Liberia: Cross-Cultural Healing
for Former Child Soldiers

Charles WRATTO

Abstract. *In recent years, the issue of child soldiering in Africa has captured international attention and it is no longer a secret that children in war are subjected to brutal recruiting methods that involve, but not limited to, cruel trainings, torture, the killing of community or family members, cannibalism, dehumanization and the application of rituals sacrifices which are believed to protect and make a warrior fearless against an enemy in battle. Agitated by drugs, alcohol, revenge, to mention a few, they are, in most cases, forced to commit terrible atrocities that are beyond human imagination. While these children faithfully execute their "duties" and are viewed as "heroes" by their commanders during wartime, they are, in peacetime, stigmatized and considered impure by the people they once lived among. This is partly so because, in traditional African society, it is held in the highest esteemed that reintegrating a wrongdoer into his former community without any form of spiritual purification could contaminate the entire clan and lead them into misfortune. Similarly, it is believed that until a warrior is purified from the pollution of battle and death, he cannot experience inner peace or total healing. This paper will examine the application of traditional purification rites and western therapeutic trauma mechanisms as approaches used by a local peace building organization (the Charles Wratto Foundation), for the successful reintegration of former child soldiers in rural Liberia. Among other things, the various treatments and support methods applied by traditional healers, community members and western practitioners are discussed.*

Keywords: *Liberia, former child soldiers, cross-cultural healing, indigenous purification, western psychology, reintegration.*

Charles WRATTO
Ph.D. Student
College of Political, Administrative
and Communication Sciences
Cluj-Napoca, Romania
E-mail: charleswratto@gmail.com

Overview

Photographs of child soldiers bearing arms and ammunitions have flashed on television screens and appeared on the front pages of newspapers all around the world. Nonetheless, contrary to the imaginative views of many non-Africans, the wars in Africa are not confined to the use of western made military equipment alone. Instead, they involve, to a greater extent, the

application of deep-rooted and extreme tribal rituals that requires human or animal sacrifices prior to combat. Reveling in his memoirs, *A Long Way Gone*, Ishmael Beah, a former Sierra Leonean child soldier, provided interesting insights not only on the uses of marijuana or a toxic mix of cocaine, which he described as brown-brown, or advanced military hardware as a driving force that devastated his country. Rather, Beah emphasized on the role of magical rituals indoctrination and animistic beliefs in African wars (Beah, 2007). Similarly, in his book, *The Redemption of an African Warlord*, General Butt Naked, a Liberian rebel leader, gave a detail and graphic description of how he would dismember and offer the life of a virgin child to his god (Nya-ghe-a-weh), before going into battle. According to the general, following the eating and drinking of the sacrificed child's heart and blood, he and his men will strip themselves naked and go on the offensive as they were now believed to be invisible to bullets and knives (Blahyi, 2013).

As a spiritual advisor to Samuel Doe, the then Liberian president and the high priest of his tribe, Blahyi (2006) understood that the introduction of tribal rituals in modern warfare would certainly strike fear and horror into the hearts and minds of his much larger and better-equipped enemies. While observing the religious dimension of the conflict, Ellis (1999, p. 264), noted that during the Liberian civil war, military and political ambitions were considered worthier than the life of a human. Consequentially, ritualistic killings became a common practice among both government and rebel forces. The consumption of human flesh for the acquisition of spiritual powers were initially sacred to certain individuals within the various military groups and they were exclusively based on fragments of their tribal beliefs systems. However, due to the military successes and glorification of these men by their comrades in arms, many children soon became indoctrinated into this barbaric and dehumanization process by their commanders. Among other things, cannibalism, rape and the destruction of communities were all strategies designed to eliminate the child soldiers of every humanistic gesture. Hence, the role of children in heinous crimes left them stigmatized and made their reintegration process extremely challenging even twelve years after the war has ended.

Why Cross-Cultural Healing?

The tribal and religious dimensions of conflicts in Africa are complex in nature to the extent that achieving a positive result would require a conflict manager or psychologist seeking healing and community reintegration for war-affected children in Liberia and indeed in Africa, to, first and foremost, acknowledge that the ordeals and experiences of Africans are interpreted through the religious and cultural settings of their communities. Therefore, suggesting that recovery processes remain focused on a system or philosophy they know little or nothing about is yet to be proven effective. Alternately, when rebuilding post-conflict societies, the need to identify and integrate traditional dispute resolution mechanisms is significant in achieving the desired results (Chereji & Wratto, 2013).

Literature Review

While exploring the place of culture and addressing the psychosocial impacts of conflict on child soldiers in Uganda El Salvador and Angola, Verhey states that indigenous purification provides acceptance of the child by assuaging the ill spirit associated with the child's actions during the war and reconciling him/her with ancestral spirits (Verhey, 2001, p. 3). Furthermore, in the 1992 "Agenda for Peace of the United Nations," peace-building was described as 'actions to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict (Mani, 2002, p. 12). Also supporting these views, Cockell (1998, p. 9) contends that 'a sustainable peace can only be founded on societal resources for intergroup dialogue, cooperation and consensus." As such, the incorporation of traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution into the mainstream peace process not only helps to contextualize conflict management, but also facilitates the participation of local people who are usually left out of the search-for-peace processes and ensure the sustenance of endangered indigenous formations (Osaghae, 2002).

Without a doubt, there are elements of African traditional beliefs which are deeply rooted in the continent's unending wars; be that as it may, the use of these practices to harm people is straightly prohibited by indigenous principles. Thus, despite condemnation by many international organizations regarding traditional healing methods which are dismissed as unscientific and primitive, it is worth mentioning that certain aspects of indigenous practices in Africa are unique, not only to evil military activities such as in the cases of general Butt Naked, Joseph Kony and other warlords, but also important tools to the peace building processes in post-conflict African societies (Chereji & Wratto, 2013).

There is nothing wrong with western dogmas of conflict resolution in themselves, however, the concepts and contexts under which they are employed to address conflicts in Africa undermines the social and religious settings of the people. As a consequence, scarce and precious resources are wasted, as achieving the overall objective of peace and stability becomes a major challenge, especially in areas affected by civil wars (Chereji, 2014). To briefly illustrate this, we shall consider western-trained personals, consisting of nurses, medical doctors, counselors, psychologists and social workers as a case study. When addressing a child soldier situation in an attempt to provide a psychological balance for the individual, these professionals are likely to begin with an interview or specific guidelines that are largely based on a set of questionnaire that may focus on the following:

 • How did the child become a soldier?
 • What did he/she experience as a child soldier?
 • What are the consequences of his/her war experiences?
 • If giving a second chance, would they want to become a soldier again?
 • Would they like to revenge the deaths of the loved ones?
 • Now that the war has ended, do they feel abandoned by their commanders?

For most practitioners, this approach may seem to be the best. Nevertheless, as one who broke his silence eleven years after the war, if applied at the earlier stages of the recovery process, without taking into account the cultural background of the child, these questions are more likely to have a negative impact on the emotional wellbeing of the child than positive ones. Additionally, it is important to mention that this paper does not advocate indigenous mechanisms as better than other approaches. However, it does points to the fact that, in this regard, a combination of cross-cultural healing strategies or mutual respect for unconventional therapeutic trauma mechanisms could be useful both for the practitioner and the patient. What is more to this, contrary to the above-mentioned approach, is that oral manifestation of the events from a traditional point of view isn't considered a necessary condition for the treatment. According to Marato and Honwana, traditionalist view recounting traumatic experiences as reopening the door for harmful spirits to penetrate the community. As started in their studies conducted in Mozambique on healing war trauma, they reviled that recalling the traumatic experience through verbal externalization as means of healing is not always effective. Hence, healing is achieved through non-verbal and symbolic procedures that are understood by those participating in it (Marato, 1996; Honwana, 1997, 1999). In addition, Boyden & Gibbs (1996) have shown that in Cambodia, individual therapy conducted by modern psychotherapists can be ineffective because it does not account for the place that ancestral spirits and other spiritual forces have in the causation and healing processes. Furthermore, by focusing exclusively on the individual alone, they argued that it undermines the family and community efforts in providing affection and support for the child in question. Also noted by Green & Honwana (1999), these cleansing and purification rituals involving child soldiers have the appearance of what anthropologists call rites of transition. In other words, the child undergoes a symbolic change of status from someone who has existed in a realm of sanctioned norm-violation or norm-suspension (i.e. killing, war) to someone who must now live in a realm of peaceful behavioral and social norms. Mbiti equally observed that Africans are notoriously religious with each tribe having its own religious system based on a set of beliefs and practices. Religion, as stressed by Mbiti, permeates into all aspects of life so fully that it is impossible to isolate (Mbiti, 1961, p. 1). Also in their review on the progress made by the International Rescue Committee on the implementation of a reintegration project for Liberian and Sierra Leonean child soldiers, Williamson and Carter (2005, p. 13), recommend traditional healing and religious support as measures essential to the successful reintegration of former child soldiers.

Comparative Analysis

Liberia, and indeed Africa, is home to indigenous principals that have regulated the affairs of its people for centuries. However, the unending conflicts in the continent have displaced most of these principles for decades. To make matter worse, the traditional

African religion, a pillar upon which indigenous societies function, has come under direct attack by the importation of foreign values (Chereji & Wratto, 2015). For instance, the rapid spread of Christianity by western missionaries in the Sudan has had a devastating impact on the local Dinka culture. As they saw it, the missionaries considered the persecution of Black Africans in the South by the Arab North as a punishment from God. Therefore, in an attempt to remove this "curse," the destruction of indigenous shrines and sacred objects was encouraged through a systematic removal of the old religion with a replacement of a new one. Hence, the sociocultural and religious ramification of this move led over 90% Dinkas to abandon their ways of life and regarded themselves as Christians (Human Rights Watch/Africa, 1997). See Hutchinson (1996) for more on religion and African civil wars. Symmetrically responsible for these limitations is the inability of African governments to introduce frameworks that will access traditional healers based on the quality of their works as well as provide adequate resources and suitable environments in an effort to promote this knowledge at a national level. Hence, this lack of interest from the state has not only discouraged most African youths from participating in the preservation of their cultural heritage, to a certain degree, but has also raised an army of dishonest impostor seeking to steal from the sick. As a repercussion, the former undermines indigenous healing and provides a platform for most western trained practitioners to continually disrespect and ignore the call for a rethink in terms of trauma intervention in African.

Understandable, the aforementioned has left unanswered questions regarding the legitimacy of local healing capacity in the minds of most Africans. Although essential to the healing and reintegration process of former child soldiers in Liberia, during the survey, the researcher observed that indigenous mechanisms alone wouldn't be enough in addressing the situation. Among other things, apart from the challenges facing traditional societies in taking on this task alone. In recent years, there has been, to a certain degree, an improvement in knowledge regarding western therapeutic interventions in post-conflict Africa. Therefore, working together would definitely provide a unique opportunity for western trained personnel's to observe, investigate and possibly understand as well as collaborate with indigenous healers when the need arises.

At the end of the research inquiries regarding suitable methods for a successful reintegration scheme, the researcher concluded that western therapeutic trauma techniques or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which were designed for American war veterans returning from Vietnam in the 1980s, only provide temporary solutions. Therefore, PTSD strategies alone wouldn't also be enough in the healing and reintegration processes of former child soldiers when applied in Liberia. As viewed by Honwana (1997), PTSD techniques were conceived as instruments in dealing with psychological distress in people who went from a situation of relative 'normality' into a traumatic experience (the war), and then returned to 'normality', as stressed by Honwana. Unlike

the Americans experience in Vietnam, the difference here is that the vast majority of war-affected children in Africa were either born in or grew up during the war. Hence, the need to seek a favorable mechanism in addressing the situation was required and it was therefore in this regard that the study focuses on combining indigenous purification rites and western therapeutic techniques as suitable approaches for the integration of former child soldiers in rural Liberia.

Initial Survey of the District

In her commemoration speech on the 10th anniversary of the Peace Agreement that brought the Liberian civil war to an end, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf praised the nation's post-conflict recovery strategy and boasted of the successes of UNMIL, the United Nations Mission in Liberia.[1] Without a doubt, Liberia has experienced years of stability and peace. Nevertheless, the research survey shows that the lack of a successful reintegration program for former child soldier in rural Liberia poses the greatest threat to the security of the country, and if not addressed carefully, the situation could escalate into the unthinkable and have a damaging impact on years of hard work done by the international community. As mentioned above, the research took place in Kparblee District, a region bordering Liberia with the Ivory Coast and a major crossing point for rebel groups during the civil war. Like most conflicts in Africa, villages within the district were captured multiple times (by different armed groups), in an effort to recruit children. Today, there are at least five thousand former combatants in the region most of whom were children during their time of active combat. As observed by the researcher, the district is completely isolated from the rest of the country and the nearest high school is three days walk away. There are no hospitals in the area and access road to the district is almost impenetrable. According to a local chief, "the last rehabilitation of the road was in 1975". As a result of the deplorable road condition, we also observed the uses of motorbikes as public transportation and ambulances to convey the sick to Ganta, the nearest city eight hours away on the Liberian side of the border. Giving that the inhabitants are subsistence farmers, most of whom cannot afford the high transportation cost to Ganta, Toulepleu, an Ivorian border town less than twenty minutes walk from the district has become the lifeline for the people. However, with the Ivorian frontier heavily guarded due to their recent civil war, many youths crossing from the Liberian side of the border in search of their daily needs now find themselves trapped between militant groups and government forces. If caught by government troops who often accused them of being mercenaries, they are killed, imprisoned or in few cases, handed to the Liberian government as foreign fighters to face the required punishment

---

1 "No to War!" Statement by H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf at Commemoration of the 10th Anniversary of the Signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement on August 18, 2003.

(Dennis, 2014). If caught by the militants, they are beaten and in most cases, forced to pick up arms for their cause (Bavier, 2012).

According to local respondents, the situation has become more complex than ever. As they pointed out, the youth with military backgrounds (in the district) was strongly against the idea of getting involved in the Ivorian civil war. Nevertheless, with the separation from their relatives by colonial boundaries (Tonkin, 2010) still fresh in their minds, as well as their subsequence exclusion from the Liberian and Ivorian societies, including the recent detentions of family and community members by both governments, many now feared that the current state of affairs could provide the youth with a moral justification to join militant groups seeking revenge against the Ivorian government. Frustrated by their sufferings and isolation, the zone chief warned about retaliation and started that, "these unfavorable conditions have left us with a feeling of fear and neglect from the government, and until something is done to adequately address the situation, we feared that our children and community might once again experience the horrors of war".[2]

Research Methodology

The study applied a semi-structured research method in which highly respected individuals such as local chiefs, women and youth leaders, pastors, former combatants and traditional healers were interviewed. During the interview sessions which were aimed at identifying and addressing the most urgent needs of the community, chief Jefferson emphasized the impact of the civil war and added that it left a vast majority of the youth mentally sick. The chief further stressed on the lack of an educational center as a contributing factor responsible for the backwardness of the district. Regarding the illnesses, he revealed that "traditional measures are currently taking place in dealing with the situation, but without some forms of education or trade, we risk losing them to the war across the border". Focusing on the circle of farming life, the women leader went on to say, "our fathers and their fathers before them were farmers, we too are farmers and so be our children. It is a hard life, but farming is much better than war. Although helping them to recover, we are constantly afraid of our children because of the bad spirits they got from the war"[3]. A similar perspective was offered by the youth leader who said, "we are not interested in these wars because our lives are offered in achieving the political agendas of politicians who often forget us, once in power, in addition, we do not want our children to become farmers, but with nothing else to do in the face of such difficult realities, these are the options available to them"[4]. The researcher noted the issues mentioned as challenges facing the district and requested to:

---

2 Interview with Chief Jefferson, the traditional leader of Kaylay and Dubuzon Kingdoms.

3 Interview with Ma Nancy, the women leader of Kaylay Kingdom, in Kparblee District.

4 Interview with Daniel Clack.

Through the help of the Charles Wratto Foundation (CWF),

- *Facilitate the building of a high school in the district?*
- *Observe the traditional cleansing rites (mention by the chief) in an attempt to provide suitable trauma counseling and victim-support networks where former child soldiers will assist and dialogue with their peers on issues relating to violence and post-conflict victimization, as well as prepare them for job opportunities that will help prevent them from future participation in violence?*

Despite concerns of contradictory motives, the elders approved the research proposals regarding the construction of a high school and request to observe and participate in the traditional cleansing rites. Determined to help and keeping in mind the cultural and religious norms as sensitive elements in maintaining a healthy relationship with the community, the research strategy was adjusted and within one month, construction of the school started on a land provided by the community. Amongst the volunteers for the ongoing construction works were the dreaded and stigmatized young men of the community who said, in a statement presented by a spokesman, "just tell us what to do, and we will obey".

Applying Both Therapeutic Trauma Mechanisms

As defined by Errante (1999), a psychotherapeutic intervention is "anything that helps a child elaborate his/her experiences, give meaning to them and build a bridge necessary for integrating those experiences". Green & Honwana (1999) also gave an extensive overview and stress that a therapeutic technique is questionable if centered on the individual patient and ignore local beliefs or undermines family and community involvement. Taking these views into account, the first step we applied during this project was to reinforce the cultural and religious worldview of former child soldiers and their communities as a starting point for their treatment. To achieve this, the researcher collaborated with traditional healers in order to provide a unique reintegration framework.

Indigenous Mechanisms

The traditional purification rites performed for youth with military backgrounds were aimed at dealing with their wartime experiences and rebuilding their morality. During these ceremonies:

- The healers spoke to ancestral spirits who were believed to be unhappy and pleaded forgiveness on behalf of the youth and the community through an act of incantations.
- The former soldiers were isolated from their communities and taken to shrines and locations of spiritual significance where they were given sacred herbal medicine to drink.
- Their clothes and other objects from the war were burnt or washed away in a river to symbolize an end to a life of violent and the beginning of a peaceful life.

- They were taking to streams for sanctified bath and were told not to look back upon emerging from the river. Doing so was considered reopening the door to the evil war spirits and inviting them to harm the person
- The healers pleaded with the spirits of the dead asking them to take the illness away from the former fighters.

The act of pleading with the dead was significant and symbolic because it is believed that the spirits of the dead have driven their killers insane. During the Liberian civil war, brutality grew into its worst when every rebel group attempted to instill terror and be viewed as the most dreaded fighting force in the country. Hence, children lacking military experience were ordered to eat the hearts of their captured enemies if they desired to be invisible to bullets (WesternVoices1, 2011). However, giving the scarcity of an enemy's heart, the definition of an "enemy" was redefined from anyone opposing you in battle to those outside your ethnicity. Needless to say, this led to the deaths of innocent people falsely accused of being "enemies". These counter-productive acts had nothing to do with tribal protection. Rather, they were strategies aimed at keeping the soldiers on constant alert. While it is true that alcohol and drugs were used to influence a child soldier's decision, not the less, once cleared from the body, the sense of human is restored and the soldier who hasn't slept for days can get a few minutes rest or reflect on his actions. For the commanders, this was a great risk to their cause. As they saw it, an untrained soldier who didn't believe in their ideology was likely to defect if giving a moment to reflect on the morality of the war. Hence, aware of the magnitude of mental torment associated with killings, soldiers were ordered by their commanders to commit murders in ways that were almost unimaginable. Today, the bleeding spirits of the innocent lives that were taken during the war are believed to be hunting their killers. Regardless of how they were recruited, the atrocities committed as well as the emotional and psychological scars carried by former and current child soldiers are much heavier than any arm on their shoulders. Therefore, informed of these experiences, the healers performed separate ceremonies to appease the spirits of the dead during the traditional cleansings rituals. In Liberia and indeed in Africa, war-related trauma is strongly believed to be caused by avenging spirits of those killed during the war but were denied their place in the ancestral world due to the lack of a proper burial. Accordingly, these spirits are believed to be extremely harmful towards their killers and community members. See (Honwana, 1996, 1997), for more on these spirits. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the rituals performed vary depending on one's involvement in the war. While some rituals may address those who participated in the war but did not kill; others are focused on murderers.

Non-Indigenous Therapeutic Trauma Mechanisms

As agreed with the chiefs, prior to granting an audience to the researcher regarding their past, the youth was required to journeyed through the religious Pilgrimage men-

tioned above. It is important to bear in mind that these religious rites were significant to the reintegration efforts because it was only after such rites were performed that the individuals were "fully" accepted back into the community. Furthermore, the degree of torture they endured as well as the atrocities committed and witnessed by these ex-combatants differ from persons to persons, therefore, our intervention strategies were adjusted on different levels to meet the physical and psychological needs of each individual.

Psychological Approach

The researcher, also the founder of CWF, brought together a team of volunteers that consisted of a medical doctor, a counselor and a psychologist. Combining their expertise, they carefully focused on the overall well-being of the ex-combatants and provided support where it was most needed. The core areas included their military exposure, worldviews & beliefs, passions, inspirations, role models and future goals. While exploring these sensitive areas involving their war experiences, the uses of drawings and cultural symbols to identify a sense of remorse, shame, grief and excitement was employed. In addition, sessions were organized enabling the ex-combatants to provide trauma counseling and victim-support networks where they assisted and dialogued with their peers on issues relating to violence and post-conflict victimization. Furthermore, emphases were placed on their social and family ties. No longer perceived as children but evil men, they were abandoned by their community for far too long, for this reason, separate platforms were arranged for families and community members who gave their blessings and provided moral and social supports. As part of our long-term peacebuilding strategy for the district, both tribal leaders and ex-combatant were trained to discuss tolerance and lead peace-building activities in their respective villages.

Conclusion

The involvement of children as key players in African wars raises more questions than answers regarding the continent's future. Child soldiers in conflict zones across the region are exposed to some of the most heinous crimes on earth and yet, more children are still being dragged into this madness who will then have to live with the repercussions of wars. As reported by Navi Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, more than 9,000 children have been recruited in the South Sudanese civil war (The EastAfrican, 2014) and 7,000 in the Democratic Republic of Congo according to Peace Direct (nd.). Similarly, a crisis-statistics released by UNICEF on May 6, 2014, indicates that an estimated 6,000 children are associated with armed groups in the Central African Republic (UNICEF, 2014). The list goes on and varies from country to country. However, the research experiences in Kparblee district shows that among other things, when taken into account, the productivity of indigenous mechanisms goes far beyond family and community reunification and extends to the prevention of child

voluntary recruitment into military groups. As mentioned above, to the researcher's arrival in the area, efforts were being made not only to wash the bad war spirits away from the youth with military backgrounds but also actions were taken to prevent their participation in the Ivorian war. Furthermore, since most of these children were born, raised and forcefully recruited from their villages, it is worth mentioning that their healing or recovery processes most equally include traditional cleansings rite as they cannot be fully forgiven or accepted by the community for some of the crimes committed (i.e.: cannibalism & human sacrifices) unless they are purified. The degree to which this is understood among local people was underlined by one of the villagers who said, "The sickness disturbing our children do not require the assistance of civilized doctors, doing so will only complicate the situation".

References

1. Bavier, J. (June 6, 2012). Militias attacking Ivory Coast from Liberia: HRW. *Reuters.* Retrieved from http://mobile.reuters.com/article/idUSBRE85516Q20120606?irpc=932.
2. Beah, I. (2006). A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier. New York: Sarah Crichton Books.
3. Blahyi, J.M. (2006). *From Priesthood to Royal Priesthood.* Lagos: C.R.M. Press.
4. Blahyi, J.M. (2013). *The Redemption Of An African Warlord. The Joshua Blahyi Story: A Modern Day Conversion From Saul To Paul.* Shippensburg: Destiny Image Publishers Inc.
5. Boyden, J., & Gibbs, S. (1997). *Children and War: Understanding Psychological Distress in Cambodia.* Geneva: UN.
6. Chereji, C.R. (2014). Is Separatism a Viable Solution for the Present African Wars? *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, 9, 3-12.
7. Chereji, C.R., & Wratto, C.K. (2013). West Africa. A Comparative Study of Traditional Conflict Resolution Methods in Liberia and Ghana. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, 5, 3-18.
8. Chereji, C.R., & Wratto, C.K. (2015). Aspects of Traditional Conflict Management Practices among the Ogoni of Nigeria. *Conflict Studies Quarterly*, 10, 56-68.
9. Cockell, J. (1998). Peace-building and Human Security: Frameworks for International Response to Internal Conflicts. Paper presented at the Third Pan-European International Relations Conference, Vienna.
10. Dennis, J.L. (November 26, 2014). Torture? "ERU Officers Burn Me'' Says Late Charles Julu's Son As He Testifies In Mercenary Trial. *In Profile Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.inprofiledaily.com/?q=article/torture-%E2%80%9Ceru-officers-burn-me-says-late-charles-julus-son-he-testifies-mercenary-trial.
11. Errante, A. (1999). Peace works as grief work in Mozambique and South Africa: post-conflict communities as context for child and youth socialization. *Journal of Peace Psychology*, 5, 261-279.
12. Green E.C., & Honwana, A. (1999). Indigenous healing of War-affected children in Africa. Washington: Knowledge and Learning Center Africa Region, World Bank. *IK Notes,* 10.
13. Honwana, A. (1996). Spiritual agency and self-renewal in southern Mozambique. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis in social anthropology, University of London, SOAS.

14. Honwana, A. (1997). Sealing the Past, Facing the Future: Trauma Healing in Mozambique. *Accord* no. 3, Special edition on the Mozambican peace process. London: Coalition Resources.
15. Honwana, A. (1999). Negotiating Post-War Identities: child soldiers in Mozambique and Angola. *CODESRIA Bulletin*, nos. 1&2, 4-13.
16. Human Rights Watch/Africa (1997). *The Scars of Death: Children Abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda.* New York: Human Rights Watch.
17. Hutchinson, S.E. (1996), *Nuer Dilemmas: Coping with Money, War and the State.* Berkeley: University of California Press.
18. Mani, R. (2002). *Beyond Retribution: Seeking Justice in the Shadows of War*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
19. Marrato, J. (1996, September). *Superando os Efeitos Sociais da Guerra em Mocambique: mecanismos eestrategias locais.* Paper presented at the fourth Congress of Lusophone Social Sciences, Rio de Janeiro.
20. Mbiti, J. (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*. London: Heineman.
21. Osaghae, E.E. (2002). *Crippled Giant: Nigeria since Independence.* Ibadan: John Archers Publishers Limited.
22. Peace Direct (nd.). Child soldiers: the facts. *Peace Direct.* Retrieved from http://www.peacedirect.org/bring-the-children-back/child-soldiers-the-facts.
23. Stephen, E., (1999). *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War.* London: Hurst & Company.
24. The EastAfrican. (2014, April 30). UN rights chief warns South Sudan leaders responsible if famine breaks out. *The EastAfrican.* Retrieved from http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/UN-rights-chief-warns-South-Sudan-leaders-famine-breaks-out/-/2558/2298884/-/xriuctz/-/index.html.
25. Tonkin, E. (2010). A Saucy Town? Regional Histories of Conflict, Collusion, And Commerce in the Making of a Southeastern Liberian Polity. In J. Knorr & W.J. Filho (Eds.), *The Powerful Presence of the Past. Integration and Conflict along the Upper Guinea Coast* (pp. 101-136). Leiden: Brill.
26. UNICEF (2014, May 6). Central African Republic. Infographic: The Worst Crisis You've Never Heard Of. *UNICEF.* Retrieved from https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/central-african-republic-car-crisis-statistics.
27. Verhey, B. (2001). The prevention, demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers*. Africa Region Working Paper Series,* 23.
28. WesternVoices1 (2011, April 29). Liberia: The Cannibals War (Remember Liberians inherited an established AMERICAN MADE country). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QdhXNnsIB1w
29. Williamson, J., & Carter, L.R. (2005). Children's Reintegration in Liberia. *USAID*.
30. Wratto, C. (2015, June 7). High School Project in Liberia. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GWrr50Pqyk.