associated with higher levels of

participation, a result that echoes the qualitative empirical chapters where many interviewees insisted on the fact that lack of land drove young people to join rebellions. We also find evidence that relative educational deprivation is associated with higher participation, although the effect is small in amplitude. The results for the other proxies of social and economic grievances are not as straightforward. Indeed, we do not find evidence that our measures of social marginalization –marriage and proximity to established authorities - are associated with higher participation, and the measures of wealth yield somewhat contradictory results.

However, we have seen that a particular group level characteristic, its origins, is particularly relevant in the analysis of the determinants of participation, as it conditions differentiated effects of grievances on participation. Indeed, we have seen that relative economic deprivation is not associated to higher participation for groups that emerged locally, but increases participation for external groups. This is also the case for land deprivation, which is associated with participation for external groups, but not for local ones. Similarly, while marriage has a negative but not statistically significant effect for external groups, participants in local groups are more likely to have been married. Such differentiated patterns of the effects of the individual determinants of participation seem to point to different stories of mobilization. On one hand, that of relative economic and social deprivation as a driver of participation in external groups, consistent with the idea that such groups represent an “exit option” for people who find themselves in positions of economic and social marginality, that has been emphasized extensively in the literature on armed conflict on the African continent (e.g. Richards 1996; Van Acker & Vlassenroot 2001; Honwana 2005). On the other hand, a different portrait of participation in local groups emerges. Indeed, participants in such groups are more representative of the general population, in terms of their economic and social profiles (and in some cases, such as marriage, slightly more “integrated” than average). Although the category of “local groups” covers a large array of very different configurations, this can potentially be explained by the fact that such “local groups” emerge - at least initially - as collective responses to insecurity by existing socio-political entities. As seen in the chapter on the “grassroots” dynamics of formation of the Mayi-Mayi militia, such groups often “activate” mechanisms of communal resource mobilization and governance, which solicit entire communities and include mechanisms of screening and vouching of participants.

In addition, we have found several other significant results concerning determinants of participation. However, it is important to not misconstrue these variables as strictly individual, as we have argued throughout the thesis that the processes they are part of operate both at individual and supra-individual levels. This is the case of social ties, for which we have found very strong statistical evidence of an effect on participation, both in local groups and in external groups. The processes whereby individuals are “pulled” into armed organizations through their social ties is a supra-individual process, that requires to understand the individual dimension in conjunction with the collective and social dimensions, which motivates the inquiry carried out in the second part of this chapter.

Similarly, while we have found strong evidence that past-participation is associated with much higher levels of participation, this does not entail that it is a strictly individual variable. As we have seen in the Kalehe Highlands chapter, the formation of an armed group activates social mechanisms of persuasion and coercion that lead many ex-combatants to be “pulled” back into armed organizations. The strong result for past-participants might therefore be capturing such processes, and it is important to remain wary not to misconstrue them as strictly individual. Finally, we have found that, across villages, direct victimization of an individual or an individual’s household is associated with higher participation, but that this result seems to be attributable to village level systematic differences. As with the previous variables, this points to the possibility that victimization related grievances do not operate solely at an individual level, but rather at a collective/village level. This informs the inquiry that is carried out in the final section of the chapter, which explores the relation between attacks, armed group formation and participation.

In the following tables - Table (2) to Table (5bis) - the dependant variable *Participate* is the probability that an individual has participated in a given group in a given village.

TABLE (2): INDIVIDUAL DETERMINANTS OF PARTICIPATION (No fixed Effects)

(dependant: Participate)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Age before group	0.002** (0.000)	0.001** (0.000)	0.002*** (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.009*** (0.002)	0.002*** (0.001)	0.001** (0.000)	0.001*** (0.000)	0.001** (0.000)	0.003 (0.002)
Father's wealth	0.004* (0.002)									0.006*** (0.002)
Wealth before group		0.029 (0.018)								0.018** (0.008)
Land before group			-0.024 (0.019)							0.006 (0.019)
Married before group				0.039* (0.021)						-0.015 (0.021)
Schoolgap before group					0.007*** (0.002)					0.003*** (0.001)
Age before group squared					-0.000*** (4.07e-05)					-3.31e-05 (3.46e-05)
Father kinship with Mwami						0.078*** (0.017)				-0.001 (0.010)
Father kinship with Chief						0.006 (0.027)				0.013 (0.024)
Family attack before group							0.054*** (0.0170)			0.057*** (0.017)
Past Participant								0.307*** (0.019)		0.194*** (0.021)
Bio Kinship group Member									0.301*** (0.059)	0.258*** (0.052)
Constant	0.067*** (0.018)	0.069*** (0.017)	0.058*** (0.018)	0.066*** (0.018)	0.060** (0.025)	0.014 (0.023)	0.059*** (0.017)	-0.003 (0.0161)	0.028 (0.0174)	0.014 (0.025)
Observations	2,175	2,255	2,344	2,344	2,344	2,340	2,344	2,344	2,248	2,002
R-squared	0.009	0.015	0.008	0.009	0.017	0.022	0.012	0.172	0.043	0.153
FE	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Cluster	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V

Linear Probability Model. Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1)

TABLE (3): INDIVIDUAL DETERMINANTS OF PARTICIPATION (Village Fixed Effects)

(dependant: Participate)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Age before group	0.001 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.001* (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.007*** (0.002)	0.001 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.001 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.003* (0.002)
Father's wealth	-0.009*** (0.002)									0.001 (0.003)
Wealth before group		0.022** (0.010)								0.019** (0.008)
Land before group			-0.035* (0.020)							0.005 (0.019)
Married before group				0.026 (0.023)						-0.018 (0.022)
Schoolgap before group					0.006*** (0.001)					0.003*** (0.001)
Age before group squared					-0.000*** (3.68e-05)					-4.60e-05 (3.55e-05)
Father kinship with Mwami						0.051*** (0.014)				-0.008 (0.013)
Father kinship with Chief						-0.014 (0.024)				0.026 (0.025)
Family attack before group							0.002 (0.016)			0.049** (0.019)
Past Participant								0.236*** (0.019)		0.155*** (0.022)
Bio Kinship group Member									0.255*** (0.058)	0.245*** (0.055)
Constant	0.098*** (0.022)	0.106*** (0.020)	0.095*** (0.021)	0.103*** (0.021)	0.105*** (0.029)	0.065** (0.026)	0.098*** (0.020)	0.032* (0.019)	0.052** (0.021)	0.029 (0.027)
Observations	2,175	2,255	2,344	2,344	2,344	2,340	2,344	2,344	2,248	2,002
R-squared	0.185	0.183	0.186	0.185	0.192	0.188	0.184	0.252	0.183	0.230
FE	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV
Cluster	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV

Linear Probability Model. Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1)

TABLE (4): INDIVIDUAL DETERMINANTS OF PARTICIPATION (Group Fixed Effects)

VARIABLES (dependant: Participate)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Age before group	-0.001** (0.000)	-0.001*** (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	-0.001** (0.000)	0.001 (0.002)	-0.001** (0.000)	-0.001** (0.000)	-0.000** (0.000)	-0.000* (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)
Father's wealth	-0.003 (0.002)									
Wealth before group		0.003 (0.005)								
Land before group			-0.023* (0.014)							
Married before group				0.005 (0.016)						
Schoolgap before group					-0.000 (0.001)					
Age before group squared					-5.63e-05 (3.74e-05)					
Father kinship with Mwami						0.033*** (0.012)				
Father kinship with Chief						-0.017 (0.020)				
Family attack before group							-0.022 (0.014)			
Past Participant								0.219*** (0.014)		
Bio Kinship group Member									0.022 (0.033)	
Social ties group Member										0.101*** (0.006)
Constant	0.164*** (0.015)	0.160*** (0.015)	0.156*** (0.014)	0.159*** (0.014)	0.117*** (0.026)	0.138*** (0.017)	0.161*** (0.014)	0.093*** (0.014)	0.108*** (0.013)	0.103*** (0.014)
Observations	2,175	2,255	2,344	2,344	2,344	2,340	2,344	2,344	2,248	2,341
R-squared	0.630	0.630	0.634	0.634	0.635	0.635	0.634	0.679	0.590	0.679
FE	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG
Cluster	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH

Linear Probability Model. Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1)

Table (5): Individual Determinants interacted with Group Origins (model with village fixed effects)

(dependant: Participate_ Probability of participation)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Father's wealth	-0.011*** (0.002)				
Group Origin:External/Local	0.365*** (0.022)	0.359*** (0.021)	0.338*** (0.030)	0.285*** (0.031)	0.457*** (0.059)
Group Origin X Father's Wealth	0.019** (0.007)				
Age before group	0.000 (0.000)	7.22e-05 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	-0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Wealth before group		-0.011** (0.004)			
Group Origin X Wealth Before Group		0.043** (0.018)			
Land before group			-0.043*** (0.013)		
Group Origin X Land Before Group			0.043 (0.040)		
Married before group				-0.007 (0.016)	
Married Origin X Land Before Group				0.124*** (0.040)	
School gap before group					0.001* (0.000)
Group Origin X School Gap					0.006* (0.003)
Constant	0.017 (0.016)	0.018 (0.015)	0.019 (0.013)	0.037*** (0.013)	0.028* (0.014)
Observations	2,175	2,255	2,344	2,344	2,344
R-squared	0.385	0.381	0.382	0.387	0.384
FE	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV
Cluster	HH	HH	HH	HH	HH

Linear Probability Model. Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1)

Table (5 bis): Individual Determinants interacted with Group Origins (model with village fixed effects)

VARIABLES (dependant: Participate)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Bio Kinship group Member	0.095 (0.089)			
Group Origin:External/Local	0.261*** (0.022)	0.220*** (0.024)	0.273*** (0.031)	0.368*** (0.022)
Group Origin X Bio Kin Group Member	0.020 (0.111)			
Age before group	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Social ties group Member		0.144*** (0.041)		
Group Origin X Social Ties Group Member		-0.010 (0.042)		
Father kinship with Mwami			-0.016 (0.010)	
Group Origin X Kin father with Mwami			0.146*** (0.039)	
Father kinship with Chief				0.006 (0.026)
Group Origin X Kin father with Chief				-0.035 (0.068)
Constant	0.003 (0.014)	0.000 (0.014)	0.017 (0.016)	0.015 (0.015)
Observations	2,248	2,341	2,340	2,340
R-squared	0.305	0.503	0.390	0.381
FE	IDV	IDV	IDV	IDV
Cluster	HH	HH	HH	HH

Linear Probability Model. Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1)

9.5. SECTION 2: Mediation and Participation

9.5.1. Rationale of analysis

In the previous section of this chapter, we searched for empirical evidence of individual level determinants of participation, with an aim to understand who participates in armed groups. One of the conclusions we have drawn is that those individuals who had pre-existing kinship or social ties with members of armed groups tend to participate more than those who did not. Tied to the question of *who* participates is the question of *how* people come to participate, or what authors such as Viterna (2006) or Scacco (2009) frame as ‘pull factors’ as opposed to ‘push factors’ of participation.

In this section, we look at processes of mediation of participation and how these interact with individual factors, in line with our multi-level analytical approach. As argued in the theoretical chapter, participation in armed factions should be seen as part of political economies of labour mobilization, which have longstanding institutional histories and have shaped the political and social landscape of the region. For example, as has been emphasized in the history section, the institution of the “native chief” served as a handle for the state to mobilize labour and resources. The formal institution of the chief, representing state authority, is based on modes of customary authority embedded in social structures of rural areas. In this section, we therefore look at what Staniland (2012, 2015) calls the “social-institutional” dimensions of armed mobilization, which have rarely been taken into account in quantitative studies of participation.

Mediation designate the ways in which institutions of authority – in this case chiefs - and structures of social organization – in this case families - influence individual participation in armed organizations. Mediation is not a linear or straightforward process, and encompasses a variety of mechanisms of individual and collective communication, negotiation, persuasion, or pressure and coercion. It is not necessarily carried out by chiefs and families and encompasses a much larger array of actors, and

does not automatically entail support. Chiefs can decide to carry out recruitments for different reasons and in different contexts. For example, chiefs can mobilize as part of efforts to provide security to their constituencies, or as part of wider social-insurrectional movements such as the Mayi-Mayi or Raia Mutomboki, or under pressure by external groups seeking to obtain resources.

Bearing in mind the intricate nature of the process under study, we nevertheless attempt to ascertain whether institutional and social mediation increase an individual's propensity to participate in armed factions. Descriptive data suggests that there is large variation in the level of mediation of recruitments into armed groups by local authorities. Figure (6) gives a historical overview of recruitment "campaigns", and those that were mediated by local authorities.²⁹⁴ The red line reveals that a significant proportion of total recruitments in the sample were mediated by chiefs.

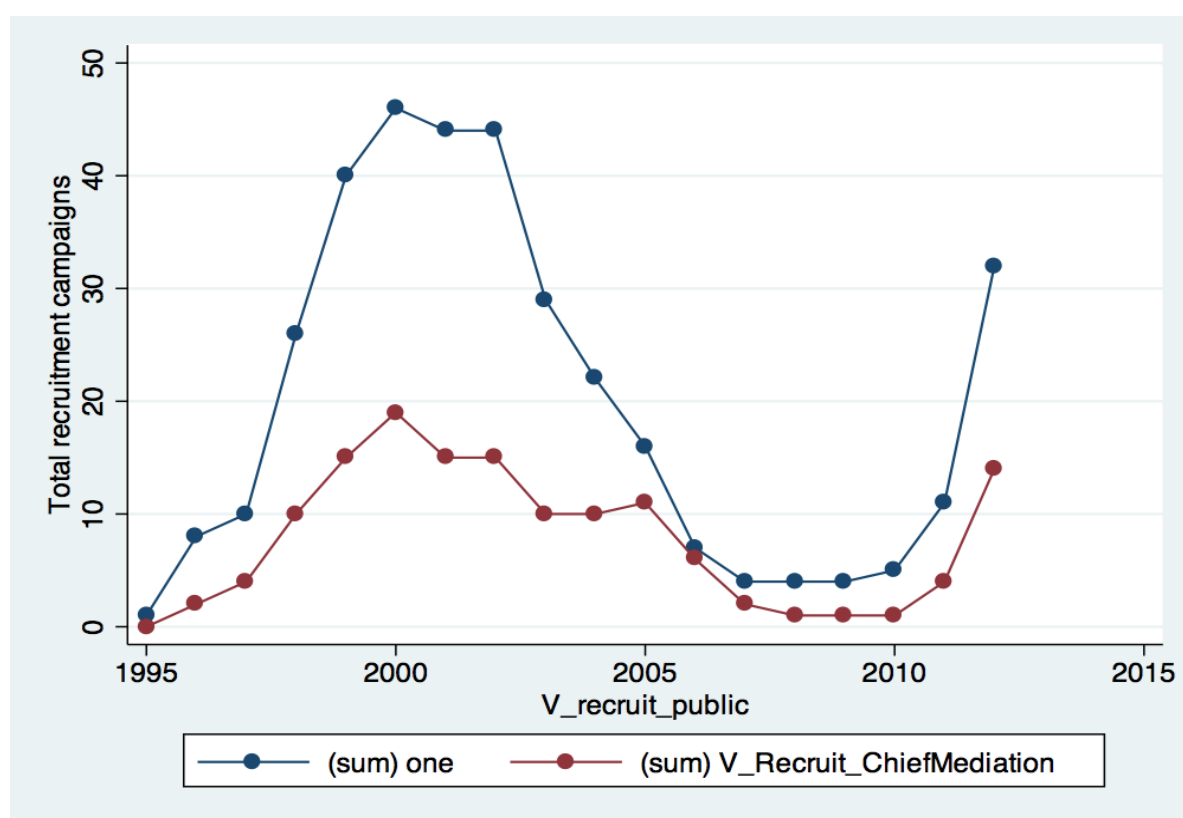


Figure 1 Mediation of Recruitments (Village Survey)

²⁹⁴ A campaign is a measure of whether an armed group carried out recruitments in a given village in a given year. Figure (6) shows the number of villages in which recruitments were being carried out in a given year. The red line gives us the number of villages in which there is evidence that local chiefs were directly involved in recruitments.

9.5.2. Model Setup

We now turn to the econometric estimation of the effect of institutional and social mediation on participation in armed organizations. As for the analysis carried out in Section 1, we use the individual*group structure of the dataset. Institutional mediation is defined as whether local authorities actively took part in the recruitment of combatants. Social mediation is defined as whether an individual's familial entourage directly encouraged and supported participation. Table (6) presents the results of a linear probability model that uses both the Village Level and Household Level data, and with the dummy variable *participation* as the dependent variable (the probability that an individual has participated in a given group in a given village). As for the previous analyses, the linear probability model is chosen over the logit model for the purpose of simplicity of interpretation, but the analysis was also carried out using a logit model, and yielded very close results. The baseline specification for the linear probability model is:

$$P_{i,g,v} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{Chief}_{i,g,v} + \beta_2 \text{Family}_{i,g,v} + \varepsilon_{i,g,v}$$

Where:

$P_{i,g,v}$ is the binary dependant variable, that takes the value of 1 if an individual i participated in a group g in a village v .

α is the constant.

$\text{Chief}_{i,g,v}$ is a binary variable that takes the value of 1 if recruitments were directly mediated by local authorities for individual i in a group g in a village v .

$\text{Family}_{i,g,v}$ is a binary variable that takes the value of 1 if recruitments were directly mediated by an individual's family for individual i in a group g in a village v .

β_1 and β_2 are the estimated coefficients.

$\varepsilon_{i,g,v}$ is the error term for an individual i in a group g in a village v .

As with the previous analysis, the effects estimated through this model could be due to systematic differences between villages. In order to take into account systematic village level differences, we add a model with village level fixed effects, and report the output in Table (7). Furthermore, the estimated effects might also be affected by systematic differences between individuals in a village, and temporal variations in both

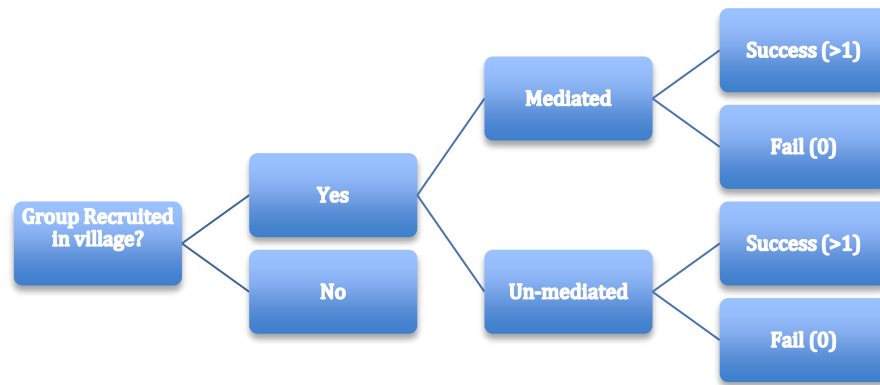
mediation and participation. In order to measure the average effect of social and institutional mediation ‘within individuals’ - i.e. account for systematic differences between individuals - we repeat the same model while adding individual fixed effects, and report the output in Table (8). The Individual fixed effects are reported as HH (for Household) in the tables. Throughout the presentation of the analysis and results, the term participation (or participate) refers to the binary dependant variable, the probability that an individual has participated in a given group, in a given village (thus, an increase in participate means an increase in the probability of an individual having participated in a specific group in a specific village).

9.5.3. Measurement and Sampling

Two measures of Institutional Mediation are used in the analysis. The first is a binary variable that takes the value of 1 if the Village authorities declared that they directly took part in the recruitments of a given group in the survey village. Importantly, it does not mean that the Authorities were supportive of the movement, as it includes the cases where authorities were forced or pressured to recruit.²⁹⁵ As Local Authorities can conceal or misreport their involvement in recruitments for armed groups for multiple reasons, a second measure of Mediation was included in the Household survey. It captures whether the respondents reported that they were ordered or directly encouraged to participate by local chiefs.

Additionally, an important risk concerns the possibility of under-evaluating the effect of mediation by conflating un-successful mediated recruitments with non-recruitments in the sample. The following tree provides an illustration of this problem:

²⁹⁵ See Appendix 2 for details of variable construction.



As there are two main binary variables (participation and mediation), these are the four outcomes for these two variables in the database:

	Participate	No Participate
Mediated	1	2
Un-mediated	3	4

The 4th option in the table conflates two outcomes of the previous possibility tree: Un-mediated mobilization with no participation, and the absence of recruitment at all in the village. We restrict observations to the first branch of the tree, to cases where there is evidence that the groups carried out recruitment, in order not to conflate unsuccessful mediated recruitments with non-recruitments.

9.5.4. Empirical Results

Column (1) of Table (6) corresponds to the baseline specification and provides an estimation of the effect of Encouragement by village authorities (hereafter called Chief Support) on the participation dummy dependent variable. The *Chief Support* measure used here is taken from the Household Survey, and corresponds to whether the respondent considers that the village Authorities were actively involved in the recruitment of combatants for a specific group.²⁹⁶ Standard errors are clustered at the

²⁹⁶ The Household Survey also included an alternative measure of mediation of recruitment by village authorities. Instead of asking whether the village authorities were directly involved in the recruitment of combatants for a given group, it asked who carried out the recruitments, and let the respondent answer openly. The surveyor then had to enter the different actors enumerated by the respondent. As this second

group level. As can be seen in Column (1), *Chief Support* is associated with a 28% increase in participation, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. This positive and statistically significant effect prevails in the model using village fixed effects (27.1% in Table (7)), as well as in the model using household fixed effects (22.8% in Table (8)), thus accounting for systematic differences between villages, and systematic differences between households and time periods. The strong positive effect also remains when using the Village Survey measure of *Chief Support*, which is not reported to avoid overburdening the table. There is therefore strong evidence that mediation by village authorities is associated with an increase in participation, both across South Kivu, on average within villages, and on average within households.

As discussed in the qualitative empirical chapters, there is evidence that mediation by local authorities often occurs concomitantly to mediation by families, as the village authority structure “encompasses” the household social structures and thus mediation by authorities can entail mediation by families. Furthermore, as previously discussed, one of the major risks in this analysis is endogeneity. Indeed, as we have seen with some of the examples of Mayi-Mayi mobilizations in Mwenga, high spontaneous participation in “popular” movements can constitute a serious challenge to the authority of local leaders, who can decide to support such movements in an attempt to regain authority over their subjects. This is just one among several configurations where high participation can drive *Chief Support*, thus introducing endogeneity in the estimation of the effect of *Chief Support* on Participation.

While it is impossible to completely rule out the risk of endogeneity, we insert a control for “popular mobilization” in order to isolate the effect of *Chief Support* on participation. In Column (2) of Table (6), we use *Family Support* as a proxy for popular support, in order to isolate the effect of Chief Support. The *Family Support* Variable is a binary variable that takes the value of 1 when respondents consider that their close family (parents) actively encouraged their participation in a given group. When controlling for *Family Support*, *Chief Support* is associated with a 14,4% increase in the probability of participation and is statistically significant at the 1% level. When controlling for *Chief Support*, *Family Support* is associated with a 15,7%

measure yielded the same results than the first one, it is not included in the results to avoid overburdening.

increase of the probability of participation, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. Thus, while the single effect of *Chief Support* on participation is likely to have encompassed that of *Family Support* in Column (1), Column (2) shows us that the isolated effects of *Chief Support* and *Family Support* on participation are strong and statistically significant. In Column (3), we can see that these effects remain strong and statistically significant when using an alternative measure of “popular support”, a binary variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent considers that their familial entourage was “supportive” of their participation (rather than actively involved in it). The estimated effects of both *Chief Support* and *Family Support* remain strong and statistically significant on average within villages, as can be seen in Table (7) that reports the results of the model using village level fixed effects.

However, when using the model with household level fixed effects, reported in Table (8), we can see in Column (2) and Column (3) that, while the *Family Support* coefficients remain strong and statistically significant, the *Chief Support* coefficients remain positive (respectively 6.89% and 4.18%), but are no longer statistically significant at any conventional level. This indicates that the effects captured in Table (6) and Table (7) could be due to temporal variations in both mediation and participation, i.e. that there is higher participation in the periods when there is also higher mediation within villages. However, this could also be due to excessive breakdown of the correlation by the Household Fixed Effects and resulting lack of statistical power.

Furthermore, an important concern is that the estimation of both the separate and combined effects of *Chief Support* and *Family Support* could be biased by an omitted variable, *Group Origins*. Indeed, the strong and significant effects of *Chief* and *Family Support* could just be capturing the “grassroots” or local character of the formation of some armed groups - which is likely to be correlated to the predictors (*Chief Support* and *Family Support*) and the outcome variable (participation) - and not the specific effect of the two Support variables on participation. To evaluate whether or not this is the case, we run two additional regressions. Column (4) reports the estimation of the effect of *Group Origins* on the probability of participating, using a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the group originated locally, and 0 if the group is originated “externally”. We can see that participation is on average 37,7% higher for local groups

than for external groups, a result that is statistically significant at the 1% level. Column (5) replicates the Column (1) regression, with *Chief Support* as the independent variable, but adding *Group Origins* fixed effects to the model, to see whether the effect of Support on participation could be due to systematic differences between Local and External groups. The output shows that, on average “within Group Origins”, the estimated effect of *Chief Support* on participation is 15,2%, and is statistically significant at the 1% threshold. This suggests a reduced, yet strong and significant effect of *Chief Support* on participation when accounting for systematic differences between local and external groups. As can be seen in Table (7) and Table (8), the effect remains when adding village level and household level fixed effects to the model.

We then look at whether the effect of *Chief Support* on participation is different for Local Groups and External groups. As discussed in the introduction of this section, there exist very different configurations of institutional mediation of armed mobilization. In some cases, chiefs can autonomously decide to mobilize as a result of rampant insecurity and the necessity to replace state security forces. In other cases, the decision to mobilize can be taken at a higher level and be mediated by state institutions, including chiefs, as was the case during the Local Defence mobilization under the RCD rule when local chiefs were tasked with mobilizing recruits for the paramilitary force.²⁹⁷ In other cases still, occupying armed groups can be forcing chiefs to provide recruit under the threat of direct coercion. Amid such a variety of configurations, we have argued previously that the difference between local and external groups remained a salient distinction in the context of high decentralization of political authority and resource mobilization. While many local initiatives are likely to obtain the support of local chiefs - although this is by no means guaranteed - the “mobilizing capacity” of local chiefs could be different when chiefs are mobilizing for external groups.

In order to see whether this is the case, we add an interaction model that incorporates both *Group Origins* and *Chief Support*, and an interaction term *GroupOrigins*ChiefSupport*. The rationale and interpretation of this interaction model is the same as for the interaction models using *Group Origins* as a conditioning

²⁹⁷ See chapter on Mobilization in the Kalehe Midlands.

variable carried out in Section 1 of this chapter. As can be seen in Column (6) of Table (6), the interaction term is statistically significant at the 1% threshold, indicating evidence that the effect of *Chief Support* on *Participate* is different for Local Groups and for External Groups. For External Groups, *Chief Support* is associated with a 5% increase in participation, and is statistically significant at the 5% level. However, for Local Groups, *Chief Support* is associated with a much stronger (30.3%) increase in participation, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. When adding village level fixed effects to the model (Table (7)), the coefficients remain of similar sign, amplitude and statistical significance. However, in Table (8), which corresponds to the model with household fixed effects, *Chief Support* is associated with 0.7% increase in participation for External Groups, and is no longer statistically significant. The interaction term reveals that, for Local Groups, *Chief Support* remains associated with a 21.3% increase in participation, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. This indicates that the effects are due to systematic differences between time periods, i.e. that there is more participation in periods where there is also more mediation.

We have therefore found that the effect of mediation on participation is strong and statistically significant for both Local and External groups. However, for local groups, mediation is associated with a much stronger increase in participation. This suggests that chiefs have a higher mobilizing power when initiatives are local, which could be due to the fact that they activate communitarian structures of mobilization, but also to endogeneity. Yet there is also evidence that chiefs retain a significant mobilizing capacity for external groups, which is consistent with the qualitative evidence that armed factions strategically delegate the mobilization of resource and combatants to local chiefs because of their higher mobilizing capacity.

9.5.6. Section 2 Conclusion

The analysis of institutional and social mediation of participation that we have carried out in this section has yielded several important results that inform our analysis of armed mobilization. First, we have seen that institutional and social mediation are an important feature of the armed mobilizations that have occurred in eastern Congo, an aspect which we have emphasized in the quantitative chapters. This substantiates the idea that mobilization is not strictly an individual phenomenon, it has a significant

“social-institutional” dimension that, although emphasized by numerous qualitative studies of mobilization, has been much less explored by quantitative analyses of participation that have predominantly taken an atomistic approach to the issue. Furthermore, the analysis has yielded strong evidence that the active involvement of village authorities in recruitments, as well as the involvement of an individual’s familial entourage are both associated with higher levels of participation, although it cannot be ruled out that these results might be affected by endogeneity. While the result is quite straightforward, it attests to the mobilizing capacity of chiefs in rural areas, and provides quantitative backing to the analyses of mediation of armed mobilization carried out in the qualitative chapters.

Table (6): Mediation and Participation (Model with no Fixed Effects)

VARIABLES (dependent: Participate)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Chief Support	0.280*** (0.030)	0.144*** (0.035)	0.149*** (0.034)		0.152*** (0.027)	0.050** (0.022)
Family Support		0.157*** (0.038)				
joinattitude_support			0.164*** (0.037)			
Group Origin:External/Local				0.377*** (0.035)		0.085*** (0.032)
Chief Support X Group Origins						0.253*** (0.053)
Constant	0.023*** (0.004)	0.019*** (0.005)	0.024*** (0.009)	0.019*** (0.004)	0.061*** (0.008)	0.013*** (0.004)
Observations	1,284	1,284	825	1,488	1,284	1,284
R-squared	0.172	0.184	0.159	0.253	0.232	0.254
FE	NO	NO	NO	NO	Group TYPE	NO
Cluster	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP

Linear Probability Model. Robust standard errors in parentheses (** p<0.01, * p<0.05, * p<0.1). The dependant variable Participate is the probability that an individual has participated in a specific group in a specific village.

Table (7): Mediation and Participation (model using Village fixed effects)

VARIABLES (dependent: Participate)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Chief Support	0.271*** (0.029)	0.134*** (0.033)	0.153*** (0.037)		0.152*** (0.027)	0.053** (0.026)
Family Support		0.160*** (0.037)				
joinattitude_support			0.143*** (0.043)			
Group Origin:External/Local				0.359*** (0.032)		0.103*** (0.036)
Chief Support X Group Origins						0.243*** (0.058)
Constant	0.026*** (0.007)	0.021*** (0.007)	0.031** (0.014)	0.025** (0.010)	0.061*** (0.008)	0.009 (0.007)
Observations	1,284	1,284	825	1,488	1,284	1,284
R-squared	0.268	0.278	0.291	0.375	0.232	0.331
FE	Village	Village	Village	Village	Group TYPE	Village
Cluster	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP

Linear Probability Model. Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1). The dependant variable Participate is the probability that an individual has participated in a specific group in a specific village.

Table (8): Mediation and Participation (Model Using Household Fixed Effects)

VARIABLES (dependent: Participate)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Chief Support	0.228*** (0.040)	0.068 (0.069)	0.041 (0.063)		0.152*** (0.027)	0.007 (0.037)
Family Support		0.180** (0.074)				
joinattitude_support			0.200** (0.077)			
Group Origin:External/Local				0.385*** (0.050)		0.144*** (0.048)
Chief Support X Group Origins						0.221*** (0.073)
Constant	0.038*** (0.012)	0.035*** (0.012)	0.056** (0.023)	0.016 (0.014)	0.061*** (0.008)	0.016 (0.013)
Observations	1,284	1,284	825	1,488	1,284	1,284
R-squared	0.699	0.705	0.809	0.684	0.232	0.740
FE	HH	HH	HH	HH	Group TYPE	HH
Cluster	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP	GROUP

Linear Probability Model. Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1). The dependant variable Participate is the probability that an individual has participated in a specific group in a specific village.

9.6. Section 3: Participation, protection and Socio-Economic Advancement

9.6.1. Rationale of Empirical enquiry

The analysis of the individual level determinants of participation carried out in the first section of this chapter has shed light on the question of *who* joins armed organizations, by looking at individual level determinants of participation. The second section has focused on *how* people join armed organizations, highlighting the central role of institutional and social mediation in armed mobilizations. Yet the understanding of *why* people participate remains unclear without an analysis of what people actually obtain as a result of their participation. Table (1) of the descriptive statistics section has given us an idea of the main self-reported motives of participation. It shows that people participate for a range of different reasons, including the hope of obtaining material benefits, the desire for revenge, various forms of social pressure and coercion, and a number of other motives. The predominant motive, however, is “community protection”, suggesting that people primarily join armed organizations in order to enhance their security and that of their social entourage and communities. While such a motive can be perfectly genuine, the literature on the discursive strategies of armed organizations begs us to be cautious not to accept such motives at face value. Indeed, most armed groups claim that their objective is to bring security and protection to civilian populations, despite the fact that a large number of them engage in violence against those very populations. Moreover, community protection can be used as a deceptive argument to lure people into joining armed organizations. The starting point of this section is therefore to necessity to investigate whether people actually gain protection, or other social or economic benefits, as a result of participation.

This question is at the heart of the general interrogation pursued in this thesis. As argued in the theoretical section, the objective is to analyse the decision of joining armed groups not solely as an individual process, but as inscribed in the broader transformations that societies undergo during civil wars. More specifically, we seek to understand participation as part of the extension of a political economy of violence and protection, and the social architecture that results from this extension.

Ascertaining whether or not direct participation or support for armed organizations is likely enhance people's security or socio-economic status is therefore central in understanding why they participate in such organizations.

The existing literature on participation points towards two, somewhat contradictory effects of participation in armed factions and social proximity to armed factions during periods of armed conflict. On one hand, authors have emphasized the economically and socially detrimental effects of joining or being associated to armed factions. Because of the nature of military work, but also the widespread negative perception of armed factions, those who have been associated with such organizations can experience various forms of economic and social ostracism. This has been extensively documented in the case of ex-combatants on the African continent, and more specifically in the eastern Congolese wars.²⁹⁸

On the other hand, a burgeoning literature, often based on close-range ethnographies of civil wars and civilian-military relations, has shown that association - either *participation* or *close relations* - with armed factions can enhance an individual's socio-economic positioning, by providing protection, power, or access to particular goods or privileges. Morvan (2005) and Verweijen (2013) have shown that, in eastern Congo, civilians often strategically develop relations with armed actors in order to obtain protection and various sorts of advantages and goods. Similarly, Richards J. (2014 p.310) identifies a mechanism that she calls 'recruitment for protection', whereby people participate to avoid being attacked by a group. Such contentions resonate with recent literature on violent organizations such as mafias and gangs, which emphasizes the fact that membership in such organizations conditions access to certain individual or collective goods, such as protection or material resources, that can also accrue to the social entourage of members (Sanchez-Jankowski 1991; Whyte 1993; Venkatesh 2000).

²⁹⁸ For eastern Congo, see for example Jourdan (2004, 2011) or the report by the Eastern Congo Initiative and the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative on the post-conflict trajectories of ex-combatants (2012).

Very few studies that have explored this question through a quantitative angle, perhaps because of the dominance of cross section type data on armed conflict. We therefore take advantage of the panel nature of the data to answer two central questions:

- 1) Does participation in armed faction enhance or deteriorate an individual's economic and social position, and reduce or enhance security?
- 2) Do social ties with armed group members enhance or deteriorate an individual's economic and social position, and reduce or enhance security?

Our two questions thus concern the effect of *participation* on socio-economic positioning, as well as the effect of *social proximity to armed groups* on socio-economic positioning. We look at the effect of these two factors on three main dimensions of socio-economic life, which are 1) Wealth and economic positioning 2) Social Integration and 3) Security.

9.6.2. Design of Study and model setup

In order to carry out the analysis, we reshape the dataset into a simplified panel, with three temporal observation points of the respondent's socio-economic variables: Before the presence of a specific armed group (Period 0, hereafter referred to as PER0), during and after the presence of the armed group (period 1, hereafter referred to as PER1), and strictly after the presence of the armed group (hereafter referred to as PER2). As previously mentioned, this reshape is feasible because all socio-economic variables have a temporal dimension (i.e. have observations for every year since 1990), and the dates of arrival and departure of groups in villages are recorded in both the Household Survey and Village survey. In order to reduce the risk of measurement errors of years of presence of groups in villages, these variables were systematically cross checked by comparing the Village Survey – the most reliable for village level events such as the presence of armed groups because it is addressed to village specialists, including security specialists – and the 8 observation points of the Household survey. The qualitative reports were further consulted to verify the accuracy of the dates. In those cases where the dates remained confused, calls to village authorities and additional research trips were carried out to verify the dates.

This variable is also a key component of the analysis carried out in Sanchez de la Sierra (2016).

The re-shaped dataset into three temporal periods is sketched in the following table. For each of the variables used in the analysis of this section, a simplified variable was computed for each of the three time periods. For example, the marriage variable takes three values for each individual*group, according to the three periods: Whether the respondent was married before the arrival of a specific group (PER0), whether the respondent got married after the arrival of the group (PER1), and whether the respondent got married after the departure of the group (PER2). This is done for all the variables used in the analysis (participation, marriage, land ownership, assets, and attacks). The difference-in-difference model explained in the following sub-section allows to calculate the effect of the arrival of a group on these variables, i.e. whether the propensity to be married is affected by the arrival of a group. The difference-in-difference is done by interaction the period (PER1) with the Participation variation (PART), which allows to see whether there is a differentiated effect of the arrival of the group on the outcome variables, conditional on whether the respondent has participated or not. For example, as illustrated in the table below, it allows to see if the effect of the arrival of a group (PER1) on marriage is different for participants and non-participants.

Time period	Individual X Group	Participation in Group?	Married?	Landowner?
PER 0 (before group)	I1 X G1 (individual 1*Group 1)	0	1	0
PER 1 (after group arrival)	I1*G1	0	1	1
PER 2 (after group left)	I1*G1	0	1	1
PER 0	I1*G2	0	0	0
PER 1	I1*G2	1	1	0
PER 2	I1*G2	1	1	0

PER 0	I2*G1	0	0	1
PER 1	I2*G1	1	0	1
PER 2	I2*G1	1	1	1

This breakdown into three periods has a theoretical as well as empirical justification. Indeed, It is assumed that before the armed group, a respondent's socio-economic status is unaffected by the effect of that particular armed group, providing a baseline against which the following periods are compared.²⁹⁹ The further separation into two periods – During and after and strictly after the Group - is justified by qualitative evidence that the purported effects of a group are likely to change upon the group's departure or dismantlement. For example, there is qualitative evidence that those who participate or collude with a given armed group are often targeted for retaliation by other armed groups upon the group's departures, or various forms of institutional and social retaliation by various actors.³⁰⁰ As retaliation, or various other social processes of marginalization are likely to affect the socio-economic positioning of people who have either participated or colluded with armed groups after the group's departure, the effect of the armed group's presence can be different *during* its presence and *after* its presence, and justifies the separation.

Using this three period panel dataset, we use a difference-in-difference model to carry out the econometric estimation of the effect of a respondent's participation and social proximity to armed group on the respondent's socio-economic position. We separate socio-economic position into 3 main clusters, which constitute our dependent variables: 1) the respondent's Wealth and land ownership 2) the respondent's marriage and 3) The respondent and his family's security.

The difference-in-difference model allows us to address the concern of a non-random assignment of the "treatment" whose effects we are trying to estimate, in this case participation in armed faction or social proximity with armed groups. This can be a

²⁹⁹ The respondent's socio-economic status before the group can, however, be affected by participation or association with other groups, or by unobserved factors also affecting his future socio-economic status. The difference-in-difference model addresses these concerns.

³⁰⁰ For example, qualitative interviews provide examples where village councils decided to exclude anyone who had participated or colluded with certain armed groups.

major concern if the selection into the “treatment” (participation) is correlated with the set of outcome measures. It therefore allows us to address unobserved constant heterogeneity selection bias, present in standard cross section estimations. For example, a cross-sectional approach to the impact of participation on wealth would compare participants and non-participant’s wealth levels, but these could be affected by constant heterogeneity between participants and non-participants. The difference in difference focuses strictly on the change in wealth at three periods in time, and on the difference between participant’s change in wealth and non-participants change in wealth, thus eliminating the average initial difference in wealth between participants and non-participants. Although not perfect, the difference in difference model therefore allows to “control” (hold constant) any constant unobserved variable potentially affecting both the treatment selection and the outcome variable. The strategy, however, is not immune to biases arising from systematically different “paths” by participants and non-participants, for other reasons than the effect of participation (differential time trends), which constitutes its main limitation.

Importantly, the database and model restrict the observations to group episodes, i.e. the episodes where a group was present in a village. This allows to avoid the bias that would arise from the inclusion of those observations where groups were not present in the village, which could bias the estimation of the effects of participation on our dependent variables.

Furthermore, while the database is divided into three temporal periods, we choose to report the model that includes PER1 (which pools the during and after group periods), and not the one that includes PER2. This is done for purposes of simplicity and clarity, but also because some of the groups were still present during the survey, and, as we cannot observe PER2 for such groups, we lose many observations. This was particularly the case of the Raia Mutomboki, who emerged in 2011-2012 and were still operating when the survey was carried out in 2012-2013. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that there is very little variation between PER1 and PER2. Thus, we only add PER2 to the model in the cases where the marginal effect of group departure is statistically significant.

Finally, we include group level fixed effects in the model, as they allow to account for unobserved constant heterogeneity between groups, but also villages (as the variable that singularly identifies groups is village specific). Furthermore, all regressions include a birth year dummy to control for age, and year fixed effects.³⁰¹ Finally, standard errors are clustered at group level. The results are reported in Table (11) and Table (12), and discussed thematically as in the previous sections. The specification of the model is:

$$Y_{i,g,t} = \alpha + \beta * PART_{i,g} + \sigma_1 * PER1 + \sigma_2 * PART * PER1 + \pi * X_{i,g,t} + \varepsilon_{i,g,t}$$

Where:

$Y_{i,g,t}$ is the outcome for Individual i group g and period t (t can take two values PER0, and PER1). We detail and discuss the selected outcome variables that we use in the interpretation of results.

α is the constant.

β is the coefficient of PART.

$PART_{i,g}$ is a dummy that takes the value of 1 if an individual i participated in group g .

σ_1 is the coefficient of PER1, i.e. the effect of the group's presence *and* aftermath.

$PER1$ is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the time period is *after* the start of the group episode, thus both during and after the group.

σ_2 is the coefficient of the interaction term PART*PER1, which measures the differentiated effect of a group's presence and aftermath (PER1=1) for participants (PART=1), as compared to non participants. It is therefore the key coefficient in identifying whether participation changes the effect of a group's presence.

$PART * PER1$ is the interaction term, a dummy that takes the value of 1 if PART=1 and PER1=1.

$X_{i,g,t}$ represents the additional individual and group level observed and unobserved factors affecting the outcome variable for each individual i , group g at period t . Their effect is held constant by using group*individual fixed effects.

³⁰¹ Indeed, if a respondent is 25 today, he is more likely to have participated in groups in, say the year 2000, than a respondent who is 18 today. The dummy allows to control for age effects.

$\varepsilon_{i,g,t}$ is the error term for Individual i , group g and period t .

9.6.3. Empirical results

Participation and Marriage

We start the analysis by looking at whether or not participation has an effect on the marriage of a respondent. We use a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent got married during a given period among the two periods included in the analysis. Hereafter, we refer to PER1 as after the beginning of the group episode (which comprises during the group and after the group). In order to better identify the effect of participation on marriage, we condition the regressions on whether or not individuals were married before the arrival of the group, creating split samples of married and non-married individuals.

Column (1) restricts the sample to those observations where the respondent was married before the arrival of a group. The coefficient of PER1 (-0.935) shows us, after the arrival of a group (as compared to before the group, PER0, which is the baseline period), those who have not participated in the group (PART=0) are 93.5% less likely to marry, which is consistent with the fact that this sample corresponds to those who were married before the group (some of whom might re-marry after, hence not 100%). The coefficient of PART tells us that, before the group (PER=0), Participants were on average more likely to have been married than non-participants, although the use of fixed effects and conditioning make the interpretation of this coefficient complex, and it is not specifically relevant as we are analysing the effect of participation on marriage. The coefficient of the interaction term PER1*PART -the key coefficient to detect whether participation induces a differentiated effect - tells us that, on average, following the arrival of a group, the likelihood of getting married of participants decreases by 4.35% more than that of ex-combatants, a result that is statistically significant at the 1% level. Participants are thus approximately 98% less likely to get married after the arrival of a group than before. While this is consistent with the fact that we are conditioning on those who are already married, it is not sufficient to establish that participation (as compared to non-participation) has a detrimental effect on the likelihood of getting married.

Column (2) repeats the same regression, but restricts to those observations where the respondent was not married before the group. As the coefficient of $PER1*PART$ is not statistically significant, there isn't sufficient statistical evidence that the likelihood of getting married after group increases or decreases more than that of non-participants. There is therefore insufficient evidence that participation as compared to non-participation has a distinctive effect on marriage after a group arrives in a village.

Participation and Land Acquisition & Dispossession

We then look at whether there is evidence of a differentiated effect of a group's arrival on land acquisition for participants and non-participants. The outcome variable is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if land was acquired by the respondent at a given period, and we condition on land ownership before the group.

Column (3) looks at the effect of a group's presence on land ownership, for those respondents who were landowners before the arrival of group. The coefficient of $PER1$ shows us that, for those who were landowners before the arrival of the group and did not participate in the group ($PART=0$), a group's presence is associated with a 75.3% decrease in land acquisition, and statistically significant at the 1% level. The coefficient of $PART$, which is statistically significant at the 1% level, shows us that, before the arrival of the group ($PER1=0$), those who later participated in the group were less likely to own land. This is consistent with the land deprivation effect on participation found in the first analysis of this chapter. The fact that the coefficient of $PART*PER1$ is positive indicates that, relative to non-participants, participants see their likelihood of acquiring land after the group increase slightly, but it is not statistically significant at any conventional level.

Column (4) repeats the same regression while restricting the sample to those observations where individuals were *not* landowners before the arrival of a group. As the coefficient of $PER1*PART$ is not statistically significant at any conventional level, there is insufficient evidence of a differentiated effect of participation on land ownership.

We then look at whether the arrival of a group has a differentiated effect on the likelihood of losing land after the arrival of a group for participants and non-participants who were landowners before the arrival of the group. We choose here to incorporate all forms of loss of land and not just expropriation,³⁰² as the presence of a group can lead to multiple forms of direct or indirect loss of goods and land, some of which cannot be recorded (such as being pressured to sell land). In Column (5), we can see that non-participants are much less likely to lose land after the arrival of a group, as the coefficient of *PERI* is negative (-86,4%), and statistically significant at the 1% level. As the coefficient of *PERI*PART* is not statistically significant at any conventional level, there isn't sufficient evidence that for participants the effect of a group's arrival on the likelihood of land acquisition is different from that of non-participants. Thus, as with marriage, we have not found sufficient evidence that participation significantly changes the effect of the arrival of a group on land acquisition and land loss.

Participation and Wealth

We then look at whether participation induces a differentiated effect of the arrival of a group on an individual's wealth acquisition. The dependant variable is constructed with the same z-score of yearly net sales and acquisitions of goods that was used to construct the measure of relative *wealth before group* in the previous analysis, adjusted here to each period of the analysis, i.e. before and after the arrival of a group (see Appendix for variable construction).

As can be seen by looking at the coefficient of *PERI* in Column (6) of Table (11), non-participants experience on average a 4.91% increase in their asset acquisition after the arrival of the group, a result that is statistically significant at the 10% threshold. The coefficient of *PART* shows us that, before the arrival of the group, those who then become participants are 18.2% higher on the scale of asset acquisition, and the coefficient is statistically significant at the 5% level. This somewhat surprising result

³⁰² The household survey contains data on all the land that an individual has owned during his life, including how the land was acquired and how it was lost.

was also present in the analysis of individual determinants of participation, where we had seen that it was conditional on group origins.

The most important result of Column (6) is the coefficient of $PERI*PART$, which shows that the asset acquisition of participants decreases on average 28.4% more than that on non-participants after the arrival of a group, and is statistically significant at the 1% level. Contrarily to marriage and land, we therefore find statistical evidence that participation is associated with a negative effect on asset acquisition. This provides support to the idea that participation has a detrimental effect on wealth.

Participation and Protection

We then look at whether participation induces differentiated effects on security after the arrival of a group, by looking at both the respondent's security and the respondent's Household's security, proxied by the Respondent and his family's history of attacks and sexual violence. The difference-in-difference model is identical to the previous one, and also uses group level fixed effects. However, we change the conditioning of regressions, which is done in this case by group origins. As argued in the two previous sections, there is extensive qualitative evidence that locally formed groups can play a different role than external groups, and we thus look at whether this is the case for security. The output of the regressions are reported in Table (12).

Participation and Attacks on Individuals and Household Members

In Columns (1) and (2) of Table (12), we look at the effect of a group episode on an individual's likelihood to have experienced attacks on himself and on his direct family members, conditioning on *Group Origins*. As can be seen when looking at the coefficient of $PART$ in both columns, none are statistically significant, signalling that there isn't sufficient evidence that participants experienced more or less attacks than non-participants *before* the arrival of the group ($PERI=0$). When looking at the coefficients of $PERI$ in Column (1), we can see that the emergence of a local group is associated with a 7.6% decrease in the likelihood of attacks on non-participants, and is statistically significant at the 10% level. This provides statistical support for the idea that local groups have a protective effects on the population. However, there is

not sufficient evidence that this is the case for external groups, as the coefficient of *PERI* in Column (2), despite being negative, is not statistically significant at any conventional level.

In Column (1), the coefficient of the interaction term *PERI*PART* indicates that, for participants, the emergence of a local group decreases the likelihood of attacks by an additional 10.9% as compared to non-participants, a coefficient that is significant at the 5% level of statistical significance. As a result of the formation of a local group, participants and their direct family members are thus 18.5% less likely to experience attacks than before the arrival of the group. As can be seen in Column (2), this is not the case for external groups, as the coefficient of the interaction term is not statistically significant at any conventional level.

We have found strong evidence of an association between the emergence of local groups and the reduction of attacks on the population, both on participants and non-participants. This effect is stronger for participants, suggesting that participation increases the protective effect of the formation of a local for those who participate and their direct familial entourage. This result, however, does not stand for external groups, for whom we do not find statistical evidence of such a protective effect.

Participation and Sexual Violence on Household Members

In Columns (3) and (4), we use an alternative measure of the victimization of a household's direct social entourage, that of sexual violence against one of his family members.³⁰³ As the coefficients of *PERI* in both columns indicate, non-participants are less likely to have had a member of their family raped after the arrival of both local and external groups rather than before, as both coefficients are negative and statistically significant (respectively at the 10% and 5% levels). The coefficient of *PART* tells us that participants in local groups are 12.9% more likely to have members of their families raped *before* the arrival of the group, pointing to grievance as a

³⁰³ While, as stated in the survey presentation, the household survey was restricted to male respondents, the information collected on the respondent's family included women.

potential cause for participation. This, however, does not hold for external groups, as the coefficient of *PART* is not statically significant at any conventional level.

As for attacks, the coefficient of the interaction term *PERI*PART* shows us that participating in a local group is associated with a 15.6% stronger decrease in the likelihood of having a family member raped after the arrival of the group than non-participants, a result that is statistically significant at the 1% level. This does not hold for external groups, as the coefficient is not statistically significant. Thus, we find further evidence of a “protective effect” (for both participants and non-participants) of the presence of both local and external armed groups on populations. This protective effect is relatively stronger for participants as compared to non-participants in the case of local groups, but not in the case of external groups.

9.6.4. Protection, armed group formation and participation

We have found strong statistical evidence of a protective effect of the presence of local groups on the population, and a relatively stronger one for individuals who participate and their social entourage. However, the coefficient of *PART* for local groups begs a further inquiry, as it suggests that participants are more likely to have experienced sexual violence in their households before the group, pointing to victimization as a potential cause of participation. At this stage of the analysis, whether direct victimization increases participation is still unclear. In the first analysis of this chapter, we had found that the relation between victimization and participation disappeared in the model with village level fixed effects, suggesting the possibility that village level variables played a role in the relation between attacks and participation, and in particular the formation of local groups, that correspond to village level responses to insecurity. As we only observe group episodes in the difference-in-difference model, we cannot analyse the role of the potential omitted variable of local group formation on the relation between attacks and participation, and it is hard to say whether we are observing individuals who participate because of attacks strictly on their families, or individuals who participate collectively as a result of attacks on their villages and the formation of local groups.

This motivates our brief final analysis of the relation between attacks, armed group formation and participation. We start by reshaping the database into a year*individual format, where each observation corresponds to one year of a given individual, between 1990 and 2012. As previously explained, the retrospective panel dataset allows us to put the data into year*individual format. For each year*individual, we create a binary variable that takes the value of 1 if individual experienced an attack that given year. We further create two additional dummy variables, one that takes the value of 1 if for a given year*individual a Local Group was present during that year, and the other that takes the value of 1 if an External Group was present during that year. Thus, we can observe the relation between attacks on individuals and the presence (the formation or arrival) of Local and External groups, and on individual participation in these groups.

We use a linear probability model, with group*village fixed effects and additional year fixed effects to control for constant heterogeneity between groups, villages and time periods. The specification is:

$$\mathbf{Group}_{i,v,t} = \alpha + \beta * \mathbf{Attacks}_{i,v,t} + \pi * \mathbf{X}_{g,v,t} + \epsilon_{i,v,t}$$

Where:

$\mathbf{Group}_{i,v,t}$ is the outcome variable, a dummy that takes the value of 1 if a group is present for an individual i in a village v and year t where $t=\{1990...2012\}$ (either a local or external group).

β is the main estimated coefficient.

$\mathbf{Attacks}_{i,v,t}$ is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if an individual i was attacked in village v and year t .

$\mathbf{X}_{g,v,t}$ are all the other factors that might affect the formation of groups in villages v and year t , which are fixed by group fixed effects.

$\epsilon_{i,v,t}$ is the error term for individual i in a village v and year t .

We add yearly lags for the independent variable Attacks, as the effect of attacks on group formation might not be immediate, and report the results in Table (13). As can be seen in Column (1), having an attack at a given year is associated with a 4.3% increase in the formation of Local groups, and is statistically significant at the 1%

level. In Column (2), we can see that attacks are also associated with an 11.7% increase in the presence of External groups, also statistically significant at the 1% level. As can be seen by looking at the coefficients of lagged attacks, the coefficients remain statistically significant up until a 4 year lag for local groups, and 5 year lag for external groups.

We therefore find strong evidence of an association between attacks and the presence (the arrival or formation) of both local and external groups. This provides evidence for the idea that local groups are formed in response to attacks, at a village level. Conversely, the relation between attacks and the formation of external groups can be explained by “conquest attacks” by external groups.

The final two columns repeat the regressions, but using participate as the dependant variable, and adding Local Group and External group formation in Columns (3) and Column (4) as independent variables. As can be seen in Column (3), Attacks do not have a statistically significant effect on participation, but the presence of Local Groups does. However, we can see in Column (4) that the attacks still do not have an effect on participation.

Thus, we have found that the relation between attacks and participation is in fact explained by a third variable, that of the formation of local groups. Indeed, the data suggests that attacks are associated with the formation of Local Groups, and that in turn the formation of local groups is associated with participation. This therefore gives strong evidence to a story of collective protection as a determinant of the formation of local groups, and as a result, participation in these groups.

Table (11): Participation and Socio-Economic Advancement (Model with group fixed effects)

VARIABLES	(1) Marriage self	(2) Marriage self	(3) Land acquisition self	(4) Land acquisition self	(5) Land expropriation self	(6) Asset acquisition self
PER1 (after group)	-0.935*** (0.006)	0.351*** (0.011)	-0.753*** (0.017)	0.325*** (0.014)	-0.866*** (0.012)	0.049* (0.029)
PART (participate)	0.031*** (0.011)	-0.042 (0.034)	-0.084** (0.039)	-0.040 (0.028)	-0.010 (0.027)	0.182** (0.086)
PER1xPART	-0.043*** (0.011)	0.034 (0.042)	0.063 (0.052)	-0.016 (0.045)	-0.022 (0.030)	-0.248** (0.117)
Constant	0.933*** (0.078)	-0.691*** (0.061)	0.417*** (0.104)	-0.423** (0.166)	0.809*** (0.105)	-0.574 (0.485)
Observations	3,713	2,585	3,016	2,649	3,415	6,067
R-squared	0.882	0.291	0.695	0.311	0.795	0.174
FE	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG
Cluster	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Sample	MARRIED	SINGLE	LAND	LANDLESS	LAND	ALL

Robust standard errors in parentheses (***) p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1)

Table (12): Participation and protection (model with group fixed effects)

VARIABLES	(1) Attacked family member local militia	(2) Attacked family member external group	(3) Raped family member village militia	(4) Raped family member external group
PER1 (After Group)	-0.076* (0.039)	-0.024 (0.016)	-0.039* (0.023)	-0.026** (0.012)
PART (Participate)	0.069 (0.049)	-0.094 (0.075)	0.129*** (0.037)	-0.040 (0.053)
PER1xPART	-0.109** (0.055)	0.121 (0.114)	-0.156*** (0.045)	0.088 (0.090)
Constant	0.279*** (0.104)	0.054 (0.103)	-0.132** (0.061)	0.180*** (0.065)
Observations	1,700	4,598	1,700	4,598
R-squared	0.290	0.258	0.255	0.158
FE	IDG	IDG	IDG	IDG
Cluster	NO	NO	NO	NO
Sample	ALL	ALL	ALL	ALL

Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1)

Table (13): Attacks, Armed Group Formation and Participation (Model using Village Fixed Effects)

VARIABLES	(1) Local Group	(2) External Group	(3) participate	(4) participate
Attack on Family	0.043*** (0.016)	0.117*** (0.022)	-0.006 (0.009)	0.010 (0.011)
Attack on Family_Lag 1 year	0.072*** (0.017)	0.051** (0.021)	-0.014 (0.009)	0.009 (0.011)
Attack on Family_Lag 2 year	0.042** (0.017)	0.076*** (0.021)	-0.016 (0.010)	-0.000 (0.011)
Attack on Family_Lag 3 year	0.046*** (0.016)	0.073*** (0.022)	-0.015 (0.010)	0.001 (0.011)
Attack on Family_Lag 4 year	0.006 (0.014)	0.056*** (0.020)	-0.012 (0.009)	-0.008 (0.011)
Local Group			0.315*** (0.020)	
External Group				-0.032*** (0.007)
Constant	0.003 (0.003)	0.029*** (0.008)	8.95e-05 (0.001)	0.002 (0.001)
Observations	17,818	17,818	17,818	17,818
R-squared	0.183	0.323	0.314	0.136
FE	Village	Village	Village	Village
Cluster	HH	HH	HH	HH

Robust standard errors in parentheses (*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1)

9.7. Chapter Conclusion: a tale of two mobilizations

This chapter has sought to provide a quantitative empirical analysis of the questions of *who* joins armed organizations, *how* they come to join such organizations and *why* they do so. In contrast to several quantitative studies of participation that adopt an individual or atomistic approach to these questions, we have sought to look at the interaction between individual level factors, and social, institutional and group level factors.

In the first part of the chapter, we have sought to identify individual determinants of participation, and found evidence that relative economic deprivation and social marginalization are associated with higher levels of participation, comforting the idea that grievance are an important factor in explaining participation in armed organizations. However, we have seen that the effects of the grievance variables were conditioned by a group level variable, the origins of the group. Indeed, grievance based factors are only associated with higher levels of participation for external groups, but not for locally formed groups. While in the qualitative empirical chapters we have seen that the relation between armed groups and the societies in which they evolve was more complex than this binary categorization of local versus external groups would suggest, this nevertheless provides a nuance to the idea that deprived people join armed organizations because of a lack of a better alternative, or as a form of exit option from an oppressive economic or social context. This seems to be the case only for external groups, and not for groups that form locally.

Furthermore, we have found strong evidence that social networks play a very important role in armed mobilization. This reinforces the results found by several quantitative studies of armed mobilizations, such as Weinstein and Humphreys (2008), Scacco (2009) and Mc Doom (2013), and provides support to the arguments on the social nature of armed mobilization developed in the qualitative empirical chapters. In particular, we have seen that social networks of family and community play a strong role in armed mobilizations into local armed groups. As argued in the chapter on the grassroots logic of mobilization of the Mayi-Mayi movement, this can be explained

by the fact that such local armed groups emerge out of pre-existing forms of social organization, which solicit mechanisms of communal governance and resource mobilization, and also play the essential role of screening and vouching of participants. However, we have also found that pre-existing social ties with members of armed groups are associated with higher levels of participation for external groups. This provides support to the argument developed in the qualitative chapters (particularly in Chapter 5) that armed groups strategically exploit the social networks of their members to recruit combatants.

In the second part of the analysis, we have sought to move beyond individual level determinants of participation to look at *how* people come to participate in armed organizations. In particular, we have looked at the ‘social-institutional’ context of armed mobilization, and the processes of social and institutional mediation, for which we find a strong positive effect on participation, both for local and external armed groups.

In the final section, we have explored *why* people participate in armed groups, by looking at whether participation is associated to material or protective gains. We have found that, on average, participants become less wealthy than non-participants as a result of their participation. This provides support to theories that emphasize that enrolment into armed organizations enhances poverty. However, the most important result of this section is the evidence of a “protective effect” of locally formed groups, who are associated with a reduction of attacks, both on participants and non-participants. This protective effect is in fact stronger for participants and their families, which provides evidence that the motive presented by a majority of participants of their reason to participate is in fact accurate: that of protecting themselves and their entourage. This constitutes strong evidence towards what Richards (2014 p.310) calls ‘recruitment for protection’.

Together, the results found in this chapter seem to tell a tale of two types of mobilizations. On one hand, a story of grievance driven participation, whereby economically deprived and socially marginalized people join external armed groups, which resonates with a long series of qualitative studies that have emphasized this aspect in eastern Congo (e.g. Van Acker & Vlassenroot 2001a, 2001b; Jourdan 2004).

On the other hand, a strong story of communal mobilization emerges from the results of the three sections. Indeed, we have found that there is a significant relation between attacks on villages and the formation of local armed organizations, and that these local organizations have a clear protective effect on their populations, including non-participants. The second part of the analysis has shown us that such local groups rely on pre-existing “social-institutional” structures, including local chiefs, families and social networks - as seen in the first part of the analysis - which mediate the recruitment of combatants. Participants in these groups, as previously mentioned, are more representative of the population of the villages in which they form, suggesting a more comprehensive collective effort to provide security. However, the protective effect is stronger for participants and their direct social entourage. This is consistent with both the theories that emphasize “selective incentives” i.e. benefits that accrue only to members and their direct social entourage, but also recent close range ethnographies of civilian-military relations that emphasize the benefits that accrue from social proximity with armed groups (Morvan 2005; Verweijen 2013).

Chapter Ten

Conclusion

The story of the village of Kimua presented in the introduction of this thesis encapsulates the story of eastern Congo during the last 20 years, and crystallizes the central interrogations that have been addressed in this dissertation. Fallen under the military control of the FDLR militia, Kimua symbolizes the violent subjugation of the rural agrarian societies of eastern DRC to an extractive and exploitative economy of pillage and violence. Yet the emergence of a self-defence militia that mobilized the village youth signalled the irruption of a phenomenon that cannot be fully apprehended through the dichotomist conceptual lens that has dominated mainstream depictions of the eastern Congolese situation. Indeed, the participation of the village youth in this armed group seems to be at the crux of two logics that have predominantly been conceived as contradictory: On one hand, it is inscribed within the rural moral economy of the village, to which it provides a fundamental collective good: protection. On the other, their participation inserts them into the economy of pillage and violence that has come to characterize eastern Congo.

In order to provide paths of understanding towards the tension that emerges from the story of Kimua, and the puzzle of participation in armed groups eastern Congo, this dissertation has sought to answer the questions of *why*, *how* and *who* participates in armed groups. Conscious that years of armed conflict and presence of armed actors in villages such as Kimua is likely to have changed the incentives and motivations for participation, we have followed a second line of inquiry into the transformative effects of the presence of armed groups on a society, to see how this affects in turn the dynamics and processes of participation in armed groups.

In order to address these research questions, I have carried out an analysis of the processes of armed mobilization and participation in armed organizations in the conflict affected province of South Kivu, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Recognizing the limitations of strictly individual-centred or atomistic approaches, I have developed a theoretical framework that has allowed me to study these questions at three articulated and inter-dependant levels: The political

economy of labour mobilization and control, the ‘social architecture’ of armed mobilization and participation, and the individual determinants and dimensions of participation in armed organizations. The analytical attention paid to the political economy dimension of armed mobilization was motivated by the recognition of the quasi ‘industrial’ scale at which the recruitment of combatants has been taking place in eastern Congo, signalling that large scale forces and factors are at play. Furthermore, the recognition that the processes whereby individuals are drawn into and controlled by armed organizations bear a fundamentally social dimension has motivated the inquiry into what Wood (2008) has called the “social processes of civil war”, and into what I have named the ‘social architecture’ of armed mobilization. This implied an attention to both the social structures that shape and condition armed mobilization, and the more dynamic social mechanisms through which individuals are drawn into and controlled by armed organizations. Finally, I have sought to analyse the ways in the political economy and the social architecture of armed mobilization interact with individual determinants of participation, and the ways in which individual-level factors evolve over time.

Central to tracing the processes of armed mobilization and participation across these three analytical levels has been the adoption of a historical viewpoint. Researchers have repeatedly pointed out that the lack of attention to the history of the region in dominant accounts of the eastern Congolese situation constitutes one of major obstacles to the understanding of such a complex conflict (Autesserre 2010; Hoffmann K. 2014; Raeymaekers & Vlassenroot 2004; Reyntjens 2009; Prunier 2009; Stearns 2012; Vlassenroot 2013). Accordingly, I have paid close attention to the social and institutional histories of contemporary processes of armed mobilization in the qualitative chapters, and exploited the retrospective panel structure of the datasets in the quantitative chapter.

I began the thesis by situating contemporary processes of armed mobilization in the social and institutional history of labour mobilization in eastern Congo in Chapter Two. Then, Chapters Four and Chapter Five were dedicated to the identification of two ‘macro-logics’ of armed mobilization in the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement across South Kivu. On one side, a grassroots dynamic of security provision came into articulation with the movement’s propagative mechanisms. On the other, a more accumulative logic of recruitment and control surfaced and consolidated over time. The following chapters adopted a narrower geographical focus in order to allow a closer historical contextualization of processes of armed mobilization. Chapter Six focused on the Midlands of the Mbinga Sud Grouping in the territory of Kalehe,

and traced the successive waves of armed mobilization that occurred in the region during the rule of the RCD, in particular the formation of the Local Defence which was orchestrated by the RCD, and then the “counter-mobilization” led by Cisayura and his Mayi-Mayi group. In Chapters Seven and Eight, I focused on the repeated rounds of armed mobilization that occurred in the Hutu societies of the Highlands of the territory of Kalehe. Chapter Seven presented the history of the region to identify how it shaped the lines of conflict that took a militarized turn in the 1990s, and analysed the repeated rounds of armed mobilization that occurred in the region in the 1990s and 2000s. Chapter Eight focused on the formation and mobilization of the Nyatura armed movement in the Kalehe Highlands in 2011-2012 and provided a close analysis of the events that built up to the mobilization as well as the social processes of the mobilization. Finally, Chapter Nine pursued the same interrogations into a quantitative analysis of armed mobilization, based on panel data collected through a survey of 1084 individuals and 134 villages in the province of South Kivu.

By carrying out this analysis, I have argued that participation in armed groups is largely driven by two ‘macro logics’: The necessity to organize and provide security to the decentralized socio-polities of eastern DRC on one side, and a large scale logic of labour accumulation and control that has taken novel features with the implantation of a militarized political economy on the other. The armed groups that have proliferated in the region occupy a central role in both these logics. I have further shown that, as a result, there has been a significant social implantation of armed groups in rural areas of the region. This results stems from two main elements. First, the social-institutional basis of these groups, who often emanated from pre-existing socio-polities and relied on established mechanisms of resource and labour mobilization. Second, the accrued social implantation of these groups, resulting from the roles they have come to play in contemporary rural societies of eastern DRC. Thus, I have shown that current social processes of recruitment and control over participants is inscribed in this multi-faceted influence and power that these groups have come to exert over rural societies. Finally, I have shown that individual dimensions of participation should be understood as processual, as they evolve and reflect the changing positions of armed organizations in these societies.

This concluding chapter presents these findings and reflects on the central themes raised in both the qualitative and quantitative sections of this thesis and the light they shed on the understanding of contemporary processes of armed mobilization. The contributions made to

the central question of *why*, *how* and *who* participates in non-state armed organizations are laid out in sections 10.1 to 10.4. Section 10.5 identifies the limitations of this work, and suggests avenues for future research, and section 10.6 provides concluding thoughts.

10.1. Why Participate? The central role of Protection

One of the most consistent findings of this dissertation is also one of the most straightforward ones: Protection is one of the key drivers of the emergence and persistence of non-state armed groups, as well as participation in these organizations. Since the crisis of the early 1990s and the breakdown of the Zairean State, numerous non-state armed organizations have emerged to address the sharp rise in insecurity, driven in large part by the necessity to provide protection to the decentralized and fragmented socio-polities of rural eastern DRC.

In Chapter Four, we have seen that the necessity to provide protection to rural communities in a context of acute insecurity was one of the driving factors behind the constitution of ad-hoc, « grassroots » security organizations in rural South Kivu, which often drew on longstanding mechanisms of collective action and security provision embedded in the rural socio-polities of eastern Congo. The articulation between this « bottom up », protection-driven logic of formation of security organizations and the Mayi-Mayi insurrection movement was not straightforward, as the Mayi-Mayi movement spread in very different ways in different areas of rural South Kivu. Yet in many areas, the mobilizing message of the Mayi-Mayi as well as the *practical* repertoire that it carried provided a template of collective action that was « appropriated » by rural socio-polities. In Chapter Six, which focused on armed mobilization in the Midlands of Kalehe, we have seen that the initial impetus for the formation of « Rondes », and then the Local Defence was also the necessity to provide protection.

In Chapters Seven and Eight, we have found that protection of the rural Hutu societies of the Kalehe Highlands was a persistent driver of the constitution of armed organizations in these societies, highlighting the *continued* role of protection as a factor of armed mobilization from the onset of the armed conflict in the region to the current situation. Indeed, we have seen that threats to the fragile architecture of land rights of these societies combined with immediate existential threats in the context of the ethnic wars of the 1990s provided the central impetus for the constitution and mobilization of the first « generation » of armed organizations in the

Kalehe Highlands. We have also found that, despite the progressive insertion of these armed organizations into more accumulative and power-related dynamics of politico-military competition, the demand for protection by the Congolese Hutu population and civilian authorities of the Kalehe Highlands remained a strong factor in the mobilization of the Nyatura movement in 2011-2012.

Finally, in the quantitative analysis carried out in Chapter Nine, we have found strong support for protection as both a *cause* and an *effect* of the constitution of armed organization and participation in these armed organizations, a result that has rarely been demonstrated through quantitative methods because of the scarcity of quantitative panel data on zones of active armed conflict. We have found that attacks on a village has a positive and statistically significant effect on the constitution of local level armed organisations, providing strong support to the idea that local organizations emerge as a response to insecurity. Furthermore, I have shown that both external and local armed organizations have a « protective effect » on the villages in which they are present, as their presence is associated with a reduction of attacks on these villages, a novel and original result of this dissertation. Importantly, we have found that, although the protective effect is stronger for those who have family ties with members of armed groups, it is not restricted to them, and concerns the entire populations of the village. This suggests that these groups provide protection not only to their close entourage or their associates, but as a collective good to the villages in which they are active.

Thus, one of the central findings of this dissertation is that protection is one of the central drivers of the constitution of armed groups, and participation in these groups. While fairly intuitive, this result is far from trivial, as it has important implications for current debates on the role of non-state armed organizations in zones of protracted conflict.

First, the fact that these groups retain a protective role to this day - and not only in the initial phases of their constitution, as is often assumed - begs for a more thorough understanding of their role. Recent studies of vigilantism in areas not categorized as zones of armed conflict have allowed to move past the negative image that has long been associated with these organizations by showing that they play essential roles as protection providers in contexts of state retreat or failure and calling for a more nuanced understanding of their role (Fourchard 2008; Meagher 2007; Pratten & Sen 2007; Pratten 2008). Yet this shift has rarely travelled into areas of active armed conflict – particularly in eastern Congo - where non-state armed

organizations remain overwhelmingly depicted as horrendously violent, exploitative and greed-driven organizations. While scepticism towards the rhetoric of protection used by armed groups is understandable and warranted, a complete dismissal of their protective role is misguided if one seeks to understand the causes and consequences of their persistent presence in areas such as eastern Congo, but also in the rest of the contemporary world. As we have seen, these groups can provide protection to collectivities, and not solely on an individual or private basis as has been emphasized by the literature on private protection by armed groups (Raeymaekers 2010). This points to the basis of a *political* relationship between these armed groups and the collectivities under their control.

Second, the policy implications stemming from these findings are straightforward. The fact that these armed groups provide in certain cases a collective good to groups of individuals or constituencies provides strong support for the argument that policies addressing the eastern Congolese conflict should take into consideration the protective role of these organizations, and should have a strong political component. As has been emphasized by several recent vocal commentators of the conflict, in particular Jason Stearns, Judith Verweijen, Koen Vlassenroot, Christoph Vogel, Degratias Buuma and others, the current approach of the Congolese Government and United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in eastern Congo, which designates these non-state armed groups as “negative forces” to be targeted by military operations are condemned to yield deceiving results as long as there are not accompanied with an effort to address the political basis of their constitution and persistence.

10.2. The Political Economy of Labour recruitment and Control

In the story of the village of Kimua, protection was at the heart of the constitution of a self-defence organization and the participation of the village youth in that organization. Yet as soon as the village youth joined the group and took up arms, they « entered » a militarized political economy in which their workforce constitutes one of the central resources, and that armed groups compete to accumulate and control.

Throughout this thesis, I have argued that the mobilization of combatants in eastern Congo should be understood in the light of the enduring regional history of large-scale labour mobilization in the region that has taken novel features with the development of a militarized

political economy in the 1990s. This follows several recent contentions that such institutional histories structure and shape current processes of armed mobilization and conflict (Hoffmann K. 2014; Hoffmann & Vlassenroot 2014; Munive 2011). The role of labour within the ‘war economies’ that developed in armed conflict is well established. In configurations where access to economic resources is dependent on military control, and where technology is scarce, labour is a crucial factor of production for armed organizations. By situating current processes of armed mobilization within the region’s institutional histories of labour mobilization, this dissertation has traced the transformative effects of the current processes of armed mobilization on the institutional forms of labour mobilization.

In Chapter Two, I have traced the historical entrenchment and institutionalization of large-scale labour mobilization mechanisms in the pre-colonial and colonial era. In particular, I have shown how the colonial state institutionalized the role of the chiefs as central handles for resource mobilization, as part of the general reconfiguration and « territorialization » of political authority that served the extractive purpose of the state (Hoffmann K. 2014; Northrup 1988).

Chapter Five was focused on the identification of an accumulative logic in the recruitment of combatants in the Mayi-Mayi movement, and the particular manifestations that such a logic took the context of the interaction between the Mayi-Mayi armed groups and socio-polities that constitute rural South Kivu. I showed that the centralization and structuration of the Mayi-Mayi resistance movement enhanced this accumulative logic, leading in many cases to the « capture » of the combatants that had been mobilized into small-scale self-defence organizations, and to the rupture of the ‘communal logic’ that had characterized their participation in these organizations. Using interviews and recent studies of armed groups, I have also shown how, in areas where they had military control, the Mayi-Mayi relied on chiefs to mobilize labour, reproducing longstanding institutional practices of labour mobilization (Hoffmann 2007, 2015a; Hoffmann & Vlassenroot 2014).

In Chapter Six, that traced the successive waves of armed mobilization in the Midlands of Kalehe, I have shown that the RCD rebellion relied on institutionalized mechanisms of labour mobilization of the Congolese state – in particular local chiefs – to coordinate the large-scale mobilization of security personnel into the Local Defence. I have shown that this process was relatively successful as long as those mobilized were kept in a protective role towards the

villages and towns of the region, but that when the RCD attempted to corral this extensive labour force into its army – severing the communal logic that had been at the basis of the constitution of these groups – it faced severe resistance from the mobilized youth, a large number of whom eventually defected. Furthermore, I have shown that the Mayi-Mayi group of Cisayura, who emerged in resistance to this attempt by the RCD to ‘capture’ the labour force of the region, progressively started displaying similarly accumulative logics of labour mobilization, albeit on a smaller scale. In Chapters Seven and Eight, I made a similar argument by focusing on the articulation between the security provision to rural Hutu communities and the more accumulative dynamic of labour mobilization that emerged in the context of the consolidation of a politico-military power basis of the Hutu elites.

Finally, in the second section of the quantitative analysis carried out in Chapter Nine, I have found evidence of a positive effect of institutional mediation on the likelihood of participation in armed organizations. While in the case of locally formed armed groups this effect is likely to be due to the protective types of mobilization previously mentioned, I have shown that the effect remained for « external groups », providing support to the continued role of institutionalized modes of labour mobilization – local chiefs – on mobilization into armed groups.

Thus, this dissertation has provided an analysis of the central role of large scale mobilization processes and the articulation between historically institutionalized forms of labour mobilization and the novel forms of mobilization that have emerged as a result of the war and the entrenchment of a militarized political economy. In understanding the macro-factors that drive armed mobilization and participation in armed groups, a central tension therefore emerges between the « protective » dynamic of mobilization identified in the previous section, and the more accumulative and extractive dynamics of labour mobilization that have characterized the political economy of eastern DRC. This thesis has shown that these often operate at the same time, and that armed groups are central vectors of these macro-logics.

10.3. The evolving ‘social architecture’ of armed mobilization and participation

Concomitantly to the central question of *why* people participate in armed organizations, this thesis has explored the inter-related question of *how* people are brought to participate in armed

organizations. This question concerns both the processes through which people are brought to participate, but also the ways in which their participation is sustained over time (Petersen 2001; Parkinson 2013). The main argument that I have advanced is that, although driven by similar ‘macro-logics’ (protection and resource accumulation), the social architecture of armed mobilization has changed to reflect the evolving position of armed organizations in the social landscape of rural South Kivu.

Throughout the thesis, I have argued and shown that social networks are a fundamental dimension of processes of mobilization and participation in violent organizations, following a long stream of scholarship that has emphasized this aspect (Barkey & Van Rossem 1997; Gould 1991, 1993, 1995; Marwell, Oliver, and Prahl 1988; Mc Doom 2013; Petersen 2001; Sageman 2004, 2008; Scacco 2009; Siegel 2009; Staniland 2012; Wickham-Crowley 1992; Wood 2003, 2008).

First, I have argued that some of the armed mobilizations that occurred in South Kivu bore the features of social movements, an aspect that has been emphasized by several recent studies of armed mobilization in Africa (Hoffman D. 2007; Hazen 2009; Stearns & Botiveau 2013). In Chapter Three, we have seen that the Mayi-Mayi armed mobilization bore two of the important features of a social movement. First, it articulated a novel political message in longstanding idiomatic and cultural frames, and provided a simple and modular repertoire of contention (Mc Adam, Tarrow & Tilly 2001; Tarrow 2010). Second, the process of mobilization was *mediated* by pre-existing social structures, which gave it a powerful mobilizing force. In the town of Bukavu, this included the activation of social networks embedded in urban neighbourhoods, but also the universities that provided important mobilizing platforms for the movement. In rural areas, the call to resist the RCD occupation came into articulation with the “protective” mobilization of ad-hoc civilian self-defence organizations and in many cases benefited from the mobilizing capacity of the rural socio-polities, although the support for the insurgent movement varied sharply across different regions. Although not explored in detail in this dissertation, the Raia Mutomboki movement of 2011, the most extensive post-war mobilization in South Kivu, also combined a simple and powerful “praxis of armed mobilization” with the propagative power of pre-constituted social networks embedded in rural socio-polities (Stearns 2013; Vogel 2014).

Second, I have shown that, even in contexts where the social polarization induced by the entrenchment of violent conflict hinders the type of “popular” mobilizations described above, social networks continue to play a central role in the recruitment of combatants. Indeed, In Chapter Five, I have shown that in contexts where counter-insurgency operations significantly enhanced the risks associated with participating in rebel factions, insurgent Mayi-Mayi groups strategically used social networks to covertly approach and enrol new recruits.

Third, I have shown that these processes of attraction of new recruits, but also of control over the members of armed groups are part of the multi-faceted forms of influence and power that armed groups develop over the societies in which they evolve. This power is highly variable and often dependant on the level of military control that they have over a region, but even in the cases where they have little or no military control, they can developed significant levels of power and influence. In Chapter Six, we have seen that the Mayi-Mayi group of Colonel Cisayura used the deep channels of penetration into the Havu societies of the Midlands of Kalehe to develop a multi-faceted form of influence over the population, through a subtle balance of coercion and genuine appeal.

Fourth, I have shown that the protective role of armed organizations towards certain segments of the population played an important role in the reconfiguration of societies around armed actors and the resulting social entrenchment of armed organizations into the very social fabric of societies. In chapters Eight and Nine, I have shown that the repeated existential threats to the politically marginalized Hutu societies of the Kalehe Highlands triggered a form of dependence of these societies to “their” armed groups, and induced a progressive social reconfiguration of these societies around them, although this process was neither linear nor uniform. Thus, while the entrenchment of a militarized political economy subjected this region to the types of accumulative and control-focused dynamics previously exposed, the social embedment of the armed organizations, whose institutional and social role largely supersedes the military sphere, made the armed groups an essential part of these societies.

Finally, I pursued this line of enquiry into the role of social networks in armed mobilization in the quantitative analysis carried out in Chapter Nine, where I found strong support for the idea that participation is mediated by social networks, in particular by showing that having a member of one’s direct social entourage in an armed organizations is associated with a strong and positive effect on participation. This is not only the case for locally formed groups, who often

emerge through pre-existing social networks, but also for ‘external groups’. This result confirms those found by several other quantitative studies of armed mobilization, in particular Humphreys & Weinstein (2008), Scacco (2009) and Mc Doom (2013). Furthermore, I have found evidence that ex-combatant networks provide strong platforms for remobilizing combatants, as having participated in armed organizations is similarly associated to a strong and positive effect on participation.

Thus, this dissertation has documented and analysed the evolving “social architecture” of armed mobilization. The central argument that emerges from this analysis is that, while the initial armed mobilizations reflected the rural agrarian societies of South Kivu from which they were often direct emanations, more recent rounds of armed mobilization reflect the social entrenchment that armed groups have developed in the rural societies of South Kivu, of which – in many cases, not all – they have become essential features. The modes of recruitment and control over their members that armed groups exert are a part of the wider forms of political, economic and social power which these organizations have developed. The protective role that they play, but also the accumulative and extractive processes that they mediate, have put them at the centre of the rural political economies, and triggered a profound re-adaptation of the rural societies to their presence.

The dominant framings that opposes a rural agrarian social order on one hand and oppressive armed groups preying upon these societies on the other, that continue to dominate depictions of eastern Congo and many areas of protracted conflict, is therefore either outdated or incomplete. Despite its subjection to the regional political economy of violence, the self-defence group of Kimua nevertheless constitutes an integral part of the transformed societies that have emerged from decades of armed conflict. While I remain cautious to use such an expression in a context where the polarizing effects of the war have in many cases had socially destructive effects, what appears in the final “portrait” of the Kimua story can be described as a “war community”, that is, a social body that has reorganized around the activity of the war, in which protection and violent accumulation are indiscernibly tied, and have come to constitute a central feature of these societies.

10.4. Individual determinants of participation

Finally, I have addressed the question of *who* participates in armed organizations by carrying out an analysis of the individual determinants of participation. Following recent contentions that individual determinants of participation should not be understood in isolation or as mutually exclusive (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008; Scacco 2009), I have explored the articulation between different individual determinants of participation, in the light of the larger social and institutional processes mentioned in the previous sections of this conclusion. Several key results have emerged from this analysis:

First, I have found evidence for the much-discussed role of individual grievances in driving participation. In the qualitative chapters, I have shown that numerous participants pointed to such grievances as central factors in decisions to participate. These included grievances related to the dire economic and social situation of many youth in the region in a context of profound economic and social crisis, such the being kept out of school because of the financial incapacity to pay the school fees, the absence of any prospects for economic stability, and – particularly in the Highlands – the dire prospects of acquiring land, which as we have seen constitutes the most important economic assets and markers of social status in the region. The first section of the quantitative analysis carried out in Chapter 9 provided us with quantitative evidence of the association of such grievances with participation, in particular relative poverty, and land deprivation, a result that provides support to studies that have emphasized the relation between the lack of prospects of acquiring land, the resulting frustration it generated in a context where land is central for economic and social status and the resulting appeal for participation in armed groups (Van Acker & Vlassenroot 2001a, 2001b ; Jourdan 2004, 2011).

The qualitative chapters have allowed us to explore in more detail the multiple manifestations of such grievances in different contexts, and their articulation with emotional factors, which Wood (2003) has shown play an important role in participation. I have shown that such grievances could translate into various forms of envy or jealousy, for example for those who hadn't found the means to go live in town, but also desires for a form of adventure.

Furthermore, I have also shown that the relation between grievances and participation is conditioned by group characteristics. In the quantitative analysis, I have shown that the type of

group, in particular its origins – local vs. external groups – conditioned the effects of grievances on participation. Indeed, while I found that relative economic and social deprivation had an effect on participation for external groups, this was much less the case for locally formed group, which seem to attract a much more representative membership. For such groups, the determining factor is the direct experience of attacks and victimization on an individual's entourage, and much less – at least initially – economic or social grievances.

The qualitative chapters have shown that such factors can evolve over time. Youth might join local groups as a result of the experience of attacks, interacted with particular types of grievances. Their experience within such groups might however progressively change their motivations, and bring them to join larger groups – into which they can also be coerced – as a result of their change in outlook and the desire to pursue the 'military career'. However, this does not entail that protection, experienced both individually and collectively, disappears as a factor. As we have seen with the case of the Nyatura crisis mobilization against the Raia Mutomboki, the impetus to protect their entourage remained a strong factor in a more militarized configuration, showing that protection is not a factor that mattered only in the initial mobilizations.

Furthermore, in Section 3 of the quantitative analysis, I have found evidence of a 'protective' effect of participation on an individual's social entourage. This is consistent with recent contentions that emphasize the 'protective' effect of participation or close social relation with armed actors in militarized contexts (Morvan 2005; Verweijen 2013; Richards J. 2014). Protection can thus be conceived as an individual incentive to participate, yet one that can also be strategically 'provoked' by armed actors, to obtain recruits (Kalyvas & Kocher 2007). However, I have shown that conceiving it as a strictly individual variable is misguided, as is also tied to collective strategies of protection. Families and communities can decide to provide recruits to armed groups in order to avoid retaliation, which can be conceived as a form of 'investment' in the economy of protection from the side of those providing recruits, or as a form of taxation from the side of the armed group. In such cases, recruits can be pressured by their social entourage to join a group. Furthermore, we have seen with the case of Padiri's Mayi-Mayi group that such processes can occur on a large scale and become institutionalized, giving rise to complex 'politics' of recruitment within villages and within families. Thus, protection works across several levels in explaining armed mobilization and participation: As an impetus of socio-political entities to form armed groups or provide recruits to armed groups, as an

‘investment’ by families or collectivities in the economies of protection (although one that can be ‘provoked’ by the armed group), and as an individual strategy.

These considerations lead to idea that the relation between individual level determinants and factors and participation is neither linear nor uniform. The emotional manifestations of such factors, and the variegated social configurations in which they occur, can lead to very different processes of participation. Thus, I follow several recent contentions, in particular Viterna (2006) and Parkinson (2013), in arguing for a disaggregation of participation, but also an understanding of differentiated patterns of participation in different types of groups. Although the framing of participation as an outcome variable has allowed us to identify and weight the role of several different factors, framing participation as a process is necessary to understand the evolving individual factors and dimensions, which change over time.

10.5. Limitations and further research

The scope of this dissertation was to examine the evolving processes of armed mobilization and participation in armed groups in contemporary eastern DRC. Given the vastness of the region, the duration of the armed conflict and the multiplicity of actors involved, the dissertation can only be a partial account of the multitudinous factors and forces that shape and structure the dynamics of armed mobilization in the region. In this section, I identify some of the limitations of this dissertation, as well as paths for future research.

Despite the focus of several chapters on specific regions and specific armed groups, this dissertation did not extensively probe into group level factors and dynamics, which are likely to significantly affect the ways in which groups recruit combatants. The armed groups that populate rural eastern DRC are subject to quasi-extreme levels of fragmentation. While such aspects are identified and factored in several of the chapters, the dissertation does not provide a systematic analysis of the relation between the dynamics of centralization and fragmentation of armed groups and the strategies of recruitment of these groups, and how these in turn affect the social and individual dimensions of armed mobilization.

Another group level aspect that is not explored in detail in this dissertation is the relation between the resource base of the groups and the patterns of recruitment of combatants. As

shown by Sanchez de la Sierra (2016), using data collected through the same survey as the data used in this dissertation, armed groups display clear patterns of taxation according to their resource base, as well as their time horizon. Such relations are likely to affect patterns of recruitment of combatants, which we have seen be conceived in certain cases as a form of taxation. While preliminary analyses of the relation were carried out, the time constraints and the need for additional data did not allow the factoring of this aspect into the dissertation.

In addition, an aspect that was not theorized systematically in this dissertation is that of rebel governance, a question that has been the object of renewed attention in the study of armed conflict (e.g. Mampilly 2011; Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly 2015). While different aspects of armed group governance were tied into the analysis at several stages of the dissertation, a systematic analysis of the relation between armed group governance and strategies of recruitment of combatants was not proposed, mainly because I was not able to collect extensive data on these governance practices.

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, the analysis of participation carried out in the quantitative section leaves out all the other forms of involvement with relation to the group that are not directly tied to security related activities, and which Parkinson (2013) has shown played crucial role in the organizational capacity of armed groups. This is tied to the fact that the survey was ‘fixed’ at a relatively early stage of this research project, during which I was still in the process of learning how armed group functioned and recruited. Furthermore, as pointed out in the quantitative chapter, the survey was limited to male respondents, which fails to capture important gendered dimensions of mobilization, an aspect that is also missing from the qualitative chapters and the general theoretical discussion of this dissertation, and constitutes one of its important limitations.

In addition, while not the central focus of this thesis, an important angle that has not been explored in detail is that of elite politics at the provincial, national and regional/international levels. This is both an empirical limitation of the thesis – as I did not carry out research in capitals such as Kinshasa or Kigali where many of these elite level politics occur – and a theoretical one. Recent studies have provided fine-grained analyses of the political and international dimensions of the eastern Congolese conflict (e.g. Prunier 2009; Reyntjens 2009; Stearns 2011). However, what remains to be explored and conceptualized more carefully are the ways in which the ‘ground’ processes of armed mobilization articulate with elite level

political negotiations. Recent research projects such as the Usalama Project, directed by Jason Stearns and Judith Verweijen have spearheaded efforts to fill this gap, and are particularly valuable as they combine a close analysis of the ways in which the dynamics of armed conflict play out on the ground with an analysis of the ways they aggregate into regional, national and international politics.

10.6. Concluding Remarks

This dissertation has sought to contribute to the understanding of contemporary dynamics of armed mobilization in eastern Congo, and in zones of protracted conflict more generally. It has shown that the mobilization of combatants in the region is tied to the large-scale forms of resource and labour accumulation that have taken particularly violent forms with the development of a militarized political economy, but also attempts by the societies that constitute rural eastern DRC to protect themselves from the omnipresent violence that this has generated. Through its conclusions, this thesis provides support to the advocates of a political solution to the armed conflict in eastern DRC. Indeed, this thesis has shown the profound ramifications that armed groups have in the societies of rural eastern DRC, of which they have in many cases become integral parts. Strictly military solutions and counter-insurgency campaigns, particularly the highly disorganized and volatile ones that have been carried out in the region, are unlikely to defeat organizations with such ramified social and institutional bases. But more importantly, such military approaches are likely to be insufficient as long as the causes of the emergence of these armed groups are not addressed. Despite the predatory and violent behaviour that they often display towards civilians, these armed organizations remain one of the only options for rural societies to attain a modicum of security, as the example of the village of Kimua potentially illustrates.

The attention to history has allowed us to understand that these dynamics have characterized the region for more than a century, which unfortunately alimments a certain pessimism with regards to the region's prospects. With more than 69 armed groups currently operating in eastern Congo, a civil war surfacing in Burundi, and an election in DRC that forecasts a high level of uncertainty, the factors that have fuelled the region's tumultuous history of violence are, unfortunately, alive and kicking. For such a beautiful, historically and culturally rich region

as the Kivus, this is a grim prospect, and yet one that remains to be understood as a fundamental aspect of our contemporary world.

I would like to end this thesis with a consideration that is both theoretical, and to a certain extent philosophical and ‘moral’. Perhaps the most troubling aspect of the emergence of non-state armed organizations throughout the contemporary world is the legitimacy that these organizations come to find as a result of the type of social re-adaption that occurs around them, which we have discussed in this dissertation. This is particularly troubling with those groups that display the more violent types of behaviours, of which we can find examples in the Islamic State or the Mexican drug cartels. While the development of ‘cultures’ of violence around military actors has been analysed with refinement in the scholarship on civil wars and violence, the emergence of novel, reconstituted forms of ‘community’ around such actors remains difficult to fathom from the perspective of societies that have professionalized and ‘externalized’ the military, and where the social body has in large part been aseptized from violence. Yet understanding them remains crucial, from an intellectual perspective, but also personal one, in order to understand the lives of a significant part of the population of this world.

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Appendix 1: Construction of Variables

A2.1. Wealth variables

The analysis uses two separate clusters of variables to measure a respondent's economic Wealth. The first is the Wealth of the Father of the respondent, and the second is the respondent's wealth.

Father's Wealth

The wealth of the father's household has been proved to be a solid predictor of an individual's wealth. Exceptionally, surveyors were instructed in the protocols that respondents were allowed to solicit help from their family -and, if applicable, their father- to answer this specific section in the case their knowledge was limited. There are three categories of measures of father's Wealth: The father's assets and "tangible" capital, the size of the father's family and the number of wives in the family, and an indicator of the respondent's perception of his father's wealth. The number of wives is used as an indicator because, in societies where dowries are still paid for a majority of marriages, the number of wives can be an indicator of wealth. The measures are regrouped in the following table:

CATEGORY	MEASURES	Indicator in analysis
ASSETS	1. Number of fields owned by father	Kept
	2. Number of cows owned by father	Z-Score
	2. Number of pigs owned by father	
SIZE OF FAMILY	4. Number of wives of father 5. Number of sons of father 6. Number of daughters of father	kept
PERCEPTION OF WEALTH	7. 4 point scale of perception of father's wealth (was your father rich)	

For the analysis, the information contained in variables 2-6 is summed into one variable, Father's Wealth, which is a z-score of the sum of individual z-scores for each one of these variables. The analysis was also conducted using a Factor Analysis for variables 2-6 instead of a z-score, and regressions were run with each one of the variables to verify the robustness of results.

Respondent's Wealth

The second measure that is used to estimate the respondent's Wealth is a z-score of his assets, to create three separate temporal variables of the respondent's wealth, *before*, *during* and *after* the group. The variable is constructed with variables that record his asset acquisitions and sales since 1990, or the respondent's birth if he was born after 1990. The yearly recorded assets are:

- Acquisition and sale/loss of cows (yearly)
- Acquisition and sale/loss of goats (yearly)
- Acquisition and sale/loss of pigs (yearly)
- Estimated amount of cash savings (yearly)

An additional set of variables measure yearly acquisition, sale or loss of land from the respondent from 1990, in order to construct three temporal variables of wealth in land, *before*, *during* and *after* the group.

A2.2. Kinship variables

The analysis uses several measures of Kinship, which include:

1. Kinship of respondent with "local" commander of armed group
2. Kinship of respondent with closest member in the armed group
3. Kinship of village chief with "local" commander of armed group
4. Kinship of village chief with closest member of armed group
5. Kinship of respondent's father with village chief
6. Kinship of respondent's father with Mwami

Measures 1 – 4, which are used as the main measures of kinship with the group, are further broken down into two sub-measures, kinship before the arrival or constitution of the group, and kinship at the end of the group. This allows to reduce problems of endogeneity in the analysis of participation, and to have a dynamic view of the constitution of social relations between respondents and the group during the group's presence.

In order to refine the analysis of kinship, three binary variables were constructed to measure the different “degrees” of kinship and social relations: Biological Kinship, “close” social relations, “larger” social relations, according to the following table:

4th level: Acquaintance			
		3rd Level: Part of community	Displaced, not from family Other
2nd Level: Extended family		In same professional organization	
1st level: Direct family member		do Business together Neighbour	
Himself	Cousin		
Father/Mother	Other Family		
Son/Daughter	Member		
Brother/Sister	Friend		
Spouse/religious relation	Family Friend	Same Religious organization	
Uncle/Aunt			
Nephew/Niece		Neighbour	
Grand Parent			
Grandson/Grand daughter			
Father/Mother in Law			
Brother/Sister in Law			
Daughter/Son in Law			

A2.3. Recruitment and mediation variables

Mediation Variables

Several variables are used to measure mediation by Authorities and Mediation by Families, based either on the Household Survey or the Village Survey.

The Chief survey Mediation variables used in the analysis of the Mediation is based on one main “source” variable, taken from the Village Survey. The “source” variable is a categorical variable that provides pre-established categories of answers to the question: “How were people recruited by this group?” The objective of the question was to capture the “dominant” mode of recruitment of combatants, as perceived by the village authorities. The following table shows which categories of answers from the “source” variable were used to create the Mediation binary V_recruit_mediation, which is used in the analysis. Importantly, the source variable allowed multiple answers, in the case for example that recruitments were both carried out directly by the group and mediated by authorities.

Categories of source variable: How were recruitments predominantly carried out?	Institutional Mediation Binary
Recruitments were private and clandestine	
Recruitments were private	
Recruitments were public	
Recruitments were never mediated by the chief	
Village authorities recruited voluntary	
Village authorities recruited under pressure by group	

The measures that correspond to the Respondent’s perception of Mediation by authorities and mediation by families are the “source” variables of the Household Survey, which are binary variables. The first (Encou_autor) is dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent perceives that there was encouragement or order to participate from village authorities. The second, (Encou_family), is a dummy

variable that takes the value of 1 if the respondent perceives that there was support or pressure to participate from his familial entourage. Additionally, the Chief Survey measure of mediation was inserted in the household survey, and used as an alternative variable.

Appendix 2: List of Interviews

DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	DATE
CHAPTERS 4 & 5		
Colonel Mbangu: Mayi-Mayi Commander	Bagira	19 June 2013
Priest Mwenga Centre 1	Mwenga Centre	14 Oct 2011
Priest Mwenga Centre 2	Mwenga Centre	14 Oct 2011
Chef de Poste D'encadrement	Mwenga Centre	15 Oct 2011
Adjunct of Territorial Administrator	Mwenga Centre	15 Oct 2011
ANR representative Mwenga Centre	Mwenga Centre	16 Oct 2011
Chief of Kitutu	Kitutu	19 Oct 2011
ANR Representative Kitutu	Kitutu	20 Oct 2011
Oxfam Representative Kitutu	Kitutu	20 Oct 2011
IRC Representative Kitutu	Kitutu	20 Oct 2011
ICRC Emergency Team	Kitutu	21 Oct 2011
FARDC Commander	Kitutu	21 Oct 2011
Ex-Mayi-Mayi 1	Kitutu	22 Oct 2011
Ex-Mayi-Mayi 2	Kitutu	22 Oct 2011
Ex-Mayi-Mayi 3	Kitutu	22 Oct 2011
Police Chief	Kamituga	27 Oct 2011
Gold Trader Kamituga 1	Kamituga	28 Oct 2011
Gold Trader Kamituga 2	Kamituga	28 Oct 2011
Gold Trader Kamituga 3	Kamituga	28 Oct 2011
ANR representative	Kamituga	29 Oct 2011
FARDC commander	Kamituga	29 Oct 2011
Hotel Owner	Walungu Centre	31 Oct 2011

Police Chief	Walungu Centre	31 Oct 2011
Simeon Lukeno: Mayi-Mayi ex-combatant	Bukavu	12 August 2012
Mayi-Mayi ex-combatant in Bunyakiri 1	Bukavu	12 August 2012
Mayi-Mayi ex-combatant in Bunyakiri 2	Bukavu	13 August 2012
Mayi-Mayi ex-combatant in Bunyakiri 3	Bukavu	13 August 2012
Mayi-Mayi ex-combatant in Bunyakiri 4	Bukavu	14 August 2012
ex-RCD, Nyabibwe	Nyabibwe	19 Oct 2012
Muganga Murhiminya: Spokesman and Provincial Councillor of the Parti National Mayi-Mayi	Bagira	09 June 2013
Denis M.: Mayi-Mayi Recruiter in Bukavu	Bagira	09 June 2013
Jacques Nyakasali: Executive Secretary of the Mayi-Mayi Kalehe	Bagira	12 June 2013
Major Muhindu Changoco: Mayi-Mayi Commander	Bagira	14 June 2013
Mackalele Ntumulo: Mayi-Mayi logistician in Bukavu	Bagira	17 June 2013
South Kivu Provincial Minister for Internal Affairs	Bukavu	10 August 2012
Secretary of South Kivu Provincial Minister for Internal Affairs	Bukavu	10 August 2012
Action pour la Paix et la Concorde Director	Bukavu	09 August 2012
University Professor Universite Officielle de Bukavu	Bukavu	08 August 2012

CHAPTER 6: KALEHE MIDLANDS

ANR Territorial responsible for Kalehe	Kalehe Centre	15 August 2012
Police Chief Kalehe	Kalehe Centre	15 August 2012
Territorial administrator Kalehe	Kalehe Centre	16 August 2012
FARDC Commander Kalehe	Ihusi	17 August 2012
Priest of Irambo 1	Irambo	22 August 2012
Priest of Irambo 2- former Priest of Nyabibwe	Irambo	22 August 2012
Ex-Mai Mai, Lwege 1	Lwege	23 August 2012
Ex-Mai Mai, Lwege 2	Lwege	23 August 2012
Ex-Mai Mai, Lwege 3	Lwege	24 August 2012
Chief of Village of Lwege	Lwege	24 August 2012

ANR (intelligence services) representative	Lwege	25 August 2012
Interview with ex-Mai Mai, Lwege 5	Lwege	25 August 2012
Interview with ex-Mai Mai, Lwege 6	Lwege	25 August 2012
Chief of Kiniezire	Kiniezure	13 Oct 2012
Leader of Kiniezire self-defence group	Kiniezure	13 Oct 2012
Kiniezure autodefence group (12 participants- Focus group + individual interviews with 5 participants)	Kiniezure	14 Oct 2012
Groupement Chief of Mbinga Sud	Mukwidja	15 Oct 2012
Chief of Mukwidja	Mukwidja	15 Oct 2012
ANR representative of Mukwidja	Mukwidja	16 Oct 2012
FARDC commander of Mukwidja	Mukwidja	16 Oct 2012
Ex- Local Defence Mukwidja 1	Mukwidja	16 Oct 2012
Ex- Local Defence Mukwidja 2	Mukwidja	17 Oct 2012
Ex- Local Defence Mukwidja 3	Mukwidja	17 Oct 2012
Priest of Nyabibwe	Nyabibwe	17 Oct 2012
Interview with chief of autodefence, Nyabibwe	Nyabibwe	18 Oct 2012
Autodefence member , Nyabibwe 1	Nyabibwe	18 Oct 2012
Autodefence member , Nyabibwe 2	Nyabibwe	18 Oct 2012
Autodefence member , Nyabibwe 3	Nyabibwe	19 Oct 2012
Autodefence member , Nyabibwe 4	Nyabibwe	19 Oct 2012
Interview Chief of Butale	Butale	20 Oct 2012
Butale Autodefence member 1	Butale	20 Oct 2012
Butale Autodefence member 2	Butale	20 Oct 2012
Butale Autodefence member 3	Butale	21 Oct 2012
Butale Autodefence member 4	Butale	21 Oct 2012
Butale Autodefence member 5	Butale	21 Oct 2012
Priest of Minova	Minova	21 Oct 2012

ANR officer and former Local Defence Instructor	Nyamucubi	31 Oct 2012
Adjunct of Village Chief of Nyamucubi- ex-Mai Mai	Nyamucubi	31 Oct 2012
Ex-Mayi-Mayi Nyamucubi 1	Nyamucubi	01 Nov 2012
Ex-Mayi-Mayi Nyamucubi 2	Nyamucubi	01 Nov 2012
Ex-Mayi-Mayi Nyamucubi 3	Nyamucubi	01 Nov 2012
Ex-Mayi-Mayi Nyamucubi 4	Nyamucubi	02 Nov 2012
Muganga Bicinga: Village Chief of Kasheke	Kasheke	08 Nov 2012
ANR representative and former Local Defence leader	Kasheke	08 Nov 2012
ex Mayi-Mayi combatant 2	Lemera	09 Nov 2012
ex Mayi-Mayi combatant 3	Lemera	09 Nov 2012
ex Mayi-Mayi combatant 4	Lemera	09 Nov 2012
Pasteur Nyamigogo	Lemera	10 Nov 2012
J.P Cirundu: "Notable" and landowner	Kasheke	08 Nov 2012
ex Mayi-Mayi combatant 5	Lemera	10 Nov 2012
ex Mayi-Mayi combatant 1	Lemera	11 Nov 2012
ex-Mai Mai combatant Nyamutwe 1	Nyamutwe	11 Nov 2012
ex-Mai Mai combatant Nyamutwe 2	Nyamutwe	11 Nov 2012
Sub-Village Chief of Nyamutwe	Nyamutwe	12 Nov 2012
Adjunct to sub-village chief of Nyamutwe 1	Nyamutwe	12 Nov 2012
Adjunct to sub-village chief of Nyamutwe 2	Nyamutwe	12 Nov 2012
family of Mai Mai combatant, Nyamutwe	Nyamutwe	13 Nov 2012
Adjunct to sub-village chief of Nyamutwe 3	Nyamutwe	13 Nov 2012
Colonel Cisayura: FARDC Colonel / Mayi-Mayi Commander	Kavumu	21 June 2013

CHAPTERS 7 & 8: KALEHE HIGHLANDS

Zihrimwa Bagabo Floribert: Numbi Police Commissioner	Numbi	25 Sept 2012
Colonel Bruce, Highlands FARDC commander	Numbi	25 Sept 2012

Honore, Havu landowner and business owner in Numbi	Numbi	25 Sept 2012
Chef de Poste d'Encadrement Administratif de Numbi (administrative officer)	Numbi	26 Sept 2012
ANR official of Numbi	Numbi	27 Sept 2012
ex-Combatant 1	Numbi	28 Sept 2012
ex-Combatant 2	Numbi	28 Sept 2012
ex-Combatant 3	Numbi	29 Sept 2012
ex-Combatant 4	Numbi	29 Sept 2012
Conversations with market operators in Numbi	Numbi	02 Oct 2012
Celestin Seburikande: Chief of village of Lowa-Numbi	Numbi	04 Oct 2012
Former chief of Fungamwaka (displaced in Numbi)	Numbi	04 Oct 2012
Director of Center for Dialogue and Mediation for the Highlands	Numbi	05 Oct 2012
representative of the ' <i>Communaute Hutu</i> '	Numbi	05 Oct 2012
Sub-Village Chief of Lumbishi	Lumbishi	06 Oct 2012
Hutu Agricultural worker and Ex-Combattant, road from Numbi to Lumbishi	Numbi	06 Oct 2012
Adjunct chief (Nyumbakumi) of Lumbishi	Lumbishi	06 Oct 2012
Hutu Agricultural worker, zone of Shandje	Shandje	09 Oct 2012
Interview with agricultural labourer, Shandje	Shandje	09 Oct 2012
Sub-Village Chief of Shandje	Shandje	10 Oct 2012
Parish Priest	Minova	22 Oct 2012
Mujogo-Viateur: spokesperson of PARECO-PAP	Minova	22 Oct 2012
Havu customary Representative 1	Minova	23 Oct 2012
Havu customary Representative 2	Minova	23 Oct 2012
Security Expert Kalehe Highlands 1	Bukavu	25 June 2013
Security Expert Kalehe Highlands 2	Bukavu	26 June 2013
Security Expert Kalehe Highlands 3	Bukavu	27 June 2013
Chef de Poste d'Encadrement Administratif de Nyabibwe (administrative officer)	Nyabibwe	19 Oct 2012

