

**Gendering Conflict and Violence in Zimbabwe, 1960-2013: The
Case of Bulawayo Metropolitan Province**

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Declaration

I, Monica Dorothy King, declare that “Gendering conflict and violence in Zimbabwe, 1960-2013. The case of Bulawayo Metropolitan Province.” is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Monica Dorothy King

Dedication

In memory of my late father, Julius Tsvakai Madziwa, who sacrificed a lot to sponsor my education.

Abstract

The problem of political violence permeated the landscape of Zimbabwe, during both the colonial and post-colonial periods. The questions tackled were: are perpetrators of violence men or women or both? Do the victims of political violence constitute of men or women? To what extent are women as compared to men perpetrators of violence? In what forms and contexts has the problem manifested itself? What are the mechanisms that have been used to resolve conflicts? By focusing on Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, the thesis examined the political violence which was perpetrated during the period 1960-2013. The study argued that in Zimbabwe from the colonial to the post-colonial era, political conflicts involved both men and women differently. It interrogated the contention that in conflict situations men are the perpetrators while women are weak and vulnerable to victimhood.

An examination of different cases of violence that transpired in the racist context of colonial Zimbabwe and in the black dominated post-colonial era revealed that both men and women can be perpetrators or victims, depending on the typology of violence prevailing. Using the case of Bulawayo, incidences of colonial racialized political violence as well as post-colonial incidences of political violence, the study established the differential experience and participation in violence by women compared to men. It established that the story of gendered participation in different typologies of political violence defies the simplistic categorisation of men as perpetrators and women as victims. The narrative is more nuanced given that men show a preponderance as both perpetrators and victims in some cases more than women while in other cases women are active agents who equally perpetrate violence in so much as they are victims in other cases. For instance, in protests against the 1961 Constitution, women in Bulawayo instigated political violence by demonstrating outside the Magistrate Court, thereby prompting the colonial state to arrest 75 of them. The violence of the Second Chimurenga involved both men and women as they fought against colonial oppression. During the post-colonial era both men and women were victims of violence-notable episodes of such violence were the '*Gukurahundi*' of the 1980s and Operation *Murambatsvina* of 2005. To problematize the phenomenon of political violence, the thesis used Slavoj Zizek's ideas on violence as well as Max Weber's Conflict Theory. In analysing the conflict resolution mechanisms, the thesis used Galtung's ideas of positive and negative peace. The study revealed that the agreements to end political conflicts in Zimbabwe deployed negative peace methodologies. Furthermore, the thesis concludes that to solve political conflicts in Zimbabwe one needs to use conflict resolution mechanisms that uproot the causes of the conflicts.

Key Words: Violence; conflict; gender; conflict resolution; Bulawayo Metropolitan Province.

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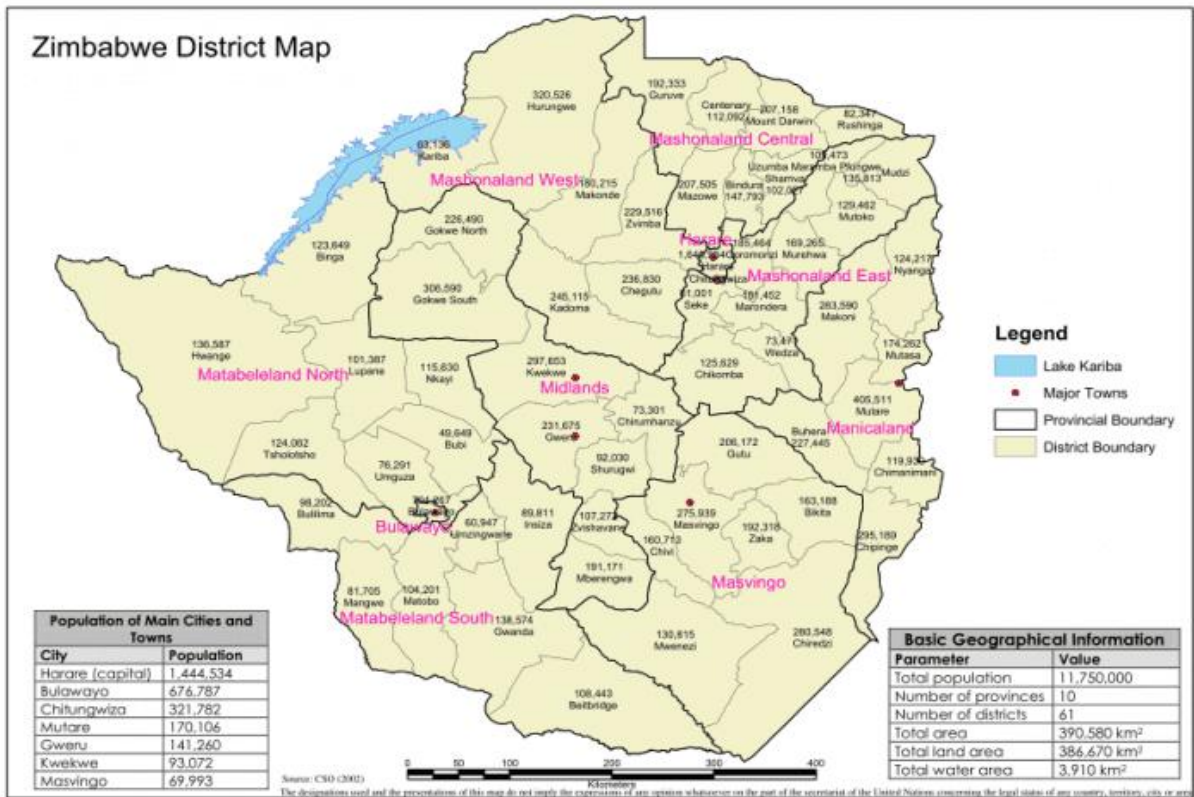
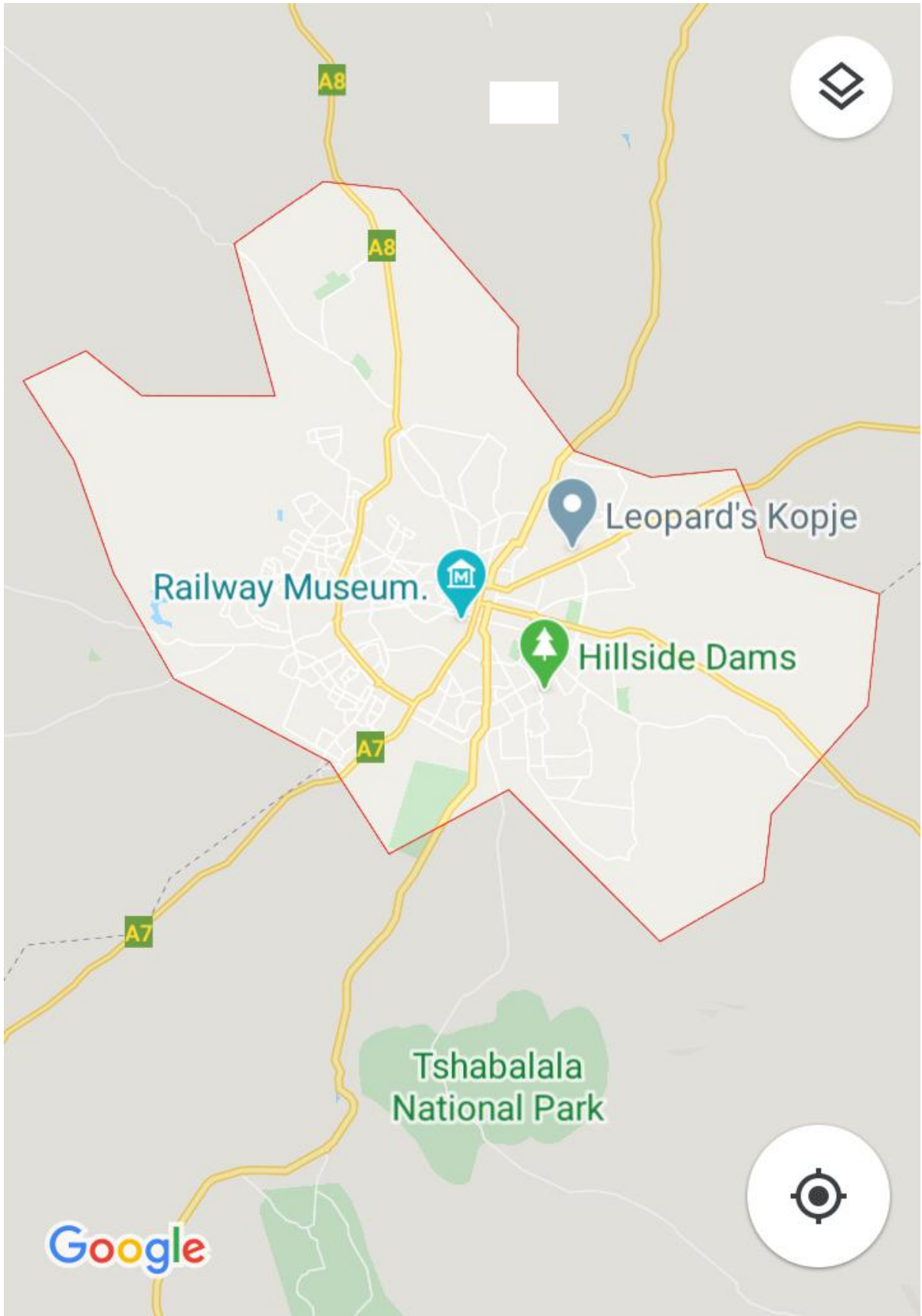


Figure 1 Source Relief web, <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/styles/report-large/public/resources-pdf-previews/18706-84825669B96B509785257746006D32F6-map.png?itok=LHk5hdTG>.



List of Abbreviations

AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
ANC	African National Congress
AP	Assembly Point
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BSAP	British South Africa Police
CBD	Central Business District
CCJPZ	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe
CID	Central Intelligence Department
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation
EFZ	Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
EU	European Union
FRELIMO	Front for the Liberation of Mozambique
FROLIZI	Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
GNU	Government of National Unity
GPA	Global Political Agreement
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JOC	Joint Operations Command
JOMIC	Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee

LOMA	Law and Order Maintenance Act
LRF	Legal Resources Foundation
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-M	Movement for Democratic Change Mutambara
MDC-N	Movement for Democratic Change Ncube
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change Tsvangirai
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSU	Midlands State University
NAZ	National Archives of Zimbabwe
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NDP	National Democratic Party
NOCZIM	National Oil Company of Zimbabwe
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ONHRI	Organ of National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration
PCC	People's Caretaker Council
POSA	Public Order and Security Act
RF	Rhodesia Front
RWS	Rhodesian Women Services
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SADCC	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
SRANC	Southern Rhodesian African National Congress
UANC	United African National Council
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations' International Children's Education Fund
UOA	Unlawful Organisation Act
WiPSU	Women in Politics Support Unit
ZADHR	Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZHRNGO Forum	Zimbabwe Human Rights Non- Governmental Organisation Forum
ZIMRA	Zimbabwe Revenue Authority
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army
ZPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement

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General Introduction

There are various types of conflicts, such as political, economic, social and religious conflicts. Conflicts can degenerate into violence. This study focuses on political conflicts in Zimbabwe and the ensuing violence that has ravaged the Zimbabwean society between 1960 and 2013. The year 1960 marks the beginning of the study because of the *Zhii* riots that occurred in Bulawayo. The study ends in 2013 which marked the end of the Government of National Unity (GNU) which had to deal with the political, economic and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe which had reached its lowest ebb. Bulawayo is the second largest city in Zimbabwe and its population was very much involved in the political violence in which the black people engaged in an attempt to overthrow colonial rule in Rhodesia. The objectives of the study therefore are to; find out the nature and extent of women's involvement in political violence in Zimbabwe compared to men; examine the differences in men and women's participation as perpetrators in the political violence that marred the landscape of Bulawayo during and after colonialism; establish the differentiated status of men and women as victims of political violence that shaped the landscape of Bulawayo before and after attainment of independence; and trace the forms and context of political violence in which men as compared to women participated in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province during the period under study. Finally the study attempts to ascertain the effectiveness of the conflicts resolution mechanisms used.

The study argues that in Zimbabwe from the colonial era political conflicts involved both men and women differently. It seeks to interrogate the predominant contention that in conflict situations men are the perpetrators while women are weak and vulnerable to victimhood. An examination of different cases of violence that transpired in the acutely racist context of colonial Zimbabwe and in the black dominated post-colonial era has revealed that both men and women can be perpetrators or victims, depending on the typology of violence prevailing. Using the case of Bulawayo, incidences of racialised political violence such as the 1960 *Zhii* riots; the 1961 anti-constitutional protests; the Bulawayo urban-based liberation war battles; the post-colonial murderous *Gukurahundi*, the racialised Fast Track Land Reform, the black-on-black Operation *Murambatsvina* as well as pre- and post-election violence running from the 1980s to the new millennium; the study established the differential experience and participation in violence by women as compared to men in the city of Bulawayo. It

establishes that the story of gendered participation in different typologies of political violence, be it subjective or systematic or symbolic, defies the simplistic categorization of men as perpetrators and women as victims. The narrative is more muddled than that, given that men show a preponderance as both perpetrators and victims in some cases more than women, while in other cases women are active agents who perpetrated violence in so much as they are also victims in other cases.

Violence has had an enduring genealogical presence in the country. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues, it is one of the common problems that runs through the continuum of Zimbabwean history across pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras running under different justificatory narratives.¹ Violence has been the main means used by colonialist, nationalist and post-colonial leaders to unite people into their hegemonic agendas. The use of violence in Zimbabwe to achieve political objectives partly contributed to the lack of national consensus before and after independence. The chances of building a democratic and human rights-sensitive society have also been thwarted by the use of violence. The period between 1960 and 2013, broadly marking the last years of colonialism in Zimbabwe and the first thirty-three years of independence, was not spared of this scourge of violence and was characterized by complicit roles by both state and non-state actors. The purpose of this research is to interrogate the nature and extent of the conflicts and violence in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province between 1960 and 2013 with a view to generate some discourses that may help to inform a greater understanding of the subject of violence in Zimbabwe. The problem of violence has manifested itself not only in Zimbabwe, but also in many other parts of Africa. For example, in neighbouring South Africa, violence exhibited itself through the uprisings in the black townships, in the form of xenophobic attacks of 2008 and 2019, as well as frequent service delivery protests. Hence, it is not surprising that violence has become a topical issue that has attracted the attention of various academic scholars.

According to Slavoj Žižek violence can be divided into three basic forms. They are subjective violence, and two forms of objective violence, that is, 'symbolic' and 'systematic' violence. To him objective violence encompasses symbolic and systematic violence. Symbolic violence is that which is embodied in language and its drive is to impose certain universal meaning. The second, that is, systematic violence is that which is embedded in economic and

¹S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Do 'Zimbabweans' Exist?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p190

political systems.² Zimbabweans have endured all three types of violence articulated by Zizek across the colonial and post-colonial times. His work is indeed important in the study of violence, especially the ‘systematic’ version that is often invisible and hidden in systems and institutions like capitalism and neo-colonialism. Due to structural violence, the legacy of racism reaching back to colonial conflicts over land and power complicated and intensified by the colonial settler rule, was exacerbated by a long brutal struggle for majority rule. This legacy has shaped the way men and women have understood their place in an often violent and unpredictable world.

The current crisis of masculinity in the Zimbabwean culture manifests itself through the deployment of violence to suppress all other masculinities and police other genders. This brand of masculinity is underpinned by the fatherhood-paternity-manhood nexus taken as a semantic and conceptual synonym. It is a confusion that deepens a crisis that finds articulation through violence in the public sphere, the family, unstructured parenting styles, clarity between hiring and fathering unfulfilled guests for ideal father figures and the denial of agency to marginal groups in society.³

Colonization reified racial and ethnic differences that today generate settler-native violence as well as black-on-black violence. Violence was a major prop for institutions that the colonial state created. Frantz Fanon in his book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, gives a psychiatric and psychological analysis of the dehumanizing effects of colonial violence upon the colonial Africans as individuals and nations from which they derive the broader social cultural and political implications inherent in establishing a social movement for the decolonization of people. To Fanon, whatever maybe the headings used for the new formulas introduced, decolonization is a violent phenomenon. He proceeds to say that through the same process of violence, the natives find route to confront the colonial masters and to even free themselves of colonialism.⁴

The violence of depressed masculinity in colonial times is not very different in severity from that arising out of the post-colonial present and does strongly have several prints of intersection with hegemonic masculinity that in the past treated it as a primitive other. The

²S.J. Ndlovu- Gatsheni, *Do ‘Zimbabweans’ Exist?*, Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p193

³ K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde, ‘Introduction’ in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde, (eds) *Manning the Nation, Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature and Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, pxx

⁴ F. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Penguin Books, London, 2001, p27

problem of violence continued in the post-colonial era. This violence had roots in the development of nationalism in the 1960s as evidenced by the ‘Zhi’ riots that occurred in Bulawayo under the leadership of the National Democratic Party.⁵ Broadly, here the violence was a handmaiden of nationalist mobilization between competing African movements, especially Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). It was also used against the minority government and supporters of the white government in the form of sell-outs, African policemen and Rhodesian African soldiers. This was particularly evident with the use of violence at election times as ZANU-PF tried to safeguard its hegemonic national project against dwindling electoral fortunes. A deeper analysis of the above reveals that this tactic of the browbeating of supporters at or around election times has a genealogy that runs in the late colonial period where colonial and post-colonial regimes have abused military and other security forces to achieve political ends. For instance, the period 1978-80 was one of the most militarized times in colonial history. The violence of the period was dominated by the Selous Scouts, the District Assistants and the Security Forces Auxiliaries of Muzorewa and Sithole.⁶ The nationalist movements, especially ZANU, also had their forces in the country, especially in the rural areas. Barely a year into independence, the ZANU-PF government engaged the Korean-trained Fifth Brigade which was used to unleash genocidal atrocities in Matabeleland and Midlands regions in the 1980s. Since then, the ZANU-PF government has constantly used security forces to carry out the most brutal actions which led Martin Rupiya to write of post-2000 ‘government by military operations’.⁷ Men have been socialized from boyhood to see their masculine identities tied up to protecting women while tolerating violence. Thus, masculine values become tied to the ability of men to protect ‘their’ women and children, and men who cannot do that are ridiculed as failed and feminine men. Much evidence supports Enloe’s concerns with how nationalistic ideologies, strategies and structures have served to update and perpetuate the privilege of masculinity. While it stands to debate, it would appear that in the Zimbabwean case all the various nationalist parties were patriarchal, despite the rhetoric about gender equality. Control over women’s bodies was paramount whether over one’s

⁵ T. Ranger, *Writing Revolt, An Engagement with African Nationalism, 1957-67*, WeaverPress, Harare, 2013, p.60

⁶ S.J. Ndlovu- Gatsheni, *Do ‘Zimbabweans’ Exist?*, Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p223

⁷ Ibid, p224

'own' women or enemy women.⁸ For instance, the violence associated with the 17 September 1956 bus boycott shattered the illusion held by Salisbury's Native Administration and most of its white population that Southern Rhodesia was immune from violent rioting. Though the bus boycott was planned as a peaceful protest against high bus fares and escalating prices for consumer goods, things got out of hand and young men began stoning cars and buses, tearing down shacks and eventually smashing the windows in the Carter Girls hostel. They stole money, personal belongings and raped sixteen residents of the hostel. Nathan Shamuyarira blamed the girls for the rapes and asserted that it was revenge by the strikers for the way the girls had defied the strike orders and boarded buses.⁹ Also, Maurice Nyagumbo, in his book *With the People*, blamed the police for having prompted the young men to invade the Carter Girls hostel and then castigated the girls for having disobeyed the bus boycott.¹⁰ The assumption made by both Shamuyarira and Nyagumbo is that retribution against sell-outs is acceptable even in the form of raping women.

The consolidation of colonial rule was characterized by the emasculation of many African men, through a wide range of small but hurtful actions by settlers such as having to step off the pavement when a European passed by, not being allowed to speak English to officials, ridiculing and undermining traditional cultural practices, being called 'boy' no matter one's age and doing women's work as household servants in European homes.¹¹ For Europeans, this period was characterized by a wide spread identification with frontier versions of masculinity with particular emphasis on the link between prowess at sport, physical toughness and ability to deal with challenges thrown up by the harsh African environment. Indeed, militarism was woven deep into the constructions of settler masculinity, no doubt reinforcing towards a militant masculinity, toughness and racial superiority.¹²

⁸J.L. Parpart, "Masculinities, race and violence in the making of Zimbabwe," in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds), *Manning the Nation: Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature ad Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, p104

⁹ T. Scarnecchia, *The Urban Roots of Democracy and Political Violence in Zimbabwe*, University of Rochester Press, New York, 2008, p79-80

¹⁰ Ibid, p80

¹¹J.L. Parpart, "Masculinities, race and violence in the making of Zimbabwe," in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds), *Manning the Nation: Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature ad Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, p105

¹² Ibid

During the federal period, however, promises of multiracial partnerships and genuine efforts in the direction by a small section of the white community encouraged some aspiring black Africans, Coloreds and Asians to dream of a future where men (and occasionally women) of all racial cultural backgrounds would have an opportunity to participate in the life of the federation. Some organisations became places where multiracial elites met and sought ways to make the partnership a reality. Those who saw little chance for themselves in the elite world tended to be more skeptical and remained wedded to local notions of masculinity, gender relations and respectability. Indeed, the privileges of patriarchal authority particularly for senior men, must have been an attractive alternative to the rewards of western civilization. African patriarchy often worked hand in hand with western patriarchy to control black women through legislation, social pressure and avert threats such as rape of working women during the boycott in 1956.¹³

After Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) by the Rhodesian Front, the party's determination to defy British opinion and set up a white dominated state in the face of both internal and external opposition fostered a virulent military masculinist discourse. However, by the late 1960s the limits of advancement for loyal blacks, Coloureds and Asians became increasingly apparent as opportunities for jobs and land failed to develop and white privilege was entrenched in legislation and institutional life. The regime refused to face its growing unpopularity among Africans, blaming attacks by nationalist forces on the few communist extremists. For the security forces, the conflict provided opportunities to brag of one's exploits at the popular watering holes like Makuti Motel while vehicles with dead guerrillas waited outside. This behaviour along with daily insults endured by blacks and other colonial subjects fueled opposition to the regime and undermined moderate Africans and increasingly a military solution was seen as the only path to majority rule.¹⁴ In an effort to garner support, the regime drew on the language of masculinity and manliness. The war propaganda of the Rhodesian state not only vilified the nationalists as dangerous, godless communists bent on destroying civilization but also characterized them as failed men who cared nothing about protecting innocent women and children. Most men felt the war was a test of their manhood.

¹³ J.L Parpart, "Masculinities, race and violence in making of Zimbabwe," in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds), *Manning the Nation: Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature and Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, p106

¹⁴Ibid, 108

Regiment recruiters trumpeted the slogan “it’s a man’s job to protect God’s own country.”¹⁵ The discourse of war reinforced both the manliness of those who fought and lack of manly qualities among those who refused. The trauma of the war, the deaths and killing of the enemy was also framed in antiseptic and masculinist terms.

As the war intensified, the question of loyalty and commitment became central to those who aspired to power within the nationalist movement. The issue of loyalty was often framed in masculinist terms. While many women actively supported the struggle, the war was primarily seen as a struggle between men over leadership, resources and loyal followers. Nhongo-Simbanegavi’s research is similar to some other studies of guerrilla and liberation war. It showed that in the early 1970s ZANLA deliberately recruited women but not for combat duties. ZANLA leaders allocated women roles such as cooks, nurses, and above all as porters and carriers.¹⁶ However, Ranger and Bhebhe aver that the war provided platforms for the emancipation of women.

From 1979, the war grew more deadly and more ambiguous as the internal settlement unsettled racial tropes. The war was no longer blacks against whites, but a struggle over power and legitimacy. The Muzorewa government condemned ZAPU and ZANU forces as ‘terrorists.’ Dirty tricks increased including poisoning water and clothes, killing accomplices and scorched earth tactics whenever ‘terrorists’ were found. The Nationalist forces also committed atrocities. They continued to torture and kill ‘sell-outs’ and suspected sorcerers/witches, attack missionaries, shot down two civilian planes and abducted school children.¹⁷ Both sides adopted a shoot first and ask questions later approach, with devastating consequences for civilians. The violence often had a sexualized, masculinist character. Women were often victims attacked by both sides. According to Parpart, young women in nationalist armies had to fend off sexual advances from fellow soldiers leading to rape. She

¹⁵ J.L Parpart, “Masculinities, race and violence in making of Zimbabwe,” in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds), *Manning the Nation: Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature and Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007 p109

¹⁶ J. Nhongo-Simbanegavi, *For Better or Worse?*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, pxx

¹⁷J.L. Parpart, “Masculinities, race and violence in the making of Zimbabwe,” in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds) *Manning the Nation Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature and society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, p111.

goes on to explain that the comrades frequently raped and tortured enemy women. The Rhodesian forces routinely stripped naked, raped and threatened to drown African women suspected of collaboration.¹⁸ The rapes were often public performances on both sides, asserting the masculinity of the rapists and inability, that is, emasculation of other men. Violence and death had become a daily occurrence, always unpredictable at close quarters.

Not surprisingly, violence continued after independence, and ‘sell-outs’ continued to be killed leading many to flee the country or deny their past. Internal nationalist struggles, largely along ethnic lines, led to a violent civil war against ‘dissidents’. The Korean-trained Fifth Brigade perpetrated brutal atrocities against the ‘Ndebele dissidents’ that are still remembered by many as worse than anything done by the Rhodesian forces.¹⁹ Sachikonye noted that the violence and raping of women in particular was humiliating and dehumanizing.²⁰ Though the brutalities were mainly committed in rural districts of Matabeleland, they prompted many civilians to flee to the relative safety of the city of Bulawayo. The violence in post-independence Zimbabwe resonates with Enloe’s warning that gender roles and relations are transformed by violence and that this transformation has long term consequences for the way people think and behave. When one looks at post-independence atrocities, it becomes apparent that patriarchal hyper-masculine practices have continued to shape key institutions of power, particularly the government and the army.²¹ The widespread use of military and police forces for politically motivated agendas that often results in the use of violence against citizens prompted Tsvangirai to complain (28 December 2005) to the African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) about how Mugabe and ZANU-PF had transformed the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) and Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) into combative units of ZANU-PF.²² The regular forces have worked in cahoots with quasi-military elements such as war veterans, youth militias and ZANU-PF Youth League to unleash violence on those considered to be opposed

¹⁸ J.L. Parpart, “Masculinities, race and violence in making of Zimbabwe,” in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds), *Manning the Nation: Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature and Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007 p,112

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ L. Sachikonye, *When State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p16

²¹J.L. Parpart, “Masculinities, race and violence in the making of Zimbabwe,” in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds) *Manning the Nation Father Figures in Zimbabwean Literature and Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, p113

²² S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Do ‘Zimbabweans’ Exist?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p224

to ZANU-PF. What is clear is that violence has been an integral part of Zimbabwean politics. What has been changing is the naming of the form of violence or codes.

The Choice of Bulawayo Metropolitan Province

As mentioned earlier, the study seeks to document some typologies of violence emanating from political conflicts in Zimbabwe between 1960 and 2013 and their impact on men and women. It also attempts to ascertain the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms used. Various works have been produced on the culture of violence that has dominated Zimbabwean politics. Lloyd Sachikonye's seminal book *When a State turns on its Citizens* is a good example. Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, which is the site of Bulawayo City, the second largest city in the country, was chosen for this research as it was not spared of the violence that permeated the Zimbabwean political landscape during the colonial and post-independence eras. Though some scholars have discussed the phenomenon of political violence in Zimbabwe, none have analysed it in the context of Bulawayo. The fact that my late mother, Daisy Tshabangu, was a Ndebele resident of Bulawayo and that I was born in Mpilo hospital motivated me to choose Bulawayo Metropolitan Province as my case study in trying to understand the phenomenon of violence that has prevailed in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it was my wish to test the African feminist narratives that temporarise and spatialise women victimhood. For example, Oyeronke Oyewumi refutes the western feminist discourse that views women as permanent victims. Her argument is that in many European societies, males and females have gender identities deriving from the elaboration of anatomic types; therefore men and women are essentialised. She asserts that western feminism which presupposes the existence of 'woman' as a social category always understood to be powerless, disadvantaged and controlled and defined by men can lead to misconceptions when applied to Oyo-Yoruba society.²³ She goes on to argue that there were no women defined in strictly gendered terms in that society. In Yoruba society social positions of people shifted constantly in relation to those with whom they were interacting; consequently social identity was relational and was not essentialised.²⁴ For me, then, the question was: Could this African feminist view be applied to the Ndebele society in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province? Oyewumi's argument spurred me to develop a critical lense concerning the violence

²³ O. Oyewumi, "The invention of women: Making African Sense of Western Gender," University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1997, @www.books.google.co.zw/books accessed on 1/04/2020

²⁴ Ibid

associated with the liberation struggle (chapter 4) as well as post-colonial violence in Zimbabwe (chapter 5).

Theoretical/Conceptual Note

The discussion by Slavoj Žižek provides a foundational framework for this thesis. According to Žižek, violence exists as a triumvirate, that is, subjective, symbolic and systematic violence.²⁵ Subjective violence refers to a direct and visible form of violence which is often enacted by identifiable social and political agents or individuals such as instruments of a repressive state such as the police and army. Symbolic violence is embodied in language taking the form of hate speech. It can be manifested in aggressive slogans and despising, insulting and disparaging music. Systematic violence is the invisible form of violence that is embedded in economic and political systems.²⁶ Systematic violence sustains relations of domination and exploitation such as colonialism, capitalism and apartheid which hide the violence within them. The effects of such violence manifest themselves in the form of material dispossession, labour exploitation and poverty among its victims. This articulation is vital as Zimbabweans have endured all three types of violence across the colonial and post-colonial experience.

To Žižek symbolic and systematic violence comprise objective violence which is linked to problems of inequality and injustice broadly linked to economic exploitation. In Zimbabwe there was a lot of systematic violence during the colonial period. The political and economic systems of the colonial period exploited Africans who were forced to provide labour to white colonial capitalists. Africans were also victims of symbolic violence as white settlers undermined traditional cultural practices and continued to mistreat adult men and women as children. Whites kept on calling African adults as ‘boys’ and ‘girls’ no matter one’s age. For example, adult men who were engaged as household servants in European homes were referred to as ‘house boys’ while adult women were labeled as ‘house girls’ and this created cultural inferiority. Also, during the colonial period, Africans endured a lot of ‘systematic’ violence as the colonial political and economic systems deprived them of their political and

²⁵ S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Do ‘Zimbabweans’ Exist?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p193

²⁶ *Ibid.*

economic rights though they enjoyed certain social benefits in the education and health sectors.

Distinguishing subjective from its objective counter-point, Zizek asserts that subjective violence is the perceptibly obvious violence seen on the news of the streets in the form of crime and terror, civil unrest, and international conflict, whereas objective violence is the unseen form of violence that takes the form of symbolic or the systematic. The very notion that this objective violence is unseen sustains the level with which we perceive something as subjectively violent.²⁷ The only way to do justice with Zizek's examples at the level at which objective violence is unseen and subjective violence is perceived is by displaying one's own examples in parallel in order to reflect properly on the extent to which his points are significant. It would be appropriate at this stage to observe two divergent examples that maintain Zizek's task, that something can be so obviously present it becomes unnoticeable and that some violent ideology can be at play simultaneously in its shamelessly concealed forms. One way to look at it is to imagine that one walks past the red box everyday that the post box does not fade into the colour of its surroundings in a literal sense but one becomes used to it being there that it becomes unnoticeable when someone paints it black. So one could argue that a Zizekian view of capitalism might be that it promotes a society that pretends everything is running smoothly, that we are free to consume whatever we like, whereas the actual reality of capitalism is one that concedes to its true core of authoritarianism that encourages the upper middle class to emasculate the poor, disregard the third world and ecological matters. Broadly, it naturalizes the status quo, including naturalizing inequality and exploitation. This concretized in the Zimbabwean situation because during the colonial period the white capitalists considered it normal to enjoy political and economic power at the expense of the Africans whose welfare they disregarded.

During the second Chimurenga a lot of subjective violence was perpetrated on the indigenous young men and women by both nationalist forces and the Rhodesian forces. The nationalist forces coerced young women into being '*chimbwidos*' while young men were coerced to be '*mujibhas*'. Conversely, the Rhodesian forces would harass and torture them as punishment for having collaborated with guerrillas. Moreover, guerrillas frequently forced local girls to

²⁷C. Packman, "Towards a Violent Absolute: Some Reflections on Zizekian Theory and Violence" in *International Journal of Zizek Studies*, vol 3, No.1 accessed on 09/07/2012

cook food for them as well as attend 'pungwes' (all night rallies). They would also sleep with the girls leading to many unwanted pregnancies. Barely a year into independence, extreme subjective violence manifested itself when ZANU-PF government used the Korean trained Fifth Brigade to perpetrate brutal atrocities against 'dissidents,' in Matabeleland and Midlands regions inhabited mostly by Ndebele speaking communities. The violence was also gendered as women were raped, sometimes systematically, while men were beaten and sometimes killed. Worse still, civilians had their property destroyed while their houses were set on fire.²⁸ In addition, the *Gukurahundi* victims were subjected to symbolic violence as many had insults shouted at them.

The 1997 food riots were related to the economic decline the country experienced after President Mugabe promised war veterans of the 1970s liberation war over four billion Zimbabwean dollars in the form of gratuities and pensions. The collapse was followed by a price increase and food riots inevitably erupted. There was systematic violence as collapse of the dollar fueled inflation through 1998, as did the persistent borrowing by the government to fund its deficit and recurrent spending. The country's involvement in the war in the Congo exacerbated the economic crisis.²⁹ The practical effect was an increase in the number of 'very poor' people in Zimbabwe. Subjective violence associated with the food riots involved members of the police and army beating civilians for allegedly getting involved in the riots. The violence was perpetrated on both men and women.

Systematic violence exacerbated as the economy of the country declined further during early 2005 due to a number of factors. Rampant corruption in the public and private sectors was one of the contributory factors towards the decline of the economy. The most notable in the public sector was the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NocZim) which had monopoly over purchase of fuel for Zimbabwe but was corrupt, bankrupt, weak and sinking under huge debts of around 200 million British pounds.³⁰ The officials running NocZim had stolen everything that was not nailed down and no company would supply it with fuel unless paid in hard currency, preferably well in advance, but Zimbabwe had no foreign exchange reserves

²⁸CCJP and LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace, A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands 1980-1988*, CCJPZ and LRF, Harare, 1997, p197

²⁹ Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, *Organised Violence & Torture in Zimbabwe 1999 Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Harare, 2000 p,4*

³⁰ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence. Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p49.

left. So queuing for petrol became a compulsory hobby for the few in Zimbabwe who were lucky enough to own a car. The entire country ran dry and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) would not lend money to Zimbabwe and hence there was no cash to buy fuel.³¹This was the most visible result of Zimbabwe's economic collapse.

The next phenomenon in Zimbabwe associated with subjective violence concerned the first referendum in Zimbabwe on 12-13 February 2000. Ostensibly, people were being asked to approve the new constitution which kept the sweeping powers of the presidency and allowed him to run for re-election twice more. Above all, it removed the obstacle that had thwarted the seizure of white owned land. Farmers lost their right to compensation for land seizures; instead the new constitution laid down that Britain must pay them. Zimbabweans voted 'NO' to the proposed constitution. Land invasions of white owned farms by paid agents of ZANU-PF was Mugabe's response to the defeat in the referendum. War veterans under the leadership of Chenjerai 'Hitler' Hunzvi were in charge of the invasions.³² The subjective violence was perpetrated on white farmers and their wives. The main objective was to smash the opposition MDC which Mugabe believed had been created by white farmers. Though the High Court declared the farm invasions illegal and ordered the police to evict all squatters, invasions continued with Mugabe's support much to the embarrassment of some of his ministers. Symbolic violence accompanied the land invasions as white Zimbabweans were insulted as 'British settlers' and 'foreigners' who were supposed to leave the country.

The next major manifestation of violence was the military-style Operation *Murambatsvina* (clean-up) launched in May 2005 to curb urban based informal trade and settlements.³³ Victims were urban men and women whose informal shelters and informal flea market stands were destroyed. Bulawayo residents too were victims of the *Murambatsvina* subjective violence as many of them had their flea market stands and extensions to their houses demolished. The objective was to punish the urban electorate for having voted for MDC in the 2005 elections. The post 29 March 2008 election-related violence was waged by ZANU-PF. Concentrated in the former ZANU-PF strongholds of Mashonaland, Manicaland Masvingo and Midlands, the subjective violence perpetrated on both men and women was

³¹David Blair, a British journalist failed to get fuel after queuing for hours.

³² D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence. Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003,p50

³³ S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Do 'Zimbabweans* ¹³ *t?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p193.

punishment to the electorate for having voted for the MDC in the 2008 elections. Secondly, violence was meant to increase the margin victory for Mugabe in the 27 June presidential run-off and to deter voters from casting ballots for MDC candidate Morgan Tsvangirai.³⁴

The focus of this thesis is on related issues of gender, conflict and violence. Gender roles and expectations are learnt and can change over time and do vary within and between cultures.³⁵ Frances Stewart observed that women are often portrayed as victims of conflict; and in a large part they are, but they are also active participants in war. Women have not only given supportive services but they have at times also been involved in active fighting, for example in Algeria, El Salvador, Eritrea, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, South Africa and Sri Lanka.³⁶ She also notes that during wars women often take on roles previously held by men such as becoming head of household. Furthermore, despite their active role in war, women are often neglected in the post-conflict situations such as peace negotiations and demobilization programmes,³⁷ as evidenced by the studies carried out in the Congo, Sudan and Uganda. She concludes that since women are active in supporting conflicts, giving them a greater role politically is not enough. Their underlying grievances should be addressed.³⁸ In the case of Zimbabwe, an analysis of the 1979 Lancaster House Conference proves that the views raised by Frances Stewart are valid.³⁹ Also, as I mentioned earlier in this introduction, another feminist Oyeronke Oyewumi refutes western feminism that always portrays women as powerless and disadvantaged victims.

Conflict as a concept can help explain many aspects of social life, such as conflict of interests, fights which may involve the use of force as in the term armed conflict.⁴⁰ Various scholars have written on theories of conflict. According to Erin Lepird *et al*, power is the core of all social conflicts because there are power differences among social classes. Also special interest groups fight over scarce resources of society so that competition puts society off-balance until a dominant group gains control and stability through power.⁴¹ Max Weber

³⁴ J. Hickman, "Explaining Post-Election Violence in Kenya and Zimbabwe," in *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol xxviii, No.1, Association of Third World Studies Georgia, 2011, p35

³⁵ UNESCO's "[Gendermainstreaming Framework](http://portal.unesco.org)"@portalunesco.org accessed on 30/5/2012

³⁶ F. Stewart, "Women in conflict and post-conflict situations" [p4@www.un.org/eco-accessed](http://www.un.org/eco-accessed) on 30/06/2015

³⁷ Ibid, p9

³⁸ Ibid, p14

³⁹ See chapter 6 for the discussion of the Lancaster House Conference

⁴⁰ "Conflict at schools" p1@pambuka.net/en accessed 30/06/2015

⁴¹ E. Lepird et al, "[Conflict Theory](http://www.14istate.edu/sapp/conflict)"@www 14 istate.edu/sapp/conflict accessed 01/07/2103

defines power as “the ability to impose one’s will on another, even when one objects.” Furthermore, he argues that the distribution of power and authority is the basis of social conflict. In his opinion, if authority is not recognized as legitimate, the result is political, economic and social conflict.⁴² Weber goes on to assert that people with power want to keep it while people without power want to seek it.⁴³ Lewis Coser agrees with the above scholars and defines conflicts as “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals”⁴⁴

The above theories are applicable and inform the various conflicts that erupted in Zimbabwe. The liberation struggle was a typical example of armed conflict which can be related to all the theories broached above. Group conflicts, intra-state conflict, international conflict, environmental resources conflict, ideological conflict, diplomatic conflict, economic conflict and military conflict are types of conflict which may appear vested in conflicts at larger levels of analysis. The Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) of 2000-2003 exemplified environmental resources conflict. The conflicts associated with elections in Zimbabwe are an example of intra-state conflict. The 1987 Unity Accord as well as the 2009-13 Government of National Unity (GNU) were attempts to resolve intra- state conflicts.

Finally, this thesis focuses on violence in Zimbabwe which has prevailed in the country from the colonial to the post-colonial period. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defined violence as the international use of physical force or power threatened or actual against oneself, another person or against a group of community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation.⁴⁵ The nature of violent acts can be physical, sexual, psychological or involving deprivation or neglect. When violence is exercised by dominant groups through the government apparatus against subordinate classes in order to maintain the status quo, it is termed institutional violence.⁴⁶ In Zimbabwe the *Gukurahundi* atrocities of the 1980s illustrate institutional violence as the Fifth Brigade was deployed by the state to commit violence in Matabeleland and Midlands regions. The objective behind the violence was the annihilation of ZAPU as a political party and retention of power by ZANU-PF.

⁴²Ibid, p8

⁴³ Ibid

⁴⁴Ibid, p14

⁴⁵ “A few concepts about Violence” p2@3hr.ass.org?Gautemala/dts accessed 01/06/2013

⁴⁶Ibid

Methodology

This research heavily relied on oral testimonies provided by men and women of Bulawayo. The respondents were either witnesses or victims of political violence perpetrated by the colonial or post-colonial state. Violence associated with the liberation struggle was explained by Bulawayo residents who experienced the war either as civilians or guerrillas.⁴⁷ Bulawayo residents also provided oral testimonies on post-colonial violence such as *Gukurahundi* of the 1980s and the invasions of 2000-2003.⁴⁸ Operation *Murambatsvina* was another phenomenon of post-colonial violence which caused many Bulawayo residents to give oral testimonies of discontent against ZANU-PF government.⁴⁹ My respondents were both women and men as I intended to unravel the difference between women and men's experience of violence. Exercising emotional intelligence was necessary when interviewing victims of violence and torture as many of them showed that they still needed to 'heal' their wounds. Through oral testimonies I was also able to get insights into the effectiveness of conflict resolution initiatives instituted regionally and locally. The interviews were carried out intermittently between September 2016 and March 2020 depending on the chapter I was working on.

Oral testimonies have some weaknesses such as forgetfulness by informants which then compromises accuracy concerning specific events. Nevertheless, comparing information from different respondents helped me to establish the authenticity of the information I obtained. Interviews also helped me get first-hand information from victims of violence and torture. Vansina notes that the most obvious limitation of oral testimonies is that they do not extend more than 400 or 500 years into the past.⁵⁰ To counteract that limitation the historian can supplement the historical information supplied by oral traditions with information from all auxiliary disciplines. Also Spear notes that oral traditions can be manipulated to reflect changing circumstances and support current political interests.⁵¹ To deal with that problem oral traditions relating to small groups such as families, clans or followers of a cult can be

⁴⁷ See Chapter 4 of the thesis for details.

⁴⁸ CCJP/LRF *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on the disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands 1980-1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997 provides details on 'Gukurahundi' atrocities.

⁴⁹ See L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011 and A. Harris, "Discourses of Dirt and Disease in Operation Murambatsvina" in M.J. Vambe (ed) *The Hidden Dimensions of Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2008

⁵⁰ J. Vansina, *Oral Tradition, A study in Historical Methodology*. Penguin, London, 1965, p.180

⁵¹ T. Spear, *Kenya's Past*, Longman, Harlow, 1981, p47

utilized to cross check the reliability of oral traditions.⁵²After gaining the confidence of some respondents I was referred to other potential informants. However, some would explicitly refuse to share their testimonies with me, even when I showed them my clearance documents from the Ministry of Local Government, Public Works and National Housing which clearly stated that my research was purely for academic purposes. They either did not wish to be reminded of the traumatic experiences caused by the violence they endured or were afraid of political repercussions of divulging sensitive information. By undertaking repeat visits where possible and gaining the trust of the interviewees, I tried to overcome bias, deliberate untruths and unconscious half - truths.

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, I used face-to-face interviews and did not carry out telephone-based interviews or leave my respondents with questionnaires. I resorted to random sampling of the informants and sometimes engaged in informal discussions in order to establish a relaxed atmosphere with my respondents. In order to gain my informants' trust we would discuss issues of general interest to them, then gradually introduce questions related to specific violent episodes. I also did not use a tape recorder or write down notes during the interviews in order to avoid unnecessary suspicions, I would record the notes of main issues raised immediately after the discussions.

Besides oral testimonies, I also used written sources extensively to engage with controversies around the subject. Files from National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) were particularly useful in providing information on the involvement of white women during the liberation struggle as it was not possible to interview any of them due to the fact that the majority of them left the country when it attained independence in 1980.⁵³ Secondary sources were important in corroborating some of the information obtained through interviews. They were also useful in providing statistics and dates related to episodes of violence and torture in Bulawayo. In addition, written sources helped the researcher to compare violence in

Bulawayo with violence elsewhere in the country. Moreover, professional researcher opinions were obtained from written sources, which helped to clarify complex sets of events that were encountered. For example, for one to appreciate the complexities behind the Global

⁵² Ki-Zerbo (ed) "Methodology in African Prehistory" in *General History of Africa vol*, UNESCO, 1989, p56

⁵³ See chapter 4 of the thesis

Political Agreement of 2008 as a conflict resolution mechanism one needs to read the chapter by Brian Raftopoulos in *The Hard Road to Reform The Politics of Zimbabwe Global Political Agreement* as it provides a “more nuanced picture of the GPA examining the various dynamics involved in its construction and providing a better understanding of the political options available to the different players at a particular juncture in Zimbabwe’s history.”⁵⁴ Also, one can appreciate how the mediation of the Zimbabwe crisis turned into a site of struggle for state power after reading Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s chapter which describes how the facilitation of the GPA “became entangled in complex ‘politics behind politics.’”⁵⁵

Chapter Outline

Chapter one focuses on the discussion of relevance of the theories of violence to the Zimbabwean case. The idea is to provide a theoretical framework in which to situate the thesis. Chapter two is a critique of relevant literature which helped me to see how other scholars connected their specific research topics to larger issues and questions within the field of violence. The objective is to show what contribution my study will make to the existing literature on violence. Chapter three discusses the political violence that occurred in Bulawayo during the colonial period up to 1973. It also depicts the gendered dimensions of the violence. The crux of chapter four is the Liberation Struggle focusing on Bulawayo Metropolitan Province during the period 1973-9. It also discusses the different roles played by men and women during that war showing how the roles complemented each other. Chapter five examines flash points of post-colonial violence that affected Bulawayo during the era 1980-2008. Finally, chapter six analyses Zimbabwe’s attempts to build a politics of peace, conflict resolution and reconciliation in the context of gross inequalities inherited from settler rule and within the constraints of particular regional and international pressures. The chapter concludes that Zimbabwe’s attempts at ‘national healing’ have been elusive.

⁵⁴B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement: National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma” in Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013,p

⁵⁵ S.J Ndlovu-Gatsheni, “Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe” in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p142.

Chapter One

Theoretical and conceptual frameworks on violence and conflict resolution

Introduction

As alluded to in the General Introduction, this thesis is a historical study of conflict, violence and conflict resolution in Zimbabwe during the period 1960-2013. It is the submission of this thesis that colonialism brought racial conflict between whites and blacks over important resources such as land and minerals. The conflict degenerated into violence when the African resorted to the armed struggle to wrestle power from the white colonialists and redress the socio-economic inequalities caused by colonialism.

After the attainment of political independence, the inequalities inherited from the colonial period manifested themselves in the black-on-black violence which has persisted to date. Conflict and violence are closely related as conflict provides the basis for eruption of violence. It is for these reasons that this study is informed by three theories, Max Weber's conflict theory, Zizek's ideas on violence and Burton's interest or needs-based conflict resolution theory. Weber's conflict theory will be used to explain the root causes of racial conflict during the colonial period. Zizek's ideas on violence will explain what triggered racial violence during the colonial period as well as black-on-black violence during the post-colonial period. Frantz Fanon in his book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, gives a psychological analysis of the dehumanizing effects of colonial violence upon the colonized African as individuals and nations from which they derive the broader social cultural and political implications inherent in establishing a social movement for the decolonization of a people. He proceeds to say that through the same process of violence the natives find a route to

confront the colonial masters and even free themselves of colonialism.¹ So they perceived decolonization as a violent phenomenon.

Theories on conflict and violence

One can define conflict as the existence of non-compatibility or disagreements between two actors (individual groups, classes, organisations or nations) in their interaction over issues of interests, beliefs, needs, goods, space, positions and scarce resources among others.² For Weber, power, which is “the ability to impose one’s will on another even when the other objects,”³ is at the core of all social relationships including social conflict. The power difference among social classes causes conflict and makes the classes fight over the scarce resources of society⁴. This conflict is characterized by resentment and hostility in society. Weber further posits that competition puts society off balance as interest groups fight to gain advantages over others.⁵ Eventually a dominant group gains control and stability through power. He also sees a link between power and authority which he defined as legitimate power and this authority is used as the basis of social conflict. Also, conflict can occur if authority is not recognized as legitimate. However, if subordinates believe in authority conflict can be avoided. Max Weber agreed with Karl Marx in that power is gained through economics which is characterized by an economic struggle between the ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’. In addition to economics, Weber believed in two other factors that play a role in power distinction that is social prestige and political influence concerning social prestige (status). For example, one could be poor and still hold lots of power because of social prestige as in

¹Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, penguin Books, London, 2001, p27

² C.F. Link, “Some Conceptual Difficulties in the Theory of Social Conflict,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol 12, 168, p412-460

³ E. Lepird et al, “Conflict Theory” p8@www.soc.iastate.edu/sapp/conflict accessed 01/07/2013

⁴ Ibid, p8

⁵ Ibid, p3

the case of Mother Theresa. Political influence has a bearing on power, for example, a politician may have great power but may not earn a big salary.⁶

Furthermore, Weber asserts that people with power want to keep it; on the other hand, people without power seek it. Max Weber's conflict theory was used to explain how conflict over resources developed between white colonialists and black indigenous people in Zimbabwe. There is little disagreement that power was the crux of the conflict as the white settlers held and guarded it politically, economically and socially, while the blacks tried to wrestle that power from them. As the conflict was not resolved, it degenerated into violence as evidenced by urban unrest such as the 1960 'Zhi' riots when blacks tried to redress the imbalances that were brought in by colonialism. The failure to resolve the conflict between the white settlers and indigenous people resulted in violence of the second liberation struggle. Weber's conflict theory can also be used to explain the black-on-black violence which manifested itself in the post-colonial period. From the foregoing, it can thus be argued that Weber's conflict theory can be understood within the framework of concepts of power and authority. Power is an aspect of the conflict theory. The central theory can be understood through this concept due to the fact that society is a struggle site for dominance among competing classes or genders.

During the colonial period, power was the crux of the conflict since white settlers held and guarded it politically, economically and socially while the blacks tried to wrestle that power from them. To that extent race was used as an instrument of power (i.e political dominance) so that whites created rules for success and opportunity often denying the black subordinate race. Political dominance ensured that the white race continued to monopolise resources and privileges that came with that political supremacy. In this case, racial conflict escalated to the

⁶E. Lepird et al, "Conflict Theory," p7 [@www.soc.iastate.edu/sapp/conflict](http://www.soc.iastate.edu/sapp/conflict) accessed 01/07/2013

political level to become a political conflict. Political violence was then utilized as a strategy to obtain power/leverage to intimidate or force or as means to defend certain positions. Political dominance was also the root of intra-Black Nationalist Party violence of the mid-1960s. The 'Zhandu' youth (supporters of ZAPU) and the Zimbabwe 1st Battalion (supporters of ZANU) waged a civil war of sticks, stones and sneers particularly in Salisbury, the capital city.⁷ Rural areas were not spared the violence. In Murehwa, thugs rampaged through villages demanding money for 'umdala' (a reference to Joshua Nkomo). Those who could not afford the required money had their homes burnt down and property destroyed. There was also violence committed by the ZANU supporters against ZAPU.⁸

In the post-colonial era many electoral and political conflicts in Zimbabwe have been a result of competition for political positions and convenience that comes with power. There has been intra-party violence as individuals competed for leadership positions. The major motivating factor in deployment of violence and rigging of elections is the grabbing and retention of power by hook or crook. Resorting to terror and violence to compel voters to vote for the ruling party has succeeded in some instances but in others it has failed. For instance, the *Gukurahundi* atrocities of the 1980s did not manage to coerce Ndebele voters to support ZANU-PF in the 1985 general elections. ZAPU under Joshua Nkomo maintained its seats in the two Matabeleland Provinces.⁹ The strategy of violence during election campaign periods was consistently used by ZANU-PF between 1985 and 1995. What changed from 2000 onwards were the scale, intensity and militarization of violence. Since the early 2000s the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) has proved to be a challenge to ZANU-PF for political power. The need to defend its position in the various constituencies made ZANU-PF

⁷P. Baxter, "The Emergence of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggles."

p1, @peterbaxtersfrica.com accessed on 21/02/2014

⁸L. Sachikonye, *When a State Turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p4

⁹Ibid, p17

resort to violence as a strategy to intimidate MDC. According to Sachikonye, some of the fiercest inter-party violence occurred in 1985, 1990, in 2000 and 2002 as well as in 2008. In each instance, the balance of the terror and violence was tipped against the opposition.¹⁰ In its demand for an opening and a share in political power, MDC has also resorted to violence to remove ZANU-PF from political power in the various national constituencies. At the same time the opposition party has engaged in violence mainly for self-defensive purposes.¹¹ It is also noteworthy that both ZANU-PF and MDC have experienced intra-party violence. The cases of intra-party violence are similar to those of inter-party conflicts. They congregate around a scramble for party positions, candidatures and promotions especially at election time and for related sinecures associated with winning parliamentary seats.¹² In the MDC, factionalism got out of hand in 2005 leading to an open split between a faction behind Morgan Tsvangirai, the party president and that behind Welshman Ncube, the secretary general. Ostensibly, the context for the split in October 2005 was over whether to participate in Senate elections of that year. However, at the heart of the long simmering factionalism was a power struggle between the two leaders.¹³

Thus, the need for power provided fertile ground for inter-party conflict in Zimbabwe. Similarly, party factions are created for ascendancy to more powerful and influential positions in a party. In essence the concept of power helps in the understanding of how group and class conflicts perpetuated developing cycles of conflict. In their contestations for power, classes or groups develop fear of becoming a disadvantaged minority group. This fear of annihilation leads to further acts of aggression against the other group. Meanwhile, the other

¹⁰L. Sachikonye, *When a State Turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011p 31

¹¹Ibid

¹² J. Makumbe and D. Campagnon, *Behind The Smoke screen The Politics of Zimbabwe's 1995 General Elections* UZ Publications, Harare, 2000,p118

¹³ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p32

group as the target perceives the same fears of annihilation and the cycle is repeated. Thus, the concept of power helps in the understanding of the theory of Max Weber on conflict as it asserts that people with power want to keep it; while people without power want to seek it. Also, the concept can be applied to the Zimbabwean case study to explain how power became a focal point of contestation, causing and triggering conflicts in the colonial and post-colonial period.

Authority is another aspect of Max Weber's conflict theory. The concept of authority is interconnected to the idea of power in the sense that opportunities and claims to particular structures, positions or levels in society lead to a conflict between those excluded from power and those in power. People have authority when what they say goes. Thus, if one person can persuade or scare one or more other persons to do as they want, then the first person exercises a degree of persuasive or coercive authority over those other persons. The concept of authority can be applied to explain conflicts in Zimbabwe as the colonial settlers gave themselves authority to exercise political power and exploit the resources of the country at the expense of the black majority. The liberation struggle was evidence of how blacks tried to remove white settlers from the position of power which gave them authority to rule and exploit the black majority as labourers while at the same time exploiting the resources of the country. In the post-colonial period, the issue of authority manifests itself in the inter-party conflicts that have characterized the black-on-black violence. Each party would be trying to wrestle the authority of having political power from the other party. There have also been conflicts about issues of the type of governance the country should have, for example one-party state system or multi-party democracy.

A person becomes an authority by being appointed or elected, anointed or authorized under an institutional arrangement that involves a capacity to coerce another person to do what they are told. As examples, police, judicial officers and various public officials have direct authority under the law to require obedience to their decisions and directions. Authority is very much linked to power and legitimacy. Nevertheless, a person can have legitimacy but not actual power (the legitimate king might reside in exile, destitute and forgotten). Also, a person can have actual power but not legitimacy (the usurper who exiled the king and appropriates the symbols of office).¹⁴ Here, now we begin to understand what authority is because in all social situations a person is treated as an authority only when they have power and legitimacy. In the Zimbabwean situation during the colonial period the white settlers' authority was based on power but not on legitimacy. Power determined authority and forced recognition of authority. Forced recognition of authority explains why the second liberation struggle erupted as the black majority were determined to wrestle power from the white settlers which gave them authority to rule the country and exploit its resources. The concept of authority is relevant to the Zimbabwean study as it brings out the dimensions of some of the racial conflict during the colonial period as well as the conflict which manifested in the black-on-black violence during the post-colonial period.

Zizek, a Slovenian philosopher and social critic, categorizes violence into three forms. These are subjective violence, symbolic violence and systematic violence. According to Slavoj Zizek, visible violence performed by a clearly identifiable agent is subjective violence. He notes that there is common intellectual concentration of this visible violence with its obvious signals such as criminality, terror, civil unrest, war and international conflict. To Zizek this "is just the most visible portion of a triumvirate that also includes two objective kinds of

¹⁴ A. Crossman, "Differentiating Authority, Power and Legitimacy," *p2@www.haslac.co.za* accessed on 15/01/2013.

violence” and for this violence to be understood there is need “to perceive the contours of the background which generates such outbursts.” Thus to him, behind the subjective violence, there is then an ‘objective’ kind of violence which falls into two further forms.¹⁵ The first is symbolic violence that is embodied in language and its drive to impose certain universal meaning. The second is systematic violence that is embodied in economic and political systems.¹⁶ These forms of violence are the motive force of what may otherwise seem to be irrational explosions of subjective violence. In the end, ‘objective’ violence is linked to the problems of inequality, exploitation and injustice.

Turning to the Zimbabwean situation, there was a lot of systematic violence during the colonial period. The political and economic system of the colonial period exploited Africans who were deprived of political and economic power, and were also compelled to provide labour to the white colonial capitalists. Racial inequalities pervaded every aspect of life such as distribution of land, wages and labour conditions, provision of education and health services, among others. It should also be noted that the colonial oppression ensured by the black majority constituted a violation of their political and economic rights, which broadly prevented them from accessing the state. Failure to resolve differences between whites and blacks resulted in the violence of the second liberation struggle as ZANLA and ZPRA forces waged warfare in order to wrestle political and economic power from the colonial regime.

To deepen our analysis of the problem of violence we have, thus, to start to think about violence in terms of its symbolic and systematic character instead of focusing on clearly visible acts, we need to make recourse to Zizek’s concepts¹⁷ This then calls for researchers on

¹⁵S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, “Beyond the Equator there are no Sins Coloniality and Violence in Africa”, *Journal of Developing Societies*, 28, 4, Pretoria, 2012, p412.

¹⁶ S.J. Ndlovu- Gatsheni; *Do ‘Zimbabweans Exist’?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p193

¹⁷ T. Valentic, “Symbolic Violence and Global Capitalism,” *International Journal of Zizek Studies* vol 2, No.2, p1 accessed 18/01/2013

violence to pay more attention to the catastrophic consequences of the functioning of the colonial economic and political systems such as systematic violence than the violence represented for example by the Islamic suicide bombers in the streets. Objective or structural violence is placed in the very heart of capitalism itself.¹⁸ According to Žižek capitalism promotes a society that pretends everything is running smoothly and that we are free to consume whatever we like yet the actual reality of capitalism is that it concedes to authoritarianism. Largely, capitalism seeks to normalize inequality through emphasizing liberal precepts including human rights of individuals. During the colonial period Africans endured ‘systematic’ violence as the colonial political and economic systems deprived them of their political and economic rights though they enjoyed certain social benefits in education and health sectors.

Africans were also victims of cultural violence as white settlers undermined traditional and cultural practices and continued to treat adult men and women as children. For example, adult men who were engaged as household servants in European homes were referred to as “houseboy” or ‘garden boy’ while adult women were labelled ‘house girls.’ Žižek also asserts that we consistently overlook the ‘symbolic’ violence embodied in language and its forms, which is democratic states’ monopoly on legitimate violence. He goes on to say that subjective and objective violence cannot be perceived from the same standpoint, as subjective violence is experienced against the background of the non-violence zero-level standard against which we perceive something as visible violence. Thus, in order to perceive it, one has to perform a kind parallax shift.¹⁹

¹⁸ C. Packman, “Towards a Violent Absolute. Some Reflections on Žižekian Theory and Violence,” *International Journal of Žižek Studies*, vol 3, No. 1 p2 accessed 09/07/2013

¹⁹T. Valentic, “Symbolic Violence and Global Capitalism,” *International Journal of Žižek Studies*, Vol 2, No.2 p2, accessed 18/12/2013.

Zizek also suggests using “sideways glances” when studying violence rather than one direct glance. Sideways glances help in transcending “the overpowering horror of violent acts and empathy with the victims which inexorably function as a line which prevents us from thinking.”²⁰ Sideways glances will be necessary for us to have an insight into the impact of the *Gukurahundi* atrocities on the survivors. Emotional intelligence has to be exercised when interviewing such people. This involves asking the right questions to the right respondents at an apt opportunity.

The circumstances surrounding the 1997 Food Riots were related to the economic decline the country was experiencing after President Mugabe had made an undertaking to war veterans that they would be paid over four billion Zimbabwean dollars in the form of gratuities and pensions. The collapse was followed by a price increase and food riots became an inevitable event. There was systematic violence as the collapse of the dollar fuelled inflation through 1998 as did persistent borrowing by the government to fund its deficit and recurrent spending. The economic crisis the country suffered was a result of maladroit handling of issues and continued through 1999. The problems were fuelled by the doubts that arose over the cost of maintaining troops in Congo. The war was highly unpopular and the government consistently refused to make any frank disclosure about either casualties or the costs.²¹ The effect was a large increase in the number of “destitute” people in Zimbabwe. Subjective violence associated with the food riots involved members of the police and army beating civilians allegedly for getting involved in the riots. The violence was perpetrated on both men and women. It also constituted a violation of the victims’ human right to freedom of expression.

²⁰ S. J. Ndlovu- Gatsheni, “Beyond the Equator There are No. Sins Coloniality and Violence in Africa,” *Journal of Developing Societies*, Vol 28, No.4, 2012, p421

²¹ Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, *Organized Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe in 1999*, Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, Harare, 2000,p4

Taking the issue a step further, this thesis investigated how life returned to normal after the food riots.

Systematic violence exacerbated as the economy of the country declined further during early 2005 due to a number of factors. Rampant corruption in the public sectors was one of the contributory factors towards the decline of the economy. The most notable case in the public sector involved National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM) which had monopoly over the purchase of fuel for Zimbabwe but was corrupt, bankrupt and sinking under a huge debt of around 200 million British pounds.²² No fuel company would supply Zimbabwe with fuel unless paid in hard currency preferably well in advance. But the country had no foreign exchange reserves left. So queuing for petrol became a “compulsory hobby” for the few in Zimbabwe lucky enough to own a car. This was the most visible consequence of Zimbabwe’s economic collapse. The recovery from systematic violence of the economic collapse is an aspect that this scholar investigated. Another development associated with subjective violence concerned the first referendum in Zimbabwe on 12 and 13 February 2000. Ostensibly people were being asked to approve a new constitution which kept sweeping powers of the presidency and allowed him to run for re-election twice more. Most crucially of all, it removed the obstacle that had thwarted the seizure of white owned land. Farmers lost their right to compensation for land seizures instead the new constitution stipulated that Britain must pay them. Zimbabweans voted ‘No’ to the proposed constitution. Land invasions of white owned farms by paid agents of ZANU-PF was Mugabe’s response to the defeat in the referendum. War Veterans under the leadership of Chenjerai ‘Hitler’ Hunzvi were in charge

²² D. Blair, *Degree in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p48

of the invasions.²³ The subjective violence was perpetrated on white farmers and their families. The violence constituted a violation of the victims' human rights to freedom of choice and expression. The main objective was to smash the opposition MDC which Mugabe believed had been created by white farmers. Though the High Court declared farm invasions illegal and ordered the police to evict squatters, invasions continued with Mugabe's support much to the embarrassment of some of his ministers.

Violence and State formation

Concerning violence and state formation, John Bailey asserts that most scholars focus on the 1870s as the starting point of the origins of the modern state. War making especially when successful can promote solidarity and patriotism, thus reinforcing the nation building project. Miguelo Conteno writes that in Latin American state power, violence has been more internal than inter-state. He goes on to emphasize that it is not war in itself that provides the sinews of the state. Rather, it is war in conjunction with an already dominant group within a state apparatus that makes it possible to extract resources from a recalcitrant state.²⁴ Robert Holden also discusses the role of public violence in state formation. Focusing on the five states of the isthmus of Central America, namely Guatamala, El Salavador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, he asserts that public violence draws together the killing, maiming and other acts of destruction committed by rival guerrilla 'liberations,' death squads and state agents such as armed forces and police, all of whom act within what he identifies as the field of state power.²⁵

²³D. Blair, *Degree in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p48

²⁴J. Bailey, "Violence, State Formation, and Everyday Politicism Latin America," p1@muse.jhu.edu accessed 17/07/2015

²⁵ R. Holden, "Armies without Nations: Public Violence and State Formation in Central America," p3@<https://books.google.co.zw> accessed 17/07/2015

Violence and Change

Karl Marx perceives violence as the midwife of change in all societies. In an 1848 newspaper article, he wrote, “there is only one way in which the murderous death agonies of the old society and the bloody birth throes of the new society can be shortened, simplified and concentrated, and that way is revolutionary terror.”²⁶ He argues that except as a malleable potential there is no human nature - it is the consciousness of men that determines their lives, but on the contrary their social being determines their consciousness. What we think is true, reasonable and good is determined by the economic circumstances in which we are raised. Marx observes that violence is very much required in the transition of monarchy to feudalism, feudalism to capitalism.²⁷

In the classical definition by Marx Weber, the modern state is that human community within which a defined territory successfully claims itself the monopoly of legitimate use of physical force.²⁸ In the making of states in Africa colonialism proved to be a violent process as evidenced by the scramble for Africa. Zimbabwe as a colony of Britain was not spared the systematic violence engendered by colonialism. The thesis also deals with issues of masculinity and femininity. Men are socialized from boyhood to see their masculine identities tied to protecting women while tolerating violence. Thus, masculine values become tied to the ability of men to protect their women and children and men who cannot do so are often ridiculed as failed men.²⁹ Attacking enemy women both emasculates the enemy and

²⁶S. Hicks, “Marx and the necessity of violent politics,” p1@www.stephenhicks.org accessed 17/07/2015

²⁷ Ibid, p3

²⁸ T. Valentic, “Symbolic Violence and Global Capitalism,” *International Journal of Zizek Studies*, Vol 2, No. 2, p3 accessed 18/12/2013.

²⁹ J.R. Parpart, “Masculinities, race, and violence in the making of Zimbabwe,” in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds), *Manning the Nation: Father figures in Zimbabwean Literature and Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, p104

reinforces the masculinity of the perpetrator. In Zimbabwe, the harassing of black women by white policemen and soldiers was meant to emasculate black men.

During the Second Chimurenga in Zimbabwe, subjective violence was perpetrated on the indigenous young men and women by both nationalist and Rhodesian forces. The nationalist forces coerced young women into being '*chimbwidos*' and young men into being '*mujibhas*.' These were collaborators who cooked for the guerrillas in the case of young women or gave them intelligence information in the case of young men. However, many youngsters (6-12yrs old) volunteered to be collaborators of the guerrillas as this elevated their social standing in the community. Issues of masculinity and femininity were again associated with the war. All the various parties (including the settlers' regime) were deeply patriarchal despite their rhetoric about gender equality. Control over women's bodies was paramount - whether one's own or enemy women. Hence, guerrillas frequently forced local girls to sleep with them leading to many unwanted pregnancies.³⁰ Thus, the period leading up to and during the liberation struggle and after independence has to be examined through a gender lens if we are to understand how ideas about practices of being men and women mutated to underwrite and perpetuate violent conflict. The thesis examined how the conflicts were resolved.

Militarised Violence

Militarisation involves equipping with military resources or imbuing society with militarism. In the Zimbabwean case, especially in the post-2000 political crisis, ZANU-PF government did both when militarizing the security and defence forces of the country. Maringira asserts that instead of sustaining Zimbabwean citizens' freedom, the police and the army have been

³⁰J.R. Parpart, "Masculinities, race, and violence in the making of Zimbabwe," in K. Muchemwa and R. Muponde (eds), *Manning the Nation: Father figures in Zimbabwean Literature and Society*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, p104

perpetrating political violence against the civilian population.³¹ Barely a year into independence extreme subjective violence manifested itself when ZANU-PF government used Korean trained Fifth Brigade to perpetrate atrocities against “dissidents” in Matabeleland and Midlands regions inhabited by the Ndebele speaking communities.³² The ZANU-PF government had trained the Fifth Brigade as a highly partisan and ethnically exclusive military unit directly answerable to Prime Minister Mugabe. Women were victimized as part of the general victimization of the societies in Matabeleland and the Midlands. Women were raped and sometimes systematically so while some men were beaten and others killed. Worse still civilians had their property destroyed while their houses were set on fire.³³

Another manifestation of violence was the military style Operation *Murambatsvina* (clean-up) launched on 19 May 2005 to curb urban based informal trade settlements.³⁴

The victims were men and women whose informal shelters and flea market stands were destroyed. Operation *Murambatsvina* should be seen within the context of a long history of ZANU-PF’s failed efforts to establish its rule as hegemonic - that is more through consent than coercion and threats. Just a little after the middle of 2004 as Zimbabweans were gearing up for the parliamentary elections scheduled for early next year, a research organisation that had carried out a public survey released its results. The survey indicated that Zimbabweans rejected overwhelmingly the political violence between the country’s two main political parties and felt that the country’s problems could be solved only if MDC and ZANU-PF sat down and talked with one another. The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum produced a

³¹ G. Maringira, “When the military become militarized: Account of National Army deserters in exile in South Africa,” Dec 2015, [p1@tandfonline.com/dos/abs/10.1080/10246024.2015.accessed10/01/2016](http://p1.tandfonline.com/dos/abs/10.1080/10246024.2015.accessed10/01/2016)

³² S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Do ‘Zimbabweans’ Exist?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p223

³³ C.C. JPZ & LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A report of Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980-1988*, CCJPZ & LRF, Harare, 1997, p197.

³⁴ S.J. Ndlovu- Gatsheni, *Do ‘Zimbabweans’ Exist?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p224

report indicating that there were struggles for power within ZANU-PF and within MDC. The violence was pervasive.

In Epworth a young MDC supporter became a victim of violence as some ZANU-PF youth and war veterans attacked him whilst he was distributing his party's leaflets. They assaulted him with baton sticks and sjamboks and took him to their base where they hit him until he lost consciousness. He next found himself in a police station where police officers further assaulted him while war veterans watched. This was another evidence of militarization of violence. Other police officers arrived and took the whole group to the central police station where they released the ZANU-PF youth and beat-up the MDC supporter to reveal the names of his MDC colleagues. On refusal they beat him again, charged him under the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and he was later released on Z\$250.00 bail.³⁵ From investigation during fieldwork there was no compensation from the government for victims of political violence like the young man from Epworth. The Afrobarometer report came and went as opinion surveys do to rest on websites in an academic journal. The objective of the violence associated with Operation *Murambatsvina* was mainly to punish the urban electorate for having voted for MDC in the 2005 elections. Also, the violence constituted violation of the victims' human rights to earn a living.

The post 29 March 2008 election-related violence was waged by ZANU-PF. This included Operation '*Mavhoterapapi*' and Operation '*Chinyavada*' which according to Martin Rupiya was governance through military operations which resulted in human rights abuses, followed by enduring anger and eventually abject apologies.³⁶ Concentrated in the former ZANU-PF

³⁵ D. Moore, "Coercion, Consent, Context Operation Murambatsvina & ZANU PF's Illusionary Quest for Hegemony," in M.J. Vambe (ed) *The Hidden Dimensions of Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2008, p27

³⁶ M. Rupiya "Zimbabwe: Government through Military Operations," in *African Security Review*, Vol 14, No. 3 2005, p7

strongholds of Mashonaland, Manicaland, Masvingo and the Midlands, the subjective violence perpetrated on both men and women was punishment for having voted for the opposition MDC in the 29 March elections. Secondly, it was meant to increase the margin victory for Robert Mugabe in the second round 27 June 2008 presidential contest and to deter voters from casting ballots for MDC Morgan Tsvangirai.³⁷ Using Bulawayo Metropolitan Province as a case study, this research tried to establish if the Organ for National Healing Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) launched by the Government of National Unity (GNU) was effective in promoting conflict resolution, peace and dialogue among the three parties that signed the Global Political Agreement (GPA) in 2008. The fieldwork did not yield any positive answer. One is tempted to agree with Masunungure who observed that authoritarianism in Zimbabwe has survived because a coalition of political and military elites stands ready to perpetuate ZANU-PF's control of the state.³⁸

Needs/interest- Based Conflict Resolution Theory

The Needs-Based Conflict Resolution theory propounded by John Burton is also referred to as the interest-based or cooperation-based theory. The theory operates on the premise that the fundamental interests or needs of groups, classes or individuals should be met. According to Burton, as conflicts are a result of frustrated interests and goals, there is need for an analytical conflict resolution which identifies what the frustrated goals and interests of the different classes are which would have caused or triggered the conflict. He asserted that "conflict resolution means terminating conflicts by methods that are analytical and get to the root of the problem. Conflict resolution as opposed to mere management or settlement points to an

³⁷J. Hickman, "Explaining Post-election Violence in Kenya and Zimbabwe," in *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol xxxi, No xxviii, Association of Third World Studies, Georgia, 2011, p35

³⁸E.V Masunungure, "Zimbabwe's militarized electoral authoritarianism," [p1@www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org), 2011. accessed 10/01/2016.

outcome that in the view of parties involved is a permanent solution to the problem.”³⁹ Thus, the theory is based on the attainment of fundamental class, group or individual interests and that if class and needs and interests are to be satisfied or attained there is need to attain those measures that build hope, trust and belief in the essential goodness of humanity. In the Zimbabwean context, failure to achieve conflict resolution over the different interests of the white settlers and those of indigenous Africans led to the eruption of the Second Chimurenga.

First, people should hope for and have a vision for peace before peace can be attained. There should be a vision and belief that former enemies can co-exist before any attempts of resolution are made. Avaruch suggests that the first step towards conflict resolution is to establish the root causes of the conflict. Hence he argues that conflict resolution requires a “process that helps conflicting parties identify salient unsatisfied needs and consider methods of accommodating social arrangements to the ineluctable demands of ‘necessitous’ individuals or groups.”⁴⁰ He goes on to assert that in order to achieve psychological and structural reconciliation in conflict resolution there is need to tap into the emotions that develop a sense of hope, trust, empathy, cooperation and inclusiveness.⁴¹ Following Max Weber’s hypothesis, the interest-based theory becomes an effective critical theory for this study since it takes into consideration basic class, group or individual interests required to attain peace. In the Zimbabwean context this could mean taking into account the interests of white settlers and those of indigenous Africans during the colonial period or those of ZANU-PF government and opposition parties during the post-colonial period.

³⁹S. Mills, “Conflict Resolution Theory,”

[p4@http://alestineisraelolutions.blogspot.com/April.2006](http://alestineisraelolutions.blogspot.com/April.2006), accessed 11/01/2016

⁴⁰ R.E Rubenstein, “Basic Human Needs: The Next Steps in Theory development,”

[p4@file:///F:/Rubenstein.htm](file:///F:/Rubenstein.htm), accessed 11/01/2016

⁴¹ Ibid

In Max Weber's opinion, what causes conflict is that each of the main classes or groups have interests in common. These classes' common interests are in conflict with those of the other class/group as a whole. In turn, this leads to conflict between individual members of different groups. Taking class or group interests into consideration will enable conflicting parties to come to the understanding that all groups or classes have legitimate needs, interests and goals that have to be satisfied if they are to live in harmony and peace. As mentioned above, in Zimbabwe taking into consideration the interests of indigenous Africans and those of white settlers during the colonial period would help to resolve the conflicts between the races and enable them to live in harmony and peace. In the post-colonial period one would have to consider ZANU-PF's authoritarianism and the attempts by opposition parties to achieve democracy by effectively participating in the country's politics. According to Avaruch, the Interest-based Conflict Resolution theory aims at getting to the root causes of the conflict between parties and not merely to treat its episodic or symptomatic manifestation. Hence, the theory provides space for an analytical process to facilitate the changes required to create a social and political system in which the goals, interests and needs of different groups can be met, thereby resolving conflicts by addressing the root causes of conflict.

Furthermore, the interest-based theory is relevant to this study as it can be applied to resolve conflicts at all levels of society from racial, interpersonal and intra class conflicts right up to the conflicts at national, regional and international levels. It is ideal for resolving conflicts at macro-level as well as micro-level settings. This study investigated conflicts at racial as well as class ethnic or group level. Hence the needs-based conflict resolution theory is the most appropriate to use in such a set up. During the colonial period, racial and class conflicts over power and resources could not be resolved peacefully, hence the eruption of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. However, an analysis of negotiations leading to independence mainly

focused on racial interests and overlooked ethnic or group interests of the people in Zimbabwe.⁴² The same applied to Robert Mugabe's reconciliation speech. By enabling racial and class or group representatives in a non-confrontation environment, the theory provides spaces in which the violence was re-enacted, interests, needs and fears presented, grudges and bitterness as well as discontent was conveyed, without the risk of starting cycles of racial or group conflicts and violence. The interest-based conflict resolution theory can be understood within track-two and analytic approach concepts. The approaches were used to resolve conflicts in Zimbabwe during the colonial and post-colonial period.⁴³

Track-two diplomacy is also referred to as grass-root method of conflict resolution. Track-two or grass-root diplomacy is an aspect of the interest-based conflict resolution. It is an unofficial interaction between members of adversary groups or classes that aims to develop strategies that might help resolve conflict. This approach has been tailored to deal with protracted conflicts among "groups denied physical and economic security, political participation and recognition from other groups."⁴⁴

Track-two diplomacy propounded by John Burton usually engages the use of a third party as a mediator between the conflicting parties who facilitates the process of problem solving by bringing conflicting parties in a neutral environment where non-hierarchical, non-competitive and non-coercive norms are meant to create and maintain an environment where the two sides can analyse their problems and create solutions. The third party facilitates an atmosphere of inclusiveness which is important to the process of resolution as it opens space to focus on the structural, social, attitudinal and interpersonal dimensions of the conflict relationship. In the case of Zimbabwe, Britain was the third party that mediated between the nationalist forces

⁴² See chapter six for details of Lancaster House Constitutional Conference as well as Mugabe's reconciliation speech

⁴³ See Chapter six for a discussion of the Lancaster House Constitutional Conference as well as the Global Political Agreement.

⁴⁴S. Mills, "Conflict Resolution Theory,"

[p6@http://palstine.israelolutions.blogspot.com.April2006](http://palstine.israelolutions.blogspot.com.April2006), accessed 11/01/2016

and the Rhodesian forces, when it invited the warring parties to the Lancaster House Constitutional Conference of 1979. The Conference was held at Lancaster House in London, far away from the battle ground of the Liberation Struggle.

The resolving of conflicts at a family level among the Shona people of Zimbabwe can be a classic example of where track-two diplomacy is used with the help of a third party. Where it was used to resolve conflict between husband and wife, the wife would have fled to her parents or relatives. On seeing this predicament, the husband or his family would approach a respectable member of the community to act as a third party or mediator. The wife's relatives would speak their minds but eventually back down and with a stern talking urge the family to live in peace. If a conflict would not be solved at a family level, it was usually referred to a higher authority like the mediation of a village head or chief. Decisions were generally arrived at after a lengthy process of consultation and debate.⁴⁵ In the case of Zimbabwe, as mentioned earlier, Britain took the role of a third party to resolve the racial and political conflict between the black indigenous people and the white Rhodesian settlers. Hence the British Prime Minister, Margret Thatcher, tasked Lord Carrington to invite the disputants to a conference at Lancaster House. Thus, track-two diplomacy and the use of Britain as mediator was an important requisite in the Zimbabwean political and racial conflict. Traditional African grievance solving mechanisms such as '*Kuripa ngozi*' would not come into play as the concept is foreign to white settlers.

⁴⁵ L.J. Laplante, *Transitional Justice and Peace Building: Diagnosing and Addressing the Socio economic Roots of Violence through a Human Rights Framework*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2008, p.332

The Concept of Analytic Approach

Burton and Kelman propounded the concept of analytic approach as another method of conflict resolution. They stress that those engaged in the resolution of a conflict need to engage in an analytical problem-solving to address the fundamental basis of conflict to see the grievances at the root of the conflict. There is need for those involved in the resolution of conflict to have an understanding of the background of the conflict, when the conflict started, whether it was related to previous conflicts or not as well as what was happening during the early stages of the conflict. The people involved in the resolution of conflict should also know the individual classes and groups involved in the conflict. Each side is given a chance to explain the situation from their point of view while the other side listens. The mediator gives a summary for each side's view, hopes, fears and concerns.⁴⁶ Rubenstein agrees with the above method of conflict resolution by saying where the conflict is generated by unsolved problems of political identity, "the process required will be analytical, exposing the differences between the conflicting parties' perceived interests and their underlying needs, and offering them a wide range of possible solutions to the reframed identity problem."⁴⁷ In the case of Zimbabwe, the analytic approach could prove to be useful when Thabo Mbeki of South Africa had to mediate between ZANU-PF and the MDC formations. As an essential component of conflict resolution, accountability and truth telling should take place. This implies that a person should recognize what they have done wrong, apologize and put things right. Concerning the conflict between ZANU-PF and MDC, Mugabe's obduracy made the conflict resolution an arduous process as he would not be accountable for his wrong- doing.

⁴⁶ S. Mills, "Conflict Resolution Theory,"

[p6@http://palestineisraelisolutions.blogspot.com/April,2006](http://palestineisraelisolutions.blogspot.com/April,2006), accessed 11/01/2016

⁴⁷R. E. Rubenstein, "Basic Human Needs: The Next Steps in Theory Development,"
[p3@file:///F:/Rubenstein.htm](file:///F:/Rubenstein.htm), accessed 11/01/2016

Rubenstein also asserts that the analytic approach entails empowering the disputants so that their conflict can be resolved. His argument is “through empowerment, disputants gain better clarity about their goals, resources, options and preferences and they use this information to make their own clear and deliberate decisions.”⁴⁸ Clarity about goals means that parties will better understand what resources are available to them or what resources they need to make an informed choice. Clarity about preferences means that the parties will reflect and deliberate on their own, making conscious decisions about what they want to do based on the strength and weaknesses of each option. In Zimbabwe, in 2008, what led ZANU-PF and MDC to negotiate were the stark political realities facing them. Ndlovu-Gatsheni observed that in spite of emerging victorious in the 29 March elections, the MDC formations were prevented by ZANU-PF from ascending to power and its support base was exposed to unbearable violence. ZANU-PF clung to power by violence, but its legitimacy was completely eroded. In addition to this, the Zimbabwean economy continued to degenerate and international, continental, and regional pressure together with sanctions contributed to ZANU-PF’s decision to accept negotiations as the only option if it was to survive politically.⁴⁹ It was within this context that the Harare disputants agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 21 July 2008 as a first step to epitomizing their commitment towards resolution of the crisis.

The concept of analytic approach thus helps in shaping the direction of conflict resolution. In the Zimbabwean situation, those involved in resolving conflict between whites and blacks or between different parties engaged in conflict analysis. Analysis was done with the aim of

⁴⁸R. E. Rubenstein, “Basic Human Needs: The Next Steps in Theory Development,”
[p3@file:///F:/Rubenstein. htm](file:///F:/Rubenstein.htm), accessed 11/01/2016

⁴⁹S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, “Politics Behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe” in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p160.

coming up with a win-win solution. Conflict is seen as a problem to be solved rather than a war to be won. The methods used focus on the needs and constraints of both parties rather than emphasizing strategies designed to conquer. Their win-win approach focused mainly on full problem definition analysis and development of alternative proceedings, concerns, and decisions on mutually agreeable solutions. Emphasis was on the quality of the long-term relationship between parties rather than short term accommodation. Communication was open and direct rather than secretive and calculating. Threat and coercion were absent. Attitudes and behaviours were directed towards an increase of trust and acceptance rather than escalation of suspicion and hostility.

In short, the concept of analytic approach proved relevant to the case study of Zimbabwe as it offered a type of justice based on reconciliation and reparation, an approach appropriate to people in different racial and class group communities who relied on continuous racial and socio-economic interaction. The approach took into account the needs of racial and group communities. The theory could be used to solve conflicts between whites and blacks at the end of the liberation struggle. The black-on-black violence experienced during the post-colonial period could also be resolved by applying the concept of analytic approach.

Conclusion

Though this study was informed by the above discussed theories in explaining the causes and triggers of conflicts and how these conflicts were resolved, it should be observed that these theories are not exhaustive to explain conflicts and conflict resolution techniques in the country. As the conflicts had different dimensions, their causes too were multi-dimensional. During the colonial period, the conflict between white settlers and indigenous black people had racial, political, economic and social dimensions. Power was in the hands of white settlers who ruled the country. Besides political power, the white settlers also held economic and social power at the expense of the black indigenous people. Hence, Max Weber's Conflict Theory can be applied to the conflict between white and blacks during the colonial period and also to the black-on-black violence that manifested itself in the post-colonial period. Zizek's ideas on violence can be applied to conflict during the colonial period, conflicts and violence during the second liberation struggle as well as explain the black-on-black violence which prevailed in the post-colonial period. Burton's Needs - based conflict resolution could be used to explain how conflicts were resolved to end colonial rule. The same applied to the concept of track-two diplomacy and concept of analytic approach which were applicable to the liberation struggle as a third party (for example, the use of Britain) was used to resolve the conflicts between white Rhodesian settlers and African indigenous people. Burton's Needs - based conflict resolution theory was also applied to the post-colonial period as conflicts which manifested themselves in black-on-black violence were eventually solved as exemplified by the GNU of 2009-13.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

The broad theme of conflict, violence and torture in Zimbabwe with specific reference to women has been peripheralised in Zimbabwean studies. Where it is touched on it is done rather tangentially. According to Valentic, violence means “the exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse, and the word usually stands for forceful human destruction of property or injury to persons, usually intentional, and forceful verbal and emotional abuse that harms others.”¹

The chapter endeavours to provide a literature review while at the same time revealing existing gaps and making a case for the importance of the present study. As such, both primary and secondary sources are reviewed thematically with a focus on those works that broadly inform the direction of the present study and those that are specifically relevant to issues of conflict, violence and torture. The theme of conflict, violence and torture in Zimbabwe needs to be understood within the context of colonial conquest, oppressive colonial administration, exigencies of violent resistance to colonialism, intra-nationalist conflict, violence and torture as well as the broader challenges of post-colonial nation building and state making, as in the context given by Ndlovu-Gatsheni.² The phenomenon has extended to permeate post-colonial struggles for power pitting the incumbents against opposition formations. Therefore, to historically contextualise its extent, depth and

¹T. Valentic, “Symbolic Violence and Global Capitalism” *International Journal of Zizek Studies*, Vol 2, No.2, p1, accessed 18/01/2013

²S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Do ‘Zimbabweans’ Exist?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p191

persuasiveness, there is need for an extended and detailed literature review starting with a focus on pioneering works by David Lan and others.

Torch- bearers of the study

David Lan's work is an analysis of how pre-colonial symbols and rituals were incorporated in the resistance ideology of the liberation struggle facilitating support for the guerrillas. He takes a celebratory approach to the role played by the mediums in gaining peasant support for the guerrillas.³ According to Lan, the mediums would deliver peasant support and the guerrillas promised that if they were successful in the war, they would reverse discriminatory legislation that limited the development and freedom of the peasantry and, most importantly, they would return the land to the peasants. However, Lan's work failed to critically engage numerous negative aspects of guerrilla-civilian relations. He overlooked the fact that peasant grievances arising from relationships with other Africans could have motivated peasants to forge alliance with the guerrillas in the armed struggle. Lan makes too much of witches being the cognitive antithesis of '*mhondoro*' and of the symbolic association of the guerrillas with the '*mhondoro*'.⁴ Lan's depiction of the mediums as anti-government may merely reflect the extent to which they had been untouched by development. Also by assuming that "sell-outs" were pro-government, Lan overstates the legitimacy of guerrilla coercion and hence their support.

Krieger, Nhongo-Simbanegavi and Lyons showed that relations between and among Africans were not as harmonious as Lan asserted. This researcher would like to confirm that observation. This is because people have different ideas. During a war people have different motives for supporting a particular side. For instance, the promise of money or other material

³ D. Lan, *Guns Rain and Spirit Mediums in Zimbabwe*, James Curry, London, 1985, p50

⁴ Mhondoro is a Shona referring to a spirit medium.

benefits can influence people to support different sides. Similar to Lan's work is Terence Ranger's on peasant consciousness and guerrilla war in Makoni district. The peasants bitterly resented the experience of colonial conquest, loss of land in the 1940s and authoritarian intervention on economic activities.⁵ According to Ranger, peasants' discontent was so intense that they only needed leaders to lead them in a revolution. Hence, when guerrillas arrived from late 1960s onwards, peasants collaborated with them in providing the guerrillas with shelter, food, clothes and other forms of support. Thus, Ranger's work remains an influential piece of work as it depicts the uniqueness of the Zimbabwean peasantry and the role they played in the liberation war of the country. The gist of Ranger's work lies in showing the causes of binary conflicts, which is conflicts between blacks and whites and what causes them, then how these binary inequalities led to armed conflicts. Ranger shows that peasants were opposed to the state and whites who had taken their lands and denied them reasonable access to markets.

Ranger's work is important to this study as it sharpens one's knowledge on the causes of grievances which led to the armed conflict in Zimbabwe. The work was also seminal in promoting African nationalism as it was part of nationalist historiography that celebrated the newly won independence. This study builds upon the foundation of conflicts laid out by Ranger at a micro-level to inform the research on inter-personal, group and community conflicts which Ranger does not highlight. The study acknowledges that whilst conflicts existed between blacks and whites, colonized and colonizer the study posits that there also existed intra-African conflicts. This study thus seeks to go beyond the binaries stated by Ranger by arguing that if conflicts were as simple as Ranger takes them to be, then how does one explain the prevalence of post-colonial conflicts which pitted Africans against Africans

⁵ To Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla War in Zimbabwe*, James Curry, Oxford, 1985, p169

and even during the Second Chimurenga as argued by Masipula Sithole, in *Struggles within the Struggle?* Thus, while Ranger's work is useful in explaining the causes of conflicts between and among blacks and whites, it does not explain the perpetuation of these conflicts between and among Africans with the demise of colonialism. This study acknowledges that Ranger and Lan's works are essential to this study as they lay the foundation of binary conflicts in Zimbabwe at both the macro- as well as micro-levels as their findings have tended to be generalized. The works of these scholars have motivated the researcher to investigate the complexity of conflicts at a macro-level.

Specific Literature on Conflict, Violence and Torture

Norma Krieger is one scholar whose work informs this study. Her work, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War Peasant Voices* is very informative.⁶ Whilst Lan and Ranger are concerned with showing conflicts between races, Krieger's point of departure is her argument that there were intra African conflicts which existed amongst and between Africans prior to and during the liberation struggle.⁷ She is the first scholar to raise the issue of conflicts and tensions along gender, class and generational lines among the Africans. Her work was also the first to show that relations between guerrillas and peasants were not as harmonious as they were painted by Lan and Ranger.

The weakness of Krieger's work, however, is that in her major emphasis on nationalist coercion she fails to reveal adequately the complexities of peasant guerrilla interactions and the extent of boundary crossing between compliance and resistance and between coercion and

⁶ N. Krieger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War Peasant Voices*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, p27

⁷ Ibid

voluntary participation.⁸ Krieger also sought to generalize a particular district experience to the guerrilla war as a whole. Moreover, the area studied, namely Mutoko district, had a particular potential for coercive strategies because of the rival nationalist movements operating in the area. These were Bishop Muzorewa's UANC and ZANLA guerrillas according to Raftopoulos.⁹ Criticizing Ranger's work, Krieger argued that Ranger's stress on unity ignored the differentiation within the peasantry along the lines of lineage, age, gender and wealth. Thus, she argues that Ranger's narrowly constructed concepts of peasant consciousness based on cultural nationalist ideology ignored various levels of differentiation of peasants, and thus overstated peasant grievances against the state and white settlers in the arena of agricultural production.¹⁰ Ranger also failed to seriously address the problem of guerrilla violence and coercion, treating the latter more as a necessary condition of war than as an indication of social tensions.

However, this study will go an extra mile from where Krieger left. Krieger discusses causes of conflicts between and among Africans but does not explain how these conflicts were resolved considering that colonial authority had collapsed. In addition, it can be argued that the liberation struggle failed to change oppressive social structures as the peasantry had hoped. To this extent, this study ventured where Krieger did not. It explored the conflict resolution mechanisms adopted by Africans to heal those who had been violated and reconcile communities. Compensating the injured party with a goat or a cow is an example of such a conflict resolution mechanism used by Africans. Again, this study's point of departure is that it also looked at conflicts in the post-colonial era. The study gave an explanation to what caused conflicts between blacks and the different manifestations of these conflicts in the

⁸B. Raftopoulos, "Problematizing Nationalism in Zimbabwe: A Historiographical Review," in *Zambezia (1999)*xxxvi(ii), p124

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid, p122

post-colonial era. The study also adopted Max Weber's Conflict Theory as well as Slavoj Zizek's ideas on violence to explain the political conflicts and violence during the colonial period as well as the black-on-black violence that persisted in the post-colonial period.

Literature which falls in the same category with Krieger's work includes the work of Mashingaidze and Schmidt. Analysing Buhera case study, Mashingaidze also observed that relations between guerrillas and peasants were not always cordial. Thus, his work was valuable to this study because it offered the researcher with a starting point making it easier for one to understand the root causes of conflict and its manifestation.¹¹ In a similar vein, David Maxwell and J. McLaughlin examine relations between the guerrillas, civilians and government security forces. Maxwell analyses guerrilla - church relations at Elim Mission in Manicaland. He observes that the guerrillas would not hesitate to hit a pastor who had been falsely accused of being a sell-out.¹² African staff at the Mission found themselves having to play the role which was not easy to accomplish, that is having to restore cordial relations between guerrillas and missionaries. On the basis of that observation, this study investigated if the black Christian staff at Cyrene Mission near Kezi (in Matabeleland) found themselves in a similar predicament.

Sithole's book, *Struggles within the Struggle* is the most extended treatment of the internal conflicts that beset the nationalist movements.¹³ For Sithole, tribalism and regionalism were responsible for tearing apart the liberation movements. He posits that ethnicity and class were

¹¹ T. Mashingaidze, "The Dynamic of Zimbabwe's Struggle for Liberation" The Case of Buhera 1950-1990." M.A Thesis, UZ, 2001, p50

¹² D. Maxwell, "Christianity and the War in Eastern Zimbabwe," in N. Bhebhe and T. Ranger (eds) *Society in Zimbabwe's War Vol 2*, UZ Publications, Harare, 1995, p64

¹³ M. Sithole, *Struggles within the Struggle*, Rujeko Publishers, Harare, 1999, p45

resources which gladiators utilised during the struggle for power.¹⁴ In another article, Sithole forges ideological differences and focuses on the resentment of Nkomo's inclusive approach to the nationalist struggle. While it may be over impulsive to reduce everything to a power struggle, Sithole's argument does go a long way in explaining some conflicts during this period. Sithole's work is significant as it draws attention to the fact that although the liberation movements were fighting against colonialism, personal differences, ideologies and the quest to lead failed to unite them. The vying for number one position of power and competition for supporters resulted in conflicts. However, Sithole's work overlooks the fact that these conflicts between leaders and the movements were mirrored within communities and among supporters. Sithole was also bitter about how his brother had been treated by other nationalists. The study aims at closing this gap by showing that different ideologies, competition for power and dominance among the rural supporters led to immense pressure and tensions on communities which resulted in conflicts. Moreover, this literature is vital to this study as it instils in one the urge to probe into the effects of these tensions and discussions on the communities.

In *Women of Resilience* edited by Zimbabwe Women Writers, various ex-combatant women relate the hardships they experienced and the violence they suffered when they joined the freedom fighters. The accounts also reveal the physical torture women suffered in the form of beatings. For instance, Nancy Saungweme, who together with her friends was accused of trying to overthrow the training personnel in Nechingwenya Camp in Tanzania, was beaten with a sjambok so hard that her buttocks turned purple and for two weeks she could not sit.¹⁵ The accounts provide a good foundation for the study which took a step further by investigating the short and long-term effects the violence and torture had on the victims.

¹⁴M. Sithole, *Struggles within the Struggle*, Rujeko Publishers, Harare, 1999, p45

¹⁵ Interview by Chiedza Musengezi with Nancy Saungweme in *Women of Resilience*, Zimbabwe Women Writers, Harare, 2000, p51

Prudence Uriri not only relates beatings that some female combatants suffered in Mozambique, but also alludes to how some of them were raped by their military superiors.¹⁶ This literature is crucial for the gendered dimension it gives to this study.

Nyagumbo also relates how the Rhodesian forces implicated his family into the struggle for political independence against colonialism. In July 1976 Victoria Nyagumbo, Maurice's wife, was arrested at their home in Makoni reserve on suspicion of feeding 'terrorists' or of failing to report the presence of terrorists. Her eldest daughter was taken with her to the police camp in Rusape and whilst there she was beaten in order to give information against her mother. The police got nothing from her and decided to let her go.¹⁷ As the account shows how a civilian family was inadvertently forced to be involved in the liberation struggle, my study explored the extent to which the livelihood of civilians in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province was disrupted by the war. Nyagumbo goes further to relate how the Rhodesian forces got religious nuns embroiled into the liberation struggle - thus again showing gender dynamics of violence at play. On the night of 31 March 1977 at about midnight, two Rhodesian soldiers woke up two of the African nuns of St Francis community and demanded to see the priest. Basil Nyabadza came out and greeted them. At their request he walked with them over to the well between the house and the church. There they shot him and he died at once. The shooting was seen in the bright moonlight by Basil's wife, Rosemary, and by two black nuns, Katherine and Felicity.¹⁸ The murder of Basil galvanised the community around St Francis against the Rhodesian forces. Using the case study of Bulawayo, my study tried to establish if

¹⁶ Interview by Irene McCarthy with Prudence Uriri, in *Women of Resilience*, Zimbabwe Women Writers, Harare, 2000, p52

¹⁷ M. Nyagumbo, *With the People*, Graham Publishing Co. (pvt) Ltd, Harare, 1980, p227

¹⁸ Ibid

brutality by Rhodesian forces similar to that related above enhanced the civilians' support for the guerrillas or if the civilians were intimidated so that they did not assist the guerrillas.

Sibanda in his book *The Zimbabwe African People's Union*, considers the ZANU-ZAPU split as the mother of all splits. He asserts that conflicts were a result of grievances over Nkomo's leadership. In his opinion, these grievances were a red herring to the power interests of the majority Shona to control the liberation movements.¹⁹ Thus, Sibanda's work is important as it sharpens one's knowledge about how issues of ethnicity, if frustrated or not recognised, can result in conflict. It is these assumptions and suppositions which this study sought to assess the extent to which they might have caused conflicts in Zimbabwe. The work also speaks to the struggles intimated by Masipula Sithole. They also corroborate the ethnic tensions in liberation movements, between the Zezuru, Karanga and Manyika in ZANU-PF and the Ndebele-Shona in ZAPU. According to Mhanda, early in 1976, there was a strain on relations between the ZANLA and ZPRA armies in Mozambique as ZPRA had brought one unit of 100 combatants led by Commander Mike Ronalds for the offensive against Rhodesian forces. On the other hand, ZANLA had committed all its available senior commanders to the mission. Furthermore, he noted that there was fighting at the ZANLA camp in Mgagao which resulted in the death of at least 15 ZPRA fighters.²⁰ Ranger also noted that in 1960 there were cleavages within the black nationalists in ZAPU as residents of Pelandaba and Pumula (in Bulawayo) demanded to be given arms to protect themselves against the poor rioters from Makokoba and other poor suburbs.²¹ It is possible that issues to do with different ethnic groups as well as different classes might have fomented conflicts. Thus, Sibanda's work is important to this research as it gave the study background knowledge on possible impact of

¹⁹ E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union*, African World Press, Trenton, 2005, p60

²⁰ W. Mhanda, *Dzino: Memoirs of a freedom fighter*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2011, p23

²¹ T. Ranger, *Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of a Southern African City 1893- 1960*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2010, p9

ethnicity in exacerbating conflicts. The study tried to assess the extent to which ethnic difference caused conflicts in Zimbabwe and how these were amplified during the liberation struggle.

Tony Kirk discusses how in the 1970s ZAPU and ZANU's nationalist leaders continued to oppose the white government (which had outlawed both parties in August 1964) from their places of exile. The old rivalries had lost none of their intensity when transferred to foreign soil. Efforts by foreign governments to bring about a reconciliation between ZANU and ZAPU failed. As both ZANU and ZAPU established their headquarters in Zambia for some time there was huge friction between the two parties. There was also friction between Shona and Ndebele elements in ZAPU. Sections of the party were losing confidence in the leadership, while the leaders themselves were divided on the question of union with ZANU. The military wing which was dissatisfied with the conditions of service and pay in 1971 seized James Chikerema and more than twenty other senior ZAPU officials and threatened to put them to death unless they altered their policies and abandoned the idea of union with ZANU. In response, President Kaunda ordered ZAPU and ZANU to settle their differences or to get out of the country. His government showed its displeasure by deporting 129 recalcitrant ZAPU men to Rhodesia where they immediately fell into the hands of the police.²² The ultimatum by the Zambian government did not bring a merger between the warring parties but another schism. On the pretext of setting up a united front, several nationalists from ZAPU and ZANU got together in 1971 and formed FROLIZI.²³ The FROLIZI formation appeared to owe as much to tribal mistrust as to the Zambian ultimatum.

²²T. Kirk, "Politics and Violence in Rhodesia, :*African Affairs Vol 74, No. 294 p5*, Oxford University [Press@www.jstor.org/stable](http://www.jstor.org/stable) accessed on 19/07/2012

²³ Ibid

The Zambian Daily Mail denounced the new party as a ‘tribal regrouping of familiar faces from the original organisation.’

The consolidation of FROLIZI coincided with a period of serious political unrest in Rhodesia caused by the African Campaign against the Anglo-Rhodesian Constitutional Settlement of 1971. In January 1972 Britain sent the Pearce Commission to ascertain the opinion of the population as a whole. As black leaders urged their people to vote ‘no’ to the proposed constitution, rioting erupted in towns and law enforcement broke down in several rural districts. Though one FROLIZI raid resulted in the death of a white farmer called Joubert in Wedza District, the fighters were eventually captured, brought to trial and imprisoned.²⁴ Therefore, Tony Kirk’s work is valuable to this study as it helped the researcher to grapple with the unclear factors that led to the formation of FROLIZI and the weakening of the liberation movement.

Mike Kesby explores the contingent nature of war-time developments in gender relations focusing partially on the experience of protected village inmates in churches. While each arena had its own unique dynamics which itself varied from region to region over the duration of the war, both types of externally imposed structures had the effect of undermining elders’ authority in their communities and of opening up new spaces of opportunity in which young men and women could act.²⁵ He argues that changes wrought by the guerrilla war were not accepted by society nor did they make female emancipation inevitable. His work prompted this researcher to investigate how changes brought by the guerrilla war impacted on

²⁴ T. Kirk, “Politics and Violence in Rhodesia, *African Affairs* Vol 74, No. 294 p25, Oxford University [Press@www.jstor.org/stable](http://www.jstor.org/stable) accessed on 19/07/2012

²⁵M. Kesby, “Arenas for Control, Terrains of Gender Contestation: Guerrilla Struggle and Counter-Insurgency Warfare in Zimbabwe 1972-1980,” in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 22, No. 4, p561@www.jstor.org/stable accessed 19/07/2012

gender relations of the Ndebele society in Bulawayo and ascertain whether these changes brought about female emancipation. An analysis of the disturbance caused by the guerrilla war can tell us much about the nature of developments in gender relations during the liberation war and can help explain the resilience of patriarchal relations in the post-independence period.

Mike Kesby further asserts that when ZANLA guerrillas crossed the border from Tete Province and began to infiltrate the remote farming areas of Northern Zimbabwe in the early 1970s, their intention was to take control of the human and material resources located in these areas. While male combatants had some experience of gender role reversals in their training camps, especially towards the end of the war, in the combatant zone it was most expedient for them to work within existing social structures. Thus, ‘mobilisation’ of the peasantry was a gendered process. The men would give clothes and materials and would have to contribute money to the shop owners who would order clothes for the guerrillas. Mostly, the cooking was done by the girls and young women and the carrying of the equipment was done by boys.²⁶ Kesby’s work proved relevant to this study as it provided an eye opener to disruption of gender relations that occurred during the liberation. This study took a step further to examine the continuation or reversal of feminine and masculine identities after the liberation struggle.

Bhebhe notes that ZANLA adopted a policy of forced political indoctrination of the civilian population through compulsory all night mass meetings called ‘*pungwes*’.²⁷ Villagers’

²⁶M. Kesby, “Arenas for Control, Terrains of Gender Contestation: Guerrilla Struggle and Counter-Insurgency Warfare in Zimbabwe 1972-1980,” in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol 22, No. 4, p573@www.jstor.org/stable accessed 19/07/2012

²⁷N. Bhebhe, *The ZAPU and ZANU Guerrilla Warfare and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1999, p9

attendance of these meetings was compulsory. Guerrillas and 'mujibhas' violence was often targeted against absentees and violence was a common element of the meetings themselves. A typical rally consisted of a long political address by the political commissioner of the combat unit and it was punctuated by the singing of Chimurenga songs and dancing to the tunes of those songs.

The 'pungwes' were an area in which guerrilla control over the population was manifested and reproduced. In this sense, they took on some of the characteristics and formations of the protected villages and like them they were social material spaces in which elders had little influence over the guerrillas or the local people.²⁸ Building on the works of Kesby and Bhebhe, this study investigated the extent to which the masculinity of adult village men was undermined by their loss of autonomy in their communities and homes, the small territories of authority they had defended throughout the colonial period. Disempowerment of patriarchy may have been more severe in the protected villages than the guerrilla affected areas, but similar spatial processes were at work destabilising the patriarchal status quo. Clearly, villagised women were under considerable sexual pressure from the guard force. However, some readily embraced relationships with these young men as a means to pursue their own agenda. Moreover, compared to their impoverished or absent traditional guardians the guards could offer women material support. This study investigated what advantages women enjoyed from having relationships with the guard force.

Various authors documented torture that occurred during the liberation struggle. Julie Frederiske in *None but Ourselves* recounts the torture a nurse at Chibi Mission Hospital

²⁸M. Kesky, "Arenas for Control, Terrains of Gender Contestation: Guerilla Struggle and Counter-Insurgency Warfare in Zimbabwe 1972-1980," in *Journal of Southern African Studies* Vol 22, No4, [p573@www.jstor.org/stable](http://www.jstor.org/stable/p573) Accessed 19/07/2012.

suffered at the hands of the Rhodesian soldiers. They accused her of giving injections and other medical supplies to the guerrillas. For that reason she was taken to Ngundu (Police camp) where she was subjected to torture in the form of electric shocks and being beaten and kicked as well as having her head submerged in water as if to drown her. Her husband too was subjected to similar torture as he was accused of supplying clothes and other material support to the guerrillas.²⁹ While the book is an effort to document a war of words and ideas through the words and ideas of the people who fought this war, it does not bring out the misconceptions about Africans that the pro-government media depicted during the liberation struggle. However, the work is relevant to my study as it enlightens the researcher about violence and torture used by the Rhodesian forces and torture used by the Rhodesian forces on civilians during the war. This study not only attempted to reveal the misconceptions about Africans that pro-government media depicted but it also investigated the forms of torture which accompanied the violence unleashed by Rhodesian forces on civilians during the liberation struggle.

The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) as well as Amani Trust also documented torture that occurred during the liberation struggle. The CCJP demonstrated the widespread use of torture by the Rhodesian security forces. In the report, “The Man in the Middle,” CCJP documents how, in trying to contain the advances of guerrilla forces of ZANLA and ZPRA, the Rhodesian regime forces used massive violence against the guerrillas and their collaborators as well as the local civilian population. The report provides details of colonial state brutality including extra-judicial killings, public display of bodies of dead guerrillas to deter local support for guerrillas and ensure herding of civilians into protected

²⁹J. Frederiske, *None But Ourselves*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1982, p73

villages.³⁰ The report also shows that the rural youth were a major target of this form of violence. This study seeks to investigate further the forms of torture which accompanied the violence unleashed by the Rhodesian forces during the liberation struggle in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province.

The central theme of the report “Civil War in Rhodesia, Torture and Death” centres on a sinister campaign by regime forces. This involved the display of killed guerrillas in public places to deter the rural population from supporting them. There was also the disrespectful handling of mutilated bodies of guerrillas killed in action at a number of police stations. These displays of the dead were part of concentrated psychological campaign to intimidate, demoralize and traumatise the African population.³¹ Whilst this literature sharpens one’s knowledge about how torture was administered on the rural population, the report does not address the psychological effects of torture on the individual, familial and at community level. It is this gap which this study tried to fill. The study sought to make an in-depth analysis of the effects of torture in Zimbabwe during the period under review.

Subsequent work by the Amani Trust demonstrated that guerrilla forces were not exempt from using torture. In the report “Survivors of Torture and Organised Violence from the 1970s War of Liberation” there is evidence that torture was directed at collaborators such as ‘informers’ who were widely used by the regime and personnel such as the police, guard forces, councillors, chiefs and other personnel of local state institutions.³² This literature proved to be relevant to my study as it gives a balanced view of the atrocities committed by

³⁰ NAZ File M5311/21 “The Man in the Middle: Torture, Resettlement and Eviction 1975”, p123.

³¹NAZ File MS311/3 “Civil War in Rhodesia, Abduction, Torture and Organised Violence from the 1970 War of Liberation”, p12.

³² Amani Trust, “Survivors of Torture and Organised Violence from the 1970 War of Liberation.” p12

the fighting forces during the liberation struggle. This study tried to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on torture by fighting forces in the environs of Bulawayo. Nhongo-Simbanegavi also notes that during the Second Chimurenga Rhodesian Security Forces arrested and tortured civilians as punishment for collaborating with the guerrillas.³³

Autobiographies, Conflict and Violence

Autobiographies provide valuable insights into issues to do with one's conception of conflicts. They give an insider's opinion of conflicts and conflict resolution at an individual level or at a collective level. In essence, autobiographies are eye-openers on issues of conflict and tensions that existed behind the banner of nationalism. They give an individual's opinion. Nkomo's autobiography provides valuable insight into how the racial injustices of colonialism spurred the spirit of nationalism among Africans, giving them the determination to fight against colonial oppression.³⁴ It also shows how ethnicity within the nationalist movements caused disunity among its members. Nkomo's reflections are very important and they are an eye-opener in understanding party conflicts, how they started in 1963 as well as the start of ethnicised politics that made unity hard to achieve among leading nationalists. Nkomo's autobiography serves to deepen one's knowledge about conflicts and their dimensions, issues which proved relevant to this study.

Muzenda's biography written by Ngwabi Bhebhe explicitly shows that it does not matter whether people belong to the same party as people's regional sensibilities must be managed skilfully if conflict is to be avoided. Bhebhe points out that the situation is worse when such people belong to different parties. As testimony to this fact ZANU and ZAPU fighters started killing each other when they were dumped together at Mboroma by the Zambian authorities.

³³ J. Nhongo-Simbanegavi, *For Better or Worse* Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p24

³⁴J. Nkomo, *The Story of My Life*, Methuen Ltd, London, 1984, p54

The ZIPA experiment in Mozambique collapsed just for the same reasons. Also in Libya, ZPRA and ZANLA cadres were put in one training camp and they killed each other.

Explaining reasons for these conflicts, Bhebhe stated that, “The reasons are very simple, the young men and women were trained to hate each other by their leaders who wanted to justify the separate existence of their parties. Each party had its own commissariat department whose task was to teach the recruits the history of the party, how the party was different from the less revolutionary and sell-out leaders of the rival party.”³⁵ Thus, the cadres were brought up to hate each other as well as rival party.

Thus, this biography amplifies the nature of conflicts between the nationalist leaders and their cadres and between different nationalist movements. A close proximity between the two groups of fighters provided immediate conflict. This literature is relevant to this study because it informs the researcher on the causes and dimensions of conflicts. It is possible that if the leaders trained their cadres to hate the rival party, this could have infiltrated down to the grass roots and the sentiments could have been shared by their supporters in Zimbabwe during the liberation struggle. Even the *Gukurahundi* massacres of the 1980s could be understood in the context that the Korean trained Shona brigade and the Ndebele civilians supported ZANU and ZAPU, respectively.

Samkange, a leading nationalist in the 1960s reflected on the political mentality of the nationalists of those days. He observed that: “Before a rally our youth must wake up at three, knock at the door of every house and tell the inmates we expected them to be at the rally and we shall be watching to see that they are there. People will be afraid to stay away. We will have a huge rally and our leader will be acknowledged by all as a leader and spokesperson of

³⁵N. Bhebhe, *Simon Vengesai Muzenda and the Struggle for Liberation of Zimbabwe*, Mambo Press, Gweru 2004, p252

Africans in that country. Those who were not with us are sell outs, those from a rival political party must be prevented at all costs. So, houses and cars were stoned. Petrol bombs were thrown into people's bedrooms."³⁶ Samkange's account reveals the *modus operandi* of the nationalist movement during that time. The leaders believed in the effectiveness of coercion and violence to mobilize and win party members and this happened in urban areas. The relevance of this literature to my study lies in that it gives background knowledge concerning the discourse of 'sell-outs' which was rife in rural areas, in general. As a point of departure this study tries to analyse the *modus operandi* of the nationalist movements during that time looking at Bulawayo. It examines the methods of mobilization for people to attend rallies.

In their autobiographies both Nyagumbo and Shamuyarira give insiders' views on tensions and violence during the liberation struggle. They both justified the employment of violence as part of legitimate tools. Nyagumbo narrated the violence lashed out on 'sell-outs' and dissidents after the 1963 split. He observed that "some ZAPU leaders in 1963 went to Mabvuku, Mbare and Mufakose where they mobilized youth who were brought to Highfields and given a task of stoning houses of those they called dissidents who no longer wanted Nkomo's leadership. This started a black chapter in the history of this country. Our opponents, Nkomo and his followers were dedicated to the elimination of every one of us and those who supported us".³⁷ Nyagumbo attributes the blame for inter-party violence only to "ZAPU thugs" yet there was a lot of violence committed by "ZANU thugs" about which he was reticent. His work is valuable to this study as it gives valuable insights into the nature of party conflicts and violence centred on power and leadership in the urban areas. In essence, Nyagumbo's account reveals that the political leadership of that time viewed violence as a

³⁶Cited by Nyagumbo in his book, *With The People An Autobiography from the Zimbabwe Struggle*, University of California Press, London, p143

³⁷ M. Nyagumbo, *With The People An Autobiography from the Zimbabwe Struggle*, University of California Press, London, 1980, p160

legitimate tool to be used to win support. This study attempted to assess the extent to which violence was justified as a legitimate tool during and after the war in Zimbabwe.

Equally important on inter-party conflicts and violence during the liberation struggle is Tekere's autobiography. He explained how ZANU youth mobilized support for the party in the towns of Masvingo and Gweru. He was very certain that "we were fighting a war with ZAPU [...] We would dispatch teams in other cities particularly at week-ends to fight. ZAPU would go into hiding when they heard we were coming."³⁸ Tekere's account is valuable as it gives an insider's view of conflicts at a collective or party level. Of importance is the conspicuous lack of effort by the leaders of the two parties to dissuade and stop the violence amongst their members. In retrospect it was a grave error of omission and ambivalence amongst leaders such as Nkomo, Sithole and Mugabe as the culture of inter-party violence would haunt them in years to come. As testimony to this, more than fifty years later the burning of homes and property of political opponents continues. For this reason this study endeavours to look at the attempts, if any, that were made to end conflicts and violence amongst people of Zimbabwe and the effectiveness of these attempts.

Nhongo-Simbanegavi's work is a gendered study of the Second Chimurenga, particularly the experiences of women during the liberation struggle within ZANLA. She argues that men had overall control over women. Women were discriminated against, during and after the war since they were not considered in policy formation.³⁹ Nhongo-Simbanegavi was mostly concerned with gender inequalities in the liberation camps. This study will find out if the gender inequalities discussed by Nhongo-Simbanegavi concerning ZANLA also applied to ZPRA camps. In her memoirs, Fay Chung gives an insider's view of divisions, tensions and

³⁸I. Mandaza (ed), *Edgar '2-boy' Tekere A lifetime of Struggle*, SAPES, Harare, 2007, p55

³⁹J. Nhongo-Simbanegavi, *For Better or Worse?* Weaver press, Harare, 2000, p xv1

conflicts within ZANU-PF during the late 1970s. She discusses the tensions between politicians and military leaders together with the rise and fall of Vashandi Movement. The movement tried to change the direction of ZANU in a more socialist direction.⁴⁰

Thus, this study will benefit from Nhongo-Simbanegavi's work as it offers insights into gender conflicts at play in rear camps during the liberation struggle. Fay Chung's work will prompt this researcher to find out if there were any tensions between ZAPU politicians and their military leader in ZPRA. Tanya Lyon's work further sharpens one's knowledge on gender conflicts and tension in the rear camps during the war.⁴¹ However, my study seeks to explore how gender conflicts played themselves out in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province as well as finding out the reasons that triggered them. Norma Krieger in *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War Peasant Voices* discusses gender conflicts in polygamous families in rural Mutoko district during the colonial period. She asserts that fear of losing access to the children if they divorced led many women to tolerate being abused and avoid the courts.⁴² She also notes that though women in polygamous marriages might find support from co-wives, senior wives often resented junior wives who got more attention from their husband creating the potential for domestic conflicts.⁴³ However, Raftopoulos points out some weaknesses associated with Krieger's work. In his opinion she sought to generalize a particular district experience (that is, Mutoko district) to the guerrilla war as a whole. Also in her major emphasis on nationalist coercion, Krieger fails to reveal adequately the complexities of peasant guerrilla interactions and the extent of boundary crossing between compliance and resistance and between coercion

⁴⁰F. Chung, *Re-Living the Memories of Second Chimurenga* Weaver Press, Harare, 2007, p151

⁴¹T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerrilla Girls," PhD Thesis, University of Adelaide, Australia, 1999, p60

⁴² N. Krieger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War Peasant Voices*, CUP, Cambridge, 1992, p70

⁴³Ibid, p78

and voluntary participation.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, using Krieger's work as a comparison, this study sought to establish how gender conflicts played out in Bulawayo during the Second Chimurenga

Colonial Counter-Insurgency as Violence

Rhodesian post-war writings have come to occupy a significant place in the genre forces, agents and assassins have written on the Zimbabwean liberation war. "The-now-it-can-be-told" confessional books such as *The Rhodesian Front War - Serving Secretly* by Ken Flower and others expose the evils of the Rhodesian Regime at the same time boasting the forces' technological triumphs. This study learnt about the dirty tricks used by Rhodesian forces from Flower's work. Also Jim Parker's work gives an idea on how the Rhodesian forces fomented conflicts between civilians and the guerrillas. Parker shows how when it became apparent that security forces could not make contact with guerrillas using conventional counter-insurgent methods they resorted to daring dirty tactics. These measures detailed the efforts of the Rhodesian forces in fomenting conflicts between the guerrillas and civilians.⁴⁵

Selous Scouts infiltrated guerrillas' logistical supply with contaminated and poisoned canned foods, medicines and clothing, resulting in the death of thousands of guerrillas. This saw the beginning of the discourse of witches and sell-outs as many guerrillas vented their anger on the civilians. Thus, Parker's work serves as a precursor of conflicts fomented by the Rhodesian forces in the country. In essence his work informs this study as it analysed and described how the war was fought in the Musikavanhu sector, in Zaka and Ndanga villages in Bikita district. Poisoned food and uniforms have also come to occupy a significant place in the genre of the liberation struggle. White's work gives a detailed account of how the Rhodesian forces gave agents poison to kill guerrillas. Out of the ignorance and sheer hatred

⁴⁴ B. Raftopoulos, "Problematising Nationalism in Zimbabwe: A Historiography Review," in *Zambezia (xxvi(ii))* U.Z Publications Harare, p123-4

⁴⁵ J. Parker, *Assignment Selous Scouts, Inside Story of Rhodesian Special Branch Officer*, Galago, Johannesburg, 2006, p225

of the guerrillas, women who prepared food for the guerrillas used it to poison the guerrillas.⁴⁶ Other villagers had relatives in the Rhodesian Army or police. The relatives supplied them with poison to kill guerrillas. White explains how water holes, clothes and canned foods were poisoned. Once consumed, guerrillas would die after days of consumption bringing about and creating confusion, tensions and conflicts between guerrillas and civilians as to who would have killed the guerrillas.⁴⁷ So this literature depicts confusion concerning issues surrounding food poisoning and how it created conflicts during the liberation struggle. Rhodesian literature also introduced the researcher to other dimensions of conflicts in the liberation struggle. It points towards the fact that conflicts can be used as a divisive tool in an opponent's hand. The creation of the zealous Selous Scouts unit and Protected Villages Committee (PVC) meant that families of the recruited children were pitted against each other. It led to the emergence of 'in' and 'out' groups whereby one group was considered the enemy to be destroyed in order for the other group to survive. Peter Stiff's book highlights all these issues. This literature proved valuable to this study as it examines how conflicts were engineered in depth, thereby shaping the direction of this work. McGregor skilfully investigates a series of poisonings during the last years of the war in western Zimbabwe. The work points to the fact that guerrillas failed to distinguish the difference between the poisoning by witches and poisoning by the Rhodesian agents. McGregor notes that people did not see the contradiction between witchcraft and counter-insurgency.⁴⁸ On the other hand, all Rhodesian literature on the liberation struggle does not mention witchcraft beliefs or guerrilla internal struggles. They stick to hard sciences and do not allow themselves remarks of

⁴⁶ L. White, "Poisoned Food, Poisoned Uniforms and Anthrax or How Guerrillas Die in War," Osiris 2nd series, vol 19, *Landscape of Exposure: Knowledge and Illness in Modern Environments*, 2004, p220.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p221-33

⁴⁸ J. McGregor, "Containing Violence: Poisoning and Guerrilla Civilians Relations in Memorial of Zimbabwe's Liberation War," in R.S. Leyadesdorff & G. Dawson (eds) *International Relations*, Methnen, London, 1999. PP 131-59

African superstition. These divergent views motivated this researcher to analyse these issues. This literature was valuable for the study as it informed the study about the contradiction between witchcraft and counter-insurgency.

Peter Stiff's book, *See you in November* gives another dimension of how the Rhodesian government fomented conflicts between the guerrillas and civilians. His work points to the fact that unknown to the guerrillas and the civilians, the Rhodesian government actually hired assassins to do their dirty jobs. On the other hand, the civilians pointed fingers at one another, yet the Rhodesian assassins would have been responsible for the killings.⁴⁹ In his memoirs, a Rhodesian assassin explained how he used parathion in poisoning clothes destined for use by the guerrillas. Parathion worked its way into the body through hair follicles. The assassin further disclosed that the Rhodesian security had brought clothing to him several hundreds of pairs of underpants and t-shirts, which he soaked in poison. These were dried, bundled and put into farm stores for anticipated future 'terrorist' targets. Many of these farm stores were raided, the guerrillas took the clothes, wore them and died.⁵⁰ Stiff's work sharpens one's knowledge on the extent to which Rhodesians would go to foment conflicts between rural masses and the guerrilla force. A former Rhodesian Intelligence Agent blames the Selous Scouts, a secret pseudo gang for poisoning guerrillas' clothes. He points that the Selous Scouts purchased large consignments of these denim items, soaked them in that poison in a secret laboratory in their barracks. He explained that the poisons used were two organophosphate pesticides, "anticholinesterase and parathion." When the guerrillas wore the clothing for seven days they experienced fevers, bleeding from the nose and mouth.⁵¹ Issues raised in this literature were considered during fieldwork.

⁴⁹ P. Stiff, *See you in November*, Albertain, South Africa, 1985, p 308-9

⁵⁰ Ibid, p310

⁵¹ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War: Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla Warfare*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1989, p267

The Post-Colonial State and Violence

Post-colonial literature on conflicts and violence is valuable to this study as it helped the researcher in identifying communities with war-time conflicts and violence. Conflicts which were created by the war and which the Zimbabwean policy of reconciliation at independence failed to resolve again spilled over to the post-colonial period. For instance, the report that was written by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in collaboration with the Legal Resources Foundation⁵² helps one to understand how the dissident insurgency as well as *Gukurahundi* atrocities occurred in the 1980s. To that extent, this literature is valuable to my study as it helps in the understanding of conflicts and violence between and among blacks after independence. Post-colonial literature on violence also helps in the understanding of conflicts and gross violence on whites during the post-colonial period. This is because land issues which had been promised the masses by the guerrillas during the war had not been fulfilled. All this frustration manifested itself in the form of post-colonial violence. Ngonidzashe Marongwe's D. Phil thesis is an example of an analysis on post-colonial violence.⁵³

The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum produced a report "Their Words Condemn Them: The Language of Violence, Intolerance and Disposition in Zimbabwe" in which it documents utterances by ZANU-PF political leaders. These statements constitute various types of hate language and the report argues that the virulent language of condemnation of opponents and

⁵²CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace. A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997.

⁵³N. Marongwe, "Rural Women as the Invisible Victims of Militarised Political Violence; The Case of Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe 2000-2008", D. Phil Thesis in History University of Western Cape, 2012.

critics was aimed at inciting violence and vengeful action against its political opponents.⁵⁴ This literature is biased because it gives the impression that only ZANU-PF was and is responsible for and capable of hate speech. The opposition parties too have been good at lashing out hate language. Nonetheless, equipped with information from this research, this study seeks to evaluate the extent to which hate language incited the youth, political activists and war veterans to engage in acts of violence in Zimbabwe. Webner's work also focuses on the effects of violence lashed out by the state on the Ndebele tribe during the *Gukurahundi* era. He stresses that *Gukurahundi* violence and terror not only brought back memories of the most brutal methods used by the Rhodesian forces, but also imposed on the victims even more ruthless and far more devastating threats throughout Matabeleland.⁵⁵ The consequences of symbolic violence were felt far and wide within Matabeleland and Midlands. For instance, the Fifth Brigade (predominantly Shona) referred to the Ndebele speaking communities as 'madzviti' (invaders), implying that they were invaders from South Africa and hence were not indigenous Zimbabweans. During the colonial period Africans were victims of symbolic violence as white Rhodesians undermined cultural practices and treated adult men and women as children and referred to them as 'houseboys' and 'house girls.' This study endeavoured to evaluate the effects of symbolic violence on the people of Bulawayo Metropolitan Province during the period under study. According to Zizek, systematic violence is embodied in economic and political systems.⁵⁶ In other words it is linked to the problems of inequality, exploitation and injustice. Turning to the Zimbabwean situation, during the colonial period, indigenous Africans were victims of systematic violence which deprived them of political and economic power and also compelled them to provide labour to

⁵⁴ ZHR NGO Forum, "Their Words condemn Them: The Language of Violence, Intolerance and Despotism in Zimbabwe," ZHR NGO Forum, Harare, 2003, p8.

⁵⁵ R. Webner, *Smoke from the Barrel of a Gun*, Penguin, London, 2005, p7.

⁵⁶ S.J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, *Do 'Zimbabweans' Exist?*, Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p13.

the white capitalists. During the post-colonial period, ZANU-PF government has perpetrated economic violence against its opponents. For example, CCJPZ in its report “Graveyard Governance” looked on economic violence that was perpetrated by ZANU-PF against the opposition and civil society. According to the report, in Bikita District property such as cattle, goats and food amongst other items was confiscated by ZANU-PF.⁵⁷ This literature is significant as it gives background information on other forms of violence other than political violence which was experienced by ZANU-PF opponents. It motivated the researcher to investigate the systematic violence suffered by *Gukurahundi* victims. The literature also sharpens one’s knowledge about the nature of post-independence violence in Zimbabwe as a whole. The report argues that the confiscation of property, tools and other assets was aimed at undermining the livelihoods of the political opponents.

Sachikonye notes that in post-colonial Zimbabwe workers and students have been targets of political repression by the Mugabe regime because they have been the most vocal critics of the regime. The material basis of the opposition has been related to economic mismanagement, corruption and deteriorating conditions in public services especially health and education in the late 1990s. Regular strikes at workplaces and at universities were symptoms of an underlying crisis.⁵⁸ Considerable violence was used by the state in order to contain student activism. Riot police invaded university campuses and used truncheons, whips and tear gas and other riot equipment.⁵⁹ This study intended to assess the extent to which the state remained sensitive and nervous about students’ criticism of corruption and bad governance.

⁵⁷CCJPZ, “Graveyard Governance,” CCJPZ, Harare, 2008, p9.

⁵⁸ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p24.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p25.

The Zimbabwe Human Rights Forum defined torture as the deliberate infliction of severe pain, mental suffering and degradation upon a person who is in a helpless condition. Torture causes physical injury, sometimes permanent disabling injury and usually leads to drastic long term psychological harm.⁶⁰ The definition informs this study on what to describe or label as torture. According to the report by ZHR NGO Forum, “Are they Accountable?” organized violence is similar to torture and sometimes the two terms are used interchangeably. However, the difference is that organized violence is inflicted by members of any organized grouping while torture is inflicted by a state official or someone acting with the acquiescence of the state to obtain a confession or information for punishment of real or perceived offences or any reason based to discriminate on race, political affiliation or sexual orientation and for intimidation or coercion. Furthermore, the report asserts that between 2001 and 2002, the most commonly recognized forms of torture in Zimbabwe were blunt violence and falanga. Blunt violence involves beatings carried out with sticks, poles, knobkerries, batons and steel tubes. Falanga involves the beatings on soles of the feet.⁶¹

According to the March 2000 report “Organized Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe in 1999,” the use of falanga has been growing in frequency as the more obvious methods of torture became detailed or as public pressure against the use of torture increased.⁶² The same report documented that Bulawayo police shot and killed Misheck Beremauro in July 1999. Beremauro was shot inside a car, handcuffed and left lying in a pool of blood by the side of the road. He later died at United Bulawayo Hospital due to severe bleeding after bullets

⁶⁰ZHR NGO Forum, “Torture by state Agents in Zimbabwe,” ZHR NGO Forum, Harare, 2003, p8

⁶¹ ZHR NGO Forum, “Are they Accountable? Examining alleged Violations and their Violators Pre and Post Presidential Election, March 2002,” ZHR NGO Forum, Harare,p26.

⁶²ZHR NGO Forum, “Organised Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe in 1999,” ZHR NGO Forum Harare, March 2000,p7

shattered his right femur, exposing his blood vessels.⁶³ Also the March 2003 report on torture documents the involvement of state agencies in acts of torture. It describes in detail many cases in which ZRP, CIO and ZNA were allegedly involved in organised torture during 1999 and 2000 as well as torture during 2001 and 2002. According to the report the land invasions on white commercial farms resulted in organised violence and torture.⁶⁴ The report elucidates the periods when organized violence and torture were at their peak. The above reports motivated the researcher to investigate cases of organized violence and torture that occurred in Bulawayo during the post-colonial period.

The report compiled by the Commission for Justice and Peace in collaboration with the Legal Resources Foundation, *Breaking the Silence- Building True Peace*, also documents the use of torture by state agents during the *Gukurahundi* atrocities. Types of torture are also described thereby broadening one's view on the subject. Also, the report illustrates that many forms of torture can be used simultaneously. For example, beatings can be accompanied by sexual torture.⁶⁵ The report informs this study by its rich body of knowledge. This researcher took a step further by investigating the effects of torture on individuals and families. The 2009 ZHR NGO Forum gives another dimension of torture. The report documents cases of sexual assaults and rape meted on women for purposes of demeaning, humiliating and punishing victims for political reasons. Rape has been used to torture, intimidate and repress political opponents. In some cases, rape was committed brutally in the presence of spouses and

⁶³ZHR NGO Forum, "Organised Violence and Torture in Zimbabwe in 1999," ZHR NGO Forum Harare, March 2000,p7.

⁶⁴ Ibid, "Torture by State Agents in Zimbabwe: January 2001 to August 2002," ZHR NGO Forum, Harare, p33-4.

⁶⁵ CCJPZ/LRF, *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands 1980 to 1988*. CCJPZ/LRF, Harare, 1997, p175

children. Those raped for political reasons have been political activists or relatives of male activists.⁶⁶ This report is relevant to my study as it sharpens one's knowledge on gender violence and torture as the motives behind some acts perpetrated by actors. My study investigated if there were cases of sexual torture and rape in Matabeleland and how the victims managed to pick up the pieces of their lives after such experiences.

For Arendt, violence is to be understood as an instrument or means of power politics. She argues that “politically it is insufficient to say that power and violence are not the same. Power and violence are opposite, where the one rules absolutely the other is absent. Violence appears where power is in jeopardy but to its own course it ends in power disappearance”.⁶⁷ Arendt's work is relevant to this study as it sharpens one's understanding of violence by bringing out the nexus between violence and or how the quest for power or desire to retain it leads to violence in Zimbabwe. Arendt understanding of violence as an instrument of power game is in line with various scholars' conception of politics, power and violence. Mills argues that “all politics is a struggle for power, and the ultimate power is violence.”⁶⁸ Mills' conception of violence and power broadens one's understanding of violence by pointing that the quest for political power leads to violence. With that idea in mind, my study tried to establish the extent to which the violence that occurred in Zimbabwe after the 29 March 2008 election was a result of the fact that ZANU-PF and President Mugabe felt power slipping from their hands. There was so much violence that the opposition candidate Morgan Tsvangirai boycotted the June 2008 presidential re-run election. In Max Weber's view, the state is a “rule of men over men based on the legitimate which is allegedly legitimate

⁶⁶ZRH NGO Forum, “Report on Torture,” 2009, p7

⁶⁷ S.J Ndlovu- Gatsheni, *Do Zimbabweans' Exist?* Peter Lang, Oxford 2009, p195

⁶⁸ C.W Mills, *The Power Elite*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1956, p27

violence.”⁶⁹ For Carl von Clausewitz, “War is the continuation of politics by other means.”⁷⁰ All these works are relevant to this study as they deepen one’s understanding of violence. In essence, their conceptualisation of violence and its causes helped me to analyse and comprehend the phenomenon of violence in Zimbabwe.

Black-on-Black Violence

In order to make sense of post-colonial violence in Africa, Mamdani offered critical ideas in the book *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*.

He uses the conceptual tools of political and cultural identities to understand and make sense of post-colonial violence. In his opinion, colonialism reified racial and ethnic differences that are today generating settler-native violence as well as black-on-black violence, as common citizenship is failing to take root in many post-colonial African states. Colonialism politicized cultural differences turning them into a basis of discrimination.⁷¹ In addition, Mamdani argues that the political legacy of colonialism affected African nationalism depriving it of the stamina to depoliticize cultural differences. Furthermore, Mamdani argues that post-colonial governments satisfied themselves with the de-racialising of civil law without a similar commitment to de-ethnicisation. This, according to Mamdani, is the bone of contention for post-colonial African politics and the recipe for suburbs of violence.⁷² However, Mamdani’s work suffers from generalisations. Nevertheless, the analysis by Mamdani is very useful in understanding identity-based violence. This study benefited from Mamdani’s body of knowledge on the post-colonial violence of black-on-black as it enhanced one’s

⁶⁹ M. Weber, “Authority and Legitimate Violence,” p2@www.boundless.com accessed 18/01/2013

⁷⁰ C. V. Clausewitz, *On War*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1956 p.28

⁷¹ M. Mamdani, “Political Violence and State Formation in Post-Colonial Africa,” *International Dvt Centre Working Paper Services*, October 2007, p.211-13

⁷² *Ibid*, p.213

understanding of post-colonial violence in Zimbabwe by revealing the importance of ethnicity.

Chabal is another scholar who discusses black-on-black violence during the post-colonial period. He asserts that since the state in Africa South of the Sahara, with a few exceptions, most notably Botswana and South Africa, does not properly discharge its nominal responsibilities, there exists a vast socio-political space in which acts of illicit violence occur.⁷³ His other observation is that the most notable development in the decade 1970-80 in Africa has not been the transition towards multi-party democracy but much more disturbingly the willingness of political actors to resort to ever-greater violence. Indeed the move to competitive party systems has frequently contributed to the disturbance and civil strife (as, for instance in Kenya, Cameroon and Cote D'Ivoire - countries with apparently orderly politics). Beyond the cases of electoral disharmony loom much more serious abuses.⁷⁴ Chabal's study is thought-provoking. It prompted this researcher to raise the question of rationality about the extent of violence experienced in Africa today in two ways. First, can such a degree of violence ultimately serve any purpose? Secondly, are the types of particularly vicious conflicts currently witnessed in a number of countries evidence of 'irrational' behaviour or, to put it another way, evidence of the behaviour of irrational people? My fieldwork showed that the purpose of violence perpetrated by political parties (for example, ZANU-PF) is retention of power. Also if a political leader lost popularity, as Mugabe did during the 2000s, he would resort to violence as a means of imposing himself on the electorate which refused to support him.

⁷³ P. Chabal, U. Engel & A. M. Gentili (eds), "Introduction," in *Is Violence Inevitable in Africa?* Leiden, Netherlands, 2005, p7

⁷⁴Ibid,p8

State Violence on Citizens

Though the works of Mamdani and Chabal are helpful in the understanding of identity-based violence, they do not enlighten us on state-sanctioned violence against citizens as in the case of Zimbabwe. This is where Richard Webner's strength of work lies. Webner argues that state-sanctioned violence against citizens is a result of the manifestation of 'quasi-nationalism.' To Webner quasi-nationalism is the dark side of nationalism. In Africa the light side has been that anti-colonial thrust of the liberation struggle. Quasi-nationalism is a movement of ideas and practices which wins its often cruelly violent moments within the 20th century state building. Quasi-nationalism reaches a peak when its protagonists capture the might of the nation-state and bring authorized violence down ruthlessly against marginalized antagonists who are in the nation yet for terrible moments not entirely of it.⁷⁵ Webner's work is essential in understanding of how old scores arising from ancient hostilities can be carried forward to a new era and lead to bursts of violence. Furthermore, his work helps one to understand state violence against citizens.

In the same line with Webner is Sachikonye, whose book also explains what causes the "state to turn on its citizens." In his view the colonial state used violence against nationalist organisations such as the National Democratic Party (NDP) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). Violence was deployed through beatings, use of dogs in controlling gatherings, forceful arrests and shootings.⁷⁶ Similarly the Zimbabwean State has been responsible for most of the violence that has rocked the country through the use of army, police and CIO agents to defend its power. Thus, violence was unleashed on the rural constituencies of Masvingo, Manicaland and Mashonaland where the ruling party could no

⁷⁵ R. Webner, *Smoke from the Barrel of a Gun*, Penguin London, 2005, p92-3

⁷⁶ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens* Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p2

longer appeal and convince the voters.⁷⁷ Sachikonye's analysis on state violence helps one to understand that the government uses violence to coerce people to support it when it has become unpopular with the electorate. The reasons for the unpopularity could be related to economic mismanagement, corruption and deteriorating conditions in public services. In short, the work of Webner and Sachikonye enabled the researcher to evaluate the role of the state in unleashing violence in Zimbabwe during both the colonial and post-colonial period.

Attempting to explain state violence on its citizens, Nzungola- Ntalaja asserts that ideally African nationalist struggles were expected to instil a 'people state' and a 'people's government' in the place of a violent state. He observed that this African aspiration was not achieved as the post-colonial African state regularly used violence to maintain order and social cohesions.⁷⁸ He also noted that the structural constraints within which the post-colonial state emerged made it difficult for it to fulfil the expectations of the peasants and the workers. It is intended to uphold the interest of the classes that dominated the social order. Thus, Nzungola-Ntalaja's analysis seems to argue that the post-colonial state acquired its violent character through this process as well as its proneness to conflict and violence. As such Nzungola-Ntalaja's work helps one to understand state violence as a significant theme of this study.

On his part, Ranger noted that post-colonial violence was a result of the centrism that characterized liberation wars, which were intolerant of pluralism. Commenting on the post-colonial state, Ranger asserts that it is hard for the post-colonial state to escape the legacy of

⁷⁷ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens* Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011,p28

⁷⁸ G. Nzungola-Ntalaja, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Africa: Essays in Contemporary politics*, Zed Books, London, 1987, p74-7

such a war⁷⁹ Ranger's analysis is relevant as it broadens one's view of post-colonial state violence by drawing attention to the fact that the post-colonial state under ZANU-PF government had limited room for plurality of ideas and open criticism for those in leadership.

According to William Bernoit, violence appears not as a single phenomenon but as an expression of a wider range of conflict, crisis or catharsis. He posits that much public violence is part of an assertion of political power, either an attempt to monopolise coercion and control or to break monopoly.⁸⁰ In his opinion, war, police brutality, riots, insurrections, sabotage, faction fights, ethnic violence, public beatings and necklacing maybe extensions of different political context.⁸¹ Thus, Bernoit's analysis asserts that there is a nexus between power and violence. His argument is similar to that of Hannah Arendt who perceives violence as an instrument of the power game.⁸² However, in his search for an understanding of political violence, Bernoit noted that there is no simple and direct link between past and present forms of violence. This study finds the divergent views emerging from Webner and Bernoit crucial for assessing the connection between past and present forms of violence such as colonial and post-colonial violence in Zimbabwe.

Encapsulating how violence has continued from the liberation struggle into present times, a Zimbabwean army sergeant observed that "during the liberation struggle the guerrillas committed as many atrocities as the barbaric force of the Smith regime. During the dissident war in Matabeleland we used to burn down entire villages. Our slogan in Five Brigade was 'Burn all, kill all, loot all.' In Tsholotsho we killed more people than Renamo killed in

⁷⁹ T.O. Ranger, "Introduction" to Volume 2 of *Historical Dimensions of Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2003, p1-2

⁸⁰ W. Bernoit, "On War" [@www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) accessed 10/07/2013

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² S.J. Ndlovu -Gatsheni, *Do 'Zimbabweans' Exist?* Peter Lang, Oxford, 2009, p195

Zimbabwe and Mozambique. My experience of war [...] has taught me that any party involved in a war is as guilty as its rival in the contest.”⁸³ These views are a reminder of the fact that violence in any war is gendered as women tend to be victims of rape.

Timothy Scarnecchia traced the roots of political violence to the emergence of mass nationalism in Zimbabwe. He argues that the mass nationalism in Zimbabwe was intolerant of imaginings of freedom. He saw a particular style of violence developing out of peculiarities of colonial African township life fuelled by the demands of a more radical nationalist politics of the 1960s.⁸⁴ For Scarnecchia urban violence became a tool of creating support by particular African leaders. In essence, this violence emerged concurrently with the violence in rural areas where sabotage was used against colonial state institutions and those African civil servants working for the colonial state.⁸⁵ The gist of his argument is that the phenomenon of violence surfaced simultaneously with the notions of “sell-outs, puppets and stooges” as reactions that were used by nationalists to defend the deployment of violence against particular leaders and their supporters. Violence was justified as part of disciplining sell-outs. It was manifested in the form of petrol - bombing of cars, houses as well as beatings of individuals identified as sell-outs. Thus Scarnecchia’s study helps one to understand the notion of “sell-out puppets” and how these were employed by political leaders to justify the deployment of violence against opponents.

David Kaulemu located the roots of the culture of violence within the belly of the liberation struggle. Through the application of the Mamdani thesis of “*When Victims Become Killers.*” Kaulemu observed that “violence breeds violence and the victims of violence become violent

⁸³*Daily News*, 24 May 1999

⁸⁴ T. Scarnecchia, *The Urban Roots of Democracy and Political Violence in Zimbabwe*, University of Rochester Press, New York, 2008, p80

⁸⁵*Ibid.*

themselves [...] The methods of violence developed during the war of liberation have spread through our society. It has become part of our social and political language⁸⁶. So Kaulemu's work is important in the tracing of root causes of the culture of violence which has prevailed in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe.

Electoral Violence

Zimbabwe has been rocked by electoral conflicts which in most cases degenerated into violence, especially from 2000 to the present. Various constituencies have been hotly contested between the ruling Party ZANU-PF and the MDC. Dennis Kadina asserts that causes of electoral conflicts are numerous. Some of the factors include competition over scarce resources, identity structural imbalances, differing goals and unequal access to information's inter-personal relations and weak administration.⁸⁷ So his work broadens one's understanding of electoral conflicts and violence in Zimbabwe during the period under study. According to Yeaboa, access to political power has been one factor that has contributed to electoral violence in Zimbabwe. He asserts that electoral conflict arises from the near exclusion dependence of the ruling elites on state power and access and control which it grants to economic wealth and social status. He noted that as poverty increases, exclusion and marginalization also increase in its wake. When this happens, opposition formation finds fertile grounds for organizing and mobilising, hence the resultant violent situation.⁸⁸ As Yeaboa puts it, the electoral process becomes a weapon in the hands of the incumbent regime to hang on to power as well as in the hands of the opposition elite and movement to displace

⁸⁶ D. Kaulemu, "The Culture of Party Politics and the Concept of the State," in D. Harold-Banny (ed), *Zimbabwe The Past is the Future*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2004, p81

⁸⁷ D. Kadina, "Kadina's Victory and US Policy on the Arab-Israeli Conflict",

[@www.heritage.org](http://www.heritage.org). accessed 14/07/2013

⁸⁸ P. Yeaboa, "Violence at Work," p1 [@www.safework.sa.gov.au](http://www.safework.sa.gov.au) accessed 15/05/2013

the incumbent regime and ascend to power. In Zimbabwe that assertion has proved true as the electoral conflict between ZANU-PF and MDC is evidence of the former's attempt to hang onto power while the latter has tried to dislodge the incumbent regime from power.

Analysing the 29 March 2008 election results, Masunungure noted that the MDC won seats in all ten provinces and had a clean sweep in Bulawayo. ZANU-PF's share of the House of Assembly translated to 47% of the 210 seats while the MDC formations captured 52% of the seats.⁸⁹ The April to June 2008 election interregnum was characterized by intense systematic violence and intimidation perpetrated by ZANU-PF that Morgan Tsvangirai withdrew from the presidential run-off.⁹⁰ Masunungure further observed that the survival tactics of the threatened regimes, such as manipulation of democratic processes, exclusionist policies and dismissive ethnic appeals combined with frequent contestations of election results by opposition parties becomes central in understanding the Zimbabwean situation. Thus, Masunungure's analysis helped one to understand the conflicts and violence surrounding elections.

From the point of view of Makumbe and Compagnon, inter-party politics explain electoral violence. They observed that inter and intra party violence has dominated Zimbabwean politics before and after independence. At independence, ZANU-PF remained at the helm of Zimbabwean politics through some unscrupulous means that included electoral fraud which it has continued to use, hence ensuring confrontation with the emergence of rather powerful opposition parties.⁹¹ Again the work of Makumbe and Compagnon reveals the causes and triggers of election conflicts. The issues they raised in their work will help one in

⁸⁹ E. Masunungure, *Defying the Winds of Change*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p76.

⁹⁰ Ibid, p79

⁹¹ J. Makumbe and D. Compagnon, *Behind the Smoke-Screen: The Politics of Zimbabwe's 1995 General Elections*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p168

understanding that inter-party politics have contributed to the outburst of conflict and violence in Zimbabwe during election times.

Ruhanya also examines the contribution of inter and intra party politics in fomenting electoral conflicts. He argues that it is not only ZANU-PF which is involved in cases of electoral violence but the opposition as well. He observed that MDC has adopted this worrisome thread of violence and this has been going on for some time.⁹²

The Catholic Commission of Justice and Peace (CCJP) has provided details of colonial state and post-independence state of Zimbabwe brutality and violence in election related violence. In its 2000 parliamentary Election Report, CCJP asserts that it has to be recognized that the scale of intimidation, violence and killings during 2000 elections was nowhere near that of independence elections. The report further states that these in turn, following seven years of appalling civil war, showed a de-escalation of violence.⁹³ Thus, the report by CCJP deepens one's knowledge about elections by bringing to light that not all elections are violent.

Commenting on the 2005 elections the CCJP in another report argued that elections were marked with a significant reduction in incidents of politically motivated violence and torture. In addition, the report also noted that there was absence of war veterans and youth to bolster the campaign of ZANU-PF as well as the absence of 'no-go- areas' in terms of campaigning of the opposition.⁹⁴ However, the report gives another dimension which characterised the 2005 elections. It argues that the violence was silent and manifested itself in the form of harassment and intimidation - a more subtle form of violence of significance was the partisan

⁹² P. Ruhanya, *The Zimbabwe Independent*, "MDC's Worrisome Thread of Violence," April 15-20, 2011, p10.

⁹³ CCJP Report on the 2000 Parliamentary Elections

⁹⁴ CCJP Report on the 2005 Parliamentary Elections, p1

role in the rural areas of the traditional leaders, village heads and chiefs (who were paid by the state) to bolster support for ZANU-PF party. Voters were shepherded by local leaders and were told whom to vote for.⁹⁵

Again, reporting on the 2008 elections, the CCJP concluded that the playing field for the 29 March elections was skewed in favour of ZANU-PF. Nevertheless, the people of Zimbabwe were afforded a reasonable opportunity to make their voice heard and to express their opinion. To this extent, the report argues that the 29 March harmonized elections were relatively free but lacking in the basic tenets of fairness.⁹⁶ The report is important as it shows the serious procedural flaws and institutional weaknesses that need to be addressed if future Zimbabwean elections are to be free and fair and yield a result that is not disputable by the contesting parties and candidates. Concerning the 2008 June presidential run-off election, CCJP points out that the elections lost their political character and assumed a military flavour. The April to June interval was more of a military operation than an election campaign. In addition, the report argues that the elections failed to meet the minimum conditions for an election.⁹⁷ Violence unleashed on the people was intense. It manifested in four major ways; intimidation, beatings, killings and arson. In addition, all forms of threats were used from verbal to physical threats. In the rural areas and former commercial farming areas base camps were established for the purpose of terrorizing people to vote for ZANU-PF. It is in this context that despicable atrocities were committed by members of both contesting parties, ZANU-PF

⁹⁵CCJP Report on the 2005 Parliamentary Elections, p2

⁹⁶ CCJP, “How Can a Ball Point Pen Fight with a Gun?” Report on 2008 Presidential elections, p2

⁹⁷ Ibid

and MDC.⁹⁸ The report brings to light the violence which characterised the June 2008 presidential elections. It also gives a balanced analysis of the atrocities committed by both parties in the battle to win the vote. The CCJP report on 2008 elections motivated the researcher to investigate if there was violence related to these elections in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province.

Concerning Bikita District, the report posits that “camps were established where people were beaten, fined in the form of chicken collected. These fines were used as food for the militia at the bases. The torture resulted in death, for example, Simbarashe Taru, a teacher at Zaka Secondary School was beaten and left to die.”⁹⁹ The report also revealed that in Zaka area both ZANU-PF and MDC were burning each other’s homes. Thus, the report is valuable to this study as it enlightens the researcher on the political landscape prevailing in Bikita prior to the 2008 June presidential election. Also by giving names of people affected as well as names of places where violence was intense, the report provided the researcher with a starting point, thus shaping and giving this study direction. Commenting on violence surrounding the 2008 June presidential run-off, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) dedicates only a sentence to the issue of violence. ZEC states that “According to the police, save for some parts of Matabeleland Central and Mashonaland East Province, where some incidents of inter-party violence were reported, the rest of the country was generally peaceful.”¹⁰⁰ The report shows how issues of violence are perceived by different actors. By stating that, “according to the police,” ZEC is disassociating itself from any opinion whether violence took place at all or not. Comparing the CCJP report on elections with that of ZEC, there is a

⁹⁸ CCJP, “How Can a Ball Point Pen Fight with a Gun?” Report on 2008 Presidential elections, p3

⁹⁹Ibid, p4

¹⁰⁰ ZEC, “Report on the 2008 General Election,” ZEC , P33

difference in the views offered by the two reports. This study finds these divergent views concerning electoral violence in Zimbabwe during the 2008 Presidential run-off crucial for the actual course of events.

Other civil society organisations like the Zimbabwe Association of Doctors for Human Rights (ZADHR), Solidarity Peace Trust, Amani Trust and Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum have documented in detail post-election violence. In “Punishing Dissent, Silencing Citizens - The Zimbabwean Elections 2008,” Solidarity Peace Trust revealed that in 2008 violence was pre-planned by members of the army, police, CIO and prison services at a joint meeting in Nkayi on 4th April 2008. A brigadier at the meeting vowed, “If we lose through the ballot, we will go back to the bush.”¹⁰¹ This statement shows that violence is not always spontaneous, but it can be planned. The report also shows the fact that violence is not only experienced before and during elections, but it can occur even after elections. This study investigated if there was manifestation of planned post-election violence in Bulawayo. Concerning the June 2008 Presidential run-off elections, ZADHR observed “that current patten of organised torture and violence being perpetrated by the state agents in rural areas of Zimbabwe is similar to that documented prior to the 2002 elections. However, the current violence is dramatically more intense and unrestrained. The level of brutality and callousness exhibited by the perpetrators is unprecedented.”¹⁰² This study analysed patterns of organized violence particularly focusing on Bulawayo.

¹⁰¹ Solidarity Peace Trust, “Punishing Dissent, Silencing Citizens: The Zimbabwean Elections, 2008,” Solidarity Peace Trust, Harare, 2008, p4

¹⁰²ZADHR , “Organised Torture and Violence in Harare” ZADHR, Harare, 2008, p5

Opposition and Violence

Besides domestic factors being responsible for causing and triggering conflicts towards or during elections, this study also examines contemporary international factors at play in causing electoral conflicts in Zimbabwe. According to Chigora and Guzura, Zimbabwe in the 21st century has received widespread condemnation from the international community, especially the West. Chigora and Guzura argue that sanctions which were imposed on the country had an overall effect of increasing poverty levels at the same time leading to the unpopularity of ZANU-PF amongst the general populace, hence its disastrous election in March 2008 where it had to use undemocratic campaigning strategies to regain power. This exacerbated the conflict in the elections.¹⁰³ So Chigora and Guzura argue that the international community also contributed to the fomenting of electoral conflicts in Zimbabwe through the imposition of sanctions which had the net effect of increasing poverty levels again in turn fuelling the general populace's anger towards ZANU-PF. Chigora and Guzura's analysis does not sound convincing. Nevertheless, it prompted the researcher to examine why and how ZANU-PF lost the 29 March 2008 elections to the MDC formations.

Whilst Makumbe and Compagnon as well as Chigora and Guzura looked at how external factors contributed to electoral conflicts, they did not examine actors that were central in electoral conflict occurrence and resolution. This study sought to expose actors that were central in electoral conflict occurrence and resolution in Zimbabwe. This study examines the role played by the Church, South Africa, African Union and Southern African Development Community in ending electoral conflicts between ZANU-PF and the MDC formations.

¹⁰³ P. Chigora and T. Guzura, "Economic Sanctions as a Tool in International Relations," [@www.academia.edu](http://www.academia.edu) accessed 12/05/2013

James Muzondidya and Brian Raftopoulos are among scholars who have written about post-independence Zimbabwe politics. They have traced the increasingly repressive nature of ZANU-PF after independence, whether it was dealing with the official opposition, striking workers or civil society. Muzondidya notes that the government relied heavily on coercive tactics to elicit civilian compliance. He asserts that ZANU-PF approached elections as ‘battles’ and viewed its political opponents as enemies to be annihilated rather than as political competitors. Its electoral dominance was partly achieved through its *Gukurahundi* strategy which entailed ‘an undistinguished, intolerant, communalist and violent policy towards the opposition’¹⁰⁴ZANU-PF was widely accused of political intimidation and its supporters also perpetuated widespread violence against the opposition in 1985 and 1990 elections. Besides deploying its violent youth and women’s wings to command support during elections, the party marshalled state resources and institutions such as the army, police, intelligence service, and public radio and television to ensure electoral hegemony.¹⁰⁵ My study examines how the opposition reacted to such lack of tolerance for political diversity and dissent by ZANU-PF. For instance, before withdrawing from the June 2008 Presidential elections Tsvangirai complained about the violence and intimidation perpetrated on his supporters by ZANU-PF which heavily made use of militarized institutions to coerce support from the electorate.

Furthermore, Muzondidya observes that the violent and brutal methods used by the state to suppress the activities of a few armed political rebels (dissidents) during the Matabeleland crisis were not only unwarranted but disproportionate to the security threat posed. The Matabeleland crisis presented the government with the opportunity to crush its only viable

¹⁰⁴ J. Muzondidya, “From Buoyancy to Crisis, 1980-1997,” in Raftopoulos B and Mlambo A.S(eds)*Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver, Press, Harare, 2009, p177

¹⁰⁵Ibid

opponents, PF-ZAPU. The deployment of both the army and a special militia unit, the Fifth Brigade, in an operation known as *Gukurahundi* to solve a political problem that could have been solved through political means was meant to achieve that. The violence and killings of this period ended only in 1987 after the signing of the Unity Accord between ZANU and ZAPU and the emerging of the two parties into ZANU-PF. While it ended the atrocities in Matabeleland, this political merger effectively emasculated the opposition.¹⁰⁶ However, this study established that ZANU-PF did not manage to establish a political hegemony as there continued to be strong voices of dissent throughout the 1990s, as evidenced by the emergence of another opposition party, the MDC in 1999 - the party has a lot of supporters in Matabeleland.

Though the Matabeleland crisis originated as a political conflict between two nationalist parties with contrasting visions, it soon assumed ethnic and regional dimensions. In the eyes of the Ndebele public what was portrayed as a mission to stamp out dissidents became an anti-Ndebele campaign that deliberately identified Joshua Nkomo, PF-ZAPU, ex-ZPRA combatants and every Ndebele speaking person with the political rebels.¹⁰⁷ Paradoxically, while Zimbabwe was experiencing this turmoil, it was still able to build a positive reputation externally. However, from the late 1980s onwards Zimbabwe's positive record abroad could no longer mask the growing social problems and contradictions at home. These problems intensified after 1990, following the country's adoption of an IMF/World Bank economic structural programme. The deregulation of prices and removal of subsidies on basic consumer goods under ESAP resulted in severe hardships of workers, the unemployed and the poor

¹⁰⁶ J. Muzondidya, "From Buoyancy to crisis, 1980-1997," in B. Raftopoulos and AS. Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p185

¹⁰⁷Ibid

who struggled to afford basic goods as prices skyrocketed and real wages declined.¹⁰⁸ Further, structural adjustment increased pressure on rural land and natural resources as retrenched workers sent their families to their rural homes or went with them.

During the 1990s, workers and the unemployed moved towards mass action and reacted to the impoverishing effects of ESAP with strike action. The ZCTU's capacity to mobilise workers during this period was strengthened by growing frustration with the slump in the economy and the government's unbudgeted gratuity payments to war veterans in November 1977. During this period, civil society groups questioned the state's commitment to uprooting poverty and criticized its growing intolerance of dissent. As protest increased, government repression intensified. Where it failed to halt strikes and demonstrations, the state increasingly deployed the police and army to use brutal force. This study revealed that the hard times experienced by the masses as well as the repression by the government resulted in the populace's increased discontent with the government.

Brian Raftopoulos also analyses the Zimbabwe crisis of the late 1990s to 2008. His observation is that a key aspect of the crisis was the rapid decline of the economy, characterized by steep declines in industrial and agricultural productivity, historic levels of hyperinflation, the informalisation of labour, the dollarization of economic transactions, displacements and a critical erosion of livelihoods. Moreover, the cost of involvement in the DRC added to the failure of structural adjustment programme by the end of the 1990s.¹⁰⁹ Consequently, ZANU-PF retreated into repression, isolation and a strategy aimed at the

¹⁰⁸. Muzondidya, "From Buoyancy to crisis, 1980-1997," in B. Raftopoulos and AS. Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p185

¹⁰⁹ B. Raftopoulos, "The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008," in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo, (eds) *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p203

support of economic elite close to the ruling party using the state to eliminate barriers to its expansion.

As the economic crisis deepened at the end of the 1980s workers and their unions increasingly demonstrated their opposition to state policies. In January 1998, food riots erupted in the capital city and smaller towns such as Beitbridge, Chegutu and Chinhoyi in response to the steep rise in the cost of mealie-meal.¹¹⁰ The state responded brutally as ten people were killed and hundreds arrested and assaulted by the security forces. The civilians retaliated by forming a coalition of workers, students, intellectuals, human rights organisations and women's groups which came to be known as the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA). Subsequent years after the mid-1990s saw the rise of strong social movement in the field of labour, constitutionalism and democratization, culminating in the emergence of the most successful opposition party in post-colonial Zimbabwe, the MDC.¹¹¹ Consequently, as observed by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, Mugabe's government increased its control over the law, the media and security forces. The government also turned to the war veterans to curb opposition from inside and outside the party.

After the January 1998 food riots the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) continued to pressurize the state over the removal of sales tax, development levy and price increases that had been imposed in late 1997, as well as the need for a properly constituted consultative body on economic policy, first suggested by the ZCTU in its 1996 document,

¹¹⁰. Muzondidya, "From Buoyancy to crisis, 1980-1997," in B. Raftopoulos and AS. Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p185

¹¹¹ B. Raftopoulos, "The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008," in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo, (eds) *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p204

“Beyond ESAP.”¹¹² The labour movement was becoming more aware of its leading role in the struggle for democracy in Zimbabwe. In April 1998 the ZCTU Secretary-General, Morgan Tsvangirai, called for debate whether ‘emphasis should be put on collective bargaining or national issues and how best this could be done without losing focus on either issue.’ Thus, though the ZCTU attempted to engage the state through the latter’s National Economic Consultative Forum, it maintained an emphasis on mass actions, notably with the organisation of three stay-aways in 1998, one in March and two in November.¹¹³ This study discovered that as the government responded by imposing heavy penalties on trade unions and employers who facilitated strike, stay-aways and other forms of unlawful collective action, the labour movement was prompted to get more involved in the country’s politics.

The process of carrying out the reform process, though strongly debated in NCA, was a major part of the demand of the civil movement. It was around issues of both the process, the proposal composition of the government commission and its draft constitution that the NCA and the MDC received support from white farmers. In the face of growing threats on their land and the breakdown of their previous consultative arrangements with ZANU-PF, the white farmers decided in 1999 to engage with the opposition political developments. As a result of the broad coalition of interests that had coalesced around the NCA and MDC the government lost the 2000 referendum on its proposed constitution in which 54% of the citizens cast a “NO” Vote.¹¹⁴ The rejection of the government’s constitution draft marked the first major political defeat for the ruling party against a political and civic opposition that made a national impression in a very short time.

¹¹²Raftopoulos, “The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008,” in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo, (eds) *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p203

¹¹³Ibid, p204

¹¹⁴Ibid,p211

In response to the referendum defeat, a series of land occupations ensued a few weeks later that readily transformed the political and economic landscape of the country. Feeling aggrieved at the voting response of the population and drawing on a losing post-colonial relationship of collaboration and conflict between the state and the war veterans, the latter embarked on a violent process of land occupations which would come to be known as the Fast Track Land Reform (FTLR) and resettlement programme.¹¹⁵ While there were continuities in terms of long-standing grievances on the land question, and while the leadership of the war veterans was prominent, the organizational and coercive support provided by the state were crucial distinguishing features of the post-2000 land occupations. The study established that due to the violent land invasions, relations between Mugabe's government and the West became more strained than before. Raftopoulos also analyses the violence associated with the government's Operation *Murambatsvina* (Clear out the filth) of May 2005, a massive onslaught on the informal sector carried out as a militarized urban 'clean-up.' Operation *Murambatsvina* was based on an assumption that those pushed out of the urban areas could 'return' to homes in rural areas, but by 2001 half of them were urban-born and did not have a rural home to return to.¹¹⁶ Through interviews this study confirmed the observation made by various human right NGOs that the operation exacerbated the impoverishment of the urban populace.

The March 2008 harmonised parliamentary, local government and presidential elections which took place in the context of the SADC mediation are also examined by Raftopoulos. He notes that though there was relatively little violence during the election after a month's delay of the results, it became clear that for the first time in its 28 years in government

¹¹⁵Raftopoulos, "The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008," in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo, (eds) *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p203

¹¹⁶Ibid, p221

ZANU-PF lost its parliamentary majority, while the presidential vote failed to deliver a decisive winner with a '50% plus one' majority, thus requiring a run-off election.¹¹⁷ During the April to June 2008 election interval ZANU-PF embarked on a brutal campaign of violence, intimidation and beating code-named 'Operation *Makavhoterapapi*' (operation who did you vote for?) both in rural and urban areas.¹¹⁸ ZANU-PF was punishing the electorate for its loss in the March election while at the same time warning against the report of such a vote, that MDC candidate was compelled to withdraw from the run-off five days before the election date.

The period between July and December was matched by further SADC attempts to bring finality to the mediation efforts, forcing both ZANU-PF and MDC to have limited options outside the mediation process. The political settlement that was signed by the MDC formations and ZANU-PF under the SADC mediation on 11 September 2008, eventually led the parties to agree on the sharing of power which resulted in an inclusive government in January 2009.¹¹⁹ Though the civic movement seemed unconvinced by the settlement, this study established that the populace generally found the compromise between the opposing parties acceptable.

The Zimbabwe Republic Police reports of 2007 argue that opposition parties are responsible for the violence that has rocked the country. In their report "Opposition forces in Zimbabwe a Trail of Violence," the police allege that opposition parties, civic organisations together with the aid of foreign governments have grouped up for the purpose of violently overthrowing the

¹¹⁷Raftopoulos, "The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008," in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo, (eds) *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p 212

¹¹⁸ E.V. Masunungure (ed), *Defying The Winds of Change Zimbabwe's 2008 Election*, Weaver, press, Harare, 2009, p87

¹¹⁹ B. Raftopoulos, "The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008," in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo, (eds) *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p230

government of President Robert Mugabe.¹²⁰ While most accounts on political violence tend to lump civil society organisations and opposition parties as victims of state agencies and ZANU-PF, this report shows that opposition parties, consciously or unconsciously have adopted violence as a tool to contest for power and other resources. However, my fieldwork did not confirm that civic organisations fuel political violence. The ZHR NGO Forum 2007 report, “At Best a Falsehood, at Worst a Lie” argues that reports by ZRP are ‘confessions’ and provides further evidence that the government and ZRP act in concert to suppress dissident and opposition views in Zimbabwe. The report holds the ZRP responsible for the violence that has rocked the country. This study found these divergent opinions crucial for the assessment of the instigators and fuellers of violence in Zimbabwe.

Youth and Violence

According to the CCJP and LRF, Zimbabwe’s general election held in July 1985 was accompanied by widespread intimidation of the opposition candidates and their supporters starting in November 1984 and continuing well after the elections in 1985. Much of the intimidation was at the hands of the ZANU-PF Youth Brigades, who were a party organized mob of young men and women, able to bully and destroy with virtual impunity. The violence and intimidation included mob beatings, property burnings and murders.¹²¹ Modelled on the Chinese Red Guard, the youth coerced people into buying ZANU-PF cards, forced people onto buses to attend ZANU-PF rallies and beat anyone (both men and women) who stood in their way. The ZANU-PF youth were identified by their uniforms of khaki trousers, bright red berets and green shirts.¹²² This study established that to some extent the violence

¹²⁰ ZRP, “Opposition forces in Zimbabwe a Trail of Violence,” ZRP, 2007, p2

¹²¹ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p62

¹²² Ibid

succeeded in forcing people to buy ZANU-PF cards but those who did so only complied in order to safeguard their lives.

Lingren also discussed ZANU-PF Youth's role in the violence associated with the 2002 presidential election. He asserts that the youth toured opposition strongholds, intimidating and beating opposition supporters. The youth were referred to as 'the green bombers' because they wore green uniforms and like greenflies destroyed everything in their way.¹²³ This study confirmed that the youth played a prominent part in perpetrating violence. Also the youth mainly consisted of unemployed young men and women who hoped to get some material gain after perpetrating violence against opposition members and their supporters.

In "National Youth Service Training - Shaping Youth in a Truly Zimbabwean Manner," Solidarity Peace Trust highlights the central role of youth on the violence that rocked the country. The youth have featured prominently as stone throwers, arsonist, petrol bomb users, torturers and rapists. The report argues that for youth, pledges of material benefits such as jobs, money, food and alcohol, promises of recognition in society or in the party as well as ethnic solidarity acts as baits for recruitment and participation in violence.¹²⁴ My fieldwork confirmed the above observation.

Masunungure's work, *Defying the Winds of Change* explains how ZANU-PF youth and War Veterans transformed the ZANU method of mobilization of the 'pungwe' into the post-independence instrument making out arbitrary punishments to those who were perceived as enemies of the party and state.¹²⁵ The 'pungwe' was employed to generate fear and trauma in

¹²³ B. Lingren, "The 'green bombers' of Salisbury Elections and political violence in Zimbabwe" *Anthropology Today*, Vol 19, No2, April 2008, p6

¹²⁴ Solidarity Peace Trust, "Nation Youth Service Training Shaping Youth in Truly Zimbabwean Manner," Solidarity Peace Trust, Harare, 2004, p2

¹²⁵ E. Masunungure, *Defying the Winds of Change*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p40

rural communities. Masunungure's work helps one to understand the prominent part played by youth in perpetrating political violence in the country.

Media on Violence

Press releases on issues of violence and conflict in Zimbabwe are vital to this study as they serve as testimony that indeed the country is and has been a hot bed of conflicts and violence, hence justifying the need for investigation into factors which cause and fund conflicts and violence. However, caution should be taken when dealing with press releases as they tend to be biased. Nevertheless, they can be used as historical sources to be authenticated by interviews and secondary sources.

The *Herald* reported on June 13, 2008 on politically motivated violence in the murder of a war veteran, Cde Mabiko Mudzingwa by 17 suspected MDC- T activists. This happened in Dumbi village in Chief Muzungunye's area in Bikita district.¹²⁶ This literature motivated the researcher to investigate if similar atrocities occurred in Bulawayo prior to the 2008 June presidential run-off. The same paper reported the death of Felix Musara who was brutally murdered on 19 June 2008 in Zaka by 20 suspected MDC-T youth. On his burial, Dzikamai Mavhaire vowed that ZANU-PF would not tolerate such acts of barbarism by the opposition and warned that the state will move in quickly to end this madness.¹²⁷ The statement by Dzikamai Mavhaire shows how violence begets violence, thereby deepening the researcher's understanding of violence. MDC-T youth provoked ZANU-PF violence, which gave rise to more violence. In the process the cycle of violence escalated. So this study sought to establish the causes of such intense conflicts and violence between and among Africans.

¹²⁶ The *Herald*, 13 June 2008

¹²⁷Ibid

On 8th June 2008, The *Standard* reported, “A Bloody Night at Jerera Growth Point” during the Presidential run-off elections. In this incident ZANU-PF is suspected to be the perpetrator. The paper stated that men brandishing AK-47 rifles were said to have pounded MDC offices in the early hours of Wednesday morning and set offices ablaze, killing two people. The two were burnt beyond recognition, while three managed to escape. The three were later taken to Musiso Hospital for treatment. The names of the deceased were given as Krison Mbano from Mujaja in Ward 18 in Zaka and Washington Nyangwa of Mbuyamasva village in Ward 9.¹²⁸ The report motivated me to investigate if similar atrocities occurred in Bulawayo during the April to June 2008 interval.

Press releases on conflict depending on who is reporting and for who need to be handled cautiously. A good example is the report by the Independent on the violence in Zaka on 6th June 2008. The paper reports that MDC Zaka Central MP-elect, Harrison Mudzuri said that MDC activists were attacked by a militia known as ‘*vakomana vehit squad*’ (the hit squad boys) which had been terrorizing opposition supporters at Jerera Growth Point since 29 March elections.¹²⁹ Reporting on the same issue, the Herald stated that ZANU-PF Provincial Chairperson for the presidential run-off team, Kudakwashe Dzoro, deemed his party was not responsible for the attacks. “Our party does not know who these people are, in fact they do not in any way associate with us. We are campaigning freely in a non-violent manner and we are appealing for people’s support without using violence”.¹³⁰ To that extent, this study finds these conflicting and divergent views from newspapers crucial for assessment of why in many instances leaders protect their followers after they have committed a crime.

¹²⁸ The *Standard*, 8 June 2008

¹²⁹ The *Independent*, 6 June 2008

¹³⁰ The *Herald*, 8 June 2008

Divergent views emerging from the newspapers are crucial for the study as they instil in the researcher the desire to find out what actually transpired through interviews. On 14th of August 2010 *The Herald* reported, “Political Violence Claims Dismissed.” It reported that three-member provincial JOMIC team comprising of ZANU-PF and MDC-T members visited Bikita and found the claims of political violence and intimidation were unfounded. A member of the team reported that, “According to the investigation we carried out we established that the person who is alleged to have been tortured by ZANU PF supporters in Marozwa area openly admitted that the incident was linked to an adultery case. So some parties take a civil case, like that of adultery, and link it with politics.”¹³¹

This literature is an eye-opener to the fact that conflicts are complex and as such there are many dimensions to conflicts and violence. One should also note the polarized atmosphere in Zimbabwe, especially from 2000 onwards, had an effect on the media. State controlled media such as the *Herald* and the *Chronicle* marginalized dissenting voices. Also, repressive legislation such as POSA and AIPPA (passed in 2002) was meant not only to restrict the activities of the opposition and civic forces in the public sphere but also to control the independent press.

The Question of Conflict Resolution

Conflicts can be experienced at different levels. They can be at personal level, socially interpersonal, intra-institutional for example within a family, intergenerational and intra-gender, inter states between rulers and the ruled and between rich and the poor. As such it is necessary to look at literature on conflict resolution. The Literature enlightens one on a wide range of policy instruments and contextual resources available in pursuit of sustainable peace

¹³¹The *Herald*, 14 August, 2010

in post-conflict societies. This study examined methods and techniques used to heal those who were violated in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. The Government of National Unity (GNU) forged in February 2009 between ZANU-PF and MDC formations serves as an example of conflict resolution between opponents though the government remained shaky. The GNU used the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) and Organ of National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (OHNRI) in trying to promote national healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe.

Bishop Desmond Tutu, in his book *No Future without Forgiveness*, argues that Western Justice does not fit with traditional African jurisprudence. It is very impersonal. He asserts that “the African view of justice is aimed at healing of breaches, redressing of imbalances and the restoration of broken relationships. This kind of justice seeks to rehabilitate both the victim and the perpetrator who should be given opportunity to be integrated into the community he or she has injured by his or her offence.”¹³² In the Zimbabwean context one would say the ‘traditional’ Shona practices of ‘*kuripa ngozi*’ is a transitional justice mechanism that would help to stamp out violence and impunity that have scarred Zimbabwe especially in the post-colonial period. The practice would help promote the healing of wounds of those who were victims of political violence. In the case of Western Justice one is tried in court for the crime he/she committed and sentenced to imprisonment. Perhaps merging the African system of justice with western justice would be an ideal method of solving cases in post-colonial Africa.

Bert Ingelaere’s work focuses on the ‘Gacaca’ courts in Rwanda and how traditional disputes settlement mechanisms were used to settle conflicts. The word ‘gacaca’ is derived from the

¹³² D. Tutu, *No Future Without Forgiveness*, William Collins, London, 1999, p511

word “*umgaca*” a *kinyarwanda* word referring to a plant that is so soft to sit on that people preferred to gather on it. The aim of these gatherings was the restoration of social harmony and to some extent the establishment of the truth about what happened, the punishment of the perpetrator, or even compensation through a gift. Though the later elements could be part of the resolution, they were subsidiary to the return of harmony between the lineages and the purification of the social order.¹³³ This literature is very informative on traditional disputes settlement mechanisms. It prepared the researcher on how to interview people involved in resolving political conflicts in Zimbabwe as well as promoting peace, such as members of the current National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC).

In their article “Restorative Justice and the Role of Magamba in Post War in Gorongosa Central Mozambique,” Lgcefa and Lambranca address the strategies for restorative justice at community level that developed in the aftermath of the 1976-92 civil war in Mozambique. They argue that the peace agreement signed in Rome, Italy, on 4 October 1992 brought immense relief to the war victims but failed to develop any specific policy to deal with the abuses and crimes that had been perpetrated during the war.¹³⁴ Despite the official neglect, the war survivors of Gorongosa community have neither resorted to violent revenge as was the case of post-apartheid South Africa nor did the Gorongosa populace give into the official directives which urged survivors to forgive and forget. Instead, Gorongosa community adopted their traditional or local mechanisms to create healing and attain justice and reconciliation in the aftermath of the conflicts.¹³⁵ This literature shows that through the emergence of the *magamba* spirits social spaces were created in which the grisly past is rescued from silence and individual families are compelled to come together to address the

¹³³B. Ingalaere, *Gacaca in Rwanda*, McMillan, London, 1995, p10

¹³⁴ C. Lgcefa and D. Lambranca, “Restorative Justice and the Role of Magamba in Post War in Gorongosa Central Mozambique”p2 @restorativejustice.org.j-library accessed 10/11/2013

¹³⁵ Ibid, p3

legacies of violence. In this regard, the *magamba* spirits worked socio-cultural forms of justice and reconciliation in the aftermath of a horrific past which allows war torn communities to contain violence, restart social orders and foster a sense of continuity and communal identity. In the case of Zimbabwe, could the transitional justice mechanisms of *kuripa ngozi* be used to bring reconciliation between brutalized civilians and the guerrillas who perpetrated violence on innocent civilians?

Reconciliation and traditional justice among the Kpaa-Mende people of Sierra Leone is examined by A.D Alie Joe. In his opinion Sierra Leone encourages restorative justice which is aimed at repairing and creating social harmony with the battled communities. As part of the Mende people's traditional disputes resolution, aspects such as mediation, token appeasement and willingness to show remorse were the major pillars of their traditional conflict resolution mechanism.¹³⁶ The literature sharpened the researcher's knowledge on aspects of traditional disputes resolution.

Naume-Kaburale's work on Burundi shows that "traditional mechanisms of conflict resolution cannot provide the cure for all ill." Using *Ushingantale* case study, he asserts that the members of '*ubushingantale*,' a local dispute resolution institution, succeeded in resolving conflicts in some communities but failed in others.¹³⁷ To this extent, this literature is an eye-opener to the fact that traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are not always a success story, they too have their weaknesses. For this reason, this study investigated if

¹³⁶A.D. Alie Joe, "Reconciliation and Traditional Justice: Tradition- based Practices of the Kpaa-Mhende in Sierra Leone," [p1@www.researchgate.net](http://www.researchgate.net) accessed 10/11/2013

¹³⁷A. Naume-Kabulare "Traditional Resolution of Land Conflicts: Survival of Precolonial Dispute Settlement in Burundi" [@journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/101177/00104](http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/101177/00104)

traditional mechanisms were used in Matabeleland to deal with dissident insurgents for instance.

Conclusion

From the above literature under various themes was reviewed to show its relevance to the study. What emerges, it is evident that this study was informed by a vast array of literature. One of the findings from the literature reviewed is that some of the literature identified gaps which this research sought to fill. Some of the literature sharpened this researcher's knowledge about issues of violence and conflict, while some pieces of literature helped in putting the study into historical context. Other pieces of literature shaped the direction of the study. The literature reviewed as a whole body equipped the researcher with background knowledge about issues to do with the topic.

Chapter Three:

From *Zhii* Riots to the early phase of the Liberation Struggle, 1960-1973

Introduction

For one to understand the violence that occurred during the period under discussion, one should consider the political, economic and social background to the violence. There is need to reflect on the repressive legacies of the colonial regime. This is important as it reminds us not only about significant changes that have marked the post-colonial period, but also how violence as a tool of repression has colonial roots. In fact, by reflecting historically, we are able to discern the ways in which the current ZANU-PF ruling class in Zimbabwe has drawn from lessons of repressive colonial past to constrain the citizens of an independent Zimbabwe. The period under discussion is also important as Africans came to accept the fact that peaceful negotiations would not make the colonial government relinquish power. As a result, this period witnessed African nationalist movements increasingly deploy armed force towards achieving self-determination. The nationalist leaders further appreciated the need to get military help from friendly countries to train armed forces to overthrow the colonial regime. Whilst the chapter accepts this decisive shift in attitude by Africans towards confrontational politics, it acknowledges how this built from earlier, but nonetheless less militant strike actions.¹

¹ An example of earlier protests by Africans is the 1956 Bus Boycott related by T. Scarnecchia in his book *The Urban Roots of Democracy and Political Violence in Zimbabwe*, University of Rochester Press, New York, 2008

The Political, Economic and Social Background to the Institutional Violence as background to the *Zhii* riots

As discussed in Chapter one in terms of the theorisations of violence, this section adopts institutionalization of violence as a framework. This is primarily due to the manner of the use of two draconian laws, the 1959 Unlawful Organisation Act (UOA) and the 1960 Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA) to ban African nationalist movements. The 1959 UOA outlawed certain African political organisations, such as Southern Rhodesian African National Congress (SRANC), for promoting subversive activities. It provided for the banning of any organisation if its activities were deemed likely to disturb public order, prejudice the tranquillity of the nation, endanger constitutional government or promote feeling of will or hostility between races. Attendance of a meeting or possession of writings, accounts, documents, banners or insignia relating to unlawful organisations were evidence of membership until the contrary is proved. It provided for the complete identification of police and civil servants for action connected with enforcing the measures.²

On 1st January 1960, the National Democratic Party (NDP) emerged from the ruins of the SRANC. Its stated goals included universal adult suffrage, higher wages, improvements in African housing and education and abolition of the Land Husbandry Act.³ In response to the launching of the NDP, the government passed the LOMA the same year. Due to that law, in the early morning of 7 July 1960 the NDP offices were raided by the police and everything taken including the typewriter. On 19 July 1960, three leaders of the NDP, that is Michael Mawema, Sketchly Samkange and Leopold Takawira became victims of subjective violence as they were arrested in Harare. While there were no arrests in Bulawayo, the houses of NDP

² “Colonial History of Southern Rhodesia” @www.hrforungim.org accessed 20/02/2014

³ T.O Ranger, *Writing Revolt. An Engagement with African Nationalism, 1957-67* Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p60

chairman Zenzo Khulekhani Sihwa, Jonas Richard Mzimila and a committee member Jason Ziyapapa Moyo were searched for documents. Reacting to the arrests of their leaders, some 700 people in Harare, led by the NDP, marched from Highfields towards the city centre where they were assaulted by the police of the Whitehead government.⁴ Besides these blatant political acts of repression, the African workers were also discontented with the low wages and poor living standards. As the NDP leaders negotiated with the police to try to send a delegation to the Prime Minister, Whitehead declared a state of emergency which banned all meetings in Harare for months. Whitehead also refused to address the NDP leaders referring to them as an illegal assembly. Subsequently, the NDP was banned in 1961.

The ‘Zhii’ Riots

In 1960, a series of riots code-named ‘*Zhii*’ were witnessed in Bulawayo city. These riots were sparked by the banning of an NDP meeting scheduled for Stanley Square in Makokoba suburb. According to Nehwati, “the word ‘*Zhii*’ has no precise equivalent in English. Its nearest meaning in English includes ‘devastating action’, ‘destroy completely’ ‘reduce to rubble.’” As Nehwati explains, it originates from the sound caused by the fall of a huge rock. Any object so crushed is beyond retrieval and a common saying then was “*ndichakuuraya kuti zhii*.” Meaning “I will kill you and reduce your remains to powder”. In a war song, ‘*Zhii*’ incites combatants with vigour to fight and inflict the deadliest blows on the enemy. This was the feeling during the riots in Bulawayo, hence these riots were known and referred to as ‘*Zhii*’.⁵

⁴B. Raftopoulos, “Lest We Forget: From LOMA to POSA Public Meeting Commemorating the 1960 protests,” Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition @www.kubatana.net accessed 20/02/2014

⁵ F. Nehwati, “The Social and Communal Background to ‘*Zhii*’ The African Riots in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia in 1960,” in *African Affairs vol 69, No. 276, Jul 1970*, p251 @www.jstor.org/stable accessed 20/02/2014.

According to Francis Nehwati, who was involved in the disturbances, the 'Zhii' riots began on Sunday 24 July 1960 when the NDP called a political rally at Stanley Square at 8 o' clock in the morning. To Nehwati, all roads leading to Stanley Square were thronged with people as early as 6 o' clock in the morning and some had to walk several miles to the square. On Saturday NDP leaders Jason Ziyapapa Moyo and Hugh Ashton had assured police commanders that the meeting would be peaceful and would not call for demonstrations or strikes. Nehwati asserted that by 8 am some 500 Africans were waiting outside the locked Stanley Hall and the ground in front of the square continued to be filled by people from the African townships so that there were over 1000 people there. Unexpectedly the rally was banned by the government. People were amazed to see a detachment of police which was posted to the square to disperse the crowd.⁶

The NDP leadership and their supporters demanded that the meeting proceed but the police forcibly dispersed the crowd. In defiance the crowd re-grouped outside the square and decided to demonstrate their anger by marching to the city centre, which during the colonial era was the European sector of Bulawayo and closed to blacks. The protest march was prevented from reaching its destination by a detachment of about 500 paramilitary police. The NDP crowd thus embarked on a "hide and seek" battle with the police. By about 1 pm the police detachment that had moved to Stanley Square area was under heavy hail of stones forcing the police to use tear-gas to disperse the crowd.⁷

Terence Ranger noted that by 5pm the road from Lobengula Street along Sixth Avenue was lined by hundreds of Africans watching the attacks. In the evening, the situation appeared to

⁶F. Nehwati, "The Social and Communal Background to 'Zhii' The African Riots in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia in 1960," in *African Affairs vol 69, No. 276, Jul 1970* p251
[@www.jstor.org/stable](http://www.jstor.org/stable) accessed 20/02/2014

⁷Ibid p252

return to normal.⁸ However, as Nehwati asserted, the night was used to mobilise forces of disruption. The rioting continued on Monday 25th July which witnessed aggravated waves of violence and by mid-morning Bulawayo resembled a war zone. The entire industrial area had come to a standstill as all factories had closed down. All workers had walked out and were streaming back into the African Townships. On their way home they attacked commercial enterprises. They were joined by Africans employed in the commercial sector of Bulawayo.⁹ Ranger asserts that the rioters roamed about the pubs where they looted beer gardens and bottle stores. Some of the rioters even confronted the police cordon into the city centre and some managed to break through. Those that succeeded to get to the city centre started stoning cars in Lobengula Street, Fort Street and Jameson Street. According to *The Chronicle* of 25 July 1960, European cars were stoned in streets from the edge of Old Location to Abercorn Street. Several shops in Lobengula Street were stoned and at least one looted. From as far as Old Falls Road, cars were being stoned. Indian shops in Lobengula Street had windows broken as gangs ran among the helpless shop-keepers.¹⁰ The same paper reported that the number of those injured was not known but about 20 Africans were treated in Mpilo hospital. About 30 Africans were arrested during the day and were put behind barbed wire. The police concentrated first on removing the rioters from the white city, then on establishing a ring around it.¹¹ The government sent for military reinforcements which led to the deployment of some troops with fixed bayonets in Lobengula Street.

⁸T. Ranger, *Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of A Southern African City 1893-1960*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2010, p222

⁹ F. Nehwati, "The Social and Communal Background to 'Zhi' The African Riots in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia in 1960" in *African Affairs* vol 69, No. 276, Jul 1970,p252 [@www.jostr.org/stable](http://www.jostr.org/stable) accessed 20/02/2014

¹⁰*The Chronicle*, 25 July, 1960

¹¹Ibid

Back in the townships the acts of violence continued to manifest as Africans screamed 'Zhi'. Everything that had to do with central or local government was targeted by the rioters. Administrative buildings, beer gardens, bus shelters, newspaper works, shops and any vehicles which were parked at the administrative offices were targeted for destruction. Trains were stoned and there were some attempts made to burn the railway rolling stock at Mpopoma Marshalling Yard. Some shops in Makokoba, Mzilikazi, Barbourfields and Nguboyenja were set on fire and/ or looted.¹² The war cry 'Zhi' was heard everywhere. My analysis of the 'Zhi' riots is that Africans in Bulawayo were protesting against the colonial government's violation of black people's human right to hold meetings and discuss their grievances. After all the NDP leaders had assured police commanders that the meeting would be peaceful and would not call for strikes or any violent action.

Tuesday 26 July saw a deterioration in the situation as arson and looting continued. On this day, armed forces supported by armoured cars, helicopters and spotter planes moved into the African townships mentioned above, and took up strategic positions. In the confrontations with the demonstrators, violent clashes took place which resulted in several deaths and injuries of the demonstrators. When attacked by gunfire and tear gas the demonstrators threw sand and pebbles at the armed troops. By the end of the third day the rioters began to feel hungry as food stuffs to the Africans townships had been blocked by the colonial authorities. This, coupled with the presence of the army in the townships, brought the disturbances to an end. Officially, some 12 people had been killed while several hundreds were injured in the demonstrations.¹³ However, in the process the riots had caused considerable damage to

¹²T. Ranger, *Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of a Southern African City 1893-1960* Weaver Press, Harare, 2010, p224

¹³F. Nehwati, "The Social and Communal Background to 'Zhi' The African Riots in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia in 1960," in *African Affairs vol 69, No. 276, Jul 1970* p253 @www.jostr.org/stable accessed on 20/02/2014.

government installations and to private property, where estimates showed that several hundreds of thousands of pounds had been made.¹⁴

According to Maxwell Masuku, who was a juvenile in 1960, what had caused the 'Zhii' riots were the following grievances that Africans in Bulawayo had against the colonial regime; lack of adequate accommodation, unemployment, racial discrimination in social amenities such as shops, bars and hotels as well as denial of business opportunities.¹⁵ Another interviewee, Mary Nyoni, emphasising the issue of racial discrimination, asserted that in urban buses the first front rows were reserved for whites; then in the middle came Coloureds and Asians and Africans sat at the back rows. She also stated that on the job market, train drivers and conductors were whites while Africans were employed as firemen and shunters.¹⁶ Siwela Sibangani confirmed the racial discrimination Africans were subjected to by pointing out that blacks were not allowed to walk on pavements in town. He also reiterated the shortage of accommodation by specifying that Burombo Flats in Nguboyenja accommodated at least ten single men per room; as a result these men could not let their wives live with them in the flats. Siwela Sibangani also emphasized the problem of African unemployment and asserted that what drove Africans to violence was that an army plane dropped tear gas at a crowd attending a rally that was being addressed by a politician, Mr. Mawema, at Emjingweni in Taylor Street.¹⁷

Another interviewee, who wished to remain anonymous stated that African unemployment in Bulawayo was aggravated by the presence of non-indigenous labourers who were employed

¹⁴F. Nehwati, "The Social and Communal Background to 'Zhii' The African Riots in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia in 1960," in *African Affairs* vol 69, No. 276, Jul 1970 p253 [@www.jostr.org/stable](http://www.jostr.org/stable) accessed on 20/02/2014

¹⁵ Interview with M. Masuku held in Barbourfields, Bulawayo, on 8 September 2016

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷Interview with S. Sibangani held at Ntabazinduna Flats, Bulawayo, on 17 September, 2016.

in industries while indigenous Africans roamed the streets looking for jobs. The *Bantu Mirror* of 11 June 1960 confirmed this by stating that the gravest problem that was threatening the whole country was that of African unemployment.¹⁸ The same paper stated that the railways employed at least 3000 Africans from Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique) and many others from neighbouring countries. Furthermore, it asserts that the implementation of the Land Husbandry Act had driven many Africans to town as they could not be absorbed in the reserves, thus exacerbating the problem of unemployment.¹⁹

One expected women to be major participants in the '*Zhii*' riots as there was a lot of female participation in township politics. But they were not. All my informants concurred that there were few women among the demonstrators. They asserted that women's main role during the demonstrations was to lock themselves and their children in their houses, venture only to look for their children and if necessary flee across the stream from Makokoba to Mzilikazi. Maria Gumede of Old Lobengula who was 14 in 1960 said she felt terrified by the violence and chaos that she witnessed during '*Zhii*' riots because most of the men involved in the '*Zhii*' riots "behaved as if they were possessed by demons."²⁰ Furthermore, MaKhumalo of Mzilikazi who was 25 in 1960 confirmed that the shouts of 'Kill! Kill!' made her feel scared while MaSibanda said she and her cousins locked themselves inside the house when they heard the shouts of '*Zhii*'.²¹

The minimum involvement of women in the '*Zhii*' riots in Bulawayo provides a great similarity with women's experiences during the partition of India and Pakistan and the

¹⁸ The *Bantu Mirror*, 11 June, 1960

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Interview with MaGumede of Old Lobengula, Bulawayo, held on 23 September, 2016

²¹ Interview with both MaKhumalo and MaSibanda, held in Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, on 24th September, 2016

aftermath of the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Veena Das' perception was that the role of men and women were contrasted in the event of participating where consent was declared and forced by symbolizing it in the abduction of women, and where violation produced silence in women while at the same time it made men vocal but they could not express what they saw and did.²² On the other hand, during the 'Zhii' riots men were heavily involved while women were largely secluded for the violence. Women focused on their domestic duties as mothers and wives. There is further similarity there concerning what Veena Das regarded as the gender division of labour when measuring the results of violence. She clearly stated that the role of women was to take care of details of life that allow a household to function, collecting supplies, cooking, washing, and looking after children and so on despite the horror within their community.²³

The gendered dynamics of 'zhii' riots in Bulawayo were in sharp contrast to what was happening in Harare where many women in the 1960s took an active role in the demonstrations. Nyagumbo asserted that Michael Mawema, Leopold Takawira and Sketchly Samkange were arrested for furthering the activities of the banned ANC.²⁴ When the news of the arrests spread, other party members including Morton Malianga and Enos Nkala went about the African townships in Salisbury telling everyone, men and women alike, to attend a meeting at the Cyril Jennings Hall in Highfields that evening. The leaders told them to march to the central police station where their arrested leaders were being held. As the masses of Africans, men and women, approached Harare police station they were confronted by jeeps full of armed police. In defiance of the order from a senior policeman for the procession to return to Harare Township the crowd continued singing as they surged on. They marched to

²²Veena Das, *Life and Words. Violence and The Descent into The Ordinary*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 2007 pxii

²³Ibid

²⁴ M. Nyagumbo, *With the People*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1980, p137

Stoddart Hall where they assembled.²⁵ When the police fired tear-gas bombs to disperse the masses, the mob later became angry and started rampaging through municipal properties in the townships. Nyagumbo further stated that the next day African workers absented themselves from work. In reaction to attacks by the army and police with dogs, the masses burnt many government installations and industrial sites. As the workers continued to demand the release of Mawema, Takawira and Samkange, production in all industries was brought almost to a halt.²⁶ The government then granted bail to the three men to avoid further disruption in industry. When the first trial was held at Forbes Avenue magistrate court, the African masses, both men and women, converged there and absconded work.

According to Ranger, oral testimonies on the 'Zhii' riots in Bulawayo presented a varied picture. A few people remembered them with pleasure.²⁷ Other informants remembered the whole series of events as anarchic and confusing. To Ranger, some women recalled the chaos of the demonstrations and expressed the terror they felt. Among others, Rita Ndlovu of Entumbane Township who was 15 in 1960 recalled of 'Zhii'; "I remember people running everywhere crying 'Zhii' Bulala! Bulala! Meaning 'kill' kill.' Food was being looted from stores and beer in beer gardens. Everyone was being forced to join the violent crowds. I was very afraid during those days because I thought a war had started."²⁸ MaMhlanga, who was 28 in 1960, also cited in *Bulawayo Burning* and was looking after her two nephews, remembered that black people were fighting each other. When her nephews who had been outside when the violence started returned home, they had bloody faces and legs. She was so

²⁵M. Nyagumbo, *With the People*, University of California Press, Los Angeles, 1980 p138

²⁶Ibid, p137

²⁷Simon Dube who in 1960 was a member of the NDP youth and was cited by Ranger in *Bulawayo Burning* recalled 'Zhii' as one of the most interesting scenes he had witnessed in his life. He considered the riots as politically motivated.

²⁸T. Ranger, *Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of a Southern African City 1893-1960*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2010

shocked she did not know what to do except to sit inside the house with her nephews, close the door and windows.²⁹ The pandemonium was a terrifying experience.

After the 'Zhii' protests it became fashionable to blame the poor, especially the unemployed, for the violence. The *Bantu Mirror* claimed on 6 August 1960 that it was the unemployed who roamed the streets who had caused most of the damage.³⁰ However, *The Sunday News* of 7 August 1960 revealed that it was not only the unemployed who had been involved in the violence. Most people arrested for riot activities were in employment. The paper further proposed a final element in the riddle of 'Zhii.' It suggested a possibility that a class consciousness was developing among the Bulawayo African labourers. Two townships in particular had developed by 1960 as a community of self-satisfied elites. One was Pelandaba, meaning 'the matter is concluded.' The other was Pumula, meaning 'a resting place', named by its inhabitants because many built homes to retire to. The paper went on to report that when the police and troops moved in they found that well-kept and trim houses and gardens had been damaged and looted.hovels and badly kept houses were not damaged.³¹ It posed the question, 'Did the element of jealousy and envy come into it? One eyewitness of the riots, Charlton Ngcebetsha, asserted that the wanton destruction of the African shops stemmed from jealousy because it was known that Africans were jealous of the success of any of their people and would do anything to destroy them. Telling a reporter of *The Chronicle* of 11 August 1960, Ngcebetsha said part of the feeling was directed by the African 'have-nots' against African 'haves.' So at night, during the peak of riots, peaceful Africans were pulled

²⁹T. Ranger, *Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of a Southern African City 1893-1960*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2010

³⁰The *Bantu Mirror*, 7 August, 1960

³¹ The *Sunday News*, 7 August, 1960

out of their beds and homes and coerced to join the demonstrations.³² In other words the commotion of 'Zhii' riots was complex. Anti-white feelings, anti-municipal feelings, gender tensions and class tensions were all inter-twined in the 'Zhii' protests.

The effects of 'Zhii' riots were complex. The findings of this study affirm Ranger's findings that the protests were spontaneous and my informants declared that it was the beginning of the political freedom struggle. The riots stimulated intense political activity in Bulawayo townships. At the same time the protests exacerbated cleavages within Bulawayo nationalism. After the 'Zhii' riots some nationalists demanded firm action against 'single' men. The Mpopoma Lease Holders Association who were pressing for the abolition of the Advisory Boards and proportionate African representation on the council demanded in September 1960 that householders be given firearms to defend themselves and that all single men should be removed from Iminyela and Mabutweni, which lay between Mpopoma and Pelandaba. On 16 September 1960 at a meeting of the Mpopoma Leaseholders, they asked that an Armed Home Guard be formed but this was shouted down by more than half the audience who appeared to be a mixture of lodgers and young people from other townships who had come to the meeting thinking it was being held by a political party.³³

It must be emphasized that the 'Zhii' riots were puzzling. During the riots there were no attacks for instance on the factories where the majority of Africans worked. Probably, this was because the rioters knew that the factories were their sources of income though the wages they received were low. The restaurants that denied the Africans service and European owned bars were attacked because they were the symbol of the white man's affluence and

³² T. Ranger, *Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of a Southern African City 1893-1960*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2010, p238

³³ Ibid, p240

privilege.³⁴ European soldiers who were patrolling the African townships were understood to make enquiries about employees of their friends or of their friends' establishment.³⁵ An observer noted that by the end of 1960 people were getting jittery from rumours of strikes and threats of reprisals. It was feared that 'Zhii' riots might come again but they did not.

Conversely, in Salisbury, on the 19th July 1960 (before the 'Zhii' riot) police arrested leaders of the NDP. Though there were no arrests in Bulawayo, the houses of NDP Chairman Zenzo Khulekhani Sihwa, of the secretary Jonas Richard Mzimila and of the leading committee member Jason Ziyapapa Moyo were searched and documents taken. The arrests provoked the famous protests march from Highfield to Mbare, police use of tear gas, a withdrawal of African labour and widespread riots. Meanwhile, though Bulawayo was quiet, there was a peaceful NDP meeting on 21 July 1960 which called for a larger meeting in Stanley Hall on 24 July. During the day on Saturday 23 July rumour was rife in the city as to the outcome of Sunday's meeting. The main question being asked was, 'Is this city in for a repeat of Salisbury's stay-away?'³⁶ It is noteworthy that while women in Bulawayo were largely not involved in the 'Zhii' riots, in Salisbury, in reaction to the arrests of NDP leaders, wives of detainees staged a sit-in protest outside Prime Minister Whitehead's office with the support of other NDP officials.³⁷ After the 'Zhii' riots in Bulawayo, the government tried to thwart any future demonstrations by promulgating the Law and Order Maintenance Act, one of the draconian laws that violated all freedoms known to man. Thereafter, blacks used purposive violence each time the government attacked them.

³⁴F. Nehwati, 'The Social and Communal Background to 'Zhii' The African Riots in Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia in 1960,' in *African Affairs* vol 60, No. 276, Jul 1970, p257 [@www.jstor.org/stable](http://www.jstor.org/stable) accessed 20/02/2014.

³⁵T. Ranger, *Bulawayo Burning. The Social History of a Southern African City 1893-1960* Weaver Press, Harare, 2010, p240

³⁶Ibid, p221

³⁷ E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union, 1961-87, A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*, African World Press, Asmara, 2005, p54

The 1961 Constitution

The next phenomenon that was to cause conflict between the white settler government and the African masses was the 1961 constitution. As a result of three years of negotiations with the Southern Rhodesian Government and other parties, the British government had proposed a draft constitution on 13 June 1961. Wilkinson asserted that the constitution provided for a parliamentary system with 65 elected members; 50 constituency members and 15 district members. The common voter's roll was divided into two rolls, the 'A' and 'B' roll. The voter rolls had education, property and income qualifications. The main 'A' roll was for citizens who satisfied high standards in these regards and 95% of its members were white and 5% were black or Asian, the 'B' roll was about one tenth of the size of the 'A' roll. Both rolls voted in elections for constituencies and districts, but for elections in the constituencies, the 'B' roll was capped at 20% of the total, and for elections in the districts, the 'A' roll vote was capped at 20% of the total. This procedure was known as 'cross-voting.' In practice, the 50 constituency members would all be white and the 15 district members would mostly be blacks.³⁸

To ascertain the acceptability of the constitution, a referendum was held on 26 July 1961 in Southern Rhodesia, then a constituent territory of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The constitution was approved by about 66% of those who voted. The turnout of those who voted was 77% of registered voters. Registered voters at the time were mostly white because of the qualified franchise under which only those who met certain financial, educational and property standards were eligible to vote.³⁹ Eliakim Sibanda asserted that the NDP repeatedly attacked the proposed constitution and urged its voting supporters not to participate in the

³⁸ A.R. Wilkinson, "Politics in Rhodesia," p1@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson, accessed 27/02/2014

³⁹L.L. Revolry, "Southern Rhodesian constitutional referendum, 1961," p2 [@www.revolry.com](http://www.revolry.com) accessed 27/02/2014

constitutional referendum or any elections. The whites, on the other hand, as highlighted above, approved it by a nearly two-to-one margin. Despite the strong opposition from the NDP, the constitution became law in December 1961.⁴⁰

When the NDP members learnt that Britain was not going to stop the 1961 constitution from becoming the law of the land they erupted into violent riots, destroying property owned by the whites, including schools and churches. As opposition against the constitution intensified, protests also broke out in some rural areas. Sibanda asserted that in the cities, blacks exploded with retaliatory violence. In Bulawayo on 8 December 1961 some women demonstrated at the Magistrate Court and 75 of them were arrested.⁴¹ In Salisbury, violent demonstrators gathered in Harare (Mbare) and Highfields townships and attacked police with various missiles. One man was shot dead by the police while 14 protesters were injured by gunshots from police, and 9 were badly bitten by police dogs. Due to their participation in the riots, 503 women were arrested by the regime in Highfields and Harare townships on 8 December 1961.⁴² Thus, both in Bulawayo and Salisbury, women were becoming increasingly militant and colonial repression did not deter them from involvement in politics. In the case of women in Bulawayo, their involvement in the demonstrations against the 1961 constitution was in stark contrast to their invisibility during the 1960 'Zhii' riots. Explaining women's involvement in the protests against the 1961 constitution, MaMhlanga asserted that women realized that all Africans, regardless of gender, were victims of colonial political oppression. Hence, they had to register their discontent against the constitution.⁴³

⁴⁰ E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union, 1961-87 A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*, Africa World Press, Asmara, 2005 p60

⁴¹ Ibid, p61

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ Interview with MaMhlanga of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, held on 24 September, 2016

Both the African nationalists and Rhodesian Front turned away from negotiations, with the nationalists strongly pushing for British intervention while the Rhodesia Front sought to strengthen the Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA) by making the death sentence mandatory for attacks involving the use of petrol bombs, arson and explosives for political goals.⁴⁴ Petrol bombs had become an increasingly familiar feature of attacks that were becoming prevalent.⁴⁵ It was during the course of the 1960-61 conference that for the first time home-made petrol bombs were used by the freedom fighters in Salisbury against settler establishments.⁴⁶ Sibanda notes that at midnight, 8 December 1961 the Whitehead government went ahead and banned the NDP at a time when it had numerically grown with a paid up membership of 25000,⁴⁷ which further widened the chasm between African nationalists and the Whitehead government.

The NDP reconstituted itself on the 17th of December 1961 as the Zimbabwe People's Union (ZAPU), which involved the same policies as the NDP and was banned in September 1962. Sibanda further asserted that the banning of the NDP coincided with the ending of an era where black nationalists worked for political change within a legal framework. Nevertheless, before it was banned, the NDP made one great achievement, which was the internationalization of the political plight of Southern Rhodesian blacks. Nkomo, its leader, almost single-handedly was responsible for internationalizing the grievances of his fellow blacks through his travels abroad.⁴⁸ He did this by holding meetings with various organisations and at these meetings he explained the injustice suffered by Africans in

⁴⁴ L.L. Revolvly, "Southern Rhodesian Constitutional referendum, 1961", p3
[@www.revolvly.com](http://www.revolvly.com) accessed 27/02/2014

⁴⁵ Ibid

⁴⁶ A.R. Wilknison, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73 An Accountant and Assessment,"
p6@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

⁴⁷ E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union 1961-82 A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*, African World Press, Asmara, 2005, p61

⁴⁸ Ibid

Southern Rhodesia and asked for humanitarian aid to help alleviate the suffering of Africans in the country.

According to Wilkinson, as a result of African impatience with the pace of reforms and then in opposition to increased repression, ZAPU agitated for political violence as a political strategy. The Rhodesian Government later published a White Paper, "Report on the Zimbabwe People's Union", which detailed acts of political violence by African nationalists between January and December 1962. According to the 'White Paper,' ZAPU had committed 33 petrol bombings, 18 of the burning of schools and 10 churches and 27 attacks on communication networks.⁴⁹ The nationalists' continued lack of success with the Rhodesian state led to a crisis of confidence in 1963 when some ZAPU party officials became increasingly critical of Nkomo's style of leadership. It was the difficulties within Rhodesia which made Nkomo decide to concentrate his political energies on the more sympathetic and apparently more fruitful international environment. However, some party officials believed that nationalist interests would be better served with Nkomo's residence in Southern Rhodesia. Nkomo's decision to establish an executive in exile resulted in the official split of ZAPU on 9 August 1963. The malcontents led by Ndabaningi Sithole formed the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).⁵⁰ On the whole, the split can be explained by both personality and policy differences but later conflicts between the organisations assumed ideological and ethnic dimensions seriously inhibiting the advancement of the nationalist cause.

⁴⁹ A.R. Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment," p7 [@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson](http://www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson) accessed 21/02/2014

⁵⁰ L.L. Revoly, "Colonial History of Southern Rhodesia," p5 [@www.revolvy.com](http://www.revolvy.com) accessed 28/02/2014

Analysing the 1963 ZAPU split, Mr Joseph Nkatozo asserted that the split was over ‘ideology’ and the best way forward in the struggle to attain independence. He explained that the founders of the new party, Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), were dissatisfied with the tactics of Joshua Nkomo, the leader of ZAPU.⁵¹ As the NDP and its successor ZAPU had been banned, members of ZANU believed that African nationalists had to struggle for political change through extra-constitutional means such as violent demonstrations as well as waging a war against the white settler regime. Retired Brigadier Abel Mazinyane agreed with the view expressed by Joseph Nkatozo but also added that “like any other grouping, political parties are prone to splits as a results of leaderships struggle.”⁵² In other words, political elites within a party fight for control of the party and as a result the party splits. Grace Noko also alluded to the struggle for leadership of the party which she attributed to the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwe society. She posed the question “Why is it that it is always male politicians who head factions and breakaways? What happened in 1963 was only a microcosm of Zimbabwean politics which is here to stay until we redefine our political culture and it might take many years.”⁵³ Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni argues that splits that have rocked political parties since 1963 cannot be explained in terms of one factor or significant political theory. His argument is “what has not been said about the split of 1963 is that it was partly to do with which ethnic group between Ndebele-oriented and Shona-oriented ones considered itself the authentic subjects of the nation with primal right to rule over Zimbabwe at the end of colonial rule.”⁵⁴ He went on to ascertain that Ndabaningi Sithole miscalculated by leading the split because he did not belong to those who were claiming primal ethnic right

⁵¹ Interview with Joseph Nkatozo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, held on 20th August, 2016

⁵² Interview with Rtd. Brigadier Abel Maginyane, of Matshamhlophe, Bulawayo held on 20th August 2016

⁵³ Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo held on 20th August, 2016

⁵⁴ “Party splits: A Recurring theme in Zimbabwean politics,” [@www.theindependent.co.zw](http://www.theindependent.co.zw) accessed 1st September, 2016

to inherit Zimbabwe from white colonisers and it was inevitable that later he would be deposed.⁵⁵

In the meantime, as follow up to the 1961 constitution, the Rhodesia Front (RF) had won the elections in 1962 under the leadership of Winston Field. This, however, served to sharpen racial polarization. The black majority had hoped that the British government would end white minority rule. Against this background the government decided to pursue self-independence to forestall black majority rule. Field's cabinet considered him too weak to give Britain an ultimatum on independence and put pressure on him to go. He resigned in April 1964 and was succeeded by Ian Douglas Smith, an ardent advocate of unconditional independence.⁵⁶

To allay the fear of the white population immediately after Smith replaced Field on 13th April 1964, the government cracked down on ZAPU/PCC leaders arresting and restricting Nkomo three days after Smith took the reins of the country. He was sentenced to 10 years 6 months in prison. Soon after more ZAPU officials were arrested and restricted with Nkomo at Gonakudzingwa, together with 141 PCC supporters. In response to Nkomo and his colleagues' arrests thousands of ZAPU supporters took to the streets in protest. Both men and women were involved in the protests. As the *Zimbabwe Review* noted, "Women carrying babies on their backs, boys and girls in their thousands staged the fiercest of demonstrations."⁵⁷ Police vehicles were stoned, government property set on fire and other

⁵⁵ "Party splits: A Recurring theme in Zimbabwean politics," @www.theindependent.co.zw accessed 1st September, 2016

⁵⁶ L.L Revolvly, "Colonial History of Southern Rhodesia," p6@ www.revolvly.com. Accessed 28/2/2014

⁵⁷E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union, 1961-87 A Political History of Insurgency in Sothern Rhodesia*, Africa World Press, Asmara, 2005, p102

police cars overturned.⁵⁸ The demonstrations took place in the two major cities of Bulawayo and Salisbury. Women's involvement in the demonstrations signified their increasing political consciousness. To compound the already tense situation, in the 1965 general elections Smith received a fresh mandate to pursue independence vigorously and if necessary illegally and unilaterally. The Rhodesia Front swept 79.3 percent of the vote (up from 56.5 percent in 1962) and its victory confirmed that the old UFP, now the Rhodesia Party was a spent force. On 11 November, 1965 Ian Douglas Smith and the RF made a unilateral declaration of independence and the British colony of Southern Rhodesia became the unrecognized state of Rhodesia.⁵⁹

The *Zhanda*- 1st Battalion Violence 1964-6

The immediate consequence of the split in the nationalist movement was violence on a level hitherto unseen. It was a fight to death, an equalization and unequivocal exposure of the deep ethnic and personal fissures that had lain unseen beneath as the cordial first phase of the struggle came to an end. The period was characterized by shocking levels of black-on-black violence that had about it all the signature features of African independence that whites feared so acutely. For the first time, blacks fought each other. The strife was started by the People's Caretaker Council (PCC) youth who called themselves the '*Zhanda*,' a corruption of the word 'gendarmes', while the ZANU youth called themselves Zimbabwe 1st Battalion. Intimidations, stonings, burnings and gang warfare by '*Zhanda*' groups were widespread. It was a civil war of sticks, stones and sneers. Peter Baxter noted that Salisbury with its big and ethnically cosmopolitan population was the worst hit. Blacks who rightly or wrongly were suspected of supporting the white administration or of belonging to the rival party were the

⁵⁸ E. Sibanda *The Zimbabwe African People's Union 1961- 87 A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia* Africa World Press, Asmara, 2025, p102

⁵⁹ L.L. Revolvly, "Colonial History of Southern Rhodesia," p6 @www.revolvly.com accessed 28/02/2014

main victims. ZANU men would shout at Nkomo's followers, "*Nyongolists*" (fishing worms). The PCC youth would roar back "*Chidhambakura!*" (Lizard).⁶⁰

The police were hard pressed to contain the violence which at times threatened to engulf the whole country periodically erupting in bouts of stoning, petrol bombing and riots violence in the townships of all the major centres. Again, most of the attacks and mass mobilisations were internecine, with extreme coercion being the main tool of motivation with one side seeking membership advantage over the other, and generally subjecting the black population of the country to the choice of supporting the revolution or suffer the consequences.⁶¹ That was in January 1964.

Wilkinson also noted that in Bulawayo, on 13 February 1964, Ernest Veli accused of belonging to ZANU was stabbed to death by a group of PCC supporters. Then in Highfields Township in Salisbury, Moses Mundede, a PCC supporter, was killed by a group of ZANU members on 18 June. On 4 September a black police reservist David Dodo was beaten to death by two members of the PCC for giving evidence at a criminal trial.⁶² The counterproductive effect of widespread and uncontrolled violence must have made some impression on both ZAPU and ZANU and attempts to restore some measure of planning were made, no doubt partly in response to the ever-present threat of UDI. Evidence that PCC/ZAPU had begun to think in terms of organized violence was provided by The

⁶⁰P. Baxter, "The Emergence of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle,"
p1@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/2014

⁶¹Ibid, p2

⁶² A.R. Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment,"
@p7@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

Zimbabwe Review which noted that at a session of PCC members in February 1964, it was decided to divide the country into command regions or fighting zones.⁶³

It would also appear that ZANU leaders had reached a similar conclusion. They had not been successful in gaining from ZAPU followers, through persuasion or intimidation, and decided to divert attention towards a positive campaign of violence against whites intending both to impress black opinion and to lower whites' morale, leading to a complete breakdown of law and order. Five general areas encompassing the main roads from Salisbury to Bulawayo, Fort Victoria, Umtali and Sinoia as well as key targets in Salisbury (the capital city) were envisaged and roadblocks, attacks on white farms, destruction of livestock and crops, cutting electricity supplies and telephone communications and petrol bomb attacks planned. However, these attacks were thwarted by Rhodesian intelligence.⁶⁴ It is noteworthy that women were not involved in these attacks which were carried out by young men.

The '*Zhanda*'- 1st Battalion violence continued. According to Peck, a ZANU group 'Crocodile Commando' which succeeded to evade the police net achieved notoriety for attacking the Oberholzer family. This group set up a roadblock, 19 miles from Melsetter, and two days after an unsuccessful attack on Nyanyadzi police camp. The first car containing Africans was allowed to pass but the Oberholzer's vehicle was attacked. The group of guerrillas focused their attack on Petrus Oberholzer but spared his wife though a stone hit her on her jaw. It is not very clear why Mr Oberholzer became a victim of this extreme subjective violence so much that he died the same night. Peck continued to explain that in Mrs Oberholzer's opinion, the attack on their vehicle was unwarranted and the guerrillas fled

⁶³A.R. Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment,"
[@p7@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson](http://p7@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson) accessed 21/02/2014

⁶⁴J.A. Peck, *Rhodesia Accuses*, Three Sisters Books, Salisbury, 1966, p85

when the lights of an oncoming car appeared. However, Davis Mugabe, the then ZANU representative in Ghana alleged that Oberholzer sought to play hero and tried to capture the group, the group tried to reason with him but in the end had to ‘deal’ with him.⁶⁵ One of the significant aspects of the attack was that the intended victims were to be white and not black. As a dimension of the ‘*Zhanda*’- 1st Battalion violence, the crocodile commando was unprofessional and undisciplined but they marked the beginning of the Guerrilla Warfare.”⁶⁶

It is worth noting that women were not involved in the violence of the ‘*Zhanda*’-1st Battalion campaign. Both perpetrators and victims of the protests were young men. This is puzzling considering that women participated in the earlier riots against the constitution of 1961. They were also participants in the 1964 demonstrations when Joshua Nkomo and PCC supporters were imprisoned at Gonakudzingwa. However, from the slough of youth militias and leaders were drawn the first recruits for formal guerrilla warfare. Explaining women’s non-involvement in the ‘*Zhanda*’- 1st battalion violence, Mrs Hazel Sibanda asserted that the gang warfare was too physical as it involved use of stones, sticks and spears as weapons.⁶⁷

In preparation for the guerrilla warfare, young men were initially sent in small numbers to Russia and China as well as to other countries that were sympathetic to Zimbabwean independence such as Algeria, Cuba, Bulgaria and North Korea through which Nkomo had toured extensively during his lengthy overseas travels. These countries also offered training facilities for selected members of ZAPU. Baxter notes that one of the first recruits to travel abroad for military training in 1963 was 24-year old Dumiso Dabengwa who would survive to play a defining role in the liberation struggle to follow. The training of these initial

⁶⁵ J.A Peck, *Rhodesia Accuses*, Three Sisters Books, Salisbury, 1966, p86

⁶⁶ P. Baxter, “The Emergence of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle,”

p2@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/2014

⁶⁷ Interview with Hazel Sibanda of Nkulumane, Bulawayo held on 21 August 2016

pioneers was comprehensive and tended to dwell more on theoretical aspects of guerrilla war, with an emphasis on political orientation and with those entering intelligence training exhaustive instruction in ciphers and codes, radio trading, interrogation methods, surveillance and counter surveillance, according to Baxter. Many of these men would form the backbone of the future military leadership of the organisation and would apply their training mainly in the preliminary organisation of the struggle.⁶⁸

Baxter further notes that Zambia was increasingly becoming the preferred base of a semi-organized response to the need for a more controlled approach to violence. It was in response to radio broadcasts assisted by the Zambian government that Rhodesian youth formed '*Zhanda*' groups to attack white owned farms and government property. The 1964 killing of a white farmer Petrus Oberholzer in Melsetter area by the 'Crocodile Commando' was reputed to be the earliest overtly political act of the protracted war that would follow. The crime was perpetrated by a handful of committed but inept militants the majority of whom were quickly rounded up by Rhodesian authorities. Other hazily defined missions of sabotage and terror more often than not had a disorganized hit-and run character involving mostly the use of the '*Zhanda*' weapon of choice, the petrol bomb, against soft targets identified as blacks working with or too closely linked with the government.⁶⁹

Wilkinson notes that although early Special Branch assessments of the unfolding situation suggested the existence and use of foreign sabotage schools, most of the '*Zhanda*' insurgents were either sparsely trained or not trained at all leading to a general ineptitude of their attacks. Furthermore, he asserts that initially the '*Zhanda*' campaign was very effective in as far as it

⁶⁸Interview with Hazel Sibanda of Nkulumane, Bulawayo held on 21 August 2016

⁶⁹ P. Baxter, "The Emergence of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle," p3@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/2014

spread alarm and despondency among whites, and at the same time mobilized large numbers of people into direct support of the struggle. It stands to reason that had it been supported by large scale and more organized guerrilla insurgency it might have registered a radically destabilizing effect. What also made the situation worse for the *'Zhandas'*, counter insurgency service proved themselves to be devastatingly competent in identifying and neutralizing almost every incursion and killing or arresting black militants and the inept *'Zhandas'* units with clinical efficiency.⁷⁰ For the nationalists it proved that much more concerted efforts would need to be mounted to have an effect on the Rhodesian regime at all, and for the Rhodesian Security services they recognized this as the forerunner of guerrilla warfare. Intelligence methods were simple. Black policemen formed the vanguard infiltrating rural areas, attending local beer drinks to gather information, cultivating informers and identifying anyone suspected of involvement with *'Zhandas'* groups. Interrogations were conducted with occasional and sometimes frequent use of physical violence that although not officially condemned were acknowledged as necessary under trying circumstances⁷¹ Most inductees were charged with common law crimes of injury to property, assault and murder.

The acquisition of arms was also amateurish in the early phase by the African insurgents. One of the first incidents was that of Joshua Nkomo being given a gift by the Egyptians of a collection of British Second World War vintage Lancaster submarine guns, ammunition and hand grenades which he carried with him as a hand luggage aboard a scheduled Air France Flight. Terence Ranger says these were then smuggled into the country via Victoria Falls at a time of very lax security. The courier was a certain Abraham Nkiwane who kept them temporarily at his father's farm near Lupane before they were discovered by a black

⁷⁰A.R. Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment," p8@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

⁷¹ Ibid

policeman manning a roadblock just outside Zvishavane town.⁷² Bobbylock Manyonga, the driver of the vehicle, Joseph Msika and other early ZAPU loyalists, succeeded in smuggling a later shipment of these weapons into the country, the first consignment to find its way into active service, and setting a trend whereby a rite of passage for many guerrillas would be the highly risky undertaking of smuggling guns and other ordinance into the country.⁷³

By the end of 1963 early optimism that a quick resolution to the question of majority rule was fading as the comparatively moderate government of Edgar Whitehead fell to the right wing Rhodesia Front party formed by Ian Smith who demanded an immediate granting of independence under minority government behind an implicit threat of a unilateral declaration. According to Sibanda, this set the stage for what would be a standoff between the Rhodesia Front under Ian Smith and the successive British governments that would form the backdrop to a bitter war of independence waged by blacks against the Rhodesian government.⁷⁴ Wilkinson notes that the nationalists trained and armed recruits in 1964 and 1965. Between September 1964 and March 1965, about 40 ZANU members went to Ghana for training in guerrilla warfare, sabotage and manufacture of explosives. The trainees who were all young men were instructed in Tanzania to attack white farms and to disrupt the May 1965 general election. In April they crossed into Rhodesia but 34 were quickly rounded up.⁷⁵ Meanwhile ZAPU had been active too. Between March 1964 and October 1965, 52 recruits took courses

⁷² P. Baxter, "The Emergence of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle," p3@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/2014

⁷³ Ibid

⁷⁴ E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union, 1961-87. A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*, Africa World Press, Asmara, 2005, p99

⁷⁵ A.R Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment," p8@www.rhodesia.nl/wilknison accessed 21/02/2014

at different training centres, four in Moscow, one at Nanking and one Pyongyang in North Korea. They entered Rhodesia and 24 were quickly arrested.⁷⁶

These early abortive attacks by the guerrillas are an indication that the Rhodesian Security forces were still a formidable challenge to the nationalist forces. It is plausible to conclude that much more dexterous and intensive training was necessary for the guerrillas to be effective in fighting against the Rhodesian forces. According to Wilkinson, although the nationalists created some disturbances, the resulting disorder was not such as to lead to British or United Nations interventions into Rhodesia affairs. Afraid of an economic collapse and the chaos that could result from racial strife, thousands of Europeans left the country to seek homes elsewhere. However, the majority of Rhodesians stayed. White confidence gradually returned and led to a massive electoral victory in May 1965 for the Rhodesia Front and the unconstitutional assumption of Independence in November of that year. On 11th November 1965 the Rhodesia Front under the leadership of Ian Smith made a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI). It marked a turning point of the struggle for freedom in the country from a constitutional and political to a primarily military struggle.⁷⁷

Baxter notes that UDI was declared on a deeply symbolic Armistice Day in order to draw British attention to the ties of kinship that bound White Rhodesia and their parent nation, the contribution made in two world wars into the defence of the homeland and to the desire of British Rhodesia to look beyond post-war labour ineptitude and back in time to a period when Britain was great and the values of the empire prevailed. However, this failed as the Rhodesian delegation was refused representation at the formal ceremony.⁷⁸ Sanctions were

⁷⁶A.R Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment," p8@www.rhodesia.nl/wilknison accessed 21/02/2014

⁷⁷Ibid, p9

⁷⁸ P. Baxter, "The Emergency of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle," p5@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/2014

imposed and though Britain did not come out with any active solution in favour of the oppressed African, it however seemed unlikely that it would defend its rebellious colony against a war by its majority.⁷⁹

The Early Phase of the Liberation Struggle

The view commonly held by Zimbabweans is that the 1966 Chinhoyi battle marked the start of the Second Chimurenga. That notion was confirmed by Zephania Nkomo during the interviews I carried out with various ZPRA ex-combatants.⁸⁰ However, Ellert asserts that one of the first identifiable guerrilla actions perpetrated by a ZANU guerrilla unit was an attack in September 1964 on the homestead of Dube Ranch in the Kezi District, some 40 miles south of Bulawayo. The attack was brief and ineffective and was abandoned quickly with the combatants leaving most of their weapons at the scene and fleeing west across the border into Botswana where they were soon apprehended and handed back to the Rhodesian authorities.⁸¹ ZANU also conducted a number of incursions which culminated in the episode thereafter known as the battle of Chinhoyi. This was the climax of a relatively large incursion of 24 well-armed and trained guerrillas who had infiltrated the country from Zambia with the order to undertake a number of missions. On 29 April 1966 about 7 members of a ZANU commando were confronted in battle by a large force of police commanded by Superintendent John Cannon and Dusty Binns. Ellert asserts that the ZANU guerrillas were hopelessly outnumbered but they heroically fought to the last.⁸² ZANU later used this episode as proof that it was its forces which had started what became known as the Second Chimurenga. The guerrillas had planned but failed to cut the Kariba Power line supplying

⁷⁹P. Baxter, "The Emergency of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle," p5@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/214

⁸⁰ Interview with Mr Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, held on 11/01/2018

⁸¹ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia 1862-82*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1989, p10

⁸²Ibid

70% of the country's electricity and attack the town centre and the police station at Chinhoyi. A notebook found on one of the bodies showed that the insurgent had been trained at Nanking Military College in the previous November and December.⁸³ The guerrillas killed at the battle of Chinhoyi were all male showing the perception that prevailed that fighting the enemy on the battlefield was a man's domain.

An earlier crossing occurred at the beginning of April when another ZANU group of 14 split into three sections. Wilkinson asserts that one section of two men headed for Fort Victoria (Masvingo) area and another five men had orders to sabotage the Beira-Umtali oil pipe-line and attack white farmers. All seven were arrested before they were able to complete their mission. A third section of seven headed for the Midlands and it is sensible to assume that their aim was to contact their president, Sithole, who was under restriction at Sikombela, near Gweru. This group may have been responsible for the attack on a farm near Hartley on 16 May. The farmer Hendrik Viljoen and his wife were killed by automatic fire in the ensuing battle.⁸⁴ The group responsible for this attack consisted of seven members, two of whom were away on a recruiting mission at the time of the attack. The group had been based in Hartley area and were in contact with some of the local population. After the attack, they split up and although all but one were eventually caught, three succeeded in staying in Mount Hampden area outside Salisbury until they were arrested in September 1966. This group, though eventually betrayed, had some measure of success in maintaining contact with and receiving help from the local population.⁸⁵

Throughout 1965, meanwhile, low key ZAPU incursions continued with little effect with most groups breaking and quietly re-integrating into society. Baxter asserts that ten Moscow

⁸³ A.R. Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment," p9@www.rhodesianl/wilkinison accessed 21/02/2014

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ J.A. Peck, *Rhodesia Accuses*, Three Sisters Books, Salisbury, 1966, p87

trained intelligence officers were deployed to fortify the mottle of inactive groups and generally coordinate and liaise in the planning and supply of ZAPU's military presence in the country. These were quickly detected by Rhodesian security forces. The year 1966 witnessed a more concentrated series of ZAPU armed incursions from across the Zambezi River at various points along its length, most with reasonably and comprehensive Soviet and Algerian training and generally charged with order to disperse into particular 'tribal reserve areas' to establish bases in order to identify and train recruits. Most of these were accounted for quickly by the Rhodesian Security Forces with only a small group of eight men remaining at large until November 1966 when they were detected in the Nkayi/Lupane area which led to the discovery of a network of a well camouflaged uniforms and arms caches. It was discovered that a certain amount of integrated action had taken place within the local community and that a high level of cohesion, training and spirit de corps characterized this group. Twenty-three locally trained recruits were identified in the mopping up operations.⁸⁶

Alluding to the collaboration between ZPRA guerrillas and civilians, Siphon Mhlanga (an ex-ZPRA combatant) asserted that the locals were organized into a courier system upon which guerrillas in the operational theatre would also depend for information and coordination of contact. He also stated that some of the villagers who received military training from the insurgents continued to fight from inside the country while others left for Zambia to receive training. The fighters were armed with a variety of weapons which included PPSH sub-machine guns, automatic pistols, grenades, AK rifles and Soviet two-way short range radios.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ P. Baxter, "The Emergency of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle," p5@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/214

⁸⁷Interview with Siphon Mhlanga of Hillside, Bulawayo, held on 4/12/2017

Terence Ranger relates an interesting example of an early guerrilla incursion into the Shangani/Lupane reserves or areas the new Rhodesian government called Tribal Trust Lands. Early in April 1966 a group of ZAPU guerrillas crossed from Zambia into Matabeleland and made their way overland in the direction of Papu, or the location of the last stand of the Shangani Patrol in 1893. They struggled through the Wankie Game Reserve for 9 days without food before risking discovery by shooting a rhinoceros and subsisting off its liver. They arrived safely, choosing Papu district as their destination for both practical and symbolic reasons. Practically this area still had dense bush and scattered population; but symbolically it held the significance of being the region where Lobengula died and where the last significant victory of the Ndebele was recorded. It was also a region of mixed population, with Ndebele immigrants living alongside originals of Tonga, Nyai and Rozvi, many of whom had become militant in the days of rocks and spears and could be relied upon to support the struggle.⁸⁸

Despite this, the men were met with deep caution and suspicion. The guerrilla leader arrived armed with the name of a leading contact man, Pilot Ncube, but since none of the guerrillas were known in the region a complex set of introductions took place, with the guerrillas first introducing themselves as police. Food was requested and payment promised while arms and ordinances were hidden in the nearby forest. Even when the men revealed their ZAPU identity, caution prevailed and the local people denied any knowledge of Joshua Nkomo or ZAPU. When finally a cordial trust was established and the aims and objectives of the guerrillas explained, training and organisation began.⁸⁹ The Rhodesian Security Forces had known the presence of the men in the region almost since their arrival in the country and

⁸⁸J. Alexander, J. McGregor and T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred years in the Dark Forests of Matabeleland*, James Currey, Oxford, 2000, p120

⁸⁹ Ibid

were tracking them towards their sanctuary in the Gusu Forest. In the meantime, armed police details appeared in the area handing out pictures of the wanted men requesting the location of the guerrillas' hideout. Those Shona members of the ZAPU group who spoke poor Ndebele were identified quickly under a blanket operation, combining the inducement of reward with the threat of detention and torture, the remainder were quickly accounted for. On the Rhodesian side, beatings and torture - sometimes fatal - became habitual ways of extracting information. The same *modus operandi* was true for Nkayi, where the guerrillas went after leaving Papu.⁹⁰

In these encounters between the guerrillas and Rhodesian forces the role of women was to provide intelligence and food to the guerrillas. Caught in the middle of mutual violence on the part of the police and guerrillas, the incursion into Nkayi was seen not to have achieved anything. The level of violence increased in Lupane, with a massively state paramilitary presence and the peace of the region shattered comprehensively. State violence in a quest for information and punishment was extreme. The violence did not win any friends for the government in the region. However, the nationalists were unable to meet state violence head-on as well as unable to protect the people. The result was a setback for the revolution.⁹¹ Neither ZANU nor ZAPU was deterred by the failure of the 1966 missions. In the first half of 1967 Rhodesian Intelligence was aware of a build-up in arms and men crossing the Zambezi River for war. Ellert asserts that on 26 May 1967, four ZANU guerrillas were hidden inside a removal truck travelling from Lusaka to Salisbury. Unaware that an informer had leaked their plans, thirty kilometres outside Karoi the driver was stopped and taken into custody. A combined force of Special Branch and the Rhodesian Army Air service surrounded the

⁹⁰Alexander, J. McGregor and T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred years in the Dark Forests of Matabeleland*, James Currey, Oxford, 2000,p122

⁹¹ P. Baxter, *The Emergence of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle*,”
p6@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/2014

vehicle and a detective called upon the guerrillas to surrender. The guerrillas pretended to cooperate but as they emerged from the rear of the vehicle, they opened fire with their AK47 rifles. The Rhodesians were ready for them and quickly killed the guerrillas in a battle near Chirundu. After this episode, special government regulations were introduced to padlock all incoming heavy vehicles from Zambia.⁹² Again, the people involved in the violence of the battle were young men on two opposing sides. Siphon Mhlanga explained that women were not involved in the fighting because both the white and black society in this country is patriarchal in nature. So being in the battlefield was regarded as a masculine domain - it was the duty of men to protect their women and children.⁹³ Nevertheless, the failures by the guerrillas during the early phase of the liberation struggle did not demoralize their fighting spirit.

It was now logical as trained cadres began to emerge from training abroad and returning to Zambia for deployment that an accelerated pace of armed insurgency into the country would begin. It was in 1967 that an alliance was forged between ZAPU and its sister armed movement, *Umkhonto wesizwe* (MK)/Spear of the Nation, which was the armed wing of the ANC of South Africa. At some point in mid-1967 ZAPU was approached by the ANC with a proposal for joint operations. The rationale behind this for MK was to establish a conduct of infiltration for its trained members into South Africa, having by then established that military cooperation between South Africa and Botswana security services precluding any obvious entente that should by right have existed between an independent state and nationalist revolutionary organisation. Botswana had tended to remain in the shadows of the Frontline states as had Malawi, leaving Zambia and Tanzania as the only active members of the bloc.

⁹² H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War Counter- Insurgency and Guerilla War in Rhodesia 1962-82* Mambo Press, Gweru, 1989, p8

⁹³ Interview with Siphon Mhlanga of Hillside, Bulawayo held on 4/12/2007

Western Rhodesia was an ideal transit route as the inhabitants of the region predominantly spoke Ndebele, which meant that MK cadres could communicate and be understood over most of the region.⁹⁴

This alliance unfortunately drew South Africa into the Zimbabwean conflict. ZAPU functionaries and historians have maintained that this was debatable, and that South Africa had already deployed significant force into the country which is rather an unabashedly political interpretation of the facts, confirmed by Southern African military historian Peter Stiff who was a serving officer with the British South Africa police at the time and did not know of any official South African armed deployment. Stiff suggests that there may very well have been liaison personnel in the country and perhaps individuals in a private capacity but that would have been the limit of South African involvement at that point.⁹⁵

The presence for the first time of South African insurgents on Rhodesian soil introduced a significant new factor to the military equation in Southern Africa. Despite the eventful containments of the joint incursion, it became obvious that this operation and the possibility of future invasions on a similar scale, had stretched the strength or capacity of the small Rhodesian security forces to an unacceptable degree and South African para-military police units were sent to assist the Rhodesian forces. The South African para-military police units arrived in Rhodesia supported by South African Air Force helicopters to help reinforce the Zambezi line.⁹⁶ According to Zephania Nkomo, the move outraged the nationalists and greatly embarrassed the British Government still claiming legal responsibility for Southern Rhodesia.

⁹⁴ P. Baxter “The Emergence of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle,”
p7@www.peterbaxterafrica.com
accessed 21/02/2014

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶ A. R. Wilkinson, “Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment,”
[p11@www.rhodesia.nl/wilknison](http://www.rhodesia.nl/wilknison) accessed 21/02/2014

He also pointed out women's contribution to the nationalist war effort by stating that women carried out intelligence work for the guerrillas and also provided them with food.⁹⁷

On the other hand, ZAPU came under criticism for allying with MK - the OAU and the Frontline States alleged that ZAPU had no business forging foreign alliances in the face of its inability to join forces with ZANU. Nevertheless, the alliance went ahead and against this background the combined MK/ZAPU unit numbering just under 200 men crossed the Zambezi at Gwaii Gorge situated between Victoria Falls and Kazungula. The presence of the group in the Wankie Game Reserve was quickly detected, with the first major engagement occurring on 13 August between the combined guerrillas and a Rhodesian Force consisting of units of the Rhodesia African Rifles and the Police Anti-terrorist units (PATU).⁹⁸ During this operation, code named Nickel, the Rhodesians encountered stiff resistance, neutralizing the guerrilla force only after hours and the intervention of Hunter strike jets deployed by the Rhodesia Airforce. The operation was concluded in September 1967 with the loss of seven members of the Rhodesian Security forces and some 30 guerrillas killed recorded. This had been a significantly more challenging encounter hitherto, proving that the days of easy victory over untrained amateurs were at an end.

During the month of December 1967 and into January 1968, more than 2000 ANC/ZAPU insurgents crossed into Rhodesia from Zambia and camped at Chewore, a controlled hunting area in the north eastern part of the country. For several months they moved backwards and forward shuttling in supplies ferried across the Zambezi by inflatable watercraft. Meanwhile,

⁹⁷ Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, held on 11/01/2018

⁹⁸ E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union, 1961-87 A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*, Africa World Press, Asmara, 2005, p107.

constant contact was maintained with Lusaka by high frequency radio transmitters.⁹⁹ Their temporary fortification was carefully concealed from aerial observation with a Vietcong style network of underground tunnel. They carried a wide footpath through the sand veld as they worked to carry in supplies, which alerted the attention of a patrolling game scout who in turn alerted authorities. A large scale mobilization of manpower immediately followed the formation of a Joint Operational Command and Operation Cauldron swung units into action over a few running battles. Rhodesian war historian, Hendrick Ellert recorded the comments of Chief Superintendent of Special Branch whose observation was that the failure of ZAPU to make any meaningful headway could be explained by the fact that no effort had so far been made to secure the support of the local people in advance of large scale incursions.¹⁰⁰

The same phenomenon had also characterized the catastrophic failures of ZANU's early military adventures. Local people suddenly finding large numbers of armed strange men in their midst, almost invariably reported their presence to the authorities or allowed information to leak leading to the inevitable capture of the guerrillas at the hands of the well-trained and equipped Rhodesian Security forces. Though the Rhodesian Security forces were not the largest in the region, they were among the most battle-ready and effective. Both the Rhodesian Security forces and guerrillas involved in the skirmishes during this early phase of the war were men as neither side considered it prudent yet to involve women on the battlefield. At the close of the 1960s both parties withdrew from the struggle for a period of reflection, out of which would come a renewed effort and for greater success.¹⁰¹ The exigent demands of the war made the two nationalist parties to consider getting women to participate in the liberation struggle. During 1969, ZANU recruited a number of men and women from

⁹⁹ P. Baxter, "the Emergence of the Zimbabwe Liberation Struggle
p7@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/2014

¹⁰⁰Ibid, p8

¹⁰¹Ibid

Zimbabwe to be trained in basic intelligence work in Zambia. Initially, they were to cross into Rhodesia via Chirundu and Victoria Falls as legitimate travellers and report back on the mood of the rural population. In time their roles increased. In the opinion of Retired Brigadier Mazinyane, the participation of women in the liberation struggle proved advantageous for liberation forces to succeed. This was because the settler regime believed that freedom fighters were men and that women could not play any role in a war.¹⁰² Guerrillas exploited that perception.

The 1966-68s' confrontation had taken place against the background of Rhodesian attempts to negotiate a British recognition of her *de facto* independence, on HMS Tiger in December 1966 and again on HMS Fearless in September 1968. The exiled nationalist movements, it seemed, still hoped that decisive defeat of the security forces would precipitate a sufficient breakdown of law and order for the British or United Nations military intervention to follow. However, by the time of the Fearless negotiations in 1968, which marked a British retreat from the Tiger terms, the nationalists had finally given up all such hopes. According to Moorcraft:

It might now be dangerous to the development of the liberation struggle to predicate that struggle on the basis of Britain as the sovereign administering power or to call for her troops in this situation. Any British troops in Rhodesia now could be solely there to frustrate the armed forces of liberation.¹⁰³

There were no armed clashes in 1969 with groups of insurgents from across the border. The severe military defeats of the past three years and the final disillusionment over Britain's attitude necessitated a reappraisal of nationalist tactics and strategy. This was confirmed in a

¹⁰²Interview with Rtd Brigadier Abel Mazinyane of Matshamhlope, Bulawayo, held on 20/08/2016

¹⁰³ P.L. Moorcraft, *A Short Thousand Years*, Galaxie Press, Harare, 1980, p20

television interview, shown on Granada Television on 1 January by James Chikerema, acting chairman of ZAPU who posited that:

this is really a protracted struggle - we do not intend to finish in a matter of 2, 3, 4 or 5 years. The type of war we fight depends on changes of tactics and I can tell you that we have changed our tactics. We will go to our own areas and infiltrate ourselves into the population and organize our masses.¹⁰⁴

Although ZAPU in early 1970 was nearing a leadership crisis, there was some attempt to put the revised nationalist party strategy, however makeshift, into action. On 17 January 1970 a South African police camp at Chisuma was attacked by some 15 insurgents. Six South African policemen were wounded, and one insurgent was apparently accidentally shot by his comrades. The police camp was considerably damaged, and the operation seems to have been planned in some detail. Before the attack, two guerrillas disguised as labourers employed by the South Africans had actually surveyed the layout of the camp. A simultaneous attack on the Victoria Falls airport damaged buildings with machine gunfire. Wilkinson went on to assert that another section of the same insurgent group made an abortive sabotage to the nearby railway line. Apart from these two main attacks, there were other less dramatic encounters between guerrillas and security forces in one of which a soldier from the Rhodesian African Rifles was killed. In another episode, nationalist commandos on the assumption of Republic status by Rhodesia (March 1970), fired at a radio station on the banks of Kariba¹⁰⁵ During 1970, court trials also provided considerable activity. Ellert notes that in 1970, ZANU used an employee of Stuttafords Transport firm, Dennis Mangwana, and his brother Cephas, to smuggle into Rhodesia a consignment of arms and communication and arranged for it to be stored at Stuttafords warehouse in Salisbury hidden inside packing cases. Special Branch penetrated the ZANU cell which Mangwana had set up for this purpose. Just

¹⁰⁴ A.R. Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment," p14
[@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson](http://www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson) accessed 21/04/2014

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

before unarmed guerrillas were to be infiltrated into Rhodesia to meet up with Mangwana the police swooped and arrested the network.¹⁰⁶

From 1971 to the end of 1972, it seemed to the Rhodesians that ZANU had completely withdrawn from the various war zones in the country. According to Wilkinson, for some time the centre stage was occupied by ZAPU and to a lesser extent by the Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI). ZAPU and ANC guerrillas trained in Cuba usually travelled by sea from Dar es Salaam. On 13 August 1968 a ZAPU guerrilla on trial before the High Court in Rhodesia described how a group of eleven men had flown to Moscow via Dar es Salaam and Cairo before being taken to a centre 40 kilometres from the soviet capital for training. During the next four months, they were taught a wide range of subjects, including the use of explosives for demolitions, grenades and weapons.¹⁰⁷ Evidence shows that the trainees were young men revealing again the need for both ZANU and ZAPU to consider getting young women in the training for the Liberation Struggle.

Squabbles in the ZAPU leadership of the early 1970s culminated in the form of break-away nationalist faction commanded by James Chikerema and George Nyandoro. This group formed the Front for the Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI) but represented a third guerrilla army which had problems of recruiting and training. FROLIZI was so desperate that it recruited men with criminal records and dubious political motivation. For the first time, members of the Rhodesian Coloured community came forward to fight; two of the most notable were members of well-known families of Zerf and Murtag. The FROLIZI operations

¹⁰⁶ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia 1962-82* Mambo Press, Gweru, 1989, p10

¹⁰⁷ A.R. Wilkinson, “ Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73:An Account and Assessment,” p15@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

were ineffectual and nearly all their guerrillas were captured by the Rhodesian security forces.¹⁰⁸

Ellert asserts that on its part, ZAPU embarked on a series of hit and run attacks against South African Police camps dotted along the Zambezi River between Kazungula, Victoria Falls, Chirundu and Kanyemba. ZAPU guerrillas attacked the Victoria Falls Airport with motor and rocket fire. During related incidents, South African Police (SAP) vehicles using the Mana Pools Game Reserve Roads detonated mines. These trans-border strikes became so serious that Ian Smith for some time closed the border with Zambia to deny Zambia export routes for her copper. Kaunda simply ignored Smith's action.¹⁰⁹

1971-73 Pearce Commission and Aftermath

In the late 1960s some attempts were made to settle the squabble between the Rhodesian white settlers and indigenous Africans. For example, talks on HMS Tiger (1966) and HMS Fearless (1968) were abortive in solving the Rhodesian problem. Then during the 1971 talks between Ian Douglas Smith and the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas Home, led to the Anglo-Rhodesian Settlement Agreement and the subsequent Pearce Commission with its test of acceptability which resulted in a massive rejection by the African people.¹¹⁰ In 1971, there was noticeable upsurge of discontent at various levels of African society. Most dramatically this was shown in the demonstrations by university students, trainee teachers and even school children after the Ministry of Education's announcement of a salary structure

¹⁰⁸ A.R. Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment," p15@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

¹⁰⁹ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian War Counter-insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia*, 1962-82, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1989, p15

¹¹⁰ The Commission tested if Rhodesians accepted the 1971 proposals agreed between the Rhodesian and British governments. In short the proposals suggested that majority rule (in Rhodesia) would not be attained until the year 2035.

for majority of black teachers. One hundred and twenty-four school children from Tegwani High school were convicted and punished for having participated in an illegal procession through Plumtree, carrying placards with slogans such as ‘People’s Liberation’, ‘Free Zimbabwe or Death’ and ‘Rightly Rhodesia is ours’ said by the magistrate to have ‘verged on subversion.’¹¹¹ In Moorcraft’s opinion, the government’s determination to introduce and enforce the discriminatory legislation aggravated existing resentment. The implementation of the Land Tenure Act in particular was resented, especially among long standing black communities threatened with eviction from areas designated as ‘white’ under the act. Political violence increased in 1970 and 1971 and in April 1971, three Rhodesian soldiers were killed when their vehicle detonated a landmine while crossing a riverbed on the Mozambique border on the north of the Mavhuradonha Mountains. Furthermore, in July a large cache of arms and equipment was found in a warehouse in Salisbury’s light industrial area. It was alleged that the contents had been supplied by ZANU for distribution to guerrilla cells in Salisbury. At the end of August, security forces clashed with a group of FRELIMO insurgents who had crossed from Mozambique into Rhodesia, south-east of Mukumbura. A Rhodesian communique declared that one of the security forces had been wounded, seven insurgents killed and one captured.¹¹²

According to Msipa, the year 1971 witnessed the return of large-scale violence reminiscent of the early 1960s. Thousands of Africans rampaged through townships and city streets destroying shops and property. In Salisbury, for example, a mob of several thousand Africans surged down Charter Road and threatened to spill into nearby European suburbs until they were stopped by armed police patrols. Dozens of men were shot dead in nights of violence and in Umtali (Mutare) the number of those slain by police far exceeded casualty figures

¹¹¹The *Chronicle*, 24 July, 1974

¹¹² P.L. Moorcraft, *A Short Thousand Years*, Galaxies Press, Harare, 1980, p27

elsewhere in the country.¹¹³ Broadly the violence signified black people's way of expressing their resentment to the implementation of the discriminatory legislation.

Furthermore, Msipa asserts that the British test of acceptability of the Anglo-Rhodesian constitutional settlement brought Bishop Abel Muzorewa of the United Methodist Church into the public eye. The Rhodesian and British governments had agreed to constitutional settlement terms in November 1971 to solve the Rhodesian crisis. The African nationalists, having formed the African National Council (ANC) in December 1971 specifically to reject the Anglo- Rhodesian proposal, persuaded Bishop Muzorewa to lead the new movement with Rev. Canaan Banana as his deputy. The Africans' response to the Pearce Commission of inquiry which arrived in Rhodesia on 11 January 1972 to test the acceptability of the constitutional proposals to the people of Rhodesia as a whole was a huge 'NO'¹¹⁴ - though the proposals had been favoured by the majority of whites. Alluding to African women's political consciousness, Grace Noko pointed out that black women were in agreement with their men and also voted 'No' to the discriminatory constitutional proposals.¹¹⁵

In Sibanda's opinion both ZAPU and ZANU recognized the chance for a fresh offensive in the new conditions created by the ANC's successful mobilization of the black population. In the cities of Bulawayo and Salisbury, demonstrations and violent protests occurred in the larger townships on a scale not seen in the early 1960s. Violence from the Smith police resulted in the death of fifteen civilians and the arresting of 1736 people - both men and

¹¹³ C.G. Msipa *In Pursuit of Freedom and Justice: A Memoir*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2015, p66

¹¹⁴ Ibidp67

¹¹⁵ Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, held on 20/08/2016

women participated in this opposition to minority white rule.¹¹⁶ This was corroborated by interviews carried out with civilians in Bulawayo. On the strength of its success the ANC was transformed into a political party and in the years ahead Bishop Muzorewa was to become a significant political force. However, Ellert asserts that the bishop proved too weak and was easily manipulated by Ian Smith who in later years lured him into the internal settlement talks, first with Joshua Nkomo and later with Ndabaningi Sithole and Chief Jeremiah Chirau.

To improve the flow of information from the rural areas, the British South Africa Police (BSAP) formed a low-grade intelligence wing which was known as the Ground Coverage Unit. The Ground Coverage Officers channelled their report to the Special Branch and to their own District and Provincial police commanders who forwarded them to the Officer Commanding Ground Coverage at Special Branch headquarters. The essential work of the ground coverage which was largely funded and directed by the Special Branch was to spread intelligence network across the country and deep into the rural areas hoping to get information about strangers moving through the remote parts of the country. The idea was to stop the rural population from being incited into violence by the guerillas.¹¹⁷

According to Wilkinson on 23 March 1972, at Mbeya in Tanzania ZAPU and ZANU signed a protocol establishing a Joint Military command. Though this failed to get off the ground, both organisations, recognized the failure of previous tactics and the need for a new approach. The Chairman of ZANU, Herbert Chitepo, told a Danish journalist that his organisation believed open confrontation in outlying areas should be abandoned in favour of other tactics. As Chitepo argued, "It is useless to engage in conventional warfare against well-equipped

¹¹⁶E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union 1961-87. A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*, Africa World Press, Asmara, 2005, p206

¹¹⁷H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia 1962-82* Mambo Press, Gweru, 1989, p16

Rhodesian and South African troops along the Zambezi.”¹¹⁸ ZAPU too had cause for reflection and their military views also had undergone some change. One would have expected some positive results from the unity established in 1972. Unfortunately for the nationalist cause the Joint Military Command failed to take off the ground.

Another observation made by Wilkinson is that during 1973 ZAPU commanders had introduced a new tactic of using the landmine in the conflict along the border with Zambia. Rhodesian security forces had been expecting such a development following extensive use of mines in both Mozambique and the Caprivi Strip. In August of the same year a farmer from Sinoia was injured when his car hit a mine in Mana Pools Reserve area. An attempt had also been made to sabotage the railway line close to the Victoria Falls. In addition, in October an army vehicle struck a mine in the Chete Game Reserve near Lake Kariba. A Rhodesian army sergeant was killed and a trooper wounded. ZAPU claimed responsibility for all these episodes.¹¹⁹ Ellert notes the activities undertaken by ZANU in the meanwhile. It opened another front and guerrillas began infiltrating into the north east of Rhodesia through Mozambique, using FRELIMO routes and bases along the Zambezi River. ZANU relied on the ethnic and cultural affinity of the Korekore people who predominate in the north-east and in the Tete Province of Mozambique. From Christmas of 1972 several farmsteads in Mangula, Centenary and Shamva areas were targets for hit – and - run raids by small bands of ZANLA guerrillas. The guerrillas apparently first obtained from local villagers the names of unpopular farmers in the area and selected them for attacks. The guerrillas would surround, then rack the farmhouses with machine gun fire, lobbing grenades through windows and blast buildings with explosives before leaving with a burst of automatic fire. The Rhodesian

¹¹⁸ A.R. Wilson, “Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment,” p15@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

¹¹⁹ Ibid

security units coming to the scene were often delayed by landmines planted on the approach roads before the attack, which gave the guerrillas time to disappear into the darkness.¹²⁰ Some of the occupants of the farmhouses, men, women and children were either killed or seriously injured.

These attacks in which civilians were killed outraged the white community and raised moral and practical questions whether in terms of morality, the end justified the means and whether in practical terms the means were likely to achieve the end. In Wilkinson's opinion, the whites in Rhodesia failed to recognize that guerrilla warfare was essentially the weapon of the weak against the strong. The nationalist view was that the system of white supremacy had to be attacked where it was weakest and they saw no reason for adapting the so-called rules of war which put them at a disadvantage compared to the whites.¹²¹ Furthermore, ZANLA operations were apparently aimed at undermining both the white economy and the myth of white invincibility. Hence, the guerrillas attacked the District Commissioner's office - a symbol of the white administration at Mt Darwin and a few days later killed two Government Land Inspectors and captured a third, who was paraded as a ZANLA prisoner-of-war in front of villagers on the way to a base outside Rhodesia where he could be held hostage against the Rhodesian government's treatment of captured guerrillas.¹²²

Ellert notes that the violence perpetrated by guerrillas was mainly directed at the male administrative staff. By attacking isolated farming communities the guerrillas hoped to damage the agricultural industry and threaten effectively the maintenance of security in rural

¹²⁰ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War. Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia 1962-82*, Mambo Press, Gweru 1989, p20

¹²¹ A.R. Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-75: An Account and Assessment," p16@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

¹²² Ibid, p17

areas. By attacking black farm worker's property, many of whom were aliens from Malawi or Mozambique, guerrillas hoped to persuade them to return to their home countries in order to leave white farms short of labour¹²³, a move which was designed to cripple the settler economy. The outbreak of insurgent activities during the first half of 1973 coincided with a noticeable decline in the number of immigrants to Rhodesia compared with 1972. Another observation by Ellert is that on more than one occasion, guerrillas held up teaching staff and kidnapped school children, as potential recruits for their course. In a daring but abortive raid in July 1973 on St Albert's Mission School near Mt Darwin, guerrillas kidnapped 273 school children and members of staff, most of whom were rescued by Rhodesian security forces.¹²⁴ Rhodesian Special Brand reports indicated that this phase of the ZANLA operations had been given the official blessing of spirit mediums (*masvikiro or mhondoro* in Shona). Three spirit mediums from Mozambique were to lend spiritual support to ZANLA in their campaigns.¹²⁵ It is plausible to argue that getting a blessing from the spirit mediums must have boosted the morale of the guerrillas to keep on fighting against the enemy.

In addition to a change in tactics from the open confrontation of previous operations, a new dimension to the conflict was added by these attacks with the guerrillas succeeding to a great extent in winning over or intimidating local tribesmen. Baxter asserted that farmers had been placed in a situation where black servants and labourers were subjected to the influence of guerrillas.¹²⁶ He also asserted that reference to ancestral spirits and heroes of the First Chimurenga of the 1890s were common and provided inspiration for many nationalists. According to Ellert, the Rhodesian government responded with a variety of counter-

¹²³ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War. Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia 1962-82*, Mambo Press, Gweru 1989, p21

¹²⁴ Ibid, p22

¹²⁵ Ibid

¹²⁶ P. Baxter, "The Emergence of the Zimbabwe liberation struggle," p8@www.peterbaxterafrica.com accessed 21/02/2014

insurgency measures, including claiming to have enlisted the support of some ethnic spirit mediums on their side. In addition to the distribution of warning leaflets with pictures of dead guerrillas, a technique used in previous operations, pamphlets, and quotation messages from important spirit mediums were distributed in affected areas. Forming a Joint Operations Command (JOC), code-named Operation Hurricane was part of the response by the Rhodesians.¹²⁷

Wilkinson further notes that the Rhodesian authorities drew heavily on British counter-insurgent experience in Kenya and Malaya where protected villages had been set up to prevent contact between insurgents and local civilians. The Rhodesian army still had both white and black veterans who had served either in Kenya or Malaya. It is perhaps significant that some of the harsh measures like forced removal of whole communities and imposition of collective fines in areas where the population was suspected of assisting guerrillas were dropped as they had the effect of increasing animosity towards the British administration and were not effective in denying manpower or food to the Chinese insurgents (in Malaya).¹²⁸ However, in Rhodesia the government was determined to increase, not to drop such harsh measures. When introducing the Law and Order (Maintenance) Amendment Bill in 1972 making death the maximum penalty for the presence of guerrillas, the Minister of Law and Order said, “Government is determined to make absolutely clear to anyone contemplating terrorist activities or assisting terrorists in any way he will do so at the risk of his own life.”¹²⁹ However, according to Siwela Sibangani, such measures intensified the black population’s

¹²⁷ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War. Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia 1962-82*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1989, p23

¹²⁸ A.R. Wilkinson, “Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73: An Account and Assessment,” p18@www.rhodesia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

¹²⁹ T. Kirk, “Politics and Rhodesia,” *African Affairs* vol 74, No. 294 Oxford University Press, p6@www.jstor/stable accessed 19/07/2012

awareness of colonial oppression. The effect was to strengthen the bond between the civilians and the guerrillas as the latter would free black people from colonial bondage.¹³⁰

According to Ellert, in order to deal with the guerrillas' threat internally, members of the Special Branch were deployed to various base camps established in various parts of Rhodesia. By early 1973 they reported that both ZPRA and ZANLA guerrillas were receiving the support of villagers who provided them with food, clothes and information on the activities of the Rhodesian Security Forces. The Rhodesians thought that if they could isolate the enemy from the local population, they might be able to regain lost ground. Operation Overload 1 and 2 was conceived in early 1973 in direct response to guerrilla successes. It provided for a creation of a series of protected villages (PVs) similar in concept to those established in Malaya, Vietnam and Mozambique. By the middle of 1973, thousands of villagers had been forcibly driven into detention centres at Msengezi mission, Gutsa, Heya and Mukumbura.¹³¹ Villagers forcibly driven into detention centres were rural civilians, men, women and children.

Kirk asserts that as part of the scheme to bring villagers into line, District Commissioners were empowered to impose collective punishments on villagers suspected of assisting guerrillas. Inability to raise cash to pay the fines led to confiscation of livestock as alternative to cash fines. This move actually strengthened villagers' ties with the guerrillas. The disposed communities were often resettled under conditions tantamount to banishment in their own land. Intimidation and terror were familiar features of insurgency-type warfare and usually practiced in varying degrees by both sides. Furthermore, Kirk notes that indiscriminate use of terror was counterproductive in its effects whether perpetrated by guerrillas or the Rhodesian

¹³⁰ Interview with Siwela Sibangani of Ntabazinduna Flats, Bulawayo held on 14/02/2018

¹³¹ H. Ellert, *The Rhodesian Front War. Counter-Insurgency and Guerrilla War in Rhodesia 1962- 82*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 1989, p24

security forces. However, despite the counterproductive effect of indiscriminate terror, it was possible for the situation to degenerate into one where innocent civilians became victims of the atrocities of both sides.¹³²

According to Wilkinson, from December 1972 war casualties increased, with over 25 security forces and over 170 guerrillas killed in addition to at least 9 white and over 30 black civilians. Many of the casualties were victims of landmine explosives; it was land mine explosions which prompted the Rhodesia government to implement its frequently repeated threat to close the border with Zambia. In addition, Wilkinson asserts that in January 1973 a South African vehicle detonated a mine on a track near the Zambezi in north-western Rhodesia. Two South African policemen were killed while 3 Rhodesian and 2 South African policemen were injured.¹³³ The Rhodesian Government in a statement of the same day (9 January 1973) argued that closure of the border with Zambia had been taken for security reasons. The hope was that economic pressure from the closing of the border would force President Kaunda to take a stronger line with the insurgents operating out of Zambian bases. But Zambia turned the tables on Rhodesia by accepting the closure as permanent despite Rhodesia's decision to re-open the border some weeks later.¹³⁴

Conclusion

¹³² T, Kirk, "Politics and Rhodesia," African Affairs vol 74, No. 294 Oxford University Press, p7@www.jstor/stable accessed 19/07/2012

¹³³A .R Wilkinson, "Insurgency in Rhodesia, 1957-73:An Account and Assessment," p19@www.rodedia.nl/wilkinson accessed 21/02/2014

¹³⁴Ibid,p20

The chapter has shown the ambivalent role of women in the nationalist violence from the 'Zhii' riots to the 1970s. Whilst in the Bulawayo chapter of the 'Zhii' riots women were largely inactive in the violence against colonialism, in Harare women actively participated in the resistance against colonial oppression with a significant number of women forming part of those demonstrators who marched to Stoddart Hall to demand the release of their leaders who had been detained for furthering the activities of the banned ANC. Furthermore, the wives of detainees fasted outside Sir Edgar Whitehead's Office in protest against continued detention of black nationalists. Women were among the demonstrators who reported violence when the police and soldiers sent by the Prime Minister fired teargas at the peaceful demonstrators. The colonial regime eventually granted bail to the detainees. The people who protested against the 1961 constitution comprised both men and women. As demonstrated in the larger body of the chapter, some 503 women were arrested for protesting against a racially biased constitution. In 1964 when Ian Smith restricted Nkomo and other ZAPU officials, both men and women were involved in the violence by the demonstrators who stoned police vehicles and destroyed government property. However, when it came to the *Zhanda* 1st Battalion violence women apparently did not participate in the attacks that were carried out by young men. As for the first ZANU and ZAPU recruits who went for training in guerrilla warfare in the period 1964-5, women were largely not involved. Also, women were not amongst the guerrillas who fought the 1966 battle of Chinhoyi. Both the Rhodesian Security forces and guerrillas who fought in the late 1960s were men. However, the 1972 Pearce Commission sent to assess the acceptability of the Anglo-Rhodesian proposals was confronted by an African rejection which involved both men and women. As the Second Chimurenga escalated in the 1970s both ZANLA and ZPRA forces included

women among their soldiers. The exigencies of the war made the guerrillas realize the need to include women among their forces.

Chapter Four

ZPRA and the Liberation Struggle, 1973-9

Introduction

Thousands of young people crossed the borders of the country to receive military training to fight against the Rhodesian security forces who were superior and well trained compared to the young guerrillas. A lot of university students, even secondary school boys and girls either willingly or forcibly abandoned their studies to go and fight for black majority rule in Southern Rhodesia. Others stayed behind and chose to provide moral and logistical support to the liberation struggle. Their vision was a free Zimbabwe, where all men and women were treated equally, where the black majority would assert themselves as free citizens enjoying every facet of this nation.¹ It was a spirit of self-determination, also inspired by events in other African countries that had liberated themselves. In this struggle for independence for Zimbabwe many women played different roles, including as combatants and in other war supportive duties. Fay Chung asserted that it was essential for women to get involved in the liberation struggle as it proved more advantageous for liberation forces to succeed. This was because the colonial settler regime believed that freedom fighters were men and that women could not play any meaningful role in the war, so they tended to ignore women while they would harass men at roadblocks.² More reasons for the involvement of women in the liberation struggle are discussed in the section *Motivation for joining the liberation struggle*.

¹A. Mazinyane, "[Pan African News Editor Speaks,](http://www.panafricannews.com)"@www.panafricannews.com accessed 15/01/1

² F. Chung "Role of female fighters in the Liberation war," @www.financialgazette.co.zw. accessed 10/01/2018

Motivation for joining the liberation struggle

The works of Norma Krieger and Josephine Nhongo-Simbanegavi provide theoretical lenses through which one can glean the key arguments for the present chapter. No single straight forward answer really explains what inspired young men and women to join the struggle. Norma Krieger asserted that the motives of young men and women changed with changing circumstances. She stated that one fifteen year old girl joined the guerrillas because she had witnessed government forces beating her aunt and left her for dead.³ As such she wanted to avenge the cruelty her aunt had suffered at the hands of Rhodesian forces. According to David Maxwell (quoted by Tanya Lyons), “some young girls seized the opportunity of the war to escape the drudgery of domestic chores and replace them with attention of young men with guns.”⁴ Lyons also asserted that some girls were motivated to join the guerrillas by the academic education offered by the nationalist forces in their camps in Zambia and overseas.⁵ However, for Terrence Ranger, some young men and women were aware of the colonial oppression that the indigenous people suffered at the hands of white Rhodesians. He argues that the peasants resented the experience of colonial conquest, loss of land in the 1940s and colonial intervention on economic activities.⁶ So this spurred them to join the guerrilla war. Hence, when guerrillas arrived from 1976 onwards, peasants collaborated with them by providing the guerrillas with shelter, food, clothes and other forms of support.

The above views expressed by Ranger were corroborated by interviewees who gave me oral testimonies in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. Zephania Nkomo who crossed the border via Botswana into Zambia for military training in 1976 at the age of 24 asserted that many

³ N. Krieger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War, Peasant Voices*, Baobab Books, Harare, 1995, p48

⁴ T. Lyons “Guns and Guerilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean Struggle,” PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of politics ,University of Adelaide, South Australia,1999,p105

⁵ Ibid, p112

⁶ T.O. Ranger, *Peasant Consciousness and Guerrilla war in Zimbabwe*, James Currey, Oxford, 1985, p169

young people like himself joined the struggle because of the injustices the African people suffered under the white settler regime.⁷ The same reasoning was proffered by Wilfred Baleni who crossed into Zambia to be trained at Chipata Guerrilla Training Centre in 1974. In his words, “I had just finished ‘O’ level and could not proceed any further because I had not passed well enough to meet the required grade to Form Five. Under the colonial regime the African system of education made it mandatory for one to have a good first class pass at ‘O’ level in order to proceed to ‘A’ level.”⁸ Wilfred Baleni trained in Zambia for ten months and was later sent to Russia for further one-year advanced training.⁹ Siphon Mhlanga, currently the Managing Director of Syfo Tiles asserted that Peter Sikhwili, who was the ZAPU representative in Francistown, Botswana, encouraged him to join the war. This was after Sikhwili had explained to Siphon Mhlanga the injustices of colonial oppression that the black people suffered at the hands of the white Rhodesians. For example, the whites had taken away the fertile land from Africans and banished them to infertile reserves, where they were overcrowded. Africans had been forced to destock. Furthermore, political power had been taken away from African chiefs who were made puppets under the control of white Native Commissioners. So in 1975 Siphon Mhlanga went to Zambia to be trained at Mwembeshi Camp for one year.¹⁰

Not only young men but also young women were motivated by the racial discrimination and general colonial oppression that Africans suffered at the hands of white Rhodesians to join the guerrillas. This was adequately explained by Urapeleng Nkomo who voluntarily joined the war in 1975. For instance, Africans were not allowed to buy in certain shops, like Huddon and Sly, which were reserved for whites. Also, they were prohibited from walking on

⁷Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, 11/01/2018

⁸ Interview with Wilfred Baleni of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 10/01/2018

⁹Ibid

¹⁰Interview with Siphon Mhlanga of Hillside, Bulawayo, 4/01/2018

pavements in town.¹¹ Grace Noko asserted that in addition to the demeaning practices mentioned by Urapeleng Nkomo, Africans were expected to lift their hats and bow their heads when they met whites in town. Also, whites referred to their African servants as ‘garden boy’ ‘house girl’ or ‘tea boy’ showing that they had no respect for adult Africans. Grace Noko explained, “I resented it when my mother was addressed by her first name by her employers she used to work for in Hillside suburb.”¹² So she too willingly joined the guerrillas and was trained for a year at Morogoro Camp in Tanzania in 1975.¹³ Another voluntary female ZPRA ex-combatant was Portia Ndlovu who joined the struggle in 1977 and underwent nine months training at Mkushi Camp in Zambia.¹⁴ Like Wilfred Baleni mentioned earlier, she resented that she could not proceed with her academic education beyond ‘O’ level though she had passed her Form four.¹⁵ Seeing her cousins who were combatants and occasionally visited their uncle at a village near the Rhodesian-Botswana border prompted Hazel Sibanda to join the war in 1972. She initially trained for six months at Mwembeshi Camp in Zambia before proceeding to Havana in Cuba for further one year training.¹⁶

The revolutionary ideas of the Russian October 1917 Revolution (which African pupils learnt in secondary school at ‘O’ level) also inspired some young Zimbabweans to join the liberation struggle. This applied to Sierra Shumba, who with other boys left Chegato Mission in 1975 to join ZPRA guerrillas at Mwembeshi Camp in Zambia for a year, then proceeded to Mgagao Camp in Tanzania where he underwent further training for nine months.¹⁷ As for

¹¹Interview with Urapeleng Nkomo of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 22/01/2018

¹² Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 16/02/2018

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ Interview with Portia Ndlovu of Colorado Farm, Somabhula, 14/02/2018

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Interview with Hazel Sibanda of Nkulumane, Bulawayo, 25/01/2018

¹⁷Interview with Sierra Shumba of Mkoba 17, Gweru, 10/01/2018

Ndabezinhle 'Butho' Nkomo, he asserted that it was the 'in thing' in his home area of Gwanda in Matabeleland South for teenage boys to go and join the liberation struggle. So in December 1976 he left home in the company of other boys, at the age of nineteen, to go to Zambia where they trained at Mlungushi Camp for six months. He later proceeded to Russia where he underwent further training for nine months.¹⁸ In the case of Marshall Mpopfu, it was his involvement in students' protests in 1971 at David Livingstone High School in Ntabazinduna that prompted him to participate in the liberation struggle. He left the country in 1972, initially trained in Tanzania for six months then he did further ten months training in Russia.¹⁹ Lovemore Ngwenya of Selborne Park in Bulawayo was inspired by the colonial oppression suffered by Rhodesian Africans to join the Second Chimurenga in 1976. For instance, he resented the fact that whites lived in spacious houses in suburbs, such as Hillside and Selborne Park, while blacks were accommodated in townships, such as Makokoba and Nguboyenja where they were overcrowded. He was also incensed by the racial segregation practised on the Rhodesia Railway trains, where first and second class coaches were reserved for whites. Indians and Coloureds used third class coaches and Africans had to use fourth class coaches.²⁰ He trained at Mwembeshi Camp in Zambia for nine months and was 26 years old when he joined the liberation struggle.²¹

As for Retired Brigadier Abel Mazinyane, he was also motivated by the Russian Revolution of October 1917 as well as the underground activities of ZAPU to leave the country and join the ZPRA guerrillas. He was 21 years old when he left the country in 1968 to train as a ZPRA combatant. He trained for nine months at Morogoro Camp in Tanzania. After the training he was deployed in Bulawayo in 1970 where he engaged in urban warfare together with

¹⁸ Interview with Ndabezinhle Nkomo of Barbourfields Bulawayo, 22/01/2018

¹⁹ Interview with Marshall Mpopfu of Mpopoma, Bulawayo, 16 February, 2018

²⁰ Interview with Lovemore Ngwenya of Selbourne Park, Bulawayo, 2/02/2018

²¹ Ibid

Lovemore Ngwenya and other guerrillas.²² From the above interviews, it is clear that ZPRA guerrillas were motivated to join the Second Chimurenga by various factors, depending on their circumstances. On the other hand, not all combatants were voluntary recruits.

According to Lyons some boys and girls were abducted from their schools and forced to join the fighters. In January 1977, ZPRA guerrillas press-ganged the children from Manama Mission and force-marched them to Botswana at gun point. Later, the students were airlifted to Zambia for training.²³ This was corroborated by Pauline Chiramba of Lundi Park in Gweru and Sihle Gabela of Mkoba 14, Gweru, who were among the abducted students.²⁴ They both trained for twelve months at Mkushi Camp in Zambia. Pauline Chiramba elaborated that the period of training varied according to the courses the recruits were training for - some trained for six months, others nine months and others for a year.²⁵

Jeremy Brickhill, who joined the war as a ZPRA recruit, analysed the calibre of youths recruited by ZPRA. He asserted that the majority of the recruits were Ndebele-speaking youngsters and that only 8% of its members were over 26 years old when they joined the war. About 84% of ZPRA members were between 18 and 25 years old when they trained. Over 53% of the recruits had been engaged in urban wage employment prior to joining ZPRA. About 50% came from peasant households and 52% from urban working class homes.²⁶

²² Interview with Rtd Brigadier Abel Mazinyane of Matshamhlope, Bulawayo, 11/01/2018

²³T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerrilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle," PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Politics, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 1999, p12

²⁴Interview with P. Chiramba of Lundi Park, Gweru and Sihle Gabela of Mkoba 14, Gweru, 19/01/2018.

²⁵Ibid

²⁶ J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU 1976-1979," in N. Bhebhe & T. Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War, Vol 1*, UZ Publications Harare, 2000, p66

The implication was that the recruits were familiar with grievances of both the African urban workers and the rural peasantry. In educational terms about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the recruits were very literate as they had attained some secondary education. Some recruits reported that they were recruited straight from their jobs into the nationalist army.²⁷ In addition, many ZPRA recruits said they had been members of branches of the ZAPU Youth League before they left the country to join the armed struggle.²⁸

It was in these urban environments that the clandestine structures of the party survived most effectively. Besides their experience in the party many recruits were also active in trade unions. This was corroborated by some of my informants. For instance, Siphon Mhlanga of Hillside asserted that he had been a member of the ZAPU Youth League for 3 years before he left the country to join the liberation struggle. He had been a member of Mzilikazi Youth League cell.²⁹ Zephania Nkomo, a railway shunter at the time he left the country to join the liberation struggle, said he had been both a member of ZAPU Youth League (Barbourfields cell) as well as an active trade unionist. He was a committee member of the Rhodesia Railways trade union which agitated for better working conditions for railway African employees³⁰

Siphon Mhlanga also said ZAPU Youth League helped the international community to be aware of the grievances of black Rhodesians. For instance, in 1976 some of its members attended the 11th Youth Festival in Havana, Cuba. Participants from ZPRA came from

²⁷ J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU 1976-1979," in N. Bhebe & T. Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War, Vol 1*, UZ Publications Harare, 2000, p66

p,67

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Interview with Siphon Mhlanga of Hillside, Bulawayo, 4/01/2018

³⁰ Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, 11/01/2018

Zambia and other students came from Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, Jamaica, Venezuela, South Africa and Panama. There were also presidents from liberation movements, including Joshua Nkomo, Robert Mugabe, Oliver Tambo and Yasser Arafat. Siphon Mhlanga was leader of the Rhodesian delegation of students by virtue of being the leader of Rhodesian students in Cuba³¹

Furthermore, Brickhill observed that it was the party structures which gave ZPRA access to many communities, in particular in urban areas where guerrillas could not easily recruit and therefore provided the army with many recruits who had the experience of politics, trade unionism and the influence of urban capitalism.³² ZPRA guerrillas relied to a great extent on party branches and party contacts for support during the war. Food, medical supplies, transport and intelligence was provided to the guerrillas by their local party contacts.³³

Black Women and ZPRA and the Second Chimurenga

According to Brickhill, by the end of the war ZPRA had over 20000 soldiers in its ranks, the bulk of whom had been recruited and trained between 1976 and 1978. Ten percent of ZPRA soldiers were women, who were mainly incorporated into one unit, the ZPRA Women's Brigade.³⁴ Tanya Lyons asserted that ZAPU's focus when training women seemed to be preparing them for the new Zimbabwe rather than for bush fighting.³⁵ However, my field-work proved that Lyons seems to have misinterpreted the situation. Grace Noko asserted that

³¹ Interview with Siphon Mhlanga of Hillside, Bulawayo, 04/01/2018

³² J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU 1976-1979," in N. Bhebe & T. Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War, Vol 1*, UZ Publications Harare, 2000, p68

³³ Ibid

³⁴ J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU 1976-1979," in N. Bhebe & T. Ranger, *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War, Vol 1*, UZ Publications Harare, 2000, p66

³⁵ T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerrilla Girls. Women in the Zimbabwean Struggle," PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Politics, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 1999, p128

the liberation struggle would have been incomplete without women who were trained in various courses.³⁶ This was corroborated by Hazel Sibanda who explained that some women engaged in administrative duties while others trained as nurses, teachers or instructors of other female guerrillas. She herself engaged in intelligence work as well as administration.³⁷ She went on to explain that nurses and medics treated ZPRA soldiers who got hurt either in training or in combat. Tailors sewed uniforms for the guerrillas.³⁸ Pauline Chiramba was a platoon medic while Sihle Gabela trained as an immigration and customs officer.³⁹ These courses were needed for the war effort though they would remain useful in the aftermath of the war. Lyons' research revealed that initially women who joined the guerillas were mainly used to carry supplies and weapons to the front. This was a dangerous task as it made the women vulnerable to attacks by Rhodesian soldiers.⁴⁰ Zephania Nkomo also alluded to the significance of those women who remained in the country as members of ZAPU. He explained that besides providing food to the guerrillas, they served as commissariats and also carried out reconnaissance work⁴¹

ZAPU's Mkushi Camp in Zambia was a training camp for women according to Portia Ndlovu who trained in that camp as an Immigration and Custom Duties Officer.⁴² Another female ex-combatant who trained in that camp was Urapeleng Nkomo who worked in the Communications Department. She asserted that other women were engaged as security guards since Rhodesian forces could attack them. If the security guards detected a contingent

³⁶ Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 16/02/2018

³⁷ Interview with Hazel Sibanda of Nkulumane, Bulawayo, 25/01/2018

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Interview with P. Chiramba and S. Gabela of Gweru, 19/01/2018

⁴⁰ T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle" PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Politics, University of Adelaide, Australia 1999, p113

⁴¹ Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, 11/01/2018

⁴² Interview with Portia Ndlovu of Somabhula, 14/02/2018

of Rhodesian soldiers, they would warn others and they would all go into hiding instead of engaging the enemy in a battle. This was because Rhodesian soldiers were not only well-trained but also well-equipped with weapons compared to the guerrillas.⁴³ Lyons asserted that ZAPU insisted on separating the women from men into specific women's training camps. So in 1977 ZAPU established Victory Camp for women cadres in Zambia. The women were given political and military training.⁴⁴ My research confirmed the above assertion. Grace Noko who worked as an instructor at Mwembeshi Training Camp asserted that women received both political and military training. She went on to explain that the women mainly served as political commissariats as well as instructors for military training. She also asserted that ZAPU did not send female combatants to the front to fight the enemy - they usually sent men.⁴⁵ Though Noko did not give the reason for such a practice, it is plausible to regard it as gender bias against women because it seemed to imply that women were not capable of fighting against the enemy. Lyons' research revealed that ZAPU treated women differently from ZANU which trained its female guerrillas together with male recruits.⁴⁶

Betty Dube who trained at Victory Camp as a political commissar and also engaged in intelligence work confirmed the idea that ZAPU had no intention of sending female combatants to the battlefield. She went further to assert that Joshua Nkomo had declared that women would be expected to fight the enemy only if all the male combatants had perished in the war. Nevertheless, this did not mean that female combatants did not risk being attacked

⁴³ Interview with Urapeleng Nkomo of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 22/02/2018

⁴⁴ T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerrilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle," PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of politics, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 1999, p126

⁴⁵ Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 16/02/2018

⁴⁶ T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerrilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle," PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of politics, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 1999, p126

by the Rhodesian forces. So they also needed military training for their own safety.⁴⁷ Taurai Moyo who was also in Victory Camp elaborated, “we were educated by the guerrilla fighters on the political reasons for the war. So many of us decided to remain in Botswana so that we could proceed to Zambia for training, despite the Rhodesian government’s program for parents to bring their children back to Rhodesia. In Zambia we were trained on how to use guns and we were keen to become soldiers as male guerrillas. However, we never got the chance to fight against the enemy.”⁴⁸

The fact that ZAPU did not want to send female combatants to the front did not necessarily protect them from the violence of war. Hazel Sibanda who survived the Rhodesian bombardment on Mkushi camp in 1978 explained that, “It was frightening and traumatic to witness the death of my colleagues. I found it hard to believe that someone I had been talking to earlier on the same day was dead.”⁴⁹ Lyons revealed more details about the attack on the camp by the Rhodesian forces. She asserted that ZAPU’s Mkushi Camp in Zambia, a refugee and training camp for women, was bombed by the Rhodesian forces on 17 October 1978. Freedom Camp suffered the same fate on the same day. She further explained that large quantities of arms, explosives and equipment were seized and destroyed. More than 1 500 combatants, including trained and armed women, were killed and many others injured.⁵⁰ It can be argued that Rhodesians represented women as victims to a male terrorist campaign. Yet women’s participation in the military struggle proved essential for the liberation forces to succeed.

⁴⁷Interview with Betty Dube of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 22/01/2018

⁴⁸Interview with Taurai Moyo of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 25/01/2018

⁴⁹ Interview with Hazel Sibanda of Nkulumane, Bulawayo, 25/01/2018

⁵⁰T. Lyons “Guns and Guerrilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle,” PhD Thesis submitted to university of Adelaide, South Australia, 1999, p128-9

Urban Warfare

In Siphon Mhlanga's words, "ZPRA's aim behind urban warfare was to cripple the Rhodesian economy but it wished to minimize killing civilians who were likely to be caught in the crossfire. Besides valuing human life from a spiritual point of view ZPRA was aware that manpower would be needed to rebuild the destroyed economy."⁵¹ He elaborated that attacking economic targets included destroying communication lines such as railway lines which were crucial to the Rhodesian economy.⁵² Rtd Brigadier Abel Mazinyane confirmed the view that the nationalist forces embarked on urban warfare to sabotage the Rhodesian economy. He explained that ZPRA embarked on urban warfare mid-1976 by deploying small groups of guerrillas in Bulawayo and other urban centres. Furthermore, he asserted that in order to make the urban warfare strategy effective, ZPRA introduced a component of urban warfare in its syllabuses in 1977.⁵³ In an article in *The Chronicle*, Abel Mazinyane elaborated that the component provided special training that was suitable to the urban environment and targeted destroying the Rhodesian economic institutions such as fuel depots.⁵⁴ Lovemore Ngwenya, who specialized in urban reconnaissance confirmed what Siphon Mhlanga said about destroying the Rhodesian economy. Explaining further he asserted that ZPRA wanted to sabotage big companies such as Dunlop Tyre Company⁵⁵

Ngwenya explained that he specialized in military intelligence. Early in 1978, he together with other four combatants were supposed to join Pilate Sibanda who had been deployed in Bulawayo to carry out a reconnaissance mission. In his own words he said, "Our task was to identify targets for attack and they included the big companies in the city. We had trained in

⁵¹Interview with Siphon Mhlanga of Hillside, Bulawayo, 04/01/2018

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Interview with Rtd Brigadier Abel Mazinyane of Mahlamhlope, Bulawayo, 11/01/2018

⁵⁴ *The Chronicle*, 26 July 2016

⁵⁵ Interview with Lovemore Ngwenya of Selbourne Park, Bulawayo, 02/02/2018

urban warfare.”⁵⁶ In an article in *The Sunday News* Ngwenya (whose pseudo name was Cde Mkhize) related that in Bulawayo the three of them were accommodated at different houses. They had lost contact with two other comrades along the way to Bulawayo. Ngwenya, Sibanda and Mujibha had an arms cache along Luveve railway line where they kept grenades, an FNSO rifle and a pistol taken from a farmer in Umguza area on their way to Bulawayo. They then carried out the reconnaissance mission until one fateful night.⁵⁷

Narrating what transpired that night on 1 June 1978, Ngwenya said the people he was staying with in Luveve Township decided to go for a beer drink at a nearby shebeen because it was month end - that was end of May. At the shebeen Sibanda had an altercation with a man whom he correctly suspected of being a member of the Rhodesian Special Branch. The altercation degenerated into a physical fight and the man pleaded for mercy and managed to convince Sibanda that he was a member of ZAPU. When Sibanda relaxed, the Rhodesian Special Branch agent sneaked out and conveyed information to his colleagues that there was a ‘terrorist’ at the shebeen. The Rhodesian forces then came and cordoned off the area. But Sibanda had left the shebeen. All along Ngwenya was sleeping unaware that Pilate Sibanda was next door and oblivious of what was happening at the shebeen.⁵⁸

Lovemore Ngwenya woke up in shock to hear the Rhodesian forces calling on the ‘terrorist’ to get out of the house with arms up and surrender. He thought they had located where he was staying and he quickly got up and armed himself with the AK 47 and the two grenades. He then waited. He told himself that if he was to break their lines it had to be through the door

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ *Sunday News*, 29 November, 2015

⁵⁸ *Sunday News*, 29 November, 2015

they were urging him to use. The enemy started firing at the door which Ngwenya wanted to use and then stopped. He moved closer to the door and opened it slowly a bit. The firing resumed and they were still demanding that whoever was in the house should come out. Hearing their footsteps getting closer, Ngwenya opened the door a bit and threw at them the grenade. He then swiftly got out of the house and jumped to the next house. Taking advantage of the commotion Ngwenya disappeared into the night.⁵⁹

Lovemore Ngwenya then moved to Magwegwe North, then Old Pumula and finally to St Peter's Village where he encountered some members of ZAPU Youth League who accommodated him. Early in the morning of 2 June, 1978 he hid himself in a bushy area while the people who had accommodated him went to Luveve to check on the situation. On their return they informed Ngwenya that eight Rhodesian soldiers had died in the previous night's battle.⁶⁰ Concerning his other colleagues, Pilate Sibanda was captured but when the Rhodesian forces raided the house where Mujibha was, he escaped and fled towards Solusi Mission area and later joined other guerrillas⁶¹ Two days after the Luveve battle Ngwenya left Bulawayo and headed towards Kezi where he joined other guerrillas. In Kezi area they fought many fierce battles.⁶²

Other informants such as Marshal Mpofu confirmed that the idea behind urban warfare was to destroy the Rhodesian economy by attacking important companies such as the Fuel depot in Harare.⁶³ It was important to attack and destroy communication lines such as the railways

⁵⁹ *Ibid*

⁶⁰ *Ibid*

⁶¹ *Sunday News*, 29 November, 2015

⁶² Interview with Lovemore Ngwenya of Selbourne Park, Bulawayo, 02/02/2018

⁶³ Interview with Marshal Mpofu of Mpopoma, Bulawayo, 16/02/2018

which oiled the Rhodesian economy, explained Ndabezinhle Nkomo.⁶⁴ Jeremy Brickhill also cited strategic sites to be attacked such as police posts, railway stations, fuel tanks, vehicle depots and administration offices. The commander of the forces attacking Plumtree town outlined the military targets in his battle plan as the police, the District Commissioner's office, the District Assistants, the Rhodesia Light Infantry, the Rhodesian African Rifles camps, the Selous Scouts camps and the Post Office.⁶⁵

Some women also contributed in the urban warfare in Bulawayo Metropolitan region. Zephania Nkomo explained that some women who worked in white suburbs as housemaids carried out reconnaissance work. The housemaids would pretend not to hear anything if their employers discussed security issues. They would also watch out for any visitors who came to the white residential areas. They would pass on the information to the guerrillas, who operated in urban areas like Lovemore Ngwenya.⁶⁶

The Party and the Army in the War

Brickhill asserted that the party structures gave ZPRA access to many communities, in particular in urban areas where guerrillas could not easily recruit and thus provided the guerrilla army with many recruits who had experience of politics, trade unionism and the modernizing influence of urban capitalism.⁶⁷ ZPRA guerrillas relied a great deal on party branches and party contacts for support during the war. Zephania Nkomo asserted that ZAPU

⁶⁴ Interview with Ndabezinhle Nkomo of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 14/02/2018

⁶⁵ J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU-1976-79," In N. Bhebhe & T. Ranger *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War Vol1*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p61

⁶⁶ Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo 11/01/2018

⁶⁷ J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU-1976-79," In N. Bhebhe & T. Ranger *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War Vol1*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p61

had in their structures contact persons located countryside (in towns as well as rural areas) to appraise ZPRA fighters conducting operations.⁶⁸ Furthermore, there were cells which would disseminate information and harbour fighters. They would also contribute money, clothes, shoes and other material needs to the guerrillas, asserted Siphon Mhlanga.⁶⁹ Sierra Shumba and Wilfred Baleni also confirmed that ZAPU party structures were important for the operations of the guerrillas.⁷⁰ Ndabezinhle Nkomo emphasized that both in town and rural areas ZAPU structures helped the guerrillas' operations to succeed. He explained that in addition to immediate local support, the network of party branches provided the combatants with vital links across the territory controlled by the Rhodesians. ZPRA guerrillas could simply introduce themselves as Nkomo's boys and seek out the party members in the community. Party structures provided ZPRA with real prospects of operating in towns and rural areas.⁷¹ Rtd Brigadier Abel Mazinyane also added that from the time of the 'Turning Point Strategy' (1978) concerted efforts were made to infiltrate intelligence and specialized urban commando units in towns and cities⁷²

Sihle Gumede who was also a member of ZAPU asserted that it was easy for female civilians to assist the guerrillas as Rhodesian security forces did not suspect them of involvement in the guerrilla war. Confirming the observation made earlier by Zephania Nkomo, she asserted that women carried out reconnaissance work and provided food to the guerrillas - both in urban and rural areas. In her own words she said; "I provided shelter and food to the few combatants who operated in Luveve, the likes of Lovemore Ngwenya and Pilate Sibanda. I even mended their khaki clothes when necessary as they did not wear camouflage uniforms. I

⁶⁸Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo 11/01/2018

⁶⁹ Interview with Siphon Mhlanga of Hillside, Bulawayo, 04/01/2018

⁷⁰ See interviews carried out with Sierra Shumba of Mkoba 17, Gweru and Wilfred Baleni of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 10/01/2018

⁷¹ Interview with Ndabezinhle Nkomo of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 22/01/2018

⁷² Interview with Rtd Brigadier A. Mazinyane of Matshamhlope, Bulawayo, 11/01/2018

also willingly carried out reconnaissance work for them.”⁷³ She went on to explain that there were other female ZAPU members in the African townships who collaborated with the combatants. However, she was reluctant to provide me with their names or addresses. It is logical to conclude that the collaboration between the guerrillas and civilians could be regarded as an application of Mao Tse Tung’s teaching which considered the civilians and the guerrillas as fish swimming in the sea. The guerrillas were the fish and the civilians were the sea.

The Rural-Urban Transport Systems

The rural-urban transport system played a key role during the war. Marshal Mporofu asserted that just as they helped to smuggle guerrilla recruits out of the country, bus drivers and conductors helped to disguise the movement of supplies within Zimbabwe.⁷⁴ Sihle Gumede of Luveve Township explained that some women would carry babies on their backs and stuff some items for guerrillas in the bag with the baby’s napkins and clothes. That was one technique of smuggling items through Rhodesian soldiers’ roadblocks.⁷⁵ Corroborating the fact that ZAPU members developed underground and unique techniques for smuggling items through Rhodesian soldiers’ roadblocks, Zephania Nkomo pointed out that “goods could be stuffed into the spare wheels of buses or buried in maize sacks.”⁷⁶ He continued to say one could also put on new clothes and take the old clothes to the laundry, then put them in a parcel and if Rhodesian soldiers checked the parcel all they would see would be old clothes.⁷⁷

⁷³Interview with Sihle Gumede of Luveve township, Bulawayo, 15/02/2018

⁷⁴ Interview with Marshal Mporofu of Mpopoma, Bulawayo, 16/02/2018

⁷⁵ Interview with Sihle Gumede of Luveve, Bulawayo, 15/02/2018

⁷⁶ Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobengula, Bulawayo, 11/01/2018

⁷⁷ Ibid

Lovemore Ngwenya also reiterated that bus operators as well as rural storeowners were also part of the underground supplying chain for the materials to guerrillas. The bus drivers would let the freedom fighters move from one area to another free of charge while storeowners would provide them with essentials such as clothes, shoes and tinned foods.⁷⁸ As part of crippling the Rhodesian economy, ZPRA forces derailed a number of goods trains that ferried commodities from one town to another. They also engaged in landmine warfare which was deadly to the enemy. By the end of 1978 ZAPU forces had crossed the Salisbury-Bulawayo railway line, south of Shangani and opened their southern front towards Shabani and further south towards Gwanda and Beitbridge.⁷⁹ Women could lure Rhodesian soldiers to move along routes that had land mines by giving false reports concerning the direction guerrillas had taken.⁸⁰ According to Grace Noko, women's roles in the struggle were not very obvious to the Rhodesian forces. She confirmed Tanya Lyons' research when she said besides politicizing the masses women would also carry equipment to be used by men at the front.⁸¹

ZAPU's Strategy

According to Brickhill, ZAPU's strategy known as the 'Turning Point' was launched in 1978. It involved cutting the enemy's supplies by ambushing supply trucks and mining the roads. This compelled Rhodesian soldiers to retreat to bigger camps and tarred roads. They would only venture into rural or bushy areas to engage in operations. The strategy also involved derailment of goods trains.⁸² He went on to explain that what was unique in ZAPU's 'Turning

⁷⁸ Interview with Lovemore Ngwenya of Selbourne Park, Bulawayo, 02/02/2018

⁷⁹ J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU-1976-79," In N. Bhebhe & T. Ranger *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War Voll*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p52

⁸⁰ Interview with Sihle Gumede of Luveve Township, Bulawayo, 15/02/2018

⁸¹ Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 16/02/2018

⁸² J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU-1976-79," In N. Bhebhe & T. Ranger *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War Voll*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p51

Point' strategy was that ZPRA was actually moving into mobile warfare in order to inflict a military defeat on the enemy. While guerrilla warfare was meant to exhaust enemy forces' economic resources and morale, mobile warfare provided the conditions to concentrate the insurgent forces for the purpose of inflicting military defeat on the enemy forces. Though it was a defensive strategy in one sense, in another it was principally aimed at preparing the conditions for a qualitative leap in offensive capacity. Apart from mobile warfare ZAPU was preparing a plan to defeat the Rhodesian forces militarily and to seize power.⁸³ It is logical to conclude that the 'Turning Point' strategy complemented the urban warfare in Bulawayo discussed earlier in the chapter. The ultimate goal of the war effort was to defeat the Rhodesian forces and to seize power from the white settler government.

ZAPU also had 'Zero Hour Plan' which was planned for early in 1979. Lovemore Ngwenya explained that the concept of 'Zero Hour Plan' involved launching a coordinated all round offensive on several fronts simultaneously. He further asserted that the idea was to confuse the enemy.⁸⁴ Brickhill elaborated that five conventional battalions with artillery support were to seize bridgeheads in the Northern Front at Kanyemba, Chirundu and Kariba to enable the crossing of ZPRA troops with armour and artillery. Simultaneous attacks were to be mounted on the airfields at Kariba, Victoria Falls and Wankie which were to be secured to enable the transfer of ZPRA's air force from Angola. The main objective of these attacks was to enable the troops to seize and hold the strategic rear bases along the border in support of the offensive to be launched from within the country.⁸⁵ In the north ZPRA forces were to attack Karoi and Chinhoyi. In the Midlands the guerrilla brigade base at Gokwe was to attack

⁸³ Ibid

⁸⁴ Interview with Lovemore Ngwenya of Selbourne Park, Bulawayo, 02/02/2018

⁸⁵J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU-1976-79," In N. Bhebhe & T. Ranger *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War Vol1*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p60

Kwekwe and Chegutu while the Brigade bases in Nkayi were to assault Gweru. The brigades in Tsholotsho had the task of attacking Bulawayo while in the Southern Front there were lines of advance towards Plumtree, Kezi, Gwanda and Beitbridge.⁸⁶ The 'Zero Hour Plan' also envisaged a major role for the civilian population which was expected to join the offensive under the auspices of local-led risings. Alexander, McGregor and Ranger point out that women were responsible for providing and cooking food and mending clothes for the guerrillas. They also engaged in intelligence work.⁸⁷ This was corroborated by the interviews I carried out with various ZPRA ex-combatants. Women received military training for their own security. However, they also engaged in various courses which were essential for the war effort.⁸⁸

Reaction from the Rhodesian Security Forces

Whilst the war was raging mainly in rural areas, urban areas were also affected so that the Rhodesian government was concerned about security in the white residential areas. Files in the National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ) provide information on steps taken by the Rhodesian government to ensure that there was security meant to forestall the incursions of guerrilla forces in the white residential areas. This was logical since ZPRA had deployed some of its combatants (like Lovemore Ngwenya) in the city of Bulawayo. In 1974 the Rhodesian government called for white volunteers for a special police force of 10 000 men to patrol white urban residential areas at night. The British South Africa Police (BSAP) revived the Police Special Reserve which had not been active for ten years. Most of the volunteers were to patrol in the main cities of Salisbury and Bulawayo and would also be trained to deal

⁸⁶ Ibid, p61

⁸⁷J. Alexander, J McGregor and T. Ranger, *Violence & Memory One Hundred Years in the Dark Forest of Matabeleland*, James Currey, Oxford, 2000, p161

⁸⁸ See the section 'Black Women in ZPRA and the Second Chimurenga' in this chapter.

with urban terrorism. About 3 500 men of the ‘specials’ who had served in the 1960s formed the nucleus of the new force.⁸⁹ The Special Forces would form patrols of two to six men in their own suburbs; though they would not be paid, they would be given a blue uniform with yellow flashes and badges, a leather belt and white hard hat. They were also given weapons training but only carried a riot baton on routine patrols. Since the specials were intended specifically for white suburbs, the police called only for white volunteers.⁹⁰ The response was so positive that by mid-November 1974 the Police Reserve Special Force had about 3000 men. Another 2000 were recruited in other urban centres. Applications were being received at a steady rate. The police spokesman stated, “we are extremely pleased with the response so far and there is still room for many more volunteers.”⁹¹ The reaction from the Rhodesian government showed that it felt the heat of the guerrilla war not only in rural areas but also in urban areas.

The Senate voted that although inconsistent with the Declaration of Rights, the Law and Order Maintenance Amendment Bill was needed in the national interest. It approved without opposition a motion to this effect after it was introduced by the then Minister of Justice, Law and Order, Senator Desmond Lardner-Burke. Further, the Senate supported its Legal Committees’ findings that two sub-sections in the Bill infringed the Declaration of Rights. The contentious sub-sections which would be passed into law made it mandatory for courts to ban any person convicted from attending a public meeting and having a statement published while under ban. The Senate passed the bill through its committee stage without amendment and gave it an unopposed third reading. Senator Sam Wally, chairman of the Senate Legal

⁸⁹NAZ, File MS 308/58/2 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Mail Africa Bureau, 28 October, 1974

⁹⁰Bhebhe & T. Ranger *Soldiers in Zimbabwe’s Liberation War V011*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p51

⁹¹ NAZ, File MS 308/58/2 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Report by Iana’s Parliamentary Service, 12 December, 1974

committee, said he would accept that the bill which was in the public interest be suitably modified. He appealed to Senator Lardner-Burke for an amending Bill to restore the court's discretion over whether to impose a ban on a person attending meetings after convicting them of a subversive statement. Senator Wally believed that the Minister in his 'heart of hearts' shared the objection in principle to mandatory sentences.⁹²

Senator Lardner-Burke's response was that his objection to mandatory sentences was held where people were sent to prison. The Minister further asserted that subversive statements were designed to undermine the confidence of the whole nation. If the situation returned to normal, the government would repeal the legislation.⁹³ In line with the notion of national security, an African weekly newspaper, *Moto*, said to be hostile to whites, was banned in the Rhodesian parliament on 15 November, 1974. Mr Lardner-Burke alleged that the paper had become increasingly racist and sympathized with 'terrorists'.⁹⁴ Concern for national security also prompted the banning of a multiracial meeting planned by the African National Council (ANC) to be held in Bulawayo's Large City Hall on 15 January 1975. A police spokesman said an application to hold the meeting had been made by the ANC but certain conditions had not been met, so it was ordered that the meeting should not be held. The ban which ANC officials considered as unfortunate had been intended mainly for the benefit of Europeans. The ban came after the meeting had been postponed twice. Dr Elliot Gabelah, the ANC acting president, Dr Gordon Chavhunduka, ANC secretary-General, John Nkomo, deputy Secretary-General and Mike Auret, a Rhodesia Party member, were supposed to have been the speakers. Furthermore, ANC officials also announced that they had cancelled a

⁹²NAZ, File MS 308/58/2 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Report by Iana's Parliamentary Service, 12 December, 1974

⁹³Ibid

⁹⁴ NAZ, File MS 308/58/2 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Report by Iana's Parliamentary Service, 12 December, 1974

meeting to have been held in Macdonald Hall in Mzilikazi Township with Joshua Nkomo as their main speaker. They explained that Nkomo had been prohibited from addressing a public meeting.⁹⁵

Later in June 1975, it was reported that police had cracked down various underground cells which they believed had been recruiting Africans for training as 'terrorists'. A spokesman at Police General Headquarters Salisbury asserted that in a series of raids several arrests had been made in Fort Victoria (Masvingo) and Matabeleland including Bulawayo on allegations of illegal recruiting for 'terrorist' training. The police were responding to an allegation by the ANC's publicity secretary Edson Sithole who had claimed that ANC members were being harassed by the police. He claimed that a campaign of harassment was directed particularly against former supporters of the banned organisation ZANU. He alleged that the police in various parts of the country had arrested several ANC officials and supporters. Nearly all the arrested persons were former supporters of the banned party, ZANU. Edson Sithole continued to state that in a space of three days police in Bulawayo had arrested seven people. The reasons for detaining these men were not clear. The police denied harassment of any particular group.⁹⁶ Also it should be noted that none of the people whose arrests Edson Sithole complained about were women. This reflected the Rhodesian government's attitude that fighting wars was a masculine job.

In the interest of Rhodesian national security, the Rhodesian government also launched a campaign to stop careless talk in July 1975. It started a mass distribution of stickers to security forces, Ministry of Internal Affairs and other government offices as well as civilians

⁹⁵ NAZ, File MS 308/58/2 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Herald Correspondent, Bulawayo, 15 January, 1975

⁹⁶NAZ, File MS 308/58/2 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Herald Reporter Philip Sanders, 5 June, 1974

living or working in operational areas. A government spokesman said the distribution would take place both in rural and urban areas. The colourful stickers carrying more than sixty different messages would be displayed in public places and would carry such slogans as 'Don't give lip service to terrorism', 'Pubs have ears', and 'Have you got a MaoTse tongue?' The government official explained that the stickers were designed to provide a constant reminder to everyone concerned in the fight against terrorism of the vital need to guard against loose talk. Later in the month the campaign was extended through radio and television to embrace the whole population.⁹⁷ At the end of August 1975, the Minister of Internal Affairs revealed a plan in which all residents of Rhodesia over the age of fifteen years would be issued with identity cards under legislation which was introduced in February 1976. He explained in the House of Assembly that the government would introduce a national registration scheme for all residents irrespective of race or sex. It would gradually phase out the prevailing law, under which only African men had to carry registration certificates, colloquially known as 'situpas.' In terms of the new scheme there would be two classes of holder: citizen and non-citizen. The identity card would show whether the holder was a citizen or not.⁹⁸ Earlier on during the same year police had arrested hundreds of African men in the townships of the main cities of Bulawayo and Salisbury for not carrying their registration certificates. However, according to a police spokesperson, European employers were to blame in many cases, because they withheld their African employees' registration certificates. The spokesperson said if a European employed an African man, he was supposed to write down the particulars of the certificate and keep them in a safe place, and give the certificate back to the employee, as it was his property and only means of personal identity. He also pointed out that it was an offense to employ an African man who did not possess a

⁹⁷NAZ, File MS 308/58/2 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: The Star, No terror talk

⁹⁸Ibid: Doc: The Herald , Identity cards for all, 28 August, 1974

registration certificate.⁹⁹ Ann Masuku of Barbourfields who worked as a housemaid in Hillside during the 1970s explained that roadblocks were set up in Bulawayo and other centres whereby Rhodesian police force would search passengers in buses plying between African townships and the city centre. In addition to searching the passengers' parcels, the police required all male passengers to produce their registration certificates.¹⁰⁰ Sikhululekile Mpofu of Mzilikazi Township also said that in town shops had security guards at entrances who made her detest being sent by her parents to do shopping in town.¹⁰¹

Towards the end of 1975 the African nationalist leader Joshua Nkomo alluded to national security in connection with guerrilla prisoners. He alleged that guerrilla prisoners in Bulawayo and other detention centres had been systematically tortured so that they could reveal information concerning fellow guerrillas who were operating either in rural or urban areas. He went on to explain that the prisoners had been threatened with being thrown out of helicopters and electrical and mechanical methods of torture had also been used.¹⁰² Believing that the armed struggle was the strongest pressure the Africans could apply to the Smith regime, Joshua Nkomo asserted that he would not join a government in which Africans were offered only some cabinet posts because the Africans were fighting to attain majority rule. Asked what his time-table for majority rule was, he replied, "we want majority rule now." Explaining that majority rule had no time-table, he said he would think in terms of months.¹⁰³

⁹⁹NAZ, File MS 308/58/2 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Sunday Mail, Employers warned on Registration Certificates, 9 February, 1975

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Ann Masuku of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 16/01/2018

¹⁰¹ Interview with Sikhululekile Mpofu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 16/02/2018

¹⁰² NAZ, File MS 308/58/3 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Rhodesia Daily Mail, Prisoners tortured, 270 1975

¹⁰³ Ibid

The police in Bulawayo also announced that the Rhodesian authorities had imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew along the border with Botswana. Also all livestock within the curfew area had to be kraaled between 6pm and 6 am each day.¹⁰⁴ To make it easy for Rhodesian security forces to fight terrorism, a bill exempting the government and members of the security forces from civil or criminal prosecution for anything done in good faith while suppressing terrorism was presented in the House of Assembly. The bill also provided that President of Rhodesia, Clifford Dupont, could if he considered it in the national interest, stop any such proceedings under way. The bill also made it possible for anyone who suffered loss or injury because of actions to which the indemnity applied, to seek compensation. According to the bill it was also possible to set up a board to consider application for compensation.¹⁰⁵ However, according to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), African members of parliament opposed the bill.¹⁰⁶

The bill was designed to protect members of the government - including security forces - from prosecution from acts done in good faith while suppressing terrorism. The Roman Catholic bishops in the country condemned the indemnity and compensation bills as a 'denial of justice'. They further asserted that its provocative nature endangered the future of the country and its entire people. In addition, the bishops suggested that a commission for Human Rights in Rhodesia should be set up. Bishops Karlin and Schmidt of Bulawayo were among the religious leaders who condemned the bill. The religious leaders asserted:

We view this Bill with the most serious anxiety. It is a denial of justice. Nothing can compensate the loss of justice. We [...] protest against its very provocative nature which also endangers the future of this country and its entire people [...] authorities

¹⁰⁴ Ibid Doc: Rhodesia Herald, Curfew imposed along Botswana Border, 6 August, 1975

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, Doc: Rhodesia Herald Indemnity first reading 28 August 1975

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, Doc: BBC Indemnity and Compensation Bill, 2 September, 1975

ought to consider the establishment in Rhodesia of a commission for Human Rights similar in purpose to that existing in Europe.¹⁰⁷

As for the African masses, both men and women resented being harassed by the Rhodesian security forces at roadblocks set up in Bulawayo and other urban centres. Security forces could even invade people's privacy by searching their houses in townships if they suspected that the African residents were harbouring guerrillas. Siwela Sibangani of Ntabazinduna flats in Bulawayo, who worked as a petrol attendant at a service station in the city between 1970 and 1980 asserted:

I dreaded going to and from work because of roadblocks set up by the Rhodesian police. A man found without his 'situpa' could be arrested and taken to the police station where he would be quizzed by the constables. If he was lucky the police would give him a ticket at the roadblock and instruct him to produce his registration certificate at the nearest police station within twenty-four hours. Sometimes the police raided our houses during the evening if they suspected that the residents were harbouring guerrillas. For Africans in Bulawayo and other towns life was tough in the 1970s.¹⁰⁸

Alleged Atrocities by Security Forces

It should be noted that in 1974, Bishop Donald Lamont had urged the government to investigate complaints of cruelty to Africans, - both men and women - by Rhodesian Security Forces. The alleged atrocities by security forces occurred not only in rural areas but also in urban areas including Bulawayo. The complaints were compiled in a report prepared by the Justice and Peace Commission of the Roman Catholic Church in Rhodesia. A spokesman for the Ministry of Law and Order said that members of the Catholic Commission had met the Justice Minister, Desmond Ladner-Burke, concerning the complaints. As a result an investigation had been instituted. Bishop Lamont stated that the government authorities who

¹⁰⁷NAZ, File MS 308/58/3 Protected Villages to 1976, Doc: Rhodesia Herald, Bill denial justice-Bishops, 8 September, 1975

¹⁰⁸Interview with Siwela Sibangani of Ntabazinduna Flats, Bulawayo, 03/03/2018

had received the report had stated that they would like to meet the complainants in person. However, the bishop observed that the victims would not comply with the request because they were too scared.¹⁰⁹ The response of the victims was logical as they were afraid of the repercussion of presenting themselves before government officials. The Catholic Commission had urged the government to establish the truth.

However, the Minister of Justice, Law and Order, Mr Desmond Ladner-Burke, defended the security forces against charges of committing atrocities made against them in the House of Assembly. African members of parliament, like the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, urged the government to investigate the allegations to establish the truth of what happened between security forces and the African masses.¹¹⁰ Even other white members of parliament, such as Allan Savoy, of the Rhodesia Party concurred that atrocities denial would not clear the air. He urged the government to investigate the allegations of atrocities because without the support of the black population the war against 'terrorism' could not be won. He further asserted that channelling a complaint through an MP was a normal one and that other channels of complaint existed¹¹¹

The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace reiterated that a commission of inquiry into atrocities by security forces should be instituted. Brutality and violence by the police and army against African men and women would not help the Rhodesian forces to win the war against the guerrillas. To prevent African civilians from supporting the guerrillas (both in rural and urban areas) the commission advised that the Rhodesian security forces should

¹⁰⁹NAZ, File MS 3/11/3 Alleged Atrocities by security forces 1974, Doc: Government Probes claims of cruelty, Article by Philip Sanders

¹¹⁰ Ibid, Doc: Rhodesia Herald 29 March, 1974

¹¹¹ NAZ, File MS 3/11/3 Alleged Atrocities by security forces 1974, Doc: Government Probes claims of cruelty, Article by Philip Sanders 185

avoid inflicting brutalities on the African men and women. If security members were innocent of accusations made against them, they would be vindicated and public confidence in the army and police would be restored. Violence was illusionary and not an acceptable solution.¹¹² Furthermore, the commission acknowledged that war was brutal, causing people to get hurt in the heat of battle. They urged the Minister of Justice to institute a commission of inquiry into alleged atrocities by security forces to restore Rhodesia's credibility.¹¹³ Even ordinary newspaper readers supported the idea of an inquiry into atrocities committed by some members of the police and army on African masses. One reader supported the request by the Justice and Peace Commission for an inquiry into the alleged atrocities by security forces by suggesting that an independent inquiry would dispel rumours.¹¹⁴

A priest, Reverend Fred Rea, wrote a complaint to the Prime Minister concerning cruel methods which security forces used when interrogating suspects, whether in urban or rural areas. Father Rea asserted that the campaign against terrorism could not be won by military force alone, and any actions which alienated the common people amounted to a military defeat and jeopardizing the security of the country.¹¹⁵ Bishops Karlin and Schmidt of Bulawayo were among bishops of different Christian denominations who met the Prime Minister Ian Douglas Smith, in order to urge the government to reconsider its ways of dealing with civilian population in April 1974. The bishops were also concerned that during the interrogation of arrested persons, methods of torture were being used to extract information,

¹¹² Ibid. Doc: Statement by the Catholic Commission For Justice and Peace, 29 March, 1974

¹¹³ Ibid, Doc: Rhodesia Herald, 6 April, 1974

¹¹⁴ Ibid Doc: Rhodesia Herald, 15 April, 1974

¹¹⁵ NAZ, File MS 3/11/3 Alleged Atrocities by security forces 1974, Doc: Moto 13 April, 1974

and that though the Prime Minister had promised that a full investigation of such cases would take place, no investigation had been undertaken.¹¹⁶

Assembled for their bi-monthly meeting, the Catholic Bishops of Rhodesia supported the appeal of the Justice and Peace Commission for an inquiry into allegations of brutality by members of the security forces. The bishops believed that it would only bring discredit on Government if an enquiry was further delayed or refused altogether.¹¹⁷ In the Senate the Minister of Law and Order had denied the existence of evidence before him “that would warrant an investigation into the allegations made against our security forces.”¹¹⁸ The bishops asserted that the Justice and Peace Commission had presented evidence to the Minister of Law and Order privately in order not to disturb public order or to undermine the morale of the security forces. It was reprehensible for the Minister of Law and Order to state that efforts of the commission were meant “to embarrass the Government and embitter the security forces”¹¹⁹

The Bishops asserted that the evidence by the Justice and Peace Commission had specific cases which the Minister of Law and Order, Desmond Ladner-Burke, had in his possession. Bishops Karlin and Schmidt of Bulawayo cited specific cases of arrested civilians who had been tortured by security forces in order to extract information. For example, Kate Mataba from Kezi had been tortured and beaten for having cooked food for ‘terrorists’. Phainos Ncube from the same area had been beaten until he admitted having helped guerrillas by giving the guerrillas clothes and tinned food. Mable Dube was also tortured for not having

¹¹⁶ Ibid, Doc: Memorandum to the Prime Minister

¹¹⁷ NAZ, File MS 311/3 Alleged Atrocities by security forces, Doc: Press statement by Bishop Lamont, 26 April, 1974

¹¹⁸ Ibid

¹¹⁹ Ibid

reported the presence of ‘terrorists’ in her area.¹²⁰ The bishops therefore pleaded with Minister Desmond Ladner-Burke to investigate alleged cases of atrocities by Rhodesian security forces. A civilian newspaper reader also called on Rhodesians to counter violence by security forces with an urgent act of reconciliation. He urged that people should build a nation in which all people respected one another as equals and enjoyed the political, economic and social life of the state.¹²¹

To discourage the civilians from supporting the ‘terrorists’, the Rhodesian Ministry of Information published *Anatomy of Terror*, a booklet with pictures of some of the atrocities perpetrated by the freedom fighters in Rhodesia, such as murder, rape, abduction, torture and robbery of over the previous eighteen months. The booklet questioned the necessity for ‘terrorists’ to resort to such brutality if the civilians supported the ‘terrorists’. It also condemned the Organisation of African Unity for supporting the terrorists¹²² Alluding to the booklet, Siwela Sibangani of Ntabazinduna flats asserted that the Rhodesian forces were so desperate in their attempt to dissuade civilians from supporting guerrillas that Africans working in Bulawayo could get the booklet free of charge from their places of employment. However, he doubted that the propaganda yielded the intended result of discouraging civilians from supporting guerrillas.¹²³

Political Prisoners and their dependants

The effect of the war on the masses would be incomplete if one does not consider the prisoners of war and their dependants. Various prisons such as Whawha, Gwelo, Fort

¹²⁰ NAZ, File MS 311/3 Alleged Atrocities by security forces, Doc: Press statement by Bishop Lamont, 26 April, 1974

¹²¹ Ibid, Doc: Rhodesia Herald, 16 May, 1974

¹²² NAZ, File MS 479 ‘Civil War in Rhodesia, Doc: a Selection of bounded press cuttings, 1976 October-1977 February

¹²³ Interview with Siwela Sibangani of Ntabazinduna Flats, Bulawayo, 03/03/2018

Victoria and Khami, which is in Bulawayo, had numerous political prisoners. The prisoners' dependants were affected by the incarceration of their breadwinners. For instance, Agnes Mutusva, whose brother Josephat was serving a long-term prison sentence at Khami had to appeal for assistance from the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa. The brother had been convicted in 1971 under the Law and Order Maintenance Act. Agnes could not afford to pay school fees for her brother's five children. So two of the children had to drop out of school and she could not raise the fees for the other three who were still attending school and had to appeal for aid from the Defence and Aid Fund.¹²⁴ It is noteworthy that the suffering by civilians due to the effects of the war cut across the gender divide. Morgan Mutsepfa also had his brother sentenced to 18 years imprisonment at Khami prison for political crimes. The brother had left under his care six children who were all going to school. To make matters worse the children's mother had passed away. So Morgan was compelled to apply for help so that he could pay the children's fees as well as provide their material needs, such as clothes and food, since he himself was still a juvenile. The responsibility was too much for him to shoulder as he was unemployed.¹²⁵

Even prisoners managed to ask for help from the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa though it meant smuggling the letters out of prison. Felix Madzamba was a political prisoner serving a 25-year sentence at Khami prison. He had 12 children as well as his old parents and two wives as his dependents. All his property had either been destroyed or confiscated by the state and all his sixteen dependants placed in the so-called protected villages. His brother who worked in Salisbury could not look after his own family as well as the dependants of Felix. So Felix applied for aid in the form of clothing and blankets for his

¹²⁴NAZ File MS 591/2/1 Conditions at Whawha. Khami; Gwelo and Fort Victoria Prisons, Doc: International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa.

¹²⁵ Ibid

two wives, his old parents and his twelve children. He also needed financial aid to help his dependants to buy food as well enable his children to continue with their academic education.¹²⁶ John Mutsure was another political prisoner serving ‘life’ imprisonment at Khami prison since 1968. His wife, three children as well as his uncle needed financial aid to meet their material needs. So he also applied for assistance from the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa.¹²⁷ However, from this study it was not clear whether the prisoners and the dependants of prisoners succeeded in obtaining the help they needed. The researcher could not locate the prisoners or the dependants of prisoners in order to interview them. What was clear from their applications for help was their desperation and desire to gain sympathy.

White Rhodesian Women’s Roles

The Second Chimurenga account would be incomplete if one does not consider the role played by white Rhodesian women. The great strain caused by the war on the economy as well as on Rhodesian white population made the Rhodesian government ask white women to participate in the country’s defence forces. The government advertised for white women to undertake duties in the defence forces, that is, in the army and airforce. The response in Salisbury, Bulawayo and other urban centres was so positive that the Rhodesian Women Services Unit was formed.¹²⁸ The applicants to the Rhodesian Women Service (RWS) had to be within the age range of eighteen to fifty years and were required to pass a medical examination to show that the applicant was fit for duty. A satisfactory level of education,

¹²⁶NAZ File MS 591/2/1 Conditions at Whawha. Khami; Gwelo and Fort Victoria Prisons, Doc: International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa.

¹²⁷Ibid

¹²⁸P. Godwin and I. Hancock, *Rhodesians Never Die*, OUP 190 3, 135

preferably 'O' level was another prerequisite for acceptance.¹²⁹ Their initial basic training which lasted four weeks consisted of squad drill, military routine, first aid and small arms handling.¹³⁰

Members of RWS later undertook in-service training which comprised of map reading, voice procedure, weapon handling as well as the art of drilling a squad.¹³¹ The women would be in charge of the bulk of administrative work in order to release men for active combatant duty. The short training was regarded adequate for the non-combat duties the women would engage in. After training the women were posted to units in their hometowns. This means white women from the suburbs of Bulawayo returned home in order to release more men for fighting against the nationalist forces. The engagement of women in non-combat duties reflected the white Rhodesian society's view that fighting wars was a masculine task.

The RWS members performed the bulk of the administrative and clerical work in the military camps in order to release men for combat duties. Some of the women engaged in specialist jobs such as nurses and medics while others served as signal corps, pay corps, engineer corps and administrators.¹³² Generally RWS women did not go to the operational areas, though a few exceptions became involved in more active duties. For instance, Beryl Shee-ham went on several operational tours detecting landmines with her Labrador bitch.¹³³ Like their colleagues who served in the army, the women in the Rhodesian air force participated mainly in non-combat roles such as doing administrative and clerical work in the Operations Room, while others served in the radio section and in the Air Traffic control at Thornhill Air Base in

¹²⁹ NAZ/IDAF, File MS 308/44/2 Military 1975-76, Doc: Rhodesia Herald, 2 July, 1975

¹³⁰ Ibid, Doc: Rhodesia Herald, 4 August, 1975

¹³¹ Assegai, The Magazine of the Rhodesia Army, Vol 6, No. 6 October 1976, p37

¹³² NAZ/IDAF, File MS 308/44/2 Military 1975-76, Doc: Sunday Mail, 7 December, 1975

¹³³ T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerrilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle," PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Politics, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 1999, p137

Gweru. Some of the women flew on duty to operational areas for various functions including looking after VIP passengers. Women were portrayed as tough and capable yet feminine, and advertisements had headlines such as “Blue Birds are a hit with the Air Force”¹³⁴ It is worth noting that the RWS had no African women as black women preferred to join the guerrillas fighting against the settler regime. It was not possible to corroborate the above information obtained mainly from archival sources, with oral testimonies from RWS members as most of them left Zimbabwe when the country became independent. Nevertheless, it is logical to conclude that the RWS women provided services which were essential for the white settler regime’s war effort.

Women in the British South Africa Police (BSAP)

White women as well as some black women also served in the BSAP. They were deployed mainly in urban stations where they worked beside their male counterparts, sharing every aspect of work and taking their turn at night and week-end duty in the charge office and information room.¹³⁵ During the armed struggle, the BSAP continued its role as a paramilitary force assisting the army to suppress the nationalist uprising. Other police units were formed specifically for that purpose, such as Police Anti-Terrorist Unit, the Police Mounted Troops, the Police Urban Emergency Unit, the BSAP Support Unit and Tracker Combat Teams.¹³⁶ Both white women patrol officers and black women constables were involved in the crime prevention and law enforcement duties. This helped to release men for combat duties against the nationalist guerrillas.

¹³⁴*Rhodesia Herald*, 17 December, 1975

¹³⁵ Rhodesian Gvt, *A Career in the BSA Police of Rhodesia* Salisbury, 1968, p13

¹³⁶J. Lovett, *Contact* Galaxie Press, Salisbury, 1977, p54

Whilst generally the policewomen did not work in operational areas during the war, there were a few exceptions. The Aqua-Living Divers Unit went out to search for anything that sunk below water. They could be called in to search for equipment or bodies after drowning accidents or grope in the mud for murder weapons or for stolen goods. In 1976 the unit had only one woman, Detective Woman Patrol Officer Cathy Stall.¹³⁷ White women also helped to release men for more active service by becoming members of the Women Police Reservists. An exception to the practice of keeping women away from operational areas occurred with the intensification of the war. In 1977 the BSAP Reserve had its first operational woman pilot, Shelagh Anderson, whose code name was 'Coper 165'74'.¹³⁸ Thus, both white and black women were generally kept away from the operational areas during the liberation war. Nevertheless, they made their contribution towards the settler government's attempt to fight against the national insurgency by taking up increased responsibility in carrying out normal police duties. This made the male members of the force available for active service.

As such, considering the violence against white women during the war and the role they played helps to highlight the intensity of the liberation struggle; white women were needed to support the Rhodesian minority state. Far from being passive bystanders, many white women actively rallied behind the Rhodesian government and their men. While black women were challenging the usual distinctions between front and rear in their support of the guerrilla war, white Rhodesian women were found at the rear, on the home front supporting the Rhodesian war effort in their roles as mothers and wives. In the Rhodesian press white women occupied the 'natural' women's place at the rear while men 'protected' them by going to the front. Yet the stereotype of women at the rear being protected by men was challenged by some white

¹³⁷ Ibid, p60

¹³⁸ The Outpost, Magazine of the BSA Police, Vol IV, N010, October, 1977, p1

women welding guns on the home front to protect themselves from attacks while men were off at the real front. White women proved themselves to be very capable of fighting like men, when required for national service. Black Women in the BSAP were quite active in the crime prevention and law enforcement duties. Hence, they also contributed towards the country's national security.

In 1975, while thousands of African women were joining the guerrillas to fight against colonialism, white women were also conscripted to join in support of Rhodesian military operations. However, they were not homogenous in their actions. Some white women like Judith Todd supported the Black Nationalist movement, while other women supported Ian Smith's Rhodesia.¹³⁹ Lyons established, for instance, that white women were presented in the media as tough and capable, yet feminine. However, despite white women's contribution to the army, air force and police, they were also required to perform their important female role of emotional support for the real soldiers - men.¹⁴⁰ Another supportive task white women undertook, when men were confined to barracks, was that every night a woman would cook for them and take the food up to the combatants. Many Rhodesian women concentrated on domestic activities including cooking for the Hartley Forces Canteen to feed soldiers on their way to and from the front.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerrilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle," PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Politics, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 1999, p135

¹⁴⁰ Ibid

¹⁴¹ T. Lyons, "Guns and Guerrilla Girls. Women in Zimbabwean National Liberation Struggle," PhD Thesis submitted to the Department of Politics, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 1999, p139

The white women's gendered roles are comparable to the African 'mothers of the revolution' who fed and clothed the guerrilla fighters.¹⁴² Located both at the front and the rear, white women transgressed these boundaries by going 'international' and appealing to other countries not to support the 'terrorists.' A group called "Women for Rhodesia" collected newspaper articles about 'terrorist' atrocities from the local press and sent these out to Australia and England with an accompanying phonogram pleading with the rest of the international community to help stop the 'terrorists.'¹⁴³ It is clear that white women played an important role in the war though they did not largely fight as soldiers alongside men to the same extent that black Zimbabwean women did.

The Road to the 1979 Lancaster House Conference

As the war escalated both the Rhodesian security forces and the freedom fighters realized that fighting had been too hard and that a solution to the Rhodesian problem had to be found. Talks and agreements between the British and the Rhodesian government in the 1960s and 1970s failed to solve the problem facing the country because the British government's authority although rightful, had been liquidated by the Rhodesia Front's declaration of Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) of 1965. As a result, Britain could not impose on Rhodesia any settlement relating to the implementation of the principle of majority rule.¹⁴⁴ For example, talks on HMS Tiger (1966), HMS Fearless (1968) as well as the Home-Smith Agreement (1971) were abortive in solving the Rhodesian problem, as neither the British government nor the Rhodesian government held a mandate from the African people of Zimbabwe, and none of the talks took into account the democratic principle of majority rule

¹⁴² Ibid, p144

¹⁴³ Ibid, p140

¹⁴⁴ N. Sithole, *In Defence of the Rhodesian Constitutional Agreement. A Power Promise*, Graham Publishing Company, Salisbury, 1978, p24

based on one man one vote.¹⁴⁵ As part of redressing the injustices of colonialism, the African nationalist forces (both young men and women) wished to see the principle implemented in this country. Hence, the various attempts at bringing the war to an end were meant to bring peace not just to Matabeleland and Bulawayo but the whole country. Due to patriarchy which regarded politics as a masculine domain, women were excluded from the various talks which eventually culminated in the Lancaster House Conference of 1979.

The Geneva Conference 1976

Chaired by Ivor Richard, representing the United Kingdom Government, the Conference received participation from the leaders of the Rhodesian Government, the United African National Council (UANC), Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) led by Ndabaningi Sithole and the joint leaders of the Patriotic Front, Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe. While the Rhodesian Government delegates came armed with a mandate from the Rhodesian whites, the nationalist delegates had one from African masses of Zimbabwe. The Conference was considered the most promising step yet taken towards producing a solution to the Rhodesian problem. It received the moral support of many governments including those of UK, the USA, the frontline states and South Africa. The OAU gave its blessing to the initiative, the African people of Zimbabwe, with high hopes of a break-through, gave their enthusiastic support.¹⁴⁶ The initiative failed because the Rhodesian delegation, claiming that the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom had misled it about the nature and objectives of the conference, disagreed with the African nationalist leaders on the principle of majority rule based on one man one vote. Finally, on 14 December, after almost 9 weeks of fruitless

¹⁴⁵N. Sithole, *In Defence of the Rhodesian Constitutional Agreement. A Power Promise*, Graham Publishing Company, Salisbury, 1978, p24

¹⁴⁶Ibid,p20

discussion, Ivor Richard, the chairman, adjourned the conference.¹⁴⁷ In short the conference had failed to address what the nationalists had gone to war for, that is majority rule and an end to racial discrimination in Rhodesia.

The Anglo- American Proposals, 1977

The proposals suggested by the governments of the USA and the UK to the Rhodesian government to some extent loosened the Rhodesian deadlock. President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania asserted that the proposals would be unacceptable in Africa unless they induced removal of Ian Smith and his army. Both the Rhodesian delegates and the African nationalists were adamant about the retention of their forces to the exclusion of the opposing forces. Hence, no one turned down the proposals but nor were they accepted by anyone.¹⁴⁸ The proposals did not offer universal suffrage which among other issues, the nationalist forces wished to see implemented.

The Rhodesian Internal Settlement 1978

The 3 March 1978 constitution was agreed on by Ian Smith, Abel Muzorewa, Ndabaningi Sithole and Chief Jeremiah Chirau. The country's name became Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and its Prime Minister was Abel Muzorewa. However, in early June African leaders sought and obtained strong condemnation of the 'internal settlement' at the non- aligned nation summit in Colombo and in July the OAU summit in Liberia took an even stronger position. Lord Carrington, the British Foreign Secretary, sent Lord Harleck to Africa to sound the views of the continent's leaders concerning the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia constitution.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷D. Martin and P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1980, p60

¹⁴⁸Ibid

¹⁴⁹D. Martin and P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1980, p304

The African leaders made it clear to Lord Carrington's envoy that the constitution which left powers such as control of the forces, judiciary and public service, and the right to vote constitutional change in white hands, was not really majority rule at all. Though the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia constitution came into effect on 1 June, 1979, no countries recognized it. This prevented the Rhodesian problem from causing an internationalized war in Southern Africa which would have brought the South Africans, Cubans and Russians into the conflict and forced Western powers to decide which side they supported.¹⁵⁰ In Joseph Nkato's opinion, the fact that the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia constitution left powers such as control of the forces, judiciary and public service, and the right to veto constitutional change in white hands made it unacceptable to the guerrillas and their leaders who wanted genuine majority rule.¹⁵¹ The amnesty offer to guerrillas by Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, proved to be a failure as very few guerrillas responded to it. So Britain's Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, decided to hold a conference on Rhodesia. It was important to bring to an end the war that was raging in Rhodesia.

The Lancaster House Conference 1979

The conference opened on 10 September 1979 and concluded a new constitution, arrangement for the transitional period preceding independence and a ceasefire agreement on 15 December, with the formal agreements being signed by the leaders of the delegations on 21 December.¹⁵² The Patriotic Front fought against constitutional provisions they regarded as racist, against restrictions placed on the ability of a new government to redistribute land that had been taken from the Africans over the previous ninety years, the location of forces during

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p305

¹⁵¹ Interview with Joseph Nkato of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, Bulawayo, 18/03/2020

¹⁵² D. Martin and P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, ZPH, Harare, 1980, p315

the ceasefire and many other issues. Muzorewa fought to preserve his position as much as possible against constitutional change which he felt would undermine it and for the retention of the Rhodesian forces and any other item he felt he could turn to his advantage.¹⁵³

Lord Carrington was under pressure from his government to reach a quick agreement because of the question whether sanctions against Rhodesia should be renewed or not. The Patriotic Front leaders faced pressures from their guerrillas, many of whom considered the negotiations at the conference as an attempt to prevent them gaining the victory they believed was near and from frontline states, whose economies were being damaged by the war, who urged the Patriotic Front not to be responsible for wrecking the conference. Like Zimbabwe-Rhodesia and Britain, the frontline states needed a settlement more than they needed the continuation of the war.¹⁵⁴

Hostilities were meant to cease on 28 December 1979 and all guerrillas were required to have been in rendezvous points by 4 January for transportation to sixteen assembly points. By 5 January about 1 700 guerrillas had assembled and more were still coming in. Major General John Acland, commander of the Commonwealth Monitoring Force, had only 850 soldiers under his command, and it was with great relief that he and his staff monitored the increasing number of guerrillas accepting the ceasefire. Their duty was to monitor the guerrillas in the assembly points as well as the Rhodesian Joint Operational Commands distributed around the country, provide logistical support for the assembly points and guerrillas who did not trust each other. The Governor Lord Soames thanked the monitoring forces for their patience, understanding, courage and discipline.¹⁵⁵ It had been a difficult task to accomplish. When

¹⁵³ Ibid

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p316

¹⁵⁵ D. Martin and P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, ZPH, Harare, 1980, p321

elections were held early in 1980, ZANU-PF won 57 seats, an outright majority, in the 100-seat parliament. Nkomo's Patriotic Front had won 20 seats and the Bishop only 3. Mugabe and his supporters cheered as the results were announced and joyful demonstrations occurred in the African townships and outside ZANU-PF headquarters. The whites listened in stunned disbelief because Robert Mugabe, the man Smith's propaganda machine had portrayed as a Marxist monster, had achieved what none of them believed possible. The commonwealth observers concluded that "the election was a valid and democratic expression of the wishes of the people of Zimbabwe."¹⁵⁶ Black men and women of Zimbabwe felt the war had achieved its main goals of majority rule and one of racial discrimination in the country.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p334

Conclusion

Generally, colonial oppression that Africans endured at the hands of white Rhodesians prompted many young men and women to join ZPRA forces and fight against the Rhodesian forces. However, my research revealed that the motives of young people for joining the liberation struggle varied according to their circumstances. It was mainly young men who fought against the Rhodesian forces. Some operated in rural areas while others engaged in urban warfare to wreck the Rhodesian economy. The female soldiers trained in various courses to provide supportive services to the male guerrillas. The Rhodesian forces not only fought the guerrillas in rural areas but also tried to provide security in the urban white suburbs. In the interest of national security, the Rhodesian government took various steps, such as; banning public meetings in urban areas, launching a campaign to stop careless talk, introducing identity cards for everyone over 15 years old and imposing a dusk to-dawn curfew along the border with Botswana. The Rhodesian security forces tortured black men and women who were suspected of helping the guerrillas. Political prisoners and their dependents also suffered the repercussions of the war. The great strain caused by the war on the economy as well as on the Rhodesian white population prompted the government to incorporate white women in the army and air force, where they mainly performed supportive duties in order to release men for active duty. The British South Africa Police (BSAP) also recruited women so that men could be released for combatant duties against the nationalist guerrillas. The escalation of the war made both the Rhodesian forces and freedom fighters realise the need to reach an agreement to stop the war. Hence, a series of talks eventually led to the Lancaster House Conference of 1979 which was chaired by Lord Carrington, the foreign minister of Britain. When elections were held in 1980 ZANU-PF won the elections and Rhodesia became officially known as Zimbabwe.

Chapter Five

Post-Colonial Violence in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, 1980-2008

Introduction

The chapter examines the phenomenon of violence which has permeated the post-colonial history of Zimbabwe with particular focus on Bulawayo Metropolitan Province. It is the contention of this chapter that the greatest perpetrators of the violence were the ruling party ZANU-PF functionaries and the ZANU-PF government. The episodes of the violence happened against the background that on 18 April 1980, the day of Zimbabwe's independence, Robert Mugabe proclaimed a policy of reconciliation promising a dawn of a new era free of violence, repression and oppression. Yet, contrary to that proclamation, post-colonial Zimbabwe has experienced various flashpoints of violence such as the murderous *Gukurahundi* of the 1980s, episodic election-based violence, 1998 food riots, land invasion of 2000-2003, and the violence of Operation *Murambatsvina* of 2005. It is the contention of this chapter that the use of violence to achieve political objectives has over the years destroyed chances of building a democratic and human rights-sensitive society. The chapter also accepts Lloyd Sachikonye's assertion that it is essential that participants in violence are convinced that there would be some benefit to them from engaging in violence.¹

The Escalation of Violence 1980-3

The period 1980 to 1983 witnessed the escalation of violence between former ZANU and ZAPU which had constituted the Patriotic Front at the 1979 Lancaster House negotiations

¹L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2001, p29

and were in a government of national unity. The two parties and their former liberation armies, that is ZANLA and ZPRA, had employed differing regional patterns of recruitment and operation during the 1970s. Also, the history of animosity between the two parties since the acrimonious split in 1963 and their armies provided a firm foundation for the escalation of violence in the early 1980s. Following its victory in the February 1980 elections, ZANU PF was concerned that ZAPU would use the forces which were still based largely outside the country to unseat it. According to Douglas Maligwa, a retired army officer, hatred and distrust existed between ZAPU and ZANU from 1963 when ZANU was formed, and it took the ugly ethnic dimension that still exists to date between the Ndebele and Shona. It only intensified after the liberation war when all guerrillas were ordered to disarm and gather in Assembly Points.² Retired Brigadier Mazinyane shared the same view and added that ZANU wished to have supremacy over ZAPU politically.³

Immediately after the ceasefire, which was agreed on 15 December and became effective on 28 December 1979,⁴ guerrillas were supposed to gather in designated Assembly Points (APs) from which they would be demobilized or integrated into the nascent Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA). In practice the ceasefire meant the end of fighting between the Rhodesian forces and the nationalist guerrillas. Many guerrillas refused to come into APs or reluctantly did so after having cached arms. Joseph Nkatazo explained that the reason behind this behaviour was the pervasive fear that they would be attacked by Rhodesian forces while concentrated in the APs.⁵ The other reason cited by John Mpofo was that ZPRA did not believe that the war should come to an end through a ceasefire. They believed that they could win the war militarily as they had the support of the oppressed indigenous masses of the

²Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28 September, 2019

³ Interview with Rtd Brigadier Abel Mazinyane of Matshamhlope, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

⁴ D. Martin & P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, ZPH, Sby1980,, p321

⁵ Interview with Joseph Nkatazo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 3/10/2019

country.⁶ According to Jocelyn Alexander, Joan McGregor and Terence Ranger, the guerrillas' fear of being attacked by Rhodesian forces while concentrated in the APs was understandable, considering that the Rhodesian army was still very much intact and was given the mandate to superintend the APs.⁷

Guerrilla compliance with the ceasefire terms was another problem which made the atmosphere tense early in 1980. Under the ceasefire agreement, the two guerrilla armies were to move all troops into the APs between 29 December 1979 and 4 January 1980 (later extended to 7 January). While ZPRA largely complied with the agreed terms, ZANLA held about 40% of guerrillas outside the country in the pre-election period and continued cross-border incursions after the stipulated date.⁸ ZANLA guerrillas inside the country were often accused of leaving APs to campaign for ZANU in the upcoming elections.⁹ In the vicinity of the Matabeleland APs which they shared with ZPRA, they allegedly abducted young girls, murdered some civilians and occasionally came into conflict with their ZPRA counterparts. This was attested by the Commonwealth Monitoring Force, which pointed out that "ZPRA would obey orders but ZANLA was ill-disciplined and unpredictable"¹⁰

The unequal treatment of the guerrilla armies in comparison to the Rhodesian forces exacerbated the sense of bitterness and suspicion because not only were the Rhodesian troops exempt from an equivalent assembly process, but they were put in a supervisory role, overseeing guerrillas' movement into the APs and guarding guerrillas after the withdrawal of

⁶ Interview with John Mpfu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

⁷ J. Alexander, J. McGregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred Years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p 181

⁸ C.G. Msipa, *In Pursuit of Freedom and Justice. A Memoir*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2015, p89

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Cited in J. Alexander, J. McGregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory. One Hundred years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland* Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p182

the Commonwealth Monitoring Force. Rhodesian forces were responsible for a large number of guerrilla deaths during the process of guerrillas moving to Assembly Points. For instance, soon after the deadline for assembly, police shot at busloads of guerrillas being transported to the AP at St Paul's in Matabeleland, as they passed through Lupane business centre; at Cross Jotsholo guerrillas who were on a bus were attacked by air.¹¹ Due to these incidents some guerrillas decided not to move into the APs but fled to the city of Bulawayo, South Africa or the bush. There were also logistical reasons for guerrillas' delayed entry into the APs, and which made the deaths of latecomers particularly tragic. Siphon Ndebele asserted that the information about the process of assembly got to some guerrillas very late, and many guerrillas had to walk considerable distances to the pick-up points for transport to the APs.¹² Furthermore, tensions continued even after the majority of guerrillas had entered the APs. John Mporu asserted that due to the mistrust between ZPRA guerrillas and the Rhodesian security forces, some ZPRA guerrillas chose to sleep outside the APs as a security measure, in case they were attacked at night.¹³ Confirming the same view, Douglas Maligwa said that some ZPRA guerrillas slept outside the APs as a precautionary measure since they were afraid of being attacked by either ZANLA or Rhodesian forces.¹⁴ ZPRA guerrillas regularly went out of the APs to visit family, friends or healers as well as to monitor the movements of the Rhodesians and ZANLA guerrillas. Joseph Nkatzo emphasized that ZPRA guerrillas went out of APs frequently as a security measure since they needed to scout their surroundings and they felt safer among the masses than inside APs.¹⁵ In addition, APs were not detention centres as noted by Douglas Maligwa. As such, guerrillas resumed family contacts after a long absence and visits outside camps to see relatives or relatives' visits to

¹¹J. Alexander, J. McGregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred Years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p 183

¹² Interview with Siphon Ndebele of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 26/9/2019

¹³ Interview with John Mporu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Interview with Joseph Nkatzo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo 3/10/2019

APs were normal and frequent.¹⁶ Some sorties ended in gun battles with Rhodesian police in which civilians, police and guerrillas alike were killed. In the face of such violence and insecurity, ZPRA combatants continued to interact with local ZAPU committees in a war footing.¹⁷

Some ZAPU activists provided guerrillas with intelligence on the movements of Rhodesian forces, visited them inside the AP, nursed wounded guerrillas before they moved into the APs and provided logistical support for those who were slow to enter.¹⁸ Douglas Maligwa asserted that some of the guerrillas did not come into the APs because they did not believe that the war should be brought to an end through a ceasefire. ZPRA believed in a real revolution, that is, to fight and capture the centre of power without any compromises. Their commander, Alfred Nikita Mangena, had always emphasized that the guerrillas had to fight until final victory. Douglas Maligwa also explained that their commander had asserted that in a revolution if combatants opted for a compromise with the enemy, they would attain neo-colonialism instead of a total independence they were fighting for.¹⁹ Another reason stated by John Mporu was that the ceasefire arrangement came as a surprise to the guerrillas. They believed that they were winning the war as they had achieved parity with the Rhodesians in the air and had an upper hand as far as ground forces were concerned. So they did not want to be dragged into a ceasefire when they were smelling victory.²⁰ Joshua Nkomo had to tour rural areas demanding that guerrillas come into APs.

¹⁶ Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

¹⁷ J. Alexander, J. McGregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred Years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p 184

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

²⁰ Interview with John Mporu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

It is also worth noting that female guerrillas got into APs separate from their male counterparts. From there, they would either be demobilized or integrated into the ZNA. Grace Noko said those from the vicinity of Bulawayo gathered temporarily at Cattle Arms in Bulawayo before being transported to Sierra Camp in Gweru.²¹ Towards the end of 1980 about 15 000 out of 65 000 ex-combatants had been integrated into ZNA. Conflict arose with the decision to move thousands of remaining ex-combatants from rural APs into housing schemes in city suburbs- Chitungwiza in Harare and Entumbane in Bulawayo. The aim was to stop rural banditry as well as provide guerrillas with better accommodation. Under a rehousing scheme in Entumbane, a suburb in Bulawayo, ZPRA and ZANLA found themselves living not only in close proximity to each other but also with their civilian supporters. This provided an ideal situation for the exacerbation of tension between ZPRA and ZANLA ex-combatants.²²

Coinciding with this development in November 1980, ZANU held a rally at White City stadium (in Bulawayo) at which Enos Nkala, a government minister made an inflammatory speech. He told the assembled crowds that ZAPU had “declared itself the enemy of ZANU-PF that the time had come to challenge ZAPU on its home ground. If it means a few blows we shall deliver them.”²³ After the rally, both male and female party supporters clashed in the streets and guerrillas were drawn into the fray. At Entumbane ZPRA and ZANLA fought a pitched battle for two days before being brought under control by their commanders. Both sides blamed each other for initiating the violence and ZPRA commanders stressed that

²¹ Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 16/02/2019

²² CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands, 1980-1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p32

²³ J. Alexander, J. McGregor & T. Ranger. *Violence and Memory. One Hundred Years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland* Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p186

Rhodesian units had exacerbated the situation.²⁴ Retired Brigadier Abel Mazinyane strongly suspected that the Rhodesians instigated the violence so that they would remain relevant. Cooperation between ZPRA and ZANLA would have made Rhodesian security forces redundant.²⁵ Distrust and tension spread to other APs and newly integrated units of the ZNA as stories about what had happened at Entumbane circulated amongst guerrillas and civilians. At Entumbane, ZPRA ex-combatants believed that their ZANLA colleagues had used heavy artillery which was in theory banned within APs.

In February 1981, a second outburst of fighting started in Entumbane and spread to integrated units at Ntabazinduna and Glenville in the vicinity of Bulawayo and Connemara in Midlands. The eruption of violence at Entumbane prompted ZPRA troops elsewhere in Matabeleland North and South to head for Bulawayo city to reinforce ZPRA combatants and have an open war. Prime Minister Mugabe had to call in former Rhodesian Defence Forces units to quell the fighting but not before more than three hundred people had been killed.²⁶ The Government instituted a Commission of Inquiry into events surrounding Entumbane conducted by Justice Enock Dumbatshena. His report on the causes of the conflict was never publicly released because Mugabe complained that it did not clearly condemn either side.

However, Sipho Ndebele believed that the commission's findings revealed the role played by Mugabe's government in fanning the violence as well as the loss of lives incurred.²⁷ Subsequently, the Entumbane camps were broken up and sent to shooting ranges outside

²⁴J. Alexander, J. McGregor & T. Ranger. *Violence and Memory. One Hundred Years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland* Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p186

²⁵ Interview with Rtd Brigadier Abel Mazinyane of Matshamhlope, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

²⁶ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands, 1980-1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p32.

²⁷ Interview with Sipho Ndebele of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 26/09/2019

Bulawayo. Guerrillas who had fled during the fighting were slowly rounded up, at least three battalions were eventually disbanded and distributed to other units.²⁸

As female ex-combatants were far away from Bulawayo during the ZPRA-ZANLA clashes at Entumbane, it is logical to conclude that they were not involved. However, Sihle Gumede asserted that female ZAPU supporters participated in the clashes that occurred in the streets following the ‘inflammatory’ speech by Nkala.²⁹ Thereafter, political relations between ZANU-PF and ZAPU deteriorated. Joshua Nkomo was demoted from Minister of Home Affairs to Minister without Portfolio early in 1981.³⁰ This worried ZAPU and ZPRA cadres. The Entumbane skirmishes resulted in mass defections of ZPRA members from the APs. Defectors regarded their decision to leave APs as life-preserving or as reflections of their disillusionment with their experience in the APs. Some of this disillusionment was to do with what appeared to be a political bias in the army towards favouring ZANLA, especially concerning promotions. ZPRA cadres also deserted the army due to the increasing number of ZPRA soldiers who seemed to ‘disappear’ under mysterious circumstances from army ranks.³¹ So, it was disillusionment and fear rather than any political motivation that prompted many ZPRA soldiers to defect from the army to a life on the run. Those who defected took their weapons with them and armed banditry increased. However, it was not possible to get statistics of those who ‘disappeared’ or defected from the army.

²⁸J. Alexander, J. McGregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred Years in the ‘Dark Forests’ of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p187

²⁹ Interview with Sihle Gumede of Luveve township, Bulawayo, 02/10/2019

³⁰ J. Alexander, J. Mc Gregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred years in the ‘Dark Forests’ of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p188

³¹ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace. A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p32

Dissident insurgent of the 1980s

As mentioned earlier, the clashes at Entumbane as well as disillusionment with their experiences in the APs prompted some ZPRA cadres to defect from the APs and subsequently led to the start of the dissident conflict in Matabeleland in the 1980s. The discovery of large arms caches in Matabeleland in February 1982 made ZANU leadership to openly accuse ZAPU of planning an armed revolt to make up ZAPU's loss in the 1980 general elections. However, there was no solid evidence for a conspiracy as both ZPRA and ZANLA had cached weapons after the Entumbane and other clashes as insurance. Besides, the revelations regarding arms caches on ZAPU properties were a result of tip-offs from white members of the Zimbabwean intelligence services whose evidence was suspect.³² Also, Joseph Nkatanzo asserted that the weapons belonged to the South African *Umkhonto Wesizwe* but were erroneously attributed to ZPRA, who were then accused of plotting to overthrow the government.³³ ZAPU Cabinet Ministers, Joshua Nkomo, Josiah Chinamano, Clement Muchachi and Joseph Msika were dismissed from the government, while ZPRA's former military leaders Dumiso Dabengwa and Lookout Masuku were arrested and subsequently tried for treason. The High Court later acquitted both men of the treason charges levelled against them³⁴

The harsh treatment given to ZAPU leaders in the wake of the finding of the arms caches made more ex-ZPRAs to believe that they could not expect fair treatment if they remained in the APs or in ZNA units. Many ZPRA ex-combatants deserted at this time. Persecution within ZNA of former ZPRA guerrillas was key in causing mass desertions. Many felt they

³² CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace: A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980-1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p32

³³ Interview with Joseph Nkatanzo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 3/10/2019

³⁴ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p32

had no option but to flee or take up arms once again to save their lives. Violence within the ZNA was widespread and many claimed that ZPRA guerrillas were killed, beaten up or otherwise victimized. In several battalions former ZPRA guerrillas alleged that they were “segregated, disarmed and some of their numbers were taken away never to be seen again.”³⁵ At Silobela camp where tension ran high between the two guerrilla armies, the arms cache claim provoked violence as all ZPRA cadres were regarded as dissidents. Some fled on foot to Bulawayo, about 180km from Silobela, in search of security.³⁶ In addition to those who fled, many more were demobilized. Leaving the army did not guarantee safety as some former ZPRA combatants outside the army also faced persecution. Confirming the ill-treatment ZPRA got in ZNA, Brigadier Abel Mazinyane asserted that the marginalization, persecution and killing of former ZPRA guerrillas pushed many of them out of the ZNA.³⁷

Factors contributing to the growth of dissident numbers are complex. Some explanations as to why dissidents became an entity include the view of the government and ZANU-PF that the dissidents were sponsored by ZAPU leaders who were hoping to gain through renewed fighting what they had failed to get in the 1980 elections.³⁸ Siwela Sibangani’s opinion was that the heavy-handed government reaction to the dissident issue, and its targeting of ZAPU as solely responsible, expressed a long-held desire either to punish ZAPU, or crush ZAPU totally and create a one party state.³⁹ Hence, for some ZAPU officials fleeing to the bush was a survival strategy. According to Maxwell Masuku, the increase was caused by pseudo-dissidents who were sponsored by Apartheid South Africa to destabilize the newly

³⁵ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p32

³⁶ Ibid, p190

³⁷ Interview with Brigadier Abel Mazinyane of Matshamhlope, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

³⁸ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p30

³⁹ Interview with Siwela Sibangani of Ntabazinduba Flats, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

independent Zimbabwe.⁴⁰ Nqobile Nyoni asserted that it could be true that some ZPRA members became dissident through disgruntlement with the treatment they got in the ZNA. However, the number of dissidents could not be verified so that it was hard to say if there was an increase in their number.⁴¹ Prince Khumalo explained that marginalization and persecution of ex-ZPRA cadres within the ranks of ZNA prompted some of them to desert the army and that once outside the army they were further persecuted and had to be on the run.⁴²

Apparently, the desire to survive was the strongest motive that ex-ZPRAs had for becoming dissidents. Themba Ncube added that so called ‘dissident sympathizers’ were purged or arrested so much that in 1982 senior army officers toured ZNA units to assure soldiers that they would not be victimized for past affiliations.⁴³ Several former ZPRA guerrillas alleged that some of their colleagues were beaten and some of their members disappeared. Research by Jocelyn Alexander *et al* showed that after the abduction of six foreign tourists in July 1982, the security force presence in Bulawayo and the whole of Matabeleland was reinforced. Soldiers, police support units and elite paratroop units collaborated with the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) in tracking down ZPRA ex-combatants. The army and the CIO ran detention camps at various centres in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province between 1982 and 1984. Anyone suspected of having helped dissidents, especially former ZPRA combatants, members of the Rhodesian army and even serving members of ZNA home on leave were tortured or killed on allegations of being dissidents. Ex-combatants were vulnerable to being picked up in spite of the fact that they carried demobilisation cards when travelling to Bulawayo to collect demobilization stipends. As a result of curfew and search

⁴⁰ Interview with Maxwell Masuku of Barbourfields Bulawayo, 26/9/2019

⁴¹ Interview with Nqobile Nyoni of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

⁴² Interview with Prince Khumalo of Ntabazinduna Flats, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

⁴³ Interview with Themba Ncube of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

operations in the city of Bulawayo, hundreds of ex-ZPRA guerrillas were picked up.⁴⁴ Such actions taken against civilian and former guerrillas by security forces in Bulawayo prompted others to defect from ZNA units. The result was an increase in dissident violence in Matabeleland.

Concerning their strategy, most of the dissidents organized themselves on the model of ZPRA. In order to destroy super-ZAPU, a group of South African-backed dissidents, dissidents instituted a territorial command structure which tried to mimic that of the 1970s ZPRA. They modelled their regions on those of the 1970s ZPRA (northern, western and southern).⁴⁵ The dissidents encountered operational problems. Shortage of weapons and ammunition was a major concern. Though many of the dissidents had left the army with their weapons or acquired them from caches left with civilians during the 1970s, maintaining the war was a serious problem. So they resorted to a defensive strategy with most of their activities being restricted to night-time attacks or forays into villages for food, followed by hurried retreats, then lying low during the day to avoid detection by troops.⁴⁶ Dissidents also found it hard to incorporate civilians who fled repression and joined them as the people were not trained fighters and were a risk to the dissidents. Frequent infiltration by the CIO was another problem encountered by the dissidents.⁴⁷ The dissidents had no support from the civilians or from ZAPU as a party. The dissidents were also resented for raping young women and for their insistence that villagers kill chickens to provide them with relish. The above problems

⁴⁴ J. Alexander, J. Mc Gregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p190

⁴⁵ Ibid, p198

⁴⁶ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p34

⁴⁷ J. Alexander, J. Mc Gregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p199

militated against dissidents being effective in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, that is, they did not terrorise or attack people in the suburbs of Bulawayo.

Alexander *et al* assert that at their height the dissidents were approximately 400. Some of them were killed, captured, or injured, while others fled to Botswana or South Africa. At the time of the Amnesty only 122 dissidents turned themselves in.⁴⁸ The target of dissident attacks were commercial farms, resettlement and forest areas of southern Lupane and Nyamandlovu districts. They attacked white farmers who were hostile to them. As for resettlement schemes, dissidents attacked them because they harboured some people they had clashed with in certain areas. Also economic sabotage of government development projects was a goal.⁴⁹ From that perspective, the dissent actions can be described as political. Between 1982 and end of 1983, dissidents murdered 33 farmers and their family members. As a result, many farmers in Nyamandlovu sold their ranches or moved their families into the city of Bulawayo for protection, leaving productive farmland idle.⁵⁰ Thus, Bulawayo became a sanctuary for farmers and their families fleeing from dissident atrocities.

The failure of Zimbabwe's transition to independence had negative repercussions for former ZPRA guerrillas. Those caught up in the deadly conflict of the 1980s were faced with a difficult situation. For some the only option seemed to 'return' to the bush. The dissident war was a war without political leadership, without civilian and party support, without hope of success, but only of survival. All dissidents were young men and any women caught up in the violence were victims of rape or were murdered. Douglas Maligwa asserted that dissident

⁴⁸J. Alexander, J. Mc Gregor & T. Ranger, *Violence and Memory One Hundred years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p199

⁴⁹Ibid, p201

⁵⁰ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p38

activities impacted on Bulawayo as they caused migration of people from Matabeleland North and South to Bulawayo to seek refuge. However, safety was not guaranteed as people were subjected to ‘curfew and search’ operations in the city of Bulawayo. As a result, some were detained while others were killed.⁵¹ Another observation made by John Mpofu was that Bulawayo’s industrial production was adversely affected because very often people did not go to work but preferred to wait for the ‘searches’ rather than being caught outside their homes. Also the influx of refugees over-stretched the existing social amenities such as houses in the townships.⁵²

Government Action

Initially the government did not blame ZAPU leadership for the outbreak of violence. However, former Prime Minister Robert Mugabe construed the arms caches in Matabeleland as evidence of a plot on the part of ZAPU’s leadership to instigate a military coup. As mentioned earlier, ZAPU leaders were either demoted, removed from the cabinet, arrested or tried for treason. At the same time many ZPRA soldiers defected to the bush. The government instituted a State of Emergency in the whole of Matabeleland, including the city of Bulawayo, which included a combination of legislative powers, restrictive curfews, widespread detention and searches and increases in the number of troops in Matabeleland.⁵³ This State of Emergency granted the government extra-legal powers such as the power to detain people without trial. The curfews imposed in different areas at different times were meant to control the movements of dissidents. Due to an armed attack on the Prime Minister’s Harare residence in June 1982, a security clampdown was instituted in Bulawayo, and some detention, as a ZPRA link to the attack was established. Roadblocks and extensive

⁵¹Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

⁵² Interview with John Mpofu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

⁵³CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p42

searches started in Bulawayo's high density suburbs and a sky-shout over the city advised people to surrender any weapons they might have. The appeal resulted in some weapons being laid out on the sides of roads.⁵⁴ Next, on 6 July 1982, the government imposed a curfew on Bulawayo restricting all movement between nine pm and four am. Anyone caught more than 50 metres from their house during these hours risked being shot on sight. For people to move around the city they had to pass through roadblocks and anyone without an identity card risked being detained. Houses and people were searched while roadblocks were maintained for some days and the goal was to locate and seize weapons. The government claimed to have seized weapons and detained people as a result of this curfew which remained in force until October 1982.⁵⁵ Further security measures, such as deploying an extra 2000 Police Support Unit members in Matabeleland accompanied clampdown on Bulawayo. According to the Deputy Minister of Home Affairs, James Mudzingwa, 400 Support Unit troops also were deployed in August, and another 400 in September 1982.⁵⁶ The aim was to curb banditry. However, Douglas Maligwa pointed out that the government did not take any measures to safeguard ordinary citizens. Instead, it accused civilians of supporting dissidents and government ministers would go around the country threatening to punish 'dissident supporters'.⁵⁷ The government's lack of concern for the safety of ordinary citizens was confirmed by Nqobile Nyoni of Mzilikazi Township. He also reiterated the government's threatening attitude towards civilians.⁵⁸

A medical specialist working at Mpilo hospital in 1982 witnessed evidence of increased military targeting of civilians. He treated several gunshot wound patients after 1982, usually

⁵⁴ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p42

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

⁵⁸ Interview with Nqobile Nyoni of Mzilikazi Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

members of ZNA injured in crossfire with dissidents as well as some wounded ‘dissidents,’ who were kept under armed guard in the wards. The hospital staff also suffered under this repression. For instance, the hospital administrator was detained on a fabricated charge of stolen property and was held in jail for eight weeks. When a wounded ‘dissident’ escaped due to a lapse in police security, all the nurses on ward duty at the time were detained. In 1983, the entire nursing staff of Mpilo Hospital were detained one morning and were taken away to Stops Police Camp for interrogation in two buses, leaving the hospital almost unstaffed. They were released later in the day. The same year, after the medical specialist had presented medical records of civilians injured by soldiers to the Prime Minister, the specialist himself was ordered to resign by the Minister of Health, Oliver Munyaradzi.⁵⁹ However, the government subsequently rescinded the resignation. Maxwell Masuku believed that the medical specialist’s report exposed the governments’ complicity in harassing and killing innocent civilians. That is why initially the Minister of Health wanted him to resign. On second thoughts the government did not know what the medical specialist would do next. So they considered it prudent to let him retain his job.⁶⁰

The dissidents’ kidnapping of six foreign tourists on 23 July 1982 in the Nyamandlovu area prompted increased repression from the government. There was increased concentration of security forces in Bulawayo and the whole of Matabeleland North. Also, a curfew was imposed first in Tsholotsho, then Lupane. Buses, private vehicles and reporters were banned from these areas.⁶¹ The idea was to prevent people from other regions getting to know the government’s repression on civilians in Matabeleland. *The Chronicle* of 31stOctober, 1982

⁵⁹ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p42

⁶⁰ Interview with Maxwell Masuku of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 26/09/2019

⁶¹ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p42

reported that during the same month about 77 demobilised ZPRA soldiers were arrested in Bulawayo while trying to collect their pay. The same paper stated that ‘452 dissidents’ were detained at this time in Bulawayo. Furthermore, the government enacted the Emergency Powers Regulations, similar to the Indemnity Law that had been passed by the Smith Government in 1975. This exempted government officials and security forces from prosecution as long as the action they had taken was “for purposes or in connection with preservation of the security of Zimbabwe.”⁶² The government also increasingly blurred the distinction between ‘dissidents’ and alleged ‘supporters of dissidents.’⁶³ This reached a climax in 1983 and 1984 during 5th Brigade activities in Matabeleland.

The government showed no sympathy for the plight of civilians, often ordered at gunpoint to feed dissidents. Villagers who reported dissidents stood a chance of being killed by the next group of dissidents to pass through. Ordinary civilians found themselves in a predicament as whatever they did, they were likely to be wrong in somebody’s eyes. While there were civilians feeding and hiding dissidents, people subjected to detention or torture were seldom brought to trial, suggesting most were innocent.⁶⁴ Prince Khumalo asserted that there was no evidence of civilians from Bulawayo who supported dissidents. Allegations of them supporting dissidents were based on ethnicity, as a Ndebele person was either regarded a dissident or a dissident supporter.⁶⁵

⁶² The *Chronicle*, 31stOctober, 1982

⁶³ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p42

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Interview with Prince Khumalo of Ntabazinduna Flats, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

Gukurahundi

In January 1983, the Government strategy to the ‘dissidents’ menace culminated in the deployment of the 5th Brigade, a special brigade trained by Korean instructors specifically to crush dissidents. ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo disapproved the formation and training of the 5th Brigade asserting that Zimbabwe had several “efficient forces of law, to handle any internal problems” and he feared that the 5th Brigade would be used to impose a one-party state in the country.⁶⁶ The 5th Brigade which Mugabe called ‘*Gukurahundi*’ (the rain which washes away the chaff before the spring rains) was equipped with Korean equipment and had unique communication procedures. Their codes and radios were incompatible with other ZNA units and their uniform was also different, its most distinctive feature being their red berets. The brigade comprised mainly of Shona-speaking former ZANLA forces loyal to Prime Minister Mugabe. In December 1982, at the Brigade’s Passing out Parade, Mugabe handed over the brigade flag to Colonel Perence Shiri, the commander of the 5th Brigade.⁶⁷

Douglas Maligwa explained that the brigade made forays into Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South as well as Bulawayo Metropolitan Province.⁶⁸ Sihle Gumede added that the brigade carried out searches in the high density suburbs of Bulawayo where people were rounded up, beaten and some were detained in prisons.⁶⁹ Also others were transferred to Bhalagwe camp (in Central Matobo area) or other prisons across the country, asserted John Mpfu. He also said that many civilians were massacred in the various districts of Matabeleland. The victims comprised of men, women and even children.⁷⁰ Joseph Nkatozo asserted that although the atrocities committed by the 5th Brigade occurred mainly in rural

⁶⁶ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p42

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

⁶⁹ Interview with Sihle Gumede of Luveve township, Bulawayo, 02/10/2019

⁷⁰ Interview with John Mpfu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

areas of Matabeleland, Bulawayo Metropolitan Province felt the impact of the atrocities as some people fled to the city of Bulawayo in search of security. However, safety eluded them because of house ‘searches’ carried out by security forces. The result was that the social amenities in Bulawayo became overstretched.⁷¹ Grace Noko added that a big number of youth escaped from Bulawayo and fled to Botswana or South Africa when they realized that they were not safe even in the city of Bulawayo.⁷²

The Brigade’s operations amplified apolitical interpretation of violence. The brigade tortured and beat up civilians and murdered others. It also informed victims that they were being punished because they were Ndebele and that all Ndebele-speaking people supported ZAPU and all ZAPU supporters were ‘dissidents’.⁷³ Lloyd Sachikonye noted that the violence and raping of women in particular was humiliating and dehumanizing.⁷⁴ Such behaviour also destroyed the dignity of the Ndebele people while at the same time subjugating them was the observation made by Prince Khumalo of Ntabazinduna Flats.⁷⁵ Journalists were prohibited from leaving Bulawayo without permission. Also, roadblocks were set up on all roads from Bulawayo into the districts of Matabeleland provinces. These measures ensured that word of atrocities took long to leak out of the area.⁷⁶ Many ZAPU leaders and other civilians escaped death by walking long distances and speaking convincingly in Shona as they fled to the safety of Bulawayo or Botswana.⁷⁷

⁷¹ Interview with Joseph Nkatazo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 03/10/2019

⁷² Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

⁷³S. Eppel, “*Gukurahundi*” The Need for truth and reparation” in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds) *Zimbabwe and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press Harare, 2005, p45

⁷⁴ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, p16

⁷⁵ Interview with Prince Khumalo of Ntabazinduna Flats, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

⁷⁶ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p50

⁷⁷Ibid

Several government ministers denied allegations against the 5th Brigade or downplayed them as the result of indiscipline, drunkenness and boredom. The situation on the ground showed that the 5th brigade atrocities spurred an increase in dissident insurgency instead of curbing it. For example, Langford Ndiweni, a former ZPRA guerrilla, returned home to Nkayi after demobilization. He tried to engage in farming but was picked up by soldiers, harassed and detained at Nkayi police camp where the CIO interrogated him about the presence of dissidents in the area. He then fled to Bulawayo where he heard about the 5th Brigade depredations. Upon escaping army search operations in the city, he fled to the dark forests of Nkayi where he joined the dissidents in late 1983.⁷⁸ Another former ZPRA guerrilla, Gcobala Ncube, demobilized in 1982 and returned home to southern Nkayi. After being beaten by the 5th Brigade in 1983, he walked about 150 kilometers to Bulawayo, where he sought treatment for a fractured hip from a private doctor. A visit from the CID in 1984 prompted him to return to Nkayi where he recovered the AK 47 he had hidden in the forest and then joined the dissidents.⁷⁹

Sikhu Sithole narrated a similar story concerning her brother, John Ndebele. A former ZPRA guerrilla, John Ndebele deserted from his ZNA Battalion following clashes between ZPRA and ZANLA guerrillas and fled to Bulawayo. In Bulawayo he heard rumours of the 5th Brigade atrocities. That, combined with searches for deserters, spurred him to flee to his rural home in Tsholotsho where his arrival coincided with that of the 5th Brigade. Sikhu Sithole added that the killing of some of their relatives by the 5th Brigade prompted John to escape into the bush and joining dissidents. The group operated in the region, moving from

⁷⁸J Alexander et al *Violence and Memory, One Hundred Years in the 'Dark Forests' of Matabeleland*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2000, p193

⁷⁹Ibid, p194

Tsholotsho through to Nyamandlovu until the Amnesty of 1988.⁸⁰ John Ndebele was not available to confirm his sister's testimony as he was working in Botswana at the time I carried out fieldwork. The 5th Brigade atrocities also spurred various other former ZPRA guerrillas to join the dissidents. Indeed the brutalities by the 5th Brigade prompted an increase in dissident insurgency instead of crushing it.

In March 1983, the government placed Joshua Nkomo under house arrest and the army guarded his house. However, he managed to flee to Botswana and then England from where he continued to denounce 5th Brigade brutalities. At the same time, a 4-day cordon was placed around Bulawayo. Men who had fled from Matabeleland North and went to seek refuge in the city of Bulawayo were detained and Bulawayo city was referred to by Enos Nkala as 'the fountainhead for dissidents.'⁸¹ Sikhu Sithole asserted that *Gukurahundi* atrocities had a detrimental effect on the relationship of those in urban Bulawayo and their rural relatives since some Bulawayo residents were reluctant to accommodate their relatives from rural areas who had fled from 5th Brigade atrocities. In town it is not easy to feed visitors whose stay is indefinite. She continued to explain that the Ndebele people who lost some of their relatives due to the 5th Brigade atrocities to date resent ZANU-PF government that unleashed the 5th Brigade on innocent civilians.⁸²

On 16 March, 1983 the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' conference presented to Prime Minister Mugabe a dossier containing evidence of 5th Brigade atrocities. Due to the meeting between the Bishops Conference and the Prime Minister there was a noticeable decline in 5th Brigade brutalities. However, the government's official response vacillated between denial and

⁸⁰ Interview with Sikhu Sithole of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 3/10/2019

⁸¹ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p52

⁸² Interview with Sikhu Sithole of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 03/10/2019

guarded acceptance of wrong-doings. On 6 April 1985 Mugabe refuted allegations of atrocities and accused the CCJP of condemning the 5th Brigade but not dissidents.⁸³

Also Emmerson Mnangagwa, who was then the Minister of State Security, proclaimed at a rally in Bulawayo that the army had come to Matabeleland to cleanse the region of the dissident menace and also to wipe out their supporters.⁸⁴ This induced many ZAPU supporters to buy ZANU-PF cards, as a security measure. However, it is debatable as to whether the meeting between the Bishops' conference and the Prime Minister helped to reduce *Gukurahundi* atrocities. Douglas Maligwa asserted that the bishops only registered to the Prime Minister their concern over human killings and injury of those who survived. The 5th Brigade atrocities continued unabated showing that the meeting did not resolve anything.⁸⁵ On the other hand Joseph Nkatanzo had a different opinion. He stated that the curfew that had been introduced in Bulawayo and various districts of Matabeleland was relaxed and food was allowed into the rural areas that were suffering from a three-year drought.⁸⁶ In 1986 the 5th Brigade was finally withdrawn and it embarked on conventional training in Nyanga under the guidance of the British Advisory Team and ZNA instructors. The members of the brigade were disbanded and attached to other brigades on external operations in Mozambique.⁸⁷

From the government's perspective, the 5th Brigade helped to bring dissident insurgency under control. However, the situation on the ground does not confirm the government's view. The dissident problem continued until the signing of the Unity Accord in December 1987. Also, the government has not formally acknowledged the killings, tortures and

⁸³ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p54

⁸⁴ Ibid

⁸⁵ Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

⁸⁶ Interview with Joseph Nkatanzo of Lobengula West, 3/10/2019

⁸⁷ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p17

disappearances that were perpetrated under the *Gukurahundi* operations. The 5th Brigade had detrimental socio-economic effects on the victimized. The victims included children who lost parents in the conflict and have found it hard to obtain identity papers.⁸⁸

In the case of the city of Bulawayo, *Gukurahundi* atrocities caused a huge refugee problem since thousands of civilians fled from rural areas to seek refuge in the city. For example, the CCJP noted that in 1984 the entire Matobo Rural Council relocated to Bulawayo from where it resumed its operations.⁸⁹ If anything, the dissidents became more active in the wake of 5th Brigade activity.⁹⁰ The civilians who suffered at the hands of *Gukurahundi* believed that they had become victims of an ‘ethnic’ and political war. The brutalities intensified ethnic differences as “an attack on the Ndebele was an attack on ZAPU, an attack on ZAPU was an attack on the Ndebele.”⁹¹

It should also be noted that there was no company or group that organized safe houses for the 5th Brigade victims in the city of Bulawayo. Brigadier Abel Mazinyane explained that Bulawayo residents had to accommodate their relatives who had fled from their rural homes in order to escape from the 5th Brigade atrocities.⁹² Siphon Ndebele explained that in rural areas people flocked to churches and schools hoping to be safe, but even there the 5th Brigade would attack them.⁹³ Moreover, the civilians in Matabeleland perceived rapes committed by

⁸⁸CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p54

⁸⁹Ibid p, 56

⁹⁰See how Langford Ndiweni, Gcobala Ncube (both from Nkayi) and John Ndebele from Tsholotsho were prompted by the 5th Brigade to become dissidents. Cases discussed in the chapter earlier.

⁹¹ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p58

⁹² Interview with Brigadier Abel Mazinyane of Matshamhlophe, Bulawayo, 10/10/201

⁹³ Interview with Siphon Ndebele of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 26/09/2019

members of the 5th Brigade as a systematic attempt to create a generation of Shona babies.⁹⁴ An informant who wished to remain anonymous testified to having been gang raped by the 5th Brigade in front of her three brothers when she was only fifteen years old. Then they were marched at gun point for about an hour until they reached a camp. At the camp there were about 50 other people, men women and children, and they were all lined up and shot one by one. By chance 6 of them survived by pretending to be dead though they all received gunshot wounds.⁹⁵ In Douglas Maligwa's opinion, the rapes were committed in order to destroy the moral fabric of Ndebele women as well as dilute the Ndebele nation. The children born as a result of such rapes would be given Ndebele names but biologically they would be Shona.⁹⁶

The 5th Brigade activities also had a negative psychological and spiritual impact on the civilians in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province and the whole of Matabeleland regions. The Brigade insisted that there would be no mourning for the dead. If the victim was killed on allegations of being a 'sellout', the relatives and friends were denied the chance to mourn because to do so would label one a sellout as well. So people suffered loss of their loved ones in silence. Also the spirits of those buried in mass graves or those who disappeared remain unappeased. Tarusarira asserted that this caused serious psychological distress to the surviving relatives.⁹⁷ According to Sikhu Sithole people mourn for their dead by shedding tears in order to ease the pressure in their hearts. She also asserted that failing to mourn the dead will remain the worst dehumanizing experience the Ndebele people went through as human beings.⁹⁸ Joseph Nkatazo explained that as no legislation can outlaw emotions, 37

⁹⁴ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace A Report on Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare 1997, p58

⁹⁵ Interview with an anonymous respondent of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

⁹⁶ Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

⁹⁷ J. Tarusarira, "Of Spirits and Healings: Cultural Values and Post-Conflict Reconciliation Agenda in Zimbabwe," in *Africa Review*, Vol 40, No 1, 2013, p100

⁹⁸ Interview with Sikhu Sithole of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 03/10/2019

years later, people still want their dead relatives exhumed and given befitting reburials as a way of healing their bottled-up emotions. Many families are affected by the spirits of those who died as traditional rituals were not performed.⁹⁹

Some people are still aggrieved about what they experienced in the 1980s at the hands of either Zimbabwean security forces or the 5th Brigade. Douglas Maligwa complained of having been arrested, detained and tortured for treason charges in March 1982. He was severely tortured so that he could implicate some members of ZPRA High Command of plotting to overthrow the government of Robert Mugabe. He was later released as he would not implicate the ZPRA commanders.¹⁰⁰ John Mpofu witnessed the 5th Brigade commit atrocities in his village in Lupane. The 5th Brigade forced the family of his uncle, his father's brother, and other villagers in a hut and set it on fire. To escape the 5th Brigade he walked about twelve kilometres together with his wife who was eight months pregnant, so that they could get transport to seek refuge in Bulawayo. He wished the government could apologise to the people of Matabeleland for the atrocities committed in the 1980s¹⁰¹

1996 June Strike, 1998 and 2003 Food Riots

The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) implemented by the government of Zimbabwe in 1991, as advised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, exacerbated the people's suffering and poverty. In response to the impoverishing effects of ESAP, in June 1996 civil servants in the main cities of Harare and Bulawayo and all the towns embarked on a strike which lasted for eight weeks. The strike by teachers, doctors, nurses and other government workers was supported by student groups, human rights

⁹⁹Interview with Joseph Nkatzo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 03/10/2019

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

¹⁰¹ Interview with John Mpofu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

organisations and churches.¹⁰² During this period civil society groups questioned the government's commitment to eradicating poverty and criticized its growing intolerance of dissent. Against the backdrop of mounting social and economic pressures, women's groups including the Zimbabwe Resource Centre and Network and the Musasa Project became more active as due to massive retrenchment of men the burden of feeding families had fallen increasingly on women. For instance, Agnes Ndebele who worked as a housemaid for a white family in the suburb of Hillside had to fend for her family after her husband had been retrenched from Merlin Limited Company. It was tough for the family to survive on her meagre salary.¹⁰³ As protests increased, government repression intensified, so that when it failed to halt strikes and demonstrations it increasingly deployed the police and army to use brutal force.¹⁰⁴ To consolidate its rule and hold over the population, the government increased its control over the law, the media and security forces. In the 1990s, Mugabe's government also turned to the war veterans to curb growing opposition from inside and outside the party. In January 1998, food riots erupted again in the major cities of Harare, Chitungwiza and Bulawayo. An analysis of events that occurred in 1997 helps one to understand the people's increasing discontent against the government.¹⁰⁵ What sparked the riots was scarcity of food as well as high prices of basic items such as mealie-meal, bread and sugar. For instance, on Monday 19th January, the day the riots started, some customers in Nkulumane high density suburb of Bulawayo were stranded when shops at the suburb's largest complex abruptly closed in panic after reports of violent consumer protests against hikes in Harare. By lunch

¹⁰²J Muzondidya, "From Buoyancy to Crisis , 1980-1997" in B Raftopoulos and A.S Mlambo, (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p194

¹⁰³ Interview with Agnes Ndebele of Ntabazinduna Flats, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

¹⁰⁴ J Muzondidya, "From Buoyancy to Crisis , 1980-1997" in B Raftopoulos and A.S Mlambo, (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p194

¹⁰⁵The government's award to ex-guerrillas of gratuities amounting to Z\$4.5 million which the country could not afford caused an increase in the country's inflation. Corruption by senior Government officials caused widespread discontent which was expressed in 1997 through strikes by workers from numerous companies. Also an increase in taxation led to social unrest. Workers responded to calls by ZCTU to engage in a protest against tax and price increases. The government resorted to human rights violations the most spectacular of which as the attack on Morgan Tsvangirai, ZCTU's Secretary General-he was taken to hospital unconscious

time most of the shops at Nkulumane shopping complex had closed.¹⁰⁶ Rita Dube was one of the customers who visited the shopping complex that Monday afternoon hoping to purchase a few basic commodities, only to find the shops closed.¹⁰⁷ Aina Mpofo got a similar surprise when her mother sent her to buy some sour milk and sugar.¹⁰⁸ When the food riots erupted on 19th January, the ZRP did not have the capacity to contain the large scale violence. So the government called in the army; the result was that in Harare and Chitungwiza a number of people were killed or injured by use of firearms.¹⁰⁹ It is plausible to conclude that in January 1998 Bulawayo did not suffer any brutalities by security forces as there was no violence in that city.

However, according to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), in January 2003 Food Riots erupted again in Chitungwiza and Bulawayo.¹¹⁰ The MDC blamed Mugabe and his government for the food shortages because of the disruption to agriculture caused by the controversial land reform. On his part, Mugabe blamed a combination of a drought and a Western imperialistic plot aimed at keeping power in the hands of whites.¹¹¹

According to aid agencies, about six million people were suffering from acute food shortages. Also MDC supporters were prevented from receiving food aid and even buying food in urban areas. In Bulawayo, a group of war veterans was dispersed by riot police when they tried to protest outside the courthouse on Monday 6 January. The war veterans allegedly organized the food riots and also intimidated opposition supporters. Apparently the war veterans were

¹⁰⁶ ZHR NGO Forum, “A Consolidated Report on the Food Riots 19-23 Jan, 1998” p10@www.hrforumzim.org, 10Feb 1998, accessed 9/3/2019

¹⁰⁷ Interview with Rita Dube of Nkulumane, Bulawayo, 30/09/2019

¹⁰⁸ Interview with Aina Mpofo of Nkulumane, Bulawayo, 30/09/2019

¹⁰⁹ ZHR NGO Forum, “*A Consolidated Report on the Food Riots 19-23Jan, 1998*, p4, @www.hrforumzim.org10feb,1998 accessed 9/3/2019

¹¹⁰ BBC, “Zimbabwe food riots caused by war veterans p2 @www.telegraph.co.uk, accessed 9/3/2019

¹¹¹ Ibid

dissatisfied with the unfair distribution of food.¹¹² President Mugabe's reaction was to tighten his control of the main cities by announcing that he would appoint governors for both Harare and Bulawayo. MDC spokesperson Paul Themba Nyathi told the BBC's Focus on Africa programme that the new governors would usurp the power of the elected mayors.

When rioting erupted on Friday 3rd January 2003 outside a government-run grain depot in Bulawayo, 34 people were arrested.¹¹³ Brian Raftopoulos, the then chairman of a civic group called Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition, said "I think it's a symptom of food availability and distribution problems and that could be the beginning of many more trials." John Makumbe, an anti-government activist speculated that, "the food riots could very easily result in the government being kicked out of office. I think we would have a full-fledged riot."¹¹⁴ Fanuel Sivangani's opinion was that the food shortages were due to Mugabe's land reform, which had resulted in white owned commercial farms being seized for redistribution among indigenous people who were inexperienced in commercial agriculture. The new farmers also lacked adequate resources to produce enough food crops to feed the nation.¹¹⁵ Anne Sibanda further observed that as there was shortage of basic goods such as mealie-meal, bread, cooking oil, salt and sugar in the shops, the populace's discontent with Robert Mugabe's government increased.¹¹⁶ ZANU-PF Youth, also known as the 'Green Bombers', participated in putting down the food riots as they attacked about 200 people queuing up for mealie-meal including the police who were controlling the crowd in Bulawayo.¹¹⁷

¹¹²BBC, "Zimbabwe food riots caused by war veterans p2 [@www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk), accessed 9/3/2019

¹¹³ Ibid, p3

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p2

¹¹⁵ Interview with Fanuel Sivangani of Nkulumane, Bulawayo, 30/09/2019

¹¹⁶ Interview with Anne Sibanda of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 30/09/2019

¹¹⁷ BBC, "Zimbabwe food riots caused by war veterans p1 [@www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk), accessed 9/3/2019

Jabulani Sibanda, then ZANU-PF regional chairman in Bulawayo, condemned the repression of food riots after there were clashes between protesters and police outside the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) distribution depot in Bulawayo. He asserted that, “We want a transparent system and we want a local task force to distribute food to local people as they know the people better.” Furthermore, he accused the police of not investigating allegations of illegal maize sales after being supplied with addresses of offenders.¹¹⁸ The food shortages in Zimbabwe also had a detrimental effect on Cricket as a sport. A series of qualifying World Cup Cricket matches were supposed to be held in Zimbabwe in 2003. Eric Bloch, a political analyst, believed that it was the duty of the International Cricket Council to prohibit the staging of World Cup Cricket matches in Zimbabwe, considering the humanitarian crisis that was in the country. He asserted that when “sports men and women represent their countries, they become unions of patriotism. Sports and politics have become inextricably mixed [...] since Adolf Hitler used the 1936 Olympics to promote his ideology.”¹¹⁹ The above discussion shows that the violence associated with the food riots in Bulawayo increased the people’s discontent with Mugabe’s government though the government used its youth (the Green Bombers) to put down the food riots.

Land Invasions 2000-2003

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) was another moment of the expression of violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe. In 2000 Robert Mugabe decided to hold the first constitutional referendum in Zimbabwean history on 12 and 13 February. The referendum sought people’s opinion on a new constitution which kept the sweeping powers of the

¹¹⁸ World Food Programme, “ZANU-PF official calls for transparency in Maize distribution” p6 @www.telegraph.co.uk accessed 9/3/2019

¹¹⁹East London Dispatch, “Mugabe’s eleven takes on World Cup,” p19 @www.telegraph.co.uk accessed 9/3/2019

Presidency and allowed him to run for re-election twice more. The people had to vote ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to the new constitution. On 15 February the result revealed that the ‘No’ campaign had won by 54% of the vote.¹²⁰ In response to the defeat in the referendum, Mugabe sanctioned ‘Land invasions’ by paid agents of ZANU-PF. The land invasions sometimes called ‘*Jambanja*’ in Shona were spearheaded by Chenjerai ‘Hitler’ Hunzvi and his War Veterans Association. The violence was meant to dispossess white farmers who owned about 11 million hectares and to destroy the political base of MDC among farm workers whose households constituted a population of about 2 million.¹²¹ Furthermore, the violence signified ZANU-PF’s genuine fear that it could lose the impending election in June of that year. It was a struggle between ZANU-PF with the support of war veterans and party youths on one side and the MDC and its farmer and farm-workers supporters. The police, army, local state administration structures as well as courts became additional players in this confrontation.¹²² Several white farmers countrywide lost their lives during the land invasions.

The land invasions had negative ramifications on Zimbabwe’s relations with the international community, especially Britain, its former colonizer. Though Britain provided up to 44 million pounds for the land reform and 500 million pounds in bilateral support for development, the programme was implemented at a very slow pace.¹²³ As the land reform evolved taking twists and turns, relations between the international community and Zimbabwe government deteriorated. The farm seizures which in some cases resulted in the death of white farmers and their families soured relations between Mugabe’s government and Britain in particular.

¹²⁰ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p58

¹²¹ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p33

¹²² D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p88

¹²³ V.Z. Nyawo- Viriri-Shava, *Dilemmas of Agrarian Reform in Independent Zimbabwe and South Africa*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 2012, p229

The UNDP report of 2002 concluded that FTRFP in Zimbabwe was extremely disorganized, under-funded, violent and not above board.¹²⁴ Some donors including the United Nations Secretary-General's office abandoned plans to raise money from international donors for the land reform programme by the end of 2002.¹²⁵

The land invasions caused a lot of suffering to black farm workers who bore the brunt of the campaign. On hundreds of occupied farms, labourers were rounded up and forced to attend political meetings at which they were browbeaten and threatened into supporting ZANU-PF.¹²⁶ By the beginning of June 2000 about 30 opposition supporters had been killed, while 1 400 farms were occupied and 841 farms designated for appropriation.¹²⁷ Farm-workers who were forced to watch beatings suffered psychological torture. At times fellow workers were forced to beat each other to show their loyalty to ZANU-PF while some were forced to intimidate each other.¹²⁸ Anne Sibanda who worked as a housemaid for the Bradshaw family that had a farm in Nyamandlovu area related that upon invasion of their farm, her boss's family fled to Bulawayo where they stayed temporarily in a hotel before proceeding to South Africa. Fortunately for her, Mr and Mrs Bradshaw found her a job in the household of John Bradshaw's brother who lived in Selborne Park suburb in Bulawayo, John Bradshaw's sister-in-law needed another housemaid as she had given birth to twins, making it necessary to hire another maid. As for her former fellow farm workers she did not know what happened to them.¹²⁹ Commercial agriculture was ruined so much that the country's maize crop yield for

¹²⁴ V.Z. Nyawo- Viriri-Shava, *Dilemmas of Agrarian Reform in Independent Zimbabwe and South Africa*, Mambo Press, Gweru, 2012, p231

¹²⁵ Ibid, p232

¹²⁶ L. Sachikonye *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p35

¹²⁷ Ibid, p38

¹²⁸ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p236

¹²⁹ B. Raftopoulos, "The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008" in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe* Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p216

2001 declined and a report by the Food and Agricultural Organisation forecast a shortage of 579 000 tons. Simba Makoni, the then Finance Minister had to ask for food aid from the United Nations Programme.¹³⁰ The food shortage was so critical that by January 2003, about three million Zimbabweans were receiving food aid. However, opposition supporters and farm workers were denied permission to receive food aid. They were also excluded from the land reallocation.¹³¹ By 2005 the remnants of the white farmers were powerless, and the economic contributions, financial clout and institutional effectiveness of the white farmers had been eliminated. The other adverse effects of the invasions on the agricultural sector were; large amounts of vacant and underutilized land, vandalized and deteriorating infrastructure and a decline of specialized production systems.¹³² Joseph Nkatazo (a former employee of CCJP) asserted that more than 500 commercial farms from Matabeleland were expropriated during the land invasions. The majority of the white farmers sought refuge in the city of Bulawayo temporarily before leaving Zimbabwe for South Africa or Botswana. Nkatazo also said a report produced by CCJP revealed that more than 20 white farmers from Matabeleland lost their lives during the land invasions, and 5 white farmers' wives also died.¹³³

The FTLRF also had an adverse effect on Matabeleland's livestock. For instance, the eviction of white farmers from their land resulted in some horses being abandoned by their owners. In January 2003 a Scottish riding instructor rescued 28 horses from starvation after the chaotic land invasions. Horses rescued from some farms in Matabeleland were kept at a ranch near the city of Bulawayo. It then took two to three weeks to get the horses from Bulawayo to a

¹³⁰ B. Raftopoulos, "*The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008*" in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe* Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p216

¹³¹ Ibid

¹³² Ibid, p217

¹³³ Interview with Joseph Nkatazo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 3/10/2019

rehousing centre in Pretoria. Organiser Kirsten Harris experienced problems with paperwork, veterinary tests and vaccinations which are essential to control diseases in wildlife in Africa. Kristen and his team used e-mails to fundraise the money (in Britain) needed to carry out the rescue operation. They raised £20000 and received another £2000 from a charitable organization.¹³⁴

On the whole, the FTLRP had a detrimental impact on the country's economy, which virtually collapsed. By 2008, printing of the local currency fuelled a hyper-inflation of 232 million percent. During the same period productivity and output in the land sector plummeted significantly. Investment in platinum, gold and diamond was affected by the violence and corruption that accompanied production and marketing of these minerals. A great deal of violence was meted out to small miners or gold panners and expropriation of their claims.¹³⁵ The land invasions were condemned by the international community. Attempts by Thabo Mbeki of South Africa to persuade Mugabe to order an end to the land invasions yielded no positive result.¹³⁶ The Commercial Farmers Union (CFU) took the issue to High Court which declared the farm invasions illegal and ordered police to evict all squatters, but the invasions continued with Mugabe's full support. Even the Supreme Court under Chief Justice Anthony Gubbay, as early as 10 November 2000 ruled against the land seizures as "unlawful" and contravened the fundamental rights of the owners but the verdict was ignored.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ C. Tomalin, "The Zimbabwe Situation; Starving horses rescued, 6 January 2003," P22-3 [@www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk) accessed 9/3/2019

¹³⁵ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turn on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011 p38-39

¹³⁶ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p236

¹³⁷ BBC, "Zimbabwe food riots caused by war veterans" p2 [@www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk), accessed 9/3/2019, p1999

The response of Western governments to the human rights abuses accompanying the land seizures was to impose ‘targeted sanctions’ against individuals in the Mugabe regime. The United States government passed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act in 2001 while between 2002 and 2008 the European Union and Australia imposed travel and asset sanctions on increasing number of key individuals either involved in the human rights abuses or profiteering under the Mugabe regime. The United States, the European Union (EU) and Canada also imposed arms embargos on the government and in 2002 Zimbabwe was suspended from the commonwealth, from which it formally withdrew in 2003.¹³⁸

Operation ‘*Murambatsvina*’ (Clean up) 2005

Operation ‘*Murambatsvina*,’ launched in 2005, was a violent phenomenon which provoked international condemnation. It engulfed Bulawayo, Harare, other cities, towns and ‘growth points’ as well as some rural areas until the end of July that year, when the UN special Envoy, Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka visited the country and compiled a report.¹³⁹ The operation started by arresting 2000 vendors countrywide beginning 25 May, destroying their vending sites and confiscating their wares. Thousands escaped but lost their livelihoods. The police destroyed all vendors’ markets nationwide, and sometimes demolished entire suburbs in towns across Zimbabwe.¹⁴⁰

The National Housing Programme in 2003 acknowledged the government’s responsibility to provide decent and affordable housing. Given the real demand for housing, poverty and the low income nature of the informal sector workers, backyard cabins and shacks was the only housing option open to low income groups. Also the relaxation in enforcing compliance with

¹³⁸B. Raftopoulos, “*The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008*”in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe* Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p216

¹³⁹ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turn on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011 p38-39

¹⁴⁰ Solidarity Peace Trust, “Discarding the Filth (Operation *Murambatsvina*)”
p9@www.solidaritypeacetrust.org accessed 9/3/2019

strict by-laws of the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act and related laws commencing housing extensions and buildings allowed many people to build unregulated structures notably in the high density suburbs.¹⁴¹ Moreover, people took advantage of the chaos of the fast track land reform programme to occupy and develop stands in the outlying areas of major cities. The chaotic land reform programme created 61 000 housing stands in 2000, so that by 2005 slums were common in all urban areas.¹⁴²

The government of Zimbabwe argues that Operation *Murambatsvina* was aimed at stopping “disorderly or chaotic urbanization, including its health consequences; curbing illegal, parallel market transactions and reversing environmental damages caused by inappropriate urban agricultural practices.”¹⁴³ So, as argued by the government, the purpose of Operation *Murambatsvina* was to rid the country of illegal structures, crime, filthy stalls and squalor. However, analysts such as Brian Raftopoulos have suggested that the real motivation of Operation *Murambatsvina* was punishment of urbanites for their consistent support of the MDC after 2000.¹⁴⁴ In the 2005 election, having won the majority of the parliamentary seats in major cities and towns, and continuing to control local government in urban centres, the MDC was regarded as a persistent threat to ZANU-PF.¹⁴⁵ The operation was also regarded as a desire to decrease the presence of the poor in the cities because of the incapacity to provide adequate housing, food and fuel for them. According to Eldred Masunungure, Operation *Murambatsvina* was an effort by ZANU-PF to reassert economic and political control in the

¹⁴¹ E. Mufema, “Report of the Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*” 23 August, 2007, p13@www.kubatana.net accessed 10/3/2019

¹⁴² A. Harris, “Discourses of Dirt and Disease in Operation *Murambatsvina*” in (ed) M.J. Vambe *The Hidden Dimensions of Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe* Weaver Press, Harare, 2008, p40

¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ B. Raftopoulos, “*The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008*” in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe* Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p216

¹⁴⁵ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turn on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011 p38-39

aftermath of the March 31, 2005 parliamentary elections.¹⁴⁶ Operation *Murambatsvina* was meant also to show the nation that ZANU-PF was in the final stages of coercing control of the cities, regardless of the will of the people.¹⁴⁷

In Bulawayo, Operation *Murambatsvina* targeted several activities, among them street vending, foreign currency dealings, backyard industries, illegal structures and flea markets. Bulawayo is notorious for foreign currency dealings because of its proximity to the regional powerhouse, South Africa and to Botswana. Due to the rampant foreign currency dealings and the shortages of such foreign currency on the formal market, foreign currency dealers were an obvious choice of the operation. Hence, police ransacked flea markets in search of foreign currency.¹⁴⁸ Goodhope Ndlovu who was one of the operators at Unity Village flea market asserted that police confiscated the goods he had imported from South Africa. So it became impossible for him to meet his financial obligations as head of the family.¹⁴⁹ Operation *Murambatsvina* also targeted illegal structures. The epicentre of the demolitions was Bulawayo's western suburbs of Makokoba, Mzilikazi and Nguboyenja. These are the most crowded suburbs in the city. Makokoba in particular was designed for single male migrant workers during the colonial period. After independence, the suburb became open to everyone. So makeshift structures were built for the purpose of accommodation, resulting in serious overcrowding. Furthermore, due to high rentals of business premises, houses in these suburbs had also become home industries. Street vendors, both in the CBD and the suburbs

¹⁴⁶ E. Batton & E. Masunungure, "Popular Reactions to state repression: Operation *Murambatsvina* in Zimbabwe," p3@www.afrobarometre.org accessed 9/3/2019

¹⁴⁷ Solidarity Peace Trust, "Discarding the Filth (Operation *Murambatsvina*), p34 www.solidaritypeacetrust.org accessed 9/3/2019

¹⁴⁸ C. Munhande & L. Matonhodze, "An assessment of the Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the Informal Market. A case of Zimbabwe's Bulawayo's Central Business District (CBD) Flea Market Operations in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa vol 10, No 3, 2008*, p5.

¹⁴⁹ Interview with Goodhope Ndlovu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 2/10/2019

were also victims of the Operation as their vending stalls were razed down and burnt by the police.¹⁵⁰

The crackdown was particularly harsh in Bulawayo. Killarney settlement on the northern outskirts of Bulawayo which had 800 residents who had lived there for twenty years or more was razed to the ground.¹⁵¹ The residents represented a wide cross section of society, the poor who could not afford rent but could build a traditional style hut and cultivate a small garden, the very old with no living relatives, people of foreign descent who do not have a rural home or extended family and those of local descent who are formally employed and raising families.¹⁵² The residents of Killarney had two weeks in which the demolition axe fell in slow motion. On 8 June 2005, police went to the area and ordered people to remove their property from their houses which would be demolished. At 6 o' clock in the morning on 12 June, police anti-riot squads arrived, woke up people and barely gave them minutes to vacate their homes before they were set on fire. People fled in panic as thatched roofs burnt and fell in on clothing and other belongings. So many families lost not only their homes, but also their property.¹⁵³

Operation *Murambatsvina* had adverse effects on its victims. Goodhope Ndlovu, mentioned earlier, was forced to send his two children to his rural home in Nkayi where school fees was lower than in town. They would be looked after by their grandmother. Thus, Operation

¹⁵⁰ C. Munhande & L. Matonhodze, "An Assessment of the Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the Informal Market. A Case of Zimbabwe's Bulawayo CBD Flea Market Operation in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, Vol 10, No. 3, 2008*, p6

¹⁵¹ Solidarity Peace Trust, "Discarding the Filth (Operation *Murambatsvina*)" p9@www.solidaritypeacetrust.org accessed 9/3/2019

¹⁵² Ibid, p34

¹⁵³ Ibid

Murambatsvina had disrupted his family life.¹⁵⁴ Bulawayo based churches offered accommodation to the displaced but some families were reluctant to move. Many of the displaced people took shelter in churches for a few weeks but even this was forbidden by the government. Police visited the churches and castigated them for taking in the displaced; they accused the churches of trying to make the government look bad.¹⁵⁵ The family of John Chulu, who originally came from Malawi, was among the Killarney displaced people who were temporarily accommodated by the Methodist Church. Harassment by the government forces made them leave their temporary shelter and they eventually rented two rooms at a house in Luveve.¹⁵⁶ Some displaced people left town ‘voluntarily’ having decided that they would try to establish a residence and livelihood elsewhere.¹⁵⁷

The United Nations Special Envoy’s Report asserted that Operation *Murambatsvina* rendered people homeless and destitute. It put the total figure of people directly affected by the operation ranging from 650 000 to 700 000 having lost their house, sources of livelihood or both. The total figure of people indirectly affected by the Operation ranged between 2.1 million and 2.56 million, which is 18% of the country’s population.¹⁵⁸ Highly vulnerable children were also displaced, thus disrupting school attendance and education. An estimated 40 000 women headed families were directly affected by the operation.

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Goodhope Ndlovu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 2/10/2019

¹⁵⁵ Solidarity Peace Trust, “Discarding the Filth (Operation *Murambatsvina*)”
p9@www.solidaritypecaetrust.org accessed 9/3/2019

¹⁵⁶ Interview with John Chulu of Luveve, Bulawayo, 2/10/2019

¹⁵⁷ Ibid

¹⁵⁸ E. Mufema, “Report on Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*” 23 August
2007p16@www.kubatana.net accessed 10/3/2019

Most lost their homes and sources of livelihood and displaced women and girls were forced into transactional sex, because of economic destitution.¹⁵⁹ Loice Dube, a widow asserted that she used to pay school fees for her three children using the money paid by tenants living in the additional rooms constructed outside the main house. Loss of income due to the demolition of the outbuildings meant that she now found it hard to raise the required fees as she was not formally employed. Before his death, her husband had erected the additional rooms in order to supplement his salary.¹⁶⁰

Economically the informal sector was disadvantaged, rendering individuals and households destitute and slowing down national economic progress. Urban municipalities lost revenue from taxes previously collected from the informal sector. The operation destroyed and disrupted livelihoods of about 2.56 million people who were coping, however poorly, with a prolonged economic crisis.¹⁶¹ The effects of the Operation on the built environment were tremendous. In a flash all backyard, squatter settlements and informal business units were destroyed. It looked like a huge earthquake had hit the main urban centres with rubble thrown all over the place.¹⁶² In the cases of the city of Bulawayo, although most of the western suburbs were affected by the operation, the epicentre of demolitions was the suburbs of Makokoba, Mzilikazi and Nguboyenja. Makokoba, as the most crowded suburb, suffered the worst demolitions.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁹E. Mufema, “Report on Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*” 23 August 2007p16@www.kubatana.net accessed 10/3/2019

¹⁶⁰ Interview with Loice Dube of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 2/10/2019

¹⁶¹ E. Mufema, “Report on Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*” 23 August 2007p16@www.kubatana.net accessed 10/3/2019

¹⁶² Ibid

¹⁶³ C. Munhande & L. Matonhodze, “An Assessment of the Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the Informal Market. A case of Zimbabwe’s Bulawayo Central Business District (CBD) Flea Market Operators,” in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, Vol 10, No. 3, 2008, p6

Children whose homes were destroyed dropped out of school in large numbers. Directors of Education estimated an average of 100 pupils per primary school to have dropped out. Due to fear of separation, families stayed together, as parents were afraid if their children went to school they might return home to find their parents arrested or forcibly trucked to some other place. In their new totally impoverished situation, parents were afraid that they would not afford school fees to place their children into new schools.¹⁶⁴For instance, out of 294 dependents, 111 were children who had been in school in Killarney and who were out of school.¹⁶⁵

According to Munhande and Matonhodze, the crackdown on flea markets in Bulawayo resulted in the flea markets closing down for about three weeks accompanied by devastating effects for the operators and the community at large. The closure meant loss of business for the operators, resulting in many of the operators failing to meet their obligations. It also compelled some of the operators to use their business capital, since they had no other sources of income to fall back on. In some cases, some operators were driven out of business altogether having spent all the capital on daily needs.¹⁶⁶ For instance, Goodhope Ndlovu was not only compelled to send his children to his rural home, but was driven out of business by Operation *Murambatsvina*. For him and his wife to survive, he eventually became a gardener for a white family in Hillside suburb.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Solidarity Peace Trust, “Discarding the Filth (Operation *Murambatsvina*),” p13 www.solidaritypeacetrust.org accessed 9/3/2019

¹⁶⁵Ibid p 45

¹⁶⁶ C. Munhande & L. Matonhodze, “An Assessment of the Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the Informal Market. A case of Zimbabwe’s Bulawayo Central Business District (CBD) Flea Market Operators,” in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, Vol 10, No. 3, 2008, p7*

¹⁶⁷ Interview with Goodhope Ndlovu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 2/10/2019

MaBhebhe also asserted that Operation *Murambatsvina* led to loss of goods worth billions of dollars by the operators as goods that were seized by the police were kept at Drill Hall up to three weeks for vetting. Thieves masquerading as policemen also capitalised on the chaos that prevailed during the raids on flea markets to steal the goods of the shocked flea market operators. She also asserted that the loss of goods, both in police custody and to bogus law enforcement agents dented a heavy blow on flea markets in Bulawayo. The loss of goods, also eroded the operators' capital base given the little profit margins for their wares most of which were imported.¹⁶⁸

Backyard industries (such as those that made clothes and shoes) constituted one of the main suppliers of local goods to the flea markets. Hence, the attack on backyard industries indirectly attacked the flea market operators. The reduction in the supply base had an inflationary effect as the demand for backyard products exceeded supply due to closure of backyard industries. The result was a sharp increase in the cost of goods causing a recession in business for most flea markets.¹⁶⁹The crackdown on illegal foreign currency dealers resulted in the reduction of foreign currency to flea market dealers for purchases of imported goods. Also the strict border checks and roadblocks which were part and parcel of Operation *Murambatsvina* had adverse effects on flea market operations. Operators frequently lost their imported goods in transit either to Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) officials or police officers after having failed to account for the sources of foreign currency.¹⁷⁰ Ironically the

¹⁶⁸Interview with MaBhebhe of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 10/1/2019

¹⁶⁹ C. Munhande & L. Matonhodze, "An Assessment of the Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the Informal Market. A case of Zimbabwe's Bulawayo Central Business District (CBD) Flea Market Operators," in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, Vol 10, No. 3, 2008, p7

¹⁷⁰C. Munhande & L. Matonhodze, "An Assessment of the Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the Informal Market. A case of Zimbabwe's Bulawayo Central Business

government did not facilitate the availability of foreign currency on the formal market for access by the general public, including flea market operators. This was confirmed by Bongani Mpofo who used to import electrical goods such as televisions, radios and kettles for sale at 4th Avenue flea market. He stated that flea market traders had to rely on illegal foreign currency market as they could not obtain the foreign currency on the formal market.¹⁷¹

The number of flea markets in the CBD was reduced, since operations in some cases were permanently prohibited. All the flea markets along Lobengula Street were closed except for the Lobengula flea market itself. West End flea market, along Herbert Chitepo, was closed together with those along 6th avenue extension. The closure of these flea markets coupled with the subsequent reduction in the number of operators made many people jobless as workers were laid off, hence exacerbating the poverty levels in the country¹⁷². According to MaBhebhe, the army and the police, during the Operation also harassed flea market customers. For instance, at Unity Village flea market the police cordoned the place and everyone inside, either customers or operators were searched and taken to Central Police Station where they were detained and later released without charges. As a result many potential customers shunned the flea market for fear of being arrested or harassed.¹⁷³

Vegetable vendors and other informal market traders operating in the CBD and Renkini bus terminus were compelled to vacate their operational bases and were pushed to the outskirts far away from customers. Statistics in the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

District (CBD) Flea Market Operators,” in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, Vol 10, No. 3, 2008, p7*

¹⁷¹ Interview with Bongani Mpofo of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 2/10/2019

¹⁷² C. Munhande & L. Matonhodze, “An Assessment of the Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the Informal Market. A case of Zimbabwe’s Bulawayo Central Business District (CBD) Flea Market Operators,” in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, Vol 10, No. 3, 2008, p10*

¹⁷³ Interview with MaBhebhe of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 10/1/2019

showed that there were 150 vending marts completed against a waiting list of over 17000 people. The government did not have enough money to provide all operators with vending marts. Therefore, the clean-up campaign turned out to be an attack on people's livelihoods. Operation *Murambatsvina* increased people's poverty as unemployment shot up due to the closure of backyard industries and flea markets. The loss of jobs exacerbated people's poverty as some parents could not send their children to school, pay rentals and other financial obligations due to the destruction caused by the operation.¹⁷⁴ The destruction of illegal structures compounded accommodation problems for the urban poor who made up the bulk of informal sector operators. Backyard shacks close to the city centre were popular with many of the informal traders who could not afford transport costs from distant suburbs and the high rentals charged for legal structures.¹⁷⁵

Though Operation *Murambatsvina* generally caused a lot of suffering to the people and flea market operators in particular, the operation brought some positive effects. In the case of flea market operators, the screening and subsequent registration of operators during the operation helped in ridding the flea markets of criminal elements.

The crackdown on unregistered street vendors who operated in undesignated places was an advantage to the registered flea market operators. It reduced competition from the street vendors who sometimes sold the same products as those found in the flea markets at a relatively cheaper price.¹⁷⁶ MaGumede pointed out that there was emphasis on cleanliness in order to prevent the spread of diseases during the operation. So ablution facilities were

¹⁷⁴ C. Munhande & L. Matonhodze, "An Assessment of the Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* on the Informal Market. A case of Zimbabwe's Bulawayo Central Business District (CBD) Flea Market Operators," in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, Vol 10, No. 3, 2008, p12

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, p13

¹⁷⁶ *The Chronicle*, 25 July, 2005

increased in all flea markets around the CBD and fines were imposed on those who littered the flea markets.¹⁷⁷ MaGumede also applauded the introduction of weekend flea market spaces around the CBD which created more business space. The Open-spaces weekend flea markets helped to absorb those who could not be accommodated by the existing flea markets or those who had their flea market bases closed permanently.¹⁷⁸

On the political landscape, Operation *Murambatsvina* was meant to punish the urbanites for having voted for the MDC in the 2005 election. However, there was a marked increase in the popularity of the MDC, especially among Operation *Murambatsvina* victims, who were more likely to identify with the opposition rather than the ruling party.¹⁷⁹ As such, one can safely conclude that the operation further undermined the ruling party's already declining base.

The United Nations sent a special envoy on a fact-finding mission to Zimbabwe to report on the operation. In Bulawayo, by 22 June the government was making hasty attempts to transport people out of sight onto Hellensvale Farm in Umguza District near Bulawayo, with no infrastructure due to the threat of the looming visit by the United Nations Special Envoy (UNSE). Even UNICEF was hurriedly asked to render help, also in the face of the UNSE visit.¹⁸⁰ The UNSE led by Anna Tibaijuka, compiled a report on Operation *Murambatsvina* which brought to the attention of the international community the humanitarian crisis unleashed by the operation. The report concluded that the operation "had done a catastrophic injustice to as many as 700 000 of Zimbabwe's poorest citizens through indiscriminate

¹⁷⁷ Interview with MaGumede of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 10/1/2019

¹⁷⁸ Ibid

¹⁷⁹ Solidarity Peace Trust, "Discarding the Filth (Operation *Murambatsvina*)" p13
[@www.solidaritypeacetrust.org](http://www.solidaritypeacetrust.org) accessed 9/3/2019

¹⁸⁰ Ibid

actions, carried out with disquieting indifference to human suffering.¹⁸¹ Even the European Union and the United States castigated Operation *Murambatsvina* and maintained targeted sanctions in place, though support for humanitarian aid was maintained.¹⁸² The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the African Union (AU) did not react to the Operation. However, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) such as UNICEF, Christian Care, World vision and Zimbabwe Red Cross Society provided humanitarian assistance and donated immediate requirements for the victims of Operation *Murambatsvina*.¹⁸³

On its part the Government of Zimbabwe announced Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle* as a follow up to Operation *Murambatsvina*. According to an official statement by the state, Operation *Garikai* aimed at “providing decent, functional and affordable accommodation as well as creating an enabling and conducive environment that promotes micro, small and medium sized business enterprises, in line with Habitat Agenda.”¹⁸⁴ In Bulawayo victims of Operation *Murambatsvina* were given first priority in the allocation of houses under Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*. Also civil servants and those on the waiting housing list got houses constructed under Operation *Garikai*. However, it was observed that Operation *Garikai* houses were not better than what was destroyed by Operation *Murambatsvina*.¹⁸⁵ MaBhebhe elaborated on the houses that were constructed in Bulawayo under Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*. She said the houses were erected in one section of Cowdry Park suburb and confirmed that they were not better than what was destroyed by Operation *Murambatsvina*. By December 2005, the houses had no electricity, water and sanitation facilities. In fact, they were tiny two roomed units and most of them did not have any window

¹⁸¹ E. Mufema, “Report on the Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*” 23 August, 2007, p18@www.kubatana.net accessed 10/3/2019

¹⁸² Ibid, p19

¹⁸³ Ibid

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p20

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p21

pens, and they had no cement floors. To date that section of Cowdry Park still bears the name *Hlalani Kuhle*.¹⁸⁶

Concerning flea markets, Mufema noted that by June 2006 there were 17 factory shells, 17 vendor marts and an unspecified number of people's markets had been completed. It is noteworthy that operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle* was inadequate to meet the magnitude of the housing crisis exposed by Operation *Murambatsvina*. For example, Bulawayo municipal council stated a figure of 10 000 properties destroyed by *Murambatsvina*, whereas of the people on the council's housing waiting list, beneficiaries under *Hlalani Kuhle* were only 43 victims of *Murambatsvina*.¹⁸⁷ The net effect was that the housing crisis exposed by Operation *Murambatsvina* was not solved by Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*. From a gender perspective, female-headed households were greatly affected by Operation *Murambatsvina* as many flea markets were dominated by women who engaged in cross-border trading.

Electoral violence

A discussion of violence and conflict in post-colonial Zimbabwe would be incomplete if one does not analyse election-related violence. Most elections conducted in post-colonial Zimbabwe have been accompanied by violence. Some of it has been inter-party violence using rudimentary technology such as stones, sticks and crude petrol bombs. On the other hand, some of the electoral violence has been state organized and sophisticated violence orchestrated by the ruling party taking advantage of its control over the levers of state power.¹⁸⁸ Organised violence and intimidation against the opposition parties has been a recurrent strategy of the ruling party before, during and after elections to punish

¹⁸⁶ Interview with MaBhebhe of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 10/1/2019

¹⁸⁷ E. Mufema, "Report on the Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle*" 23 August, 2007, p22@www.kubatana.net accessed 10/3/2019

¹⁸⁸ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p17

constituencies that dared oppose it. Perpetrators of election violence have generally enjoyed impunity. The involvement of President Mugabe in this violence has been his use of presidential power to grant pardon and amnesties to killers and perpetrators of this violence.¹⁸⁹

The rationale behind election-related violence and rigging is the grabbing and retention of power by hook or crook.¹⁹⁰ It reflects an indirect admission that the ruling party would have lost popular support, hence the resort to terror and violence to force voters to vote for it. While in some cases this strategy has succeeded, in others it has failed. For example, the *Gukurahundi* violence failed to compel Ndebele voters to support ZANU-PF in the 1985 election. ZAPU retained its seats in the two Matabeleland provinces, and in the case of Bulawayo all the 8 seats were won by ZAPU.¹⁹¹ In the 1980 campaign, ZANU-PF utilized its combatants who had not yet been demilitarized to mobilise rural support in independence elections. Intimidation was prevalent in those regions in which ZANLA guerrillas had been active.¹⁹²

In the 1985 election, violence and intimidation assumed the form of retribution against opposition parties that had contested against ZANU-PF. The campaign included physical violence and property destruction against opposition supporters of ZAPU and United Africa National Council (UANC). Robert Mugabe was quoted then as having advised his ZANU-PF supporters to “go and uproot the weeds from your garden” and to “take the rotten pumpkins

¹⁸⁹ S.J Ndlovu Gatsheni, *Do 'Zimbabweans Exist'* Peter Lang, Oxford, p220

¹⁹⁰ J. Makumbe and D. Compagnon, *Behind the Smokescreen. The Political of Zimbabwe's 1995 General Elections*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p118

¹⁹¹L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p17

¹⁹² Ibid, 18

from your patch.”¹⁹³ According to CCJP, Zimbabwe’s 1985 general election which was held in July was accompanied by violence against opposition candidates and their supporters beginning in November 1984, and continuing after the election in 1985. The intimidation included mob beatings, property burning and murders. While some of the violence was inspired by ‘dissident killings’ of ZANU officials, the victims of the violence were almost all town-based or at district administration centres, far removed from dissident activity; they were also invariably Ndebele speakers¹⁹⁴. Besides deploying its violent youth and women’s wings to commandeer support during elections, the ruling party marshalled state resources and institutions, such as the army, police and intelligence services as well as public radio and television stations to ensure its electoral victory.¹⁹⁵ The violence up until the middle of 1985 was directed against ZAPU supporters in the pre-election campaign though the election itself was conducted in relative calm. However, ZAPU retained the seats in Bulawayo and the rest of Matabeleland much to the anger of the ruling party.

In 1985, ZANU-PF also resorted to the strategy of detaining opposition ZAPU officials and supporters before and after elections. The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights estimated that in February 1985 about 1 300 people were detained in Bulawayo. In August 200 Bulawayo City Council employees as well as 200 other ZAPU supporters were detained. Some ZAPU officials claimed that 415 of their members were kept in detention in Bulawayo in the post-election round-up.¹⁹⁶ In October 1985 Amnesty International sent a telex to PM

¹⁹³ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p17

¹⁹⁴ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace: A Report on disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p62

¹⁹⁵ J. Muzondidya, “From Buoyancy to Crisis, 1980-1997,” In B Raftopoulos and A.S Mlambo (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p171

¹⁹⁶ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace: A Report on disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p66

Mugabe urging him to stop torture and detentions. It also released a report on “Torture in Zimbabwe” in November 1985, in which it revealed the upsurge of detention after the elections in Bulawayo. They estimated that in November, 200 people were being kept in detention at Stops camp in Bulawayo.¹⁹⁷ It is logical to conclude that the torture and detentions were a retribution to the Ndebele electorate for having voted for ZAPU in 1985 elections. Shari Eppel’s research also confirmed that in 1985, ZANU-PF Youth brigades were responsible for much of the political violence in urban and peri-urban settings, including the burning of houses, assaults and murder.¹⁹⁸Loice Dube, who was among the detainees held at Stops Camp, asserted that they were beaten with truncheons, rhinoceros hide whips or rubber horses. She explained that the other forms of torture were electric shocks, suspending detainees by their ankles or arms for hours and stretching people to breaking point with hands tied to one object and ankles to another. Victims were also hung upside down and then beaten with their heads in buckets of water. What she found most humiliating was interrogating people while they were completely naked.¹⁹⁹ According to CCJP’s report, people in detention were kept in horrible conditions, including over-crowding, under-feeding, inadequate sanitary facilities and bedding. In their report on torture in Zimbabwe, Amnesty International described how detainees at Stops Camp in Bulawayo were kept in three large cages which were open to the weather. Reports with CCJP describe women being herded in such a cage spattered with blood and faeces from previous detainees and being given lice-infested blankets.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace: A Report on disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p66

¹⁹⁸ S. Eppel, “Gukurahundi” The Need for truth and reparation” in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds) *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p45

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Loice Dube of Mzilikazi Bulawayo, 2/10/2019

²⁰⁰ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence Building True Peace: A Report on disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p68

To further underscore the central place of violence in election-related periods, one also needs to scrutinize how it was played out in the 1990 general elections. Elections held on 28, 29 and 30 March 1990 were Zimbabwe's second post-independence general elections and also gave the first chance for Zimbabweans to elect the country's Executive President. They were held at a time when there was discontent with the government especially in urban areas, where people experienced problems such as unemployment, shortage of transport, lack of housing and inflation. At that time as well, when some political analysts considered the merger of ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU as a step towards one-party state in Zimbabwe, the opposition Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) was formed in 1989 especially to oppose one-party rule. This made the elections important as they became a matter of voting for democracy.²⁰¹ ZANU-PF was reluctant to deal with fundamental questions of political accommodation with the black community within a framework of political diversity and plural politics. Though it was on a reduced scale, campaign violence in 1990 was directed at ZUM and its supporters.²⁰² While in 1980 many Zimbabweans, due to euphoria over the liberation war, would have supported the idea of a one-party state under ZANU-PF, by 1990 many opposed the idea because they had experienced ten years of ZANU-PF rule upon which they were able to judge the undesirability of legislated monopoly politics.

In 1995 the culture of fear which formed the background of any national election in Zimbabwe was widespread and prevalent. The threat of resuming the Chimurenga war if the opposition won the election was made by ZANU-PF.²⁰³ Electoral violence was directed at opposition parties, that is Forum, ZUM and ZANU- Ndonga. Comparing opposition parties to

²⁰¹ J. N. Moyo, *Voting for Democracy. A Study of Electoral Politics in Zimbabwe*, UZ Publications, Harare, 1992, p2

²⁰² L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p19

²⁰³ J. Makumbe and D. Compagnon, *Behind the Smokescreen: The Politics of Zimbabwe's 1995 General Elections*, UZ Publications, Harare, 2000, p18

‘puppies’ and ZANU-PF to an ‘elephant,’ Mugabe was quoted as saying that “the puppies could bark as long as they wanted provided they are far away. But the elephant would trample them if they got too near for comfort.”²⁰⁴ Thus, violence has been ZANU-PF’s tool if and when opposition parties threaten to erode the ruling party’s support base. Nevertheless, the modest show of the opposition parties that contested in the 1995 elections is an indicator of an increasing wave of protest against the ZANU-PF government. In Bulawayo, according to Joseph Nkato, there was a low turn-out of voters during the 1995 elections. Desisting from voting was an indication of the electorate’s protest against ZANU-PF government.²⁰⁵ On the whole, whilst there was not much overt violence in Bulawayo Metropolitan province, the election atmosphere in the 1995 general elections was determined by the dark cloud of the threatened violence against the opposition that had been made by the then Prime Minister, Mugabe, as noted above.

The launch of a new opposition party, Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), on 11 September 1999, followed by the ‘No’ vote in the 2000 referendum exacerbated the tension between government and groups pushing for democratic reforms. In the run up to the 2000 elections, rule of law continued to breakdown. Violence prevailed in the form of farm invasions, brutal murders, arson, rape, torture and robberies throughout the country. It is estimated that in the run-up to the 2000 elections, 31 people were murdered and 500 were injured.²⁰⁶ It was not possible to establish how many of these, if any belonged to Bulawayo. In his electoral campaign for the June 2000 parliamentary elections, Mugabe used racial rhetoric by invoking a distinction between white land owners and landless black Africans,

²⁰⁴ Sachikonye, L. *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p19

²⁰⁵ Interview with Joseph Nkato of Lobengula West, Bulawayo 3/10/2019

²⁰⁶ ZHR NGO Forum, *Outreach Report, Taking Transitional Justice to the People*, Vol 2. ZHR NGO Forum, Harare, 2010, p8

though the government claimed to have recently seized enough land from white farmers.²⁰⁷ However, in Bulawayo and the rest of Matabeleland the racial politics failed to induce the electorate to vote for ZANU-PF. In Bulawayo urban as well as outside Bulawayo, the electorate seized the opportunity to vote for change as they voted for MDC.²⁰⁸ When the results were announced, all 8 seats in Bulawayo fell to the MDC. Of the seats in Bulawayo and Matabeleland 21 were won by MDC. However, the final tally of seats was 57 for the MDC, 62 for ZANU-PF and one for the tiny opposition ZANU-Ndonga party.²⁰⁹ The MDC, a party just nine months old, had proved to be quite a challenge to ZANU-PF. The electoral system had not produced free and democratic elections and created an impasse between the government and the emerging democratic forces. The European Union observer team noted that, “High levels of violence, intimidation and coercion marred the electoral campaign. An assessment of violence and intimidation since February 2000 made by EU Observation Mission, together with reports from EU observers operating throughout the country since June, indicate that ZANU-PF was responsible for the bulk of political violence.”²¹⁰ The Commonwealth observers also condemned the electoral violence which the team concurred had been mostly unleashed by ZANU-PF. MaBhebhe also confirmed that ZANU-PF Youth engaged in intimidating the electorate in Bulawayo during the electoral campaign.²¹¹

Post-electoral violence in the form of beatings, torture, rape, brutal murders and intimidation rocked the nation and hate speech continued. The government passed such restrictive legislation as Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and the Access to Information and

²⁰⁷ B. Lindgren, “The Green Bombers of Salisbury: Elections and Political Violence in Zimbabwe,” in *Anthropology Today* Vo 19,N0.2, April 2003, p6

²⁰⁸ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p161

²⁰⁹Ibid, p164

²¹⁰Ibid, 166

²¹¹ Interview with MaBhebhe of Barbourfields, Bulawayo, 10/1/2019

Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) in 2002 which signified return to pre-independence repression. Also, farm invasions intensified in the weeks following the elections.²¹² The farm invasions constituted an example of what Slavoj Zizek described as subjective violence. When an obscure official of the War Veterans Association, Cain Nkala, was killed in Bulawayo, his murder was blamed on the MDC and a ZANU-PF mob rampaged through the city and burned down the opposition party's regional headquarters. Many MDC activists were arrested and imprisoned on flimsiest charges. By late November 2000 the MDC party had been effectively shut down in Bulawayo City and the environs.²¹³ On 9 and 10 March 2002, Zimbabweans would be engaged in a presidential election in which Mugabe competed against Morgan Tsvangirai. With Olympic winning ruthlessness, Mugabe removed the possibility of defeat by changing the electoral system. A number of changes, covering from registering voters to observing polling stations was combined into one giant General Laws (Amendment) Bill. City dwellers were required to produce proof of residence in the form of title deeds, rental agreements or utility bills. The result was that many of Morgan Tsvangirai's supporters in urban areas were disenfranchised because they could not produce the required proof of residence.²¹⁴

Furthermore, at law, POSA and AIPPA made Zimbabwe's political landscape very restrictive. The law forced MDC to seek police permission before holding any rally. During the election campaign clearance was often denied. Any gathering of more than three people considered to have a political purpose was banned, unless specific permission was granted.²¹⁵ Alongside

²¹² ZHR NGO Forum, *Outreach Report, Taking Transitional Justice to the People*, Vol 2. ZHR NGO Forum, Harare, 2010, p8

²¹³ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p238

²¹⁴ Ibid, p246

²¹⁵ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p247

these measures, Mugabe resorted to using youth trained at various centres around the country and the most notorious of these was Border Gezi Training Centre. Drawn mainly from youth in their teens, the recruits were indoctrinated with propaganda that painted opposition parties as ‘sellouts’ and western puppets.²¹⁶ The youths, who became known as ‘green bombers’, because they wore green uniforms, were taught to beat, torture and intimidate opposition supporters. Working in gangs of about 50 they hunted down MDC supporters for beatings, torture and murder. They also demanded that people produce paid-up valid ZANU-PF cards. Failure to produce one would lead to a severe beating, at the very least.²¹⁷ At the election time, opposition members were hounded, beaten, tortured and killed by this militia. For instance, Betty Mpfu (sister to John Mpfu mentioned earlier in the chapter), who was known to be a staunch MDC supporter, was tortured by some members of the ‘green bombers’. They hanged her upside down and beat her with her head immersed in water.²¹⁸ In addition, Douglas Maligwa was beaten with sticks on the soles of his feet for being an MDC member.²¹⁹ In both the 2000 parliamentary and 2002 presidential elections, the MDC received strong support in Bulawayo. The state also resorted to violence during the 2005 general election. ZANU-PF also orchestrated post-election violence as retribution on voters who opposed it during the election. This involved public denunciations and harassment, destruction of property and eviction from housing in neighbourhood.²²⁰

In 2008, the period preceding the 29 March elections was relatively peaceful. The harmonized elections were for the office of executive president, the House of Assembly seats and local government seats. The elections were conducted against the backdrop of the SADC

²¹⁶ . Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p21

²¹⁷ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p249

²¹⁸ Interview with Betty Mpfu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 01/10/2019

²¹⁹ Interview with Douglas Maligwa of Killarney, Bulawayo, 28/09/2019

²²⁰L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p19

mediated negotiations between ZANU-PF and the two opposition formations of the MDC. On paper, the presidential election was a triangular contest between Mugabe of ZANU-PF, Morgan Tsvangirai of MDC-T and Simba Makoni who stood as an independent. In practice however, the real battle was between Mugabe and his arch-rival Tsvangirai.²²¹ The March election results revealed that for the first in post-independence Zimbabwe, ZANU-PF lost its political hegemony in parliament and the electorate.

During the interval between April and the June run-off election ZANU-PF unleashed violence against the MDC and its supporters. Masunungure asserted that Mugabe felt that, “the loss had to be avenged, [...] and the MDC in particular and the voters in general - had to ‘disciplined’ for their ‘delinquent’ conduct on 29 March 2008”²²² Threatening utterances were accompanied by Tsvangirai’s arrest and harassment of about ten MDC members of parliament and two senators. Tsvangirai was forced to seek refuge in the Dutch Embassy a few days before the 27 June election.²²³ Unlike the pre-29 March period, ZANU-PF’s campaign afterwards was visibly a militarized one, with the security forces being in the forefront spearheading the march to the 27 June run-off. In the face of violence against MDC and its supporters, on 22 June Tsvangirai proclaimed “a credible election, which reflects the will of the people, is impossible” and that MDC-T had decided to withdraw from the presidential run-off.²²⁴

Regarding the April to June 2008 interval, Timberg revealed that ZANU-PF’s brutal campaign was code-named CIBD, an acronym for Coercion, Intimidation, Beating and

²²¹E. V. Masunungure (ed) *Defying the Winds of Change Zimbabwe’s 2008 Elections*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p64

²²²Ibid, p91

²²³ B. Raftopoulos and S. Eppel, “Desperately Seeking Sanity: What Prospects for a New Beginning in Zimbabwe?” in *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol 1, No.3, November 2008, p372

²²⁴ ZHR NGO Forum, *Outreach Report, Taking Transitional Justice to the People*, Vol 2. ZHR NGO Forum, Harare, 2010, p11

Displacement. The campaign was also code-named ‘Operation *Makavhotera Papi?*’ (Operation who Did You Vote For?). Violence prevailed in both rural and urban areas. In Bulawayo, the crackdown was orchestrated and executed by soldiers, state security agents, ZANU-PF militia and veterans of the liberation war.²²⁵ Despite Tsvangirai’s withdrawal, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) proceeded with the run-off election with Mugabe as the remaining candidate. To ensure high voter turn-out, Operation ‘Red Finger’ was mounted. Each voter had to dip a finger in red ink that is visible and indelible and the message from ZANU-PF was that anyone who would not have voted would be classified as an MDC supporter and subjected to the same violence as meted out under Operation *Makavhotera Papi*. The violence took the form of intimidation, kidnapping, torture and murder of opposition or suspected opposition activists and supporters.²²⁶ The results revealed that Tsvangirai got many votes and in Bulawayo he won more votes than Mugabe.²²⁷ Within two days ZEC announced the results which declared Mugabe the winner. There was international as well as local condemnation of the violence unleashed by ZANU-PF during the inter-election period. The Zimbabwe Election Support Network described the period as “Hate speech incitement of violence, and threats of war characterized the electoral campaigns with the ruling party presidential candidate threatening to go back to war if he lost the election to the MDC presidential candidate whom he considered a puppet of the west.”²²⁸ The CCJP asserted, “This Pre-Presidential period (29 March to 27 June 2008) was the most violent and bloody of all post-colonial elections that we have witnessed as an observer group.”²²⁹ Even the United Nations Security Council condemned the politically motivated violence, five days

²²⁵E. V. Masunungure (ed) *Defying the Winds of Change Zimbabwe’s 2008 Elections*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p87

²²⁶Ibid

²²⁷ Ibid, p88

²²⁸Ibid.

²²⁹E. V. Masunungure (ed) *Defying the Winds of Change Zimbabwe’s 2008 Elections*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p95

before polling. Also observers from the SADC, Pan-African Parliament and the African Union assessed the run-off thus; “The political environment was hostile and volatile as it was characterised by an election campaign marred by high levels of intimidation, violence, displacement of people, abductions and loss of life.”²³⁰ This international and local outcry coupled with the total collapse of the economy drove the main political parties to the negotiating table. On 10 July 2008, ZANU-PF and the two MDC formations signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in which they agreed to engage with each other for a genuine and sustainable solution to the Zimbabwe crisis.

Conclusion

The chapter has revealed that at the attainment of Zimbabwe’s independence, Mugabe declared a policy of reconciliation promising a new era free of violence and repression. However, post-colonial Zimbabwe has experienced various flashpoints of violence. The people of Bulawayo Metropolitan Province as well as other areas opposed to ZANU-PF have been targets of the violence. The use of violence and torture has been the main tool used by Mugabe’s government to retain power and invite people into their hegemonic national projects. The use of violence in Zimbabwe to achieve political objectives partly contributed to the lack of national consensus after independence. Violence has been detrimental to the country’s economic and social development. It has also compromised the prospects of holding free and fair elections. As a result, the chances of building a democratic and human rights sensitive nation have been thwarted. The image of the ruling party and government has been tarnished and this has attracted international condemnation for their poor human rights record, which resulted in targeted sanctions for the ruling elite.

²³⁰Ibid

Chapter Six

Peace, Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe to 2013

Introduction

The chapter analyses Zimbabwe's failing attempts to build a politics of peace, conflict resolution and reconciliation in the context of gross inequalities inherited from settler rule, and within the constraints of particular international pressures in the post-colonial period. Zimbabwe has a history of unresolved conflicts, including racism in colonialism and ethnic conflict which was intensified by colonialism. Furthermore, its post-colonial ZANU-PF leadership is determined never to leave power voluntarily and has a poor tolerance of political diversity. As a result of the cumulative effects of oppressive and suppressive governance dating back from the colonial era, the nation has experienced political violence, torture, human rights abuses, hyperinflation, unemployment and other elements of direct and indirect violence.

The 21st century dispensation in Zimbabwe can be described as the 'crisis period' because the country experienced one crisis after another. The chapter examines the mitigation measures instituted locally, regionally and internationally in responding to the crisis in Zimbabwe, and attempts to have peace in the country. There is need to assess the effectiveness of the conflict resolution measures that have been used to deal with the violence which generally has been perceived as gendered.

Positive Peace: A theoretical Note

The chapter deploys Johan Galtung's positive peace approach to help resolve issues related to the management of conflicts in Zimbabwe from 1980 up to 2013. Galtung defines peace as a political condition that ensures justice and social stability through formal and informal

institutions, practices and norms. Furthermore, he contends that peace conjures images of harmony and bliss in a psychological, social and political sense.¹ Galtung makes the distinction between positive and negative peace. Positive peace describes a situation where there is the building and restoration of healthy relationships amongst parties to the conflict and the creation of social systems that serve the needs of the whole population and constructive resolution of conflict. This may entail eradicating systems that promote violence such as economic injustice, racism and political repression. On the other hand, to Galtung negative peace refers to a situation when something undesirable has stopped happening such as when oppression ends.² In short, positive peace allows for the integration of human society, while negative peace is the absence of violence or war. Conflict resolution entails solving a problem between two people or parties who have an antagonistic relationship. It is understandable that political, economic and social conflict is inevitable in all societies which comprise diversity. Whether these groups are defined by ethnicity, race, class, religion or politics, they have different needs, interests, values and access to power and resources. In the case of Zimbabwe, one needs to acknowledge the long term structural effects of colonialism that led to economic violence. Also the structural violence instituted by ZANU-PF government led to a serious economic decline particularly during the period 2000-2008. As the chapter unfolds it will show that various agreements to end rounds of conflict deployed negative peace without getting to uproot the causes of the challenges.

¹ B. Singh Grewal, "Johan Galtung: Positive and Negative Peace, 30 August, 2003" p1@www.activeforpeace.org accessed 10/8/2019

² D. Munemo & E. Nciizah, "The Church in Zimbabwe's Peace and Reconciliation Process under the Government of National Unity," IOSR Journal of Human and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS' Vol 19, N0.10, October 2014, p64@www.iosrjournals.org accessed 21/6/2019

Lancaster House Constitutional Conference 1979

One of the first major attempts at resolving the political conflicts in Zimbabwe was the Lancaster House Conference of 1979. Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister, was determined to end the guerrilla war between the Rhodesian soldiers and the African nationalist forces. Invitations to a constitutional conference at Lancaster House were therefore sent to the Patriotic Front leaders and the Muzorewa Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government which included Ian Douglas Smith and Ndabaningi Sithole in the delegation.³ Chaired by Lord Carrington, the British Foreign Secretary, the conference which started on 10 September 1979 and concluded on a new constitution as well as arrangements for the transitional period preceding independence, ended on 21 December, when the leaders of the delegations signed its formal agreements.⁴

In his opening remarks, Lord Carrington stated that Britain had a constitutional responsibility to bring Rhodesia to legal independence on the basis of justice and democracy. So there would be free and fair elections properly supervised under British Government authority.⁵ Lord Carrington was under pressure from his government to reach a swift agreement because of the question whether sanctions against Rhodesia should be renewed or not. The Patriotic Front leaders faced pressures from their guerrillas, who regarded the negotiations at the conference as an attempt to prevent them gaining the victory they believed was near and from frontline states who urged the Patriotic Front not to wreck the conference and whose

³D. Martin and P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Publishing House, Harare, 1980, p315

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Report by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth affairs, January 1980 "Southern Rhodesian Constitutional Conference held at Lancaster House, London, September-December 1979," p5 @www.rhodesia.nl/lanc.li accessed 30/7/2019

economies were being damaged by the war. The only way to end the war was to agree on a new internationally acceptable constitution and holding of new British supervised elections.⁶

Applying Galtung's analysis of peace, one can regard the Lancaster House Agreement as an example of negative peace, in so far as it ended the liberation war in Zimbabwe. In addition, the constitution that was agreed on gave settler capital a decade-long period of constitution, during which issues around the radical restructuring of the legacy of economic inequality were effectively put on hold.⁷ Nevertheless, the final constitution included the following provisions, a ten-year limitation on the future government's power to acquire land compulsorily for state purposes; and payment of 'adequate compensation' for any land acquired under the 'willing seller-willing buyer scheme.'⁸ Grace Noko perceived the failure of the Lancaster House Agreement to solve the injustices associated with land distribution and ownership as a major flaw of the agreement. To her it was not surprising that two decades after the attainment of independence, Zimbabwe experienced the FTRLP of the year 2000.⁹

Mugabe's Reconciliation speech and Policy

When elections were held early in 1980, ZANU-PF won with an outright majority of 57 out of 80 parliamentary seats reserved for blacks. Nkomo's Patriotic Front won 20 and Bishop

⁶ Report by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, January 1980, "Southern Rhodesia Constitutional Conference held at Lancaster House, London, September-December, 1979" p5@www.rhodesia.nl/lanchi accessed 30/7/2019

⁷ B. Raftopoulos, "Unreconciled differences. The limits of reconciliation politics in Zimbabwe," in B. Raftopoulos & T Savage (eds) *Zimbabwe, Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare 2005, px

⁸ B. Kagoro, "Constitutional reform as a social movement. A critical narrative of the constitution-making debate in Zimbabwe, 1999-2000" in B. Raftopoulos & T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p238

⁹ Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 18/3/2020

Muzorewa only 3.¹⁰ On 18 April 1980, Zimbabwe's Independence Day, Mugabe proclaimed a policy of reconciliation which promised a dawn of a new era free of violence, repression and oppression. His speech reflected the delicate task of nation-building as it aimed to allay the fears of both the white minority and the international community. In his own words, Mugabe said:

If yesterday I fought you as an enemy, today you have become a friend and ally with the same national interest, loyalty, rights, and duties as myself. If yesterday you hated me today you cannot avoid the love that binds you to me and me to you. The wrong of the past must now stand forgiven and forgotten¹¹

The language of reconciliation thus set the tone for the initial period of state consolidation that was the major priority of ZANU-PF after 1980. Mugabe's obvious challenge lay in uniting the races of Rhodesia as one Zimbabwean society living within a newly democratic nation.

An analysis of Mugabe's reconciliation speech shows that apparently he was mainly focused on black and white reconciliation. He seems to have overlooked the question of reconciliation within the black community where two groups had fought a bitter conflict, both in the far past and as rivals in the liberation movement. Tarusarira regarded the failure by Mugabe's reconciliation within the black community where the Ndebele and Shona had fought bitter conflicts in the far past and as rivals in the liberation movement as a major flaw in the policy. To him that conflict is the one that degenerated into *Gukurahundi* two years after the reconciliation speech.¹² Also there has been the phenomenon of whites living "separate from

¹⁰ D. Martin and P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, ZPH, Harare, 1980, p330. The other 20 seats were reserved for whites

¹¹ J. Tarusarira, "Of Spirits and Healing: Cultural Values and Post-Conflict Reconciliation Agenda in Zimbabwe," *Africa Reviewer*, Vol 40, No.1, 2013, p98

and yet dependent on a majority that most do not know or understand beyond the level of appearances.”¹³ Given such constraints, the policy of reconciliation remained merely a political hope, especially given the continuing legacy of structural inequality in the sphere of the economy. Interviews I carried out in Bulawayo corroborated the above views. Joseph Nkathazo asserted that “Mugabe was concerned about retaining Rhodesian Whites in the country as the country’s economy depended on their expertise. He did not expect the ethnic differences between the Shona and the Ndebele of Bulawayo to be a problem as both had fought against colonial oppression.”¹⁴ Hazel Sibanda criticized Mugabe’s speech for not promising gender equality in the new Zimbabwe. To her the implication was that women would continue to be marginalised as they had been during the colonial period.”¹⁵

State repression and the 1987 Unity Accord

Between 1982 and 1986, Zimbabwe experienced an intra-state conflict after attainment of independence. The conflict, which was mainly concentrated in Matabeleland and some parts of Midlands, was called *Gukurahundi*.¹⁶ ZANU PF also criminalised the opposition leaders with false crimes. There were two treason trials during the 1980s. Both, however failed to result in conviction.”¹⁷ Ostensibly the ‘*Gukurahundi*’ atrocities were meant to crush dissidents but in fact resulted in the massacre of thousands of innocent civilians. In Joseph

¹² J. Tarusarira, “Of Spirits and Healing: Cultural Values & Post- Conflict Reconciliation Agenda in Zimbabwe,” *African Review, Vol 40, No. 1 2013*, p98. The Shona/Ndebele divide was complicated as ZANU- PF has some Ndebeles in high posts such as Enos Nkala. Also ZAPU has some influential Shona e.g. Parirenyatwa.

¹³ B. Raftopoulos “Unreconciled differences. The limits of reconciliation politics in Zimbabwe,” in B. Raftopoulos & T. Savage (eds) *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p xv

¹⁴ Interview with Joseph Nkathazo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 18/3/2020.

¹⁵ Interview with Hazel Sibanda of Nkulumane, Bulawayo, 18/3/2020.

¹⁶ See Chapter 5, for more details on this violent episode.

¹⁷ S. Eppel, “An Overview of the circumstances of the Unity Accord of 1987 in Comparison to those of the Global Political Agreement of 2008,” p4 Solidarity Peace Trust, Feb 2009@www.solidaritypeacetrust.org accessed 21/06/2019

Nkathazo's opinion the 'Gukurahundi' violence was meant to emasculate the opposition party, ZAPU, led by Joshua Nkomo.¹⁸ In order to resolve the conflict between ZANU-PF and ZAPU, the Unity Accord was signed by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo on 22 December 1987 as leaders of their respective parties.¹⁹ In terms of this accord, ZAPU no longer existed as a separate party. The agreement offered ZAPU very little except that persecutions and killings in ZAPU strongholds would stop and that there would be two Deputy Presidents.²⁰ Effectively, ZAPU was swallowed by ZANU.

One would be forgiven for arguing that the conflict between ZANU-PF and ZAPU was resolved using negative peace in the form of the one-sided Unity Accord. Zephaniah Nkomo believed that the merger of the two parties was a step towards the establishment of a one-party state by Robert Mugabe although the one-party agenda failed. Zimbabweans resisted the establishment of a one-party state by forming opposition parties including the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), the United Parties and the Zimbabwe Union for Democrats.²¹ The Unity Accord can be regarded as a negative peace in the sense that it brought to an end to the persecution and killings that ZAPU members had suffered at the hands of ZANU-PF. The people of Bulawayo were no longer subjected to harassment and house searches that ZANU-PF had instituted in search of 'dissidents' as well as 'dissident sympathizers.' Nevertheless, Zephania Nkomo believed that by signing the Unity Accord ZAPU had surrendered in broad daylight without much good cause.²² The 1987 Accord resulted in the cessation of hostilities

¹⁸ Interview with Joseph Nkathazo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 18/3/2020.

¹⁹ J.N Moyo, *Voting for Democracy. A Study of Electoral Politics in Zimbabwe*, UZ Publications, Harare, 1992, p29.

²⁰ S. Eppel, "An Overview of the circumstances of the Unity Accord of 1987 in Comparison to those of the Global Political Agreement of 2008," p4 Solidarity Peace Trust, Feb 2008@www.solidaritypeacetrust.org accessed 21/06/2019

²¹ L. Mhandara and A. Pooe, "Mediating a convoluted conflict South Africa's approach to the Inter-Party negotiations", *Occasional Paper Series Accord, Issue 1, 2013*, p8

²² Interview with Zephaniah Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, 11/3/2020.

but brought no peace and unity. Victims of the violence have not been compensated. Neither, have those who perpetrated violence been tried nor have they sought the forgiveness of their victims. The discussion in the next section titled ‘Amnesties, Silences and Impunity’, furthers the contention around negative peace thread of the Unity Accord and how that addressed the symptoms and not the root of the conflict in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces.

Amnesties, Silences and Impunity.

The signing of the Unity Accord in December 1987 was followed a few months later by a blanket amnesty, in April 1988. It pardoned all human rights violations committed by political parties between 1982 and 1987.²³ The amnesty benefited not only dissidents but also 3 500 members of the 5th Brigade as they were pardoned for the murders of about 20000 civilians, the rape and torture of thousands more and property destruction often resulting in total loss for victims and most of Matabeleland.²⁴ To date victims have not been compensated.

To show that victims of *Gukurahundi* did not benefit much from the 1988 amnesty, Rtd Brigadier Mazinyane asserted that such victims still needed to ‘heal’ their wounds. He alluded to psychological problems experienced by the victims such as being denied the right to mourn their dead relatives, the inability to bury them and perform traditional ceremonies.²⁵ Shari Eppel confirmed that to date victims have not been compensated. She also asserted that the full truth of these years has not been told and, without truth, most victims have found it

²³ P. Machakanya, “National Healing and Reconciliation in Zimbabwe: Challenges and Opportunities,” *Zimbabwe Monograph Series No 1 2010*, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Africa Programme, Wynberg, South Africa 2010, p10

²⁴S. Eppel, “ ‘Gukurahundi’ The Need for truth and reparation,” in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage [eds] *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p50

²⁵ Interview with Rtd Brigadier Mazinyane of Matshamhlophe, Bulawayo, 11/3/2020.

hard to put the events behind them and move on.²⁶ Another presidential amnesty in 1995 pardoned all politically motivated violence perpetrated during 1995 general elections. Once more, a general amnesty of October 2000 pardoned all politically motivated violence and human rights violations committed during and after the Parliamentary elections of June 2000.²⁷ The amnesties are evidence of negative peace which has prevented victims of violence from 'healing' their wounds.

Apparently, the amnesties have not resulted in national cohesion, national healing and unity. For example, Grace Noko pointed out that survivors of political violence not only experienced emotional and psychological problems. They had material and practical problems that needed resolving, such as failure to access benefits from the deceased's estate, needing death certificates for the disappeared relatives or material support for orphans or the need to appease the spirits of the dead.²⁸ In Zimbabwean culture the spirits of the living and the dead are on the continuum, with the dead able to influence events in the lives of their descendants. To confirm that, Brigadier Mazinyane stated that to have thousands of murdered in unacknowledged and unmourned mass graves (as what happened during *Gukurahundi*) has caused problems for the living. Problems such as failed marriages, infertility, illness, crop failure, drought, failed developments projects are all blamed on the spirits of the angry dead.²⁹ From the interviews I conducted in Bulawayo, it is plausible to conclude that the amnesties did not in any way help victims of violence heal their wounds. The amnesties are a form of negative peace that has muzzled the truth from coming out.

²⁶ S. Eppel, " 'Gukurahundi' The Need for truth and reparation," in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage [eds] *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p47

²⁷ P. Machakanya, "National Healing and Reconciliation in Zimbabwe: Challenges and Opportunities," *Zimbabwe Monograph Series No 1 2010*, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Africa Programme, Wynberg, South Africa 2010, p10

²⁸ Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 18/3/2020

²⁹ Interview with Rtd Brigadier Mazinyane of Matshamhlophe, Bulawayo, 11/3/2020.

Church Initiatives to reduce conflicts between ZANU-PF and MDC.

During the early years of the 21st Century, Zimbabwe was highly polarized and faced the challenge of reversing this polarization and getting rid of organised violence and torture and intolerance which were a manifestation of the crisis it was experiencing. Could the church manage to initiate political dialogue and promote tolerance and peaceful co-existence between ZANU-PF and MDC and their respective supporters?

Munemo and Nciizah assert that the church featured prominently in efforts to resolve the crisis that engulfed the country.³⁰ According to Muchena, key church leaders were involved in the negotiations of the Lancaster House Conference and the church played a supportive role in the post-independence construction programmes of the country.³¹ Dube and Makuwerere pointed out that the church facilitated peace talks between ZANU-PF and ZAPU, which culminated in the signing of the 1987 Unity Accord. To facilitate dialogue between the parties, church leaders from Christian organisations asked the late former President Canaan Banana to act as mediator.³² When politically motivated violence, torture, rape, arson and murder became more frequent after 2000, various church leaders demanded an end to the culture of violence, intimidation and disrespect for human rights, especially on the part of ZANU-PF government.³³ In the run-up to the June 2000 parliamentary elections ZANU-PF resorted to violence, intimidation, arson, beatings, torture and brutal murders. This was

³⁰ D. Munemo and E. Nciizah, "The Church in Zimbabwe's Peace and Reconciliation Process under the Government of National Unity," *Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol19, No 10, October 2014, p66@www.iosrjournals.org. Accessed 21/3/2019

³¹ D. Muchena, "The Church and Reconciliation. A mission impossible?" in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p259.

³² D. Dube and D. Makuwerere, Zimbabwe: Towards a Comprehensive Peace Infrastructures," *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol 2, No 18, October 2012, p298@www.ijhssnet.com accessed 20/6/2019

³³ D. Muchena, "The Church and Reconciliation. A mission Impossible?" in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p262

corroborated by interviews I conducted in Bulawayo though I could not get statistical evidence from my informants.³⁴ Attempting to resolve the conflict between ZANU-PF and MDC, in February 2002, the Zimbabwe National Pastors' Conference held a conference in Gweru with the theme "Prophetic Ministry in Times of Crisis." At the conference pastors discussed the extent of political violence in Zimbabwe and received inputs from practitioners who were involved in assisting victims of political violence.³⁵

The South African Council of Churches, the leaders of churches of the Province of KwaZulu-Natal and Free State, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and some leaders of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe, took steps to identify with the suffering masses of Zimbabwe or spoke about the Zimbabwean crisis and affirmed the prophetic role of the church in the country.³⁶ Also, in 2003 the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, Reverend Njongokulu Ndungane, embarked on a reconciliation mission to Zimbabwe. In February and March he visited the country twice and met with Robert Mugabe of ZANU-PF, Morgan Tsvangirai the leader of MDC, church leaders, civil society leaders and human rights organisations. Ndungane's visits were generally welcomed by Zimbabweans and gave impetus to local efforts of mediation.³⁷

Mugabe's government responded by trying to locate the conflict as one between Britain and its former colony, and by asking the Archbishop to direct his efforts at the UK. The government controlled press also labelled the church as part of the opposition.³⁸ Reverend Mapfumo, a Roman Catholic priest, confirmed that Mugabe's government refused to take

³⁴ See Chapter 5 for details concerning the atrocities.

³⁵ D. Muchena, "The Church and Reconciliation. A mission impossible?" in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p263

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ Ibid, p264

³⁸ Ibid

responsibility for the violence in the country but instead blamed Britain for the problems in Zimbabwe. However, the church continued to persuade Mugabe and Tsvangirai to engage in dialogue.³⁹ My analysis of the above events is that Mugabe's obduracy prevented the church's conflict resolution attempts from producing fruitful results.

In July 2003, Bishops Patrick Mutume of the Roman Catholic Church, Trevor Manhanga, the president of the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ) and Sebastian Bakare, the president of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC) held meetings with President Robert Mugabe and Tsvangirai, during which they challenged the political leaders to set the stage for national reconciliation as the country was deeply polarised. The bishops offered to mediate between the two parties and agreed on the need for a home-grown solution to the crisis.⁴⁰ Tsvangirai readily accepted the bishops' offer but Mugabe welcomed it cautiously. Political arrogance and preoccupation with retention of power seemed to be obstacles preventing Mugabe from moving towards conflict resolution and reconciliation. The bishops' mission proved to be a hard one because the cooperation needed from ZANU-PF at the highest level was not forthcoming. For example, when the bishops requested the two political parties to submit their positions in writing so that mediation could start in earnest, only the MDC complied with the request.⁴¹

Churches in Southern Africa as well as East Africa also attempted to resolve the Zimbabwe crisis. In October 2004, the South African civil groups held a conference in Pretoria to discuss conditions of elections in Zimbabwe. Church leaders from Zimbabwe, South Africa

³⁹ Interview with Reverend Mapfumo at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, Gweru, 15/3/2020

⁴⁰ D. Muchena, "The Church and reconciliation. A mission impossible?" in B. Raftopoulos & T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p265

⁴¹ Ibid

and Kenya made presentations. In November 2004, another conference was convened by the Association of Evangelical Alliances in Africa and was attended by 35 delegates from 12 SADC countries. These actions by churches in other sub-Saharan countries encouraged local churches in their endeavours to achieve conflict resolution between ZANU-PF and MDC.⁴²

However, the church's attempts to achieve conflict resolution and reconciliation between the political parties met with challenges. Reverend Mapfumo asserted that very often Mugabe's government accused church leaders of having hidden agendas.⁴³ The government-controlled press also demonised brave church leaders like Roman Catholic Archbishop Pius Ncube whenever the state was criticised. Others such as Bishops Bakare and Manhanga were actually arrested.⁴⁴ This shows that Mugabe's government was not receptive to the church's advice.

Focusing on the era of the Government of National Unity (GNU), Munemo and Nciizah asserted that the church was at the forefront of de-escalating the Zimbabwe crisis.⁴⁵ However, different views on the role of the church in responding to the challenge of healing and reconciling Zimbabweans in the wake of Zimbabwe's 2008 political violence have been noted. Differences on how conflict resolution, peace and reconciliation could be promoted were not only found among politicians but were also found in the church resulting in

⁴²D. Muchena, "The Church and reconciliation. A mission impossible?" in B. Raftopoulos & T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p265

⁴³ Interview with Rev Mapfumo at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, Gweru, 15/3/2020

⁴⁴ D. Muchena, "The Church and reconciliation. A mission impossible?" in B. Raftopoulos & T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p267

⁴⁵ D Munemo & E Nciizah, "The Church in Zimbabwe's Peace and Reconciliation Process under the Government of National Unity" *ISOR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (ISOR-JHSS)*, Vol 19, No. 10, October, 2014, p67@www.isorjournals.org accessed 21/06/2019, p68

divisions which hindered church efforts aimed at uniting the country.⁴⁶ For example, some leaders of independent African initiated churches such as Johanne Marange's Apostolic Church supported ZANU-PF, while traditional churches were ambivalent about getting involved in the political issues. However, the Catholic Church criticised the government's repressive policies and actions.⁴⁷ Together with civil society bodies, the Roman Catholic Church preached democracy and advocated for human rights and good governance. This discourse is associated with the MDC party. So the close link of the church, the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe, with civil society has blunted the former's efforts of resolving the conflicts between ZANU-PF and the MDC.⁴⁸

Under the GNU the church was supposed to be providing guidance and playing a prominent role in promoting conflict resolution and national healing to the situation, but it was pushed to the margins of the whole process. When the GPA tasked the government with the writing of a new constitution, churches through the ZCC submitted their proposal but the constitution that was adopted did not reflect the input made by the church.⁴⁹ Before the creation of the GNU the Church tried to negotiate with ZANU-PF to foster unity and reconciliation in the nation. In 2006, a delegation led by Bishop Peter Nemapare met President Mugabe and expressed their view of problems bedeviling the country and how they could be solved. Also Andrew Wutawunashe urged Zimbabweans to put aside their differences and collaborate for the good

⁴⁶ D Munemo & E Nciizah, "The Church in Zimbabwe's Peace and Reconciliation Process under the Government of National Unity" *ISOR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (ISOR-JHSS)*, Vol 19, No. 10, October, 2014, p67@www.isorjournals.org accessed 21/06/2019, p68

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Ibid, p67

⁴⁹ Ibid

of the nation.⁵⁰ Under the GNU in 2009, the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops' Conference argued that the Zimbabwe crisis could only be resolved if Zimbabweans confessed their transgressions and accepted each other while committing themselves to work together in solidarity, justice and peace.⁵¹ However, the church's efforts to resolve the crisis in the country were frustrated by politicians in the inclusive government.

Reverend Mapfumo asserted that even under the GNU, the church's attempts to promote reconciliation between ZANU-PF and MDC were undermined by ZANU-PF politicians who perceived the church as an enemy of the state and accused the church of aligning with drivers of regime change. He also alluded to the fact that the church became divided into two groups- those in favour of Mugabe and those opposed to his continued grip on power.⁵² Elaborating the above situation, Reverend Mapfumo pointed out that independent African initiated churches such as the Zion Christian Church and the apostolic churches like Johanne Marange rallied behind President Mugabe while the likes of Bishop Levee Kadenge and Bishop Anselm Magaya of the Zimbabwe National Pastor's Conference sympathised with the MDC and joined it in denouncing repression by ZANU-PF.⁵³

It is my contention that during the GNU era, the Church should have exploited the largely violence free atmosphere to seek resolution to the major sources of conflict in Zimbabwe, such as micro-economic policies, constitutional debate, electoral framework, human rights and governance. However, political gladiators marginalised the Church from effectively

⁵⁰ D Munemo & E Nciizah, "The Church in Zimbabwe's Peace and Reconciliation Process under the Government of National Unity" *ISOR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (ISOR-JHSS)*, Vol 19, No. 10, October, 2014, p67@www.isorjournals.org accessed 21/06/2019, p68

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Interview with Rev Mapfumo at the Roman Catholic Cathedral, Gweru, 15/3/2020

⁵³ Ibid

influencing the conflict resolution and reconciliation process and charting the political trajectory of the country. Considering this, most churches chose the path of constructive engagement with the inclusive government. Unfortunately, the government was embroiled in hegemonic struggles and did not share the same vision and goals as that of the church.

South Africa's 'Quiet' Diplomacy

Another attempt towards resolving Zimbabwe's new millennium conflict that was largely born out of the ZANU-PF and MDC divide came from South Africa. Over time it became known as South Africa's 'quiet diplomacy'. In its attempt to avoid isolation from the liberation legacy in Southern Africa while at the same time pursuing its goal of continental leadership in attempting to find a way forward out of the impasse, South Africa's role came under increasing scrutiny.⁵⁴ The politics of the Zimbabwe crisis posed a serious dilemma not only for Zimbabweans themselves, but for Southern African region and South Africa in particular. According to Raftopoulos, Mbeki hoped that a reformed ZANU-PF would be able to regain its support and if necessary lead a government of national unity in normalising its relations with the West.⁵⁵ Moore argued that in spite of keeping white capital on board, Mbeki slipped into the same 'kith and kin' argument as Mugabe, thus justifying Mugabe's reduction of all opposition to a British conspiracy, and not paying any attention to massive human rights abuses of the ZANU-PF government.⁵⁶ These positions contributed to a multi-faceted explanation of Mbeki's policy on Zimbabwe and they should be considered together rather than as singular explanations.

⁵⁴ B. Raftopoulos, "Unreconciled differences. The limits of reconciliation politics in Zimbabwe," in B. Raftopoulos & T Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, pxix

⁵⁵ Ibid, p5

⁵⁶ Ibid

While Mbeki was active as mediator on the Zimbabwe crisis since 2002, he was formally endorsed by SADC in 2007. What prompted such a move was the worsening effect of the Zimbabwean crisis, domestically including public beating, arrest as well as the torture of opposition and civic leaders while for South Africa there was increased influx of Zimbabwean economic and political refugees. International pressure and concerned voices in SADC prompted an Extraordinary SADC Heads summit to be held in Tanzania on 28-29 March 2007, at which Mbeki was mandated to “continue to facilitate dialogue between the opposition and the government of Zimbabwe” and report back to the Troika on the progress. Besides appealing to Britain to honour its pledges to provide finance for an orderly land reform in Zimbabwe the SADC summit also expressed opposition to the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe by the Western powers.⁵⁷

Mbeki’s ‘quiet diplomacy’ also aimed at preventing of regime change via the ballot box in which MDC won elections.⁵⁸ It was within this context that Mbeki’s mediation emphasised the need for national dialogue between the major parties. To Phimister, South Africa’s policy towards the Zimbabwe crisis constituted a paradox. The economic decline, political violence and human rights abuses in Zimbabwe all made a mockery of Mbeki’s envisaged African Renaissance, turning as it does on the promotion of good governance in return for increased investment in Africa by the West. Also they flew in the face of the values officially informing South African policy for Africa as a whole and Southern Africa in particular. According to Nkosana Dlamini-Zuma, the values encompassed democratic good governance, people

⁵⁷ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, “Politics Behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe” in Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p156

⁵⁸ Ibid

centred development, peace, stability and security.⁵⁹ Yet neither did the South African government criticise the actions of ZANU-PF government nor did it attempt to help the victims of state oppression.

Phimister also noted that Thabo Mbeki's policy of 'quiet diplomacy' was short-lived. By 2002 Mbeki had abandoned the policy of quiet diplomacy towards Zimbabwe to one of open support for Mugabe and his government.⁶⁰ As opposition to ZANU-PF intensified, so ANC support for its fellow liberation movement increased. For example, in March 2002, after the presidential elections that were condemned as neither free nor fair by every observer group except the South African and Organisation of African Unity (OAU) missions, the ANC's Deputy president publicly congratulated Mugabe on a 'legitimate and valid' victory.⁶¹ This display of support was bolstered by an invitation to ZANU-PF to send a delegation to attend ANC's 51st national congress, scheduled for December 2002.⁶²

Mugabe's position was strengthened by his elevation to the deputy presidency of the African Union. Thereafter he insisted that any talks with the MDC would have to be concluded entirely on his terms.⁶³ The previous year, Obasanjo's mediation initiative had resulted in the Abuja Agreement of 6 November 2001 which recognised historical injustices informing Mugabe's agenda of land distribution and advocated for a transparent and equitable rectification of unequal land ownership. Britain reaffirmed its commitment to a financial contribution to the land reform program and its undertaking to urge other international donors

⁵⁹ I. Phimister, "South African diplomacy and the crisis in Zimbabwe. Liberation solidarity in the 21st century," in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare 2005, p272

Ibid

⁶¹Ibid, p273

⁶² Ibid, p275

⁶³ Ibid, p279

to do the same.⁶⁴ The Abuja Agreement failed due to lack of compliance by Mugabe's government which did not make any effort to restore political sanity through the restoration of rule of law, stop violence or prevent new farm invasions.⁶⁵ Joseph Nkatanzo agreed with that observation but also added that the failure by Britain and international community to provide finance for an orderly land reform also contributed towards the failure of the Abuja Agreement.⁶⁶

South Africa was worried about consequences of a political and economic implosion in Zimbabwe. Mbeki thus collaborated with Obasanjo in mediating on the sidelines of the commonwealth in 2002. However, they encountered a combination of obduracy and belligerence from Mugabe and ZANU-PF which insisted on being the only guardian of a non-negotiable legitimacy that derived on its huge sacrifices during the liberation struggle.⁶⁷ According to Phimister, Mugabe also regarded having a dialogue with the MDC as negotiating away Zimbabwe's sovereignty and compromising the sacred tenets of the liberation struggle.⁶⁸ So the arrogance from ZANU-PF closed doors for any breakthrough by Mbeki and Obasanjo in 2002.

In November 2003, Obasanjo of Nigeria left Harare without a commitment from Mugabe to talks with the MDC. So, having lost patience with Mugabe's obduracy, back in Lagos,

⁶⁴ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe" in Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p153

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ Interview with Joseph Nkatanzo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 18/3/2020

⁶⁷ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "Politics Behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe" in Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p154

⁶⁸ I. Phimister, "South African diplomacy and the crisis in Zimbabwe. Liberation solidarity in the 21st century," in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare 2005, p280

Obasanjo announced that Mugabe would not be invited to attend the Commonwealth heads of Government meeting in Abuja. The Abuja meeting confirmed Zimbabwe's suspension, a decision which prompted Mugabe to announce that Zimbabwe was withdrawing from the Commonwealth, which he denounced as an 'Anglo-Saxon unholy alliance'.⁶⁹ In Hazel Sibanda's opinion the attitude by both Mugabe and Obasanjo was not going to help resolve the conflict between ZANU-PF and MDC. She added that perhaps negotiating with Mugabe behind closed doors and persuading him to see reason would have yielded positive results.⁷⁰

The view of Zimbabwe's Minister of Information was also that the West was seeking 'regime change' in Zimbabwe through acts of sabotage, under the guise of instruments of democracy, human rights, rule of law and good governance to sound reasonable.⁷¹ This view was held by all of Zimbabwe's partners in SADC, the South African government and Mbeki himself. Mbeki went to Harare where he met at length with Mugabe and briefly with the MDC.⁷² An analysis of the foregoing shows that Mbeki was not an impartial mediator between ZANU-PF and the MDC as he clearly supported ZANU-PF and Mugabe. This bolstered Mugabe's reluctance to negotiate with the MDC which he accused of being an ally of the west.

An appeal from the South African Council of Churches urging Mbeki to send a delegation to Harare to resume talks between ZANU-PF and MDC drew only non-committal replies. Mugabe was adamant not to negotiate with the MDC. By mid-year 2004 SADC's support for

⁶⁹ I. Phimister, "South African diplomacy and the crisis in Zimbabwe. Liberation solidarity in the 21st century," in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare 2005, p280

⁷⁰ Interview with Hazel Sibanda of Nkulumane Bulawayo 18/3/2020

⁷¹ I. Phimister, "South African diplomacy and the crisis in Zimbabwe. Liberation solidarity in the 21st century," in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare 2005, p280

⁷² Ibid, p282

his regime had strengthened his obduracy, while MDC was in disarray, hit by factionalism and demoralised by pressure from pro-government youths.⁷³ Also when Amnesty International and other human rights groups wrote a letter urging Mbeki to take a ‘more public stand in resolving the crisis in Zimbabwe,’ he did not respond.⁷⁴ It was obvious that Mbeki sympathised with Mugabe and ZANU-PF.

The consistent pattern of Mbeki’s support for the ZANU-PF regime has baffled many observers. It is obvious that South Africa has significant economic interests in Zimbabwe and a strong case has been made for considering Mbeki’s support for Mugabe and ZANU-PF as a vehicle for “securing the economic interests of an emergent black South Africa bourgeoisie, in both the state and private sectors.”⁷⁵ Mbeki’s attitude towards the crisis took account both of the unsettling precedent that would be established by an MDC government in Harare, and the apparently widespread support for Mugabe by black South Africans.⁷⁶

In 2007 Mbeki sent out a letter to the presidents of the three parties (the MDC had split in 2005) stating that the crux of the SADC facilitation was to ensure that the 2008 elections were “conducted in a manner that will make it impossible for any honest person in Zimbabwe to question the legitimacy of their outcome.”⁷⁷ Thus, Mbeki made it explicit that the facilitation process would be led by SADC and the Zimbabwean political leaders and supported by international players. Obviously the task would be too difficult for Mbeki to

⁷³ I. Phimister, “South African diplomacy and the crisis in Zimbabwe. Liberation solidarity in the 21st century,” in B. Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare 2005, p284

⁷⁴ Ibid, p285

⁷⁵ Ibid, p288

⁷⁶ Ibid, p289

⁷⁷ B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement: National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p8.

accomplish alone without SADC's backing. It was within this context that Mbeki's mediation emphasised the need for national dialogue between the major parties. The mediation aimed at developing an understanding of the differences among the Harare disputants in order for them to reach a political compromise and to persuade them to commit to resolution of the Zimbabwe crisis through democratic means including free and fair elections in 2008. The process which started in mid-2007 soon produced agreement on a package of constitutional, electoral and other reforms aimed at securing freedom of speech, assembly and expression and they were rapidly passed by the Zimbabwe parliament in December 2007.⁷⁸ Prior to the dialogue process in mid-May, the two MDC formations had sent a statement to Mbeki as well as to ZANU-PF stating obstacles to the holding of free and fair elections which ranged from the need for electoral and constitutional reforms, to problems of state violence, state monopolisation of the electronic media and political abuse of power by the government leaders. In response the ZANU-PF paper failed to address any of the major issues in the MDC documents.⁷⁹

At the suggestion of the South African facilitators it was agreed that the range of issues to be included on the agenda would comprise; a) the constitution, b) electoral laws, c) security legislation, d) communications and communication legislations (i.e broadcasting laws and external radio stations) e) political climate (i.e demilitarisation of state institutions, use of militia, abuse of state and traditional leaders, sanctions, land).⁸⁰ The talks by the parties

⁷⁸ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "Politics Behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe" in Raftopoulos (ed), *The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p157

⁷⁹ Ibid, p8

⁸⁰ B. Raftopoulos, "An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement: National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma," in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p9

eventually culminated in the ‘Kariba Draft’ of 2007, which was a constitution draft.⁸¹ Then constitutional, electoral and other reforms were passed by the Zimbabwe parliament in December. There was a deadlock in the mediation over the date of the election, the timeframe for the implementation of agreed reforms and the manner, process and timeframe for the making, adoption and implementation of a new constitution.⁸²

Mugabe and ZANU-PF decided to have harmonised parliamentary, presidential and council elections in March 2008 without a new constitution in place. Mugabe also unilaterally decided that the elections would take place on 29 March and that this decision was not negotiable. The MDC eventually conceded to the declared date.⁸³ It is plausible to conclude that due to Mugabe’s belligerence, resolving the conflicts between ZANU-PF and the MDCs was a difficult task for Mbeki and SADC. In Zephania Nkomo’s opinion Mugabe’s behaviour was a reflection of his desire to retain power and his lack of sincerity when it came to resolving the Zimbabwe crisis.⁸⁴ Due to important changes to the system of voting, counting and tallying results at polling stations, opening up the electronic media and freer campaigning space, the MDC-T won the general election and its presidential candidate Morgan Tsvangirai got more votes than Mugabe who stood for ZANU-PF.⁸⁵ For the first time since 1980, the ruling party and its leader lost elections to an opposition party.

⁸¹ B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement: National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma,” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p9

⁸² Ibid, p10

⁸³ S.J. Ndlovu, “Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe,” in B Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p158

⁸⁴ Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, 11/3/2020

⁸⁵ S.J. Ndlovu, “Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe,” in B Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p158

As the March elections did not result in a clear presidential winner, the country was compelled to call for a run-off. The second round of elections, held on 27 June 2008, was tainted by allegations of electoral flaws and widespread institutionalised violence. Regression into the pre-29 March era spurred SADC to mandate South Africa to facilitate negotiations for a political solution among the rivals. The crisis that befell Zimbabwe in the aftermath of the 29 March elections is well captured by Eldred Masunungure who described ZANU-PF's behaviour as a form of 'defying the winds of change'.⁸⁶ On realising that MDC-T had won, Mugabe and ZANU-PF did everything in their power to confuse the situation, testing the electorate's patience and power and testing the international and regional bodies' preparedness to intervene in Zimbabwe in support of democracy.

The presidential run-off culminated not only in an election crisis but also a political legitimacy logjam. It was imperative for Mbeki and SADC to respond to the crisis. Concerning the mediation process, Joseph Nkato asserted that Mbeki was in a difficult position of dealing with Mugabe's intransigence while at the same time he faced criticism from Western countries.⁸⁷ The thrust of the mediation was towards creating a government of national unity while the country prepared for another free and fair election.⁸⁸ As the Zimbabwean economy continued to decline continental and regional pressure together with sanctions compelled ZANU-PF to accept mediation if it was to survive politically.⁸⁹ Against this background, Harare disputants signed a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) on July

⁸⁶ S.J. Ndlovu, "Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe," in B Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p158

⁸⁷ Interview with Joseph Nkato of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 18/03/2020

⁸⁸ S.J. Ndlovu, "Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe," in B Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p160

⁸⁹ Ibid

21, 2008, s a first step to showing commitment towards the resolution of the crisis. The parties signed the Global Political Agreement (GPA) on 15 September 2008 as a result of the Mbeki-led mediation.⁹⁰

The GPA was a form of negative peace as it was an uneasy compromise between ZANU-PF and the two MDCs aimed at resolving the Zimbabwe crisis. According to Raftopoulos the agreement resulted from a combination of factors: weakening of both ZANU-PF and opposition, together with social forces and civic groups that supported the MDCs, the disastrous economic and humanitarian situation in the country by 2008, pressure from SADC, and growing international isolation of the Mugabe regime.⁹¹ In my analysis, while for ZANU-PF the GPA was a chance to climb out of the political and economic crisis it had played a central role in creating, the MDCs accepted the agreement as their only viable route to state power, in the face of a state capable of deploying repressive power against opposition forces. Mhandara and Poee note that some of the factors that influenced the MDC-T to accede to the GPA were: a) failure to remove ZANU-PF from power through the ballot box, b) escalating socio- economic and political suffering of the masses, and c) uncertainty over the efficacy of Western pressure against Mugabe's government to cede power.⁹² In addition, the MDC-T felt discomfort with what it perceived as Mbeki's closeness to ZANU-PF. So the party frustrated the mediation process with the hope of pushing the mediation from SADC to

⁹⁰ United Nations Peacemaker, "Agreement between the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the two Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) formations on resolving the challenges facing Zimbabwe"
p4@www.peacemaker.un.org/Zimbabweresolving-challenges2008 accessed 20/6/2019

⁹¹ B. Raftopoulos, "An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement: National Conflict, regional Agony, International Dilemma," in B Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement* Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p14

⁹² L. Mhandara and A. Poee, "Mediating a convoluted conflict: South Africa's approach to the inter-party negotiations" Occasional Paper Series in Accord, Issue 1, 2013,
p5@www.files.accord-occasional-paper2013 accessed 30/7/2019

AU and ultimately to the United Nations (UN) in the MDC-T's quest for full control of the state through participation in the GPA. The stance was consistent with the party's distrust of Mbeki and his 'quiet diplomacy.'⁹³

For ZANU-PF, the idea of sharing power, after years of unlimited access and grip on the state machinery and most levers of power in Zimbabwe, was unattractive. Besides these internal dynamics, there was also pressure on the country from SADC and the AU in the aftermath of the violence that accompanied the 2008 presidential run-off. The GPA became an essential tool for ZANU-PF to regroup and consolidate its position both in the country and on the continent.⁹⁴ The violence that preceded the presidential run-off of June 2008 shows that the Mbeki-led SADC mediation was a negative peace which failed to resolve the conflict in the country.

The GPA agreement included provisions for various political and economic reforms that would create the conditions for a generally acceptable election and the normalisation of politics of Zimbabwe. Some of the conditions included in the agreement were restoration of stability and growth, the removal of sanctions, recognition of the inevitability of a comprehensive land reform programme in Zimbabwe, the basic reform programme in Zimbabwe, the basic right and duty of the Zimbabweans to make a constitution by themselves and for themselves and the promotion of equality, national healing, cohesion and

⁹³ L. Mhandara and A. Pooe, "Mediating a convoluted conflict: South Africa's approach to the inter-party negotiations" Occasional Paper Series in Accord, Issue 1, 2013, [p5@www.files.accord-occasional-paper2013](http://www.files.accord-occasional-paper2013) accessed 30/7/2019

⁹⁴Ibid, p13

unity.⁹⁵ The agreement also came up with a framework for a government which would be divided between the President, Prime Minister and Cabinet, with the Presidency still a dominant force. The Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee was set up to ‘ensure full and proper-implementation of the letter and spirit of the Agreement.’ The agreement, however, left the coercive arms of the state under the control of ZANU-PF, and in that respect represented, “an asymmetrical distribution of powers and responsibilities in favour of the executive president.”⁹⁶

AU and SADC’s intervention in the Zimbabwean crisis

The degeneration of the Zimbabwe crisis into a serious humanitarian catastrophe prompted the AU and SADC to intervene. Towards the end of 1999 the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) produced a draft for a new constitution which was intended to empower the state to acquire land without compensation, to allow President Mugabe to seek two additional terms of office and to grant government officials immunity from prosecution. The referendum on the government’s draft constitution, held on 12 and 13 February, produced a ‘no’ vote from the majority of the population. The result represented a protest vote against not only the way the constitution making process had been carried out but also an angry protest against the performance of the government and the degeneration of the economy.⁹⁷

The human rights abuses were accompanied by repressive legislation such as Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and the Access to Information and the Protection of Privacy Act

⁹⁵B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement: National Conflict, regional Agony, International Dilemma,” in B Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement* Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p14.

⁹⁶ Ibid p, 15

⁹⁷ B. Kagoro, “Constitutional reform as social movement. A critical narrative of the constitution-making debate in Zimbabwe, 1997-2000,” in B Raftopoulos and T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*, Weaver Press, Harare 205, p249

(AIPPA). The promulgation of POSA prior to the March 2002 presidential elections facilitated the harassment, intimidation and torture of MDC supporters. AIPPA was utilised to prevent journalists from reporting on forced evictions, arbitrary arrests, beatings, torture and politically inspired killings.⁹⁸ The passing of these draconian laws and opposition resistance to them resulted in full scale militarisation of Zimbabwean governance structures, increased state aggression and gross human rights abuses. After ZANU-PF's constitutional referendum defeat in 2000, the government introduced a National Youth Service whose aim was to instil in youths 'a sense of patriotism and responsible leadership' and to 'prepare the youth to work for their country.'⁹⁹ The emergence of the youth militia was part of the militarisation of governance structures. Operation *Murambatsvina* (discussed in chapter 5) was part of the government orchestrated violence.

The Zimbabwe crisis briefly summarised in the above paragraphs evoked responses from the AU and SADC regional institutions. Dzimiri asserts that the AU Peace and Security Council is mandated to deliver on "collective security and early warning arrangements to facilitate a timely and efficient response to conflict and crisis situations in Africa."¹⁰⁰ So the Zimbabwe crisis gave the AU a chance to live up to its mandate and put its words into action. After Operation *Murambatsvina* in 2005, the AU mandated Commissioner Bahame Nyandingato investigate into the operation between 30 June and 4 July 2005. Unlike the UN report, the one by the AU commissioner did not condemn the *Murambatsvina* demolitions. Instead, the AU proceeded to nominate former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano to persuade Mugabe to negotiate with the MDC. Why did the AU adopt such a cautious approach to the Zimbabwe crisis? Some analysts such as Dzimiri consider this as "diplomatic indifference"

⁹⁸ P. Dzimiri, "African Multilateral Responses to the crisis in Zimbabwe: A Responsibility to Protect Perspective," *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, Vol 39, No. 2, p56

⁹⁹Ibid, p58

¹⁰⁰Ibid, p62

by AU.¹⁰¹ Leslie Ncube's opinion on the AU's cautious approach was that probably the AU was afraid that a confrontational approach might prompt Zimbabwe's withdrawal from the AU as it had withdrawn from the Commonwealth earlier in that decade.¹⁰² On the other hand, Joseph Nkatazo noted that Mugabe's defiance that he would not negotiate with the opposition MDC whom he accused of selling out to the British government showed the AU's lack of capacity to control him.¹⁰³ Concerning Chissano's attempt to persuade Mugabe to negotiate with the MDC formations, Ndlovu-Gatsheni noted that Chissano was rebuffed by the ZANU-PF government which wished to put the Zimbabwean question into the SADC court, where there was a possibility of Mugabe influencing decisions in his favour.¹⁰⁴

The police's brutal attacks on and detention of the MDC leadership on 11 March 2007 while on a prayer meeting in Highfields attracted regional and international condemnation. This prompted the AU to mandate SADC to facilitate political dialogue in Zimbabwe. The AU's Pan-African Parliamentary Observer Mission compiled a report which concluded that "the current atmosphere prevailing in the country did not give rise to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections."¹⁰⁵ The AU's Pan- African Parliament proposed that both SADC and AU leadership engage with political parties and produce a transitional settlement. On 1 July 2008, the 11th Summit of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government was held in Egypt where the Zimbabwe crisis was part of the agenda. The Egypt summit asserted that violence negated the credibility of the June run-off, the election did not reflect the will of the people,

¹⁰¹P. Dzimiri, "African Multilateral Responses to the crisis in Zimbabwe: A Responsibility to Protect Perspective," *Strategic Review for Southern Africa, Vol 39, No. 2*, p62

¹⁰² Interview with Leslie Ncube of Main Court Flats, Bulawayo, 19/3/2020

¹⁰³ Interview with Joseph Nkatazo of Lobengula West Bulawayo, 18/03/2020

¹⁰⁴S.J. Ndlovu- Gatsheni, "Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe," in B Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p154

¹⁰⁵ P. Dzimiri, "African Multilateral Responses to the crisis in Zimbabwe: A Responsibility to Protect Perspective," *Strategic Review for Southern Africa, Vol 39, No. 2*, p62

and hence the outcome was not legitimate.¹⁰⁶ The AU's delegation of authority to SADC to mediate the crisis showed that the AU played a peripheral role in its involvement in the Zimbabwe crisis. Perhaps as the founding of the organisation (as successor to the Organisation of African Unity) coincided with the onset of the Zimbabwe crisis, its conflict resolution structures were still in embryonic stages and too weak to handle the crisis in Zimbabwe.

It is also noteworthy that not all African leaders refrained from confronting the Mugabe regime. For example, President Ian Khama of Botswana urged other countries in Southern Africa not to recognise Mugabe after the June 2008 presidential run-off election and called for Zimbabwe's suspension from SADC. Also Prime Minister Raila Odinga of Kenya urged the AU to deploy peacekeepers to Zimbabwe but this was condemned by most of the AU leadership.¹⁰⁷ However, the AU's deflection and relegation of responsibility for resolution of the Zimbabwe crisis to SADC left a lot to be desired.

The SADC leadership was engaged with the politics in Zimbabwe since the controversial 2000 parliamentary elections. However, in its initial approach, the SADC leadership avoided discussing human rights violation in the country including electoral violence and the harassment of opposition party supporters in both the 2000 parliamentary and 2002 presidential election.¹⁰⁸ It is, however, difficult to determine the extent of the influence of Thabo Mbeki as president of South Africa and official SADC mediator on how SADC approached the Zimbabwe crisis. The Extraordinary SADC Heads of State summit held in

¹⁰⁶S.J. Ndlovu- Gatsheni "Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe," in B Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p155

¹⁰⁷ P. Dzimiri, "African Multilateral Responses to the crisis in Zimbabwe: A Responsibility to Protect Perspective," *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, Vol 39, No. 2, p64

¹⁰⁸Ibid

Tanzania on 28-29 March 2007 mandated Mbeki to ‘continue to facilitate dialogue between the opposition and the Government of Zimbabwe and report back to the Troika on the progress. The summit also reiterated the appeal to Britain to ‘honour its compensation obligations with regard to land reform made at Lancaster House’ and appealed for the lifting of all forms of sanctions against Zimbabwe.¹⁰⁹

In terms of diplomacy, the political, economic and humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe ruptured SADC’s regional fabric. Especially after the June 2008 elections, there were disagreements concerning the crisis response mechanisms, with Botswana and Zambia calling for intervention to protect humanity at risk. Nevertheless, SADC presented a united front in its approach to the crisis and pressured ZANU-PF and the two MDCs to enter into the GPA, which they signed on 15 September 2008.¹¹⁰ It is also noteworthy that there was lack of policy harmony between AU and SADC concerning the Zimbabwean crisis. This is because while the AU Constitutive Acts call for intervention when a crisis constitutes a threat to regional security, the SADC Protocol still regards sovereignty as sacrosanct, hence also the principles of territorial integrity and non-interference in domestic affairs. It only provides for the peaceful resolution of disputes through “mediation, conciliation, negotiation and arbitration.”¹¹¹ So any condemnation of the ZANU-PF government would be merely rhetoric and no action could be invoked. SADC was resolute in safeguarding the national sovereignty of member states.

¹⁰⁹ B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement. National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma,” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p7

¹¹⁰ P. Dzimiri, “African Multilateral Responses to the crisis in Zimbabwe: A Responsibility to Protect Perspective,” *Strategic Review for Southern Africa*, Vol 39, No. 2, p65

¹¹¹ Ibid, p65-6

Explaining how the Zimbabwe crisis presented SADC with a daunting challenge, Ndlovu-Gatsheni asserts that for the first time the region had to deal with the political fallout of a liberation movement led by a veteran nationalist staring at imminent loss of an election to a political party with no liberation credentials. Such a situation shocked other former liberation movements in power in the SADC region, which understood and represented themselves as champions of democratisation.¹¹² ZANU-PF as a former liberation movement exposed itself as an undemocratic force that survived by violence. As the party and Mugabe intensified violence it became hard for other former liberation movements to condone what was happening. Yet ZANU-PF's push for land reform, its anti-colonial rhetoric and pan-African pretensions enabled it to claim to be pursuing a decolonial and redemptive agenda. Zimbabwe became a site for contestations between decolonisation values of social and economic justice vis-a-vis the post-Cold war universal claims of good governance, human rights and liberal democracy.¹¹³

The SADC dilemma in the Zimbabwe crisis situation also presented Mugabe as a shrewd politician who manipulated the race card to his own advantage. So the "mobilisation of race as a legitimate force was used to justify the battle against historical inequalities, while trying to conceal structures that increase such inequalities"¹¹⁴ To this, Raftopoulos asserted that SADC mediation encountered numerous obstacles and delays. These took the form of obstructive political dynamics of the major parties in Zimbabwe, the contradictions of the

¹¹² S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe" in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p150-51

¹¹³Ibid , p150-51

¹¹⁴ P. Dzimir, "African Multilateral Responses to the crisis in Zimbabwe: A Responsibility to Protect Perspective," *Strategic Review for Southern Africa, Vol 39, No. 2*, p67

civic responses, counterproductive positions from the Western countries, and the slowness of SADC in responding to the authoritarian politics of the Mugabe regime.¹¹⁵

Nevertheless, one should appreciate the successes of SADC mediation in handling the Zimbabwe crisis. The first notable accomplishment is that under SADC pressure, and for the first time since the founding of the MDC, ZANU-PF conceded to sharing the political space, made amendments to POSA and AIPPA legislation and opened the draft constitution to the public. SADC and Mbeki must be credited for steering Zimbabwe into peaceful and credible 29 March 2008 ‘harmonised’ election and MDC was allowed to campaign in both urban and rural areas prior to the elections. Also, the signing of the GPA in September 2008 and the subsequent formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) in 2009 with all its imperfections would not have occurred without SADC-sponsored mediation.¹¹⁶ Moreover, due to SADC pressure, the ZANU-PF government conceded to a constitutional amendment, which paved the way for the creation of the offices of Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. Also economic and social advantages under the GNU were a result of SADC mediation. For example, schools re-opened, civil servants resumed work, hospitals started to function again, the cholera epidemic subsided, shops were stocked with goods and the valueless Zimbabwe dollar was shelved for the United States dollar. Political violence also abated. So for the Zimbabwean masses the SADC-initiated power sharing arrangement brought relative stability in the post-GNU period both economically and politically.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement. National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma,” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p7

¹¹⁶ P. Dzimiri, “African Multilateral Responses to the crisis in Zimbabwe: A Responsibility to Protect Perspective,” *Strategic Review for Southern Africa, Vol 39, No. 2*, p6

¹¹⁷Ibid, p68

GPA, GNU and initiatives to bring about conflict resolution in Zimbabwe

When Jacob Zuma succeeded Mbeki as the mediator between ZANU-PF and its opponents, MDC and civil society expected that this marked an end to South Africa's policy of 'quiet diplomacy.' In Zephania Nkomo's opinion, this was based on Zuma's open criticism of ZANU-PF and Mugabe before he assumed the presidency of South Africa.¹¹⁸ Joseph Nkatozo said that ZUMA was an ally of COSATU which was openly critical of Robert Mugabe's human rights abuses and was regarded as sympathetic to the MDC parties because of its roots in the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU). So MDC and civil society expected Zuma to resort to a confrontational engagement when dealing with Mugabe.¹¹⁹ Zuma appointed a facilitation team made up of three South Africans to help him with facilitation of the implementation of the GPA.¹²⁰ He and SADC were expected to facilitate the full implementation of the GPA.

The main purpose of the GPA, which was officially signed on 15 September, 2008 was to plot a route beyond the controversial June 2008 presidential elections and the problem of political legitimacy that this entailed for all parties and prepare the ground for a generally acceptable election in a highly polarised state. The economy was in the worst condition of the post-colonial era with hyperinflation, unemployment, failure of state services, cholera and massive human displacement serving as the major indicators of the crisis.¹²¹ In a bid to

¹¹⁸ Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, 18/03/2020

¹¹⁹ Interview with Joseph Nkatozo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 18/03/2020

¹²⁰ S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe" in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p163

¹²¹ B. Raftopoulos, "An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement. National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma," in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p1

address the challenges the country faced, the signatories hoped to accomplish numerous achievements including the;

Restoration of economic stability and growth in Zimbabwe, end of sanctions against Zimbabwe imposed in 2000 by the international community, promotion of equality, national healing and unity; promoting the values and practices of tolerance, respect, non-violence and dialogue to resolve political differences; the obligation to establish a framework of working together in an inclusive government and ensure that the implementation of the agreement would be guaranteed and underwritten by the Facilitator, SADC and the AU.¹²²

The Agreement also set out a framework for a government which would be divided between the President, Prime Minister and Cabinet, with the Presidency still a dominant force. The Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) was set up to “ensure full and proper implementation of the letter and spirit of the Agreement.”¹²³

The GPA, as Brian Raftopoulos avers, was a negative peace as it was an agreement imposed on disputants who were reluctant to work together. Though the agreement signalled the end of the political crisis between rival parties in Zimbabwe, one of its weaknesses was that it left the coercive arms of the state under the control of ZANU-PF and hence represented an imbalanced “distribution of powers and responsibilities in favour of the executive president”¹²⁴

¹²² United Nations Peacemaker, “Agreement between the Zimbabwe Africa National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the two Movement For Democratic Change (MDC) formations, on resolving the challenges facing Zimbabwe” [p5-27@www.peacemaker.un.org/Zimbabwe-resolving-challenges](https://www.peacemaker.un.org/Zimbabwe-resolving-challenges)

¹²³ B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement. National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma,” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p14

¹²⁴Ibid, p15

Machakanja pointed out that Article VI of the agreement revealed ambiguity and vagueness in addressing human rights issues of equality, national healing, cohesion and unity. Also the article was vague on the steps that had to be taken in setting up structures of transitional justice during the interim period.¹²⁵ Furthermore, Article 7.1 (c), which focused on national healing, cohesion and unity, was stated in very vague and ambiguous terms as conflicts from different periods were lumped together. So due to lack of clarity, the process of national healing might take decades and abrogated ZANU-PF's responsibility for post-independence human violations.¹²⁶ Furthermore, as Machakanja asserted, Article 7.1 (d) was problematic as it implied that although the government might want to create an environment of tolerance and respect, they might fail. So the political security of people would not be guaranteed by the state.¹²⁷ Another challenge was that the GPA was a transitional 24 months, power-sharing agreement and not a comprehensive peace agreement in the truest sense. One of the main mandates of the transitional government was to facilitate the making of comprehensive constitutional reforms that pave the way for a new 'people-driven' constitution within 18 months.¹²⁸ Hence, due to the flaws inherent in the GPA, the process of converting it into working government took nearly 5 months of arduous negotiation over portfolios, with Mbeki as SADC facilitator, though no longer South African president.

Raftopoulos spells out challenges facing the GPA. He asserts that soon after the GPA was signed disagreements arose over power-sharing deal, which delayed the coming into being of the inclusive government. The crux of the dispute between the parties concerned four ministries namely; Finance, Home Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Local Government, Rural and

¹²⁵ P. Machakanja, "National Healing and Reconciliation in Zimbabwe. Challenges and Opportunities" *Zimbabwe Monography Series No.1, 2010* Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Africa Programme, Whyenberg 2010,p4

¹²⁶ Ibid

¹²⁷ Ibid

¹²⁸ Ibid

Urban Development.¹²⁹By the end of 2008 issues under dispute had expanded to include: equitable distribution of ministries; the enactment of the law establishing the National Security Council, the appointment of governors and other senior posts such as the Governor of the Reserve Bank, the Attorney General, the secession and reversal of all breaches to the MOU and the GPA, and the enactment of Constitutional Amendment No. 18.¹³⁰ The dispute over these issues retarded the establishment of an inclusive Government until February 2009, when following renewed pressure from the SADC Heads of State and Government Summit in Pretoria on 26-27 January 2009, the transitional government started its work. One could say that the power-sharing government was still-born and that ZANU-PF had no intention of respecting the unity deal.

When the GNU started functioning in February 2009, it had to grapple with an economic and humanitarian crisis that had reached its lowest ebb: shops had empty shelves, schools were either closed or characterised by absenteeism by both pupils and teachers whose salaries were inadequate to meet their needs; and hospitals did not have essential drugs and amenities as well as staff such as doctors and nurses.¹³¹ Confirming the above scenario, Grace Noko said Bulawayo residents had to obtain groceries from neighbouring countries such as South Africa and Botswana. Her family depended on one of her sons who was working in Gaborone to bring them groceries every month.¹³² To resolve the crisis in Zimbabwe, on 17 March 2009, the Minister of Finance buried the already moribund Zimbabwe dollar, effectively

¹²⁹ B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement. National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma,” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p15

¹³⁰ Ibid

¹³¹ T. Biti, “Rebuilding Zimbabwe: Lessons form a coalition government,” *Centre for Global Development*, Johannesburg, September, 2015, p8

¹³² Interview with Grace Noko of Emganwini, Bulawayo, 18/3/2020

demonetising the local currency.¹³³ The ministry took drastic measures to revive the country's comatose health sector. In the case of Bulawayo, the GNU resuscitated services at Mpilo Hospital first, then at United Bulawayo Hospitals. Donors funded an Education Trust Fund administered by UNICEF together with a Basic Education Assistance Module (BEAM) that helped parents pay fees.¹³⁴ Thus, the country's education system was revived.

Despite the strides made by the GNU in reviving the country's economy and social services, the fact that it was a coalition government born out of disputed and violent elections did not resolve the conflicts between the political parties. ZANUP-PF and the MDC had and still have divergent ideological backgrounds. So forging common positions in such an atmosphere was difficult. Faced with the enormous task of participating in a political agreement in which it had little control of the arms of the state, and was equally challenged in its lack of experience of statecraft and state power, the MDC formations had to embark on a steep learning curve in order to confront the obstructionist tactics of ZANUP-PF.¹³⁵ Besides a charged political past, fundamental policy differences existed on major issues that could move the country towards a long-term sustainable position. Major areas of conflict centred on property rights, agriculture, finance, reform of state enterprises, the indigenisation policy, the size of the public service and the method of debt-relief.¹³⁶ Although the GNU period provided Zimbabwe with a degree of political stability, and unprecedented dialogue took place across

¹³³ T. Biti, "Rebuilding Zimbabwe: Lessons from a coalition government," *Centre for Global Development*, Johannesburg, September, 2015, p10

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, p14

¹³⁵ B. Raftopoulos, "An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement. National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma," in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p21

¹³⁶ T. Biti, "Rebuilding Zimbabwe: Lessons from a coalition government," *Centre for Global Development*, Johannesburg, September, 2015, p15

the political divide, much remained to be done to advance democratisation and national healing.

The establishment of GNU opened new chances for peace building, national healing and reconciliation in Zimbabwe. The initiatives comprised of the Joint Monitoring and Implementation Committee (JOMIC) and Organ of National Healing and Integration (ONHRI). The GPA bound all parties to “give consideration to the setting up of a mechanism to properly advise on what measures might be necessary and practicable to achieve national cohesion and unity in respect of victims of pre and post- independence political conflict.”¹³⁷ The quotation shows that the GPA approached the issue of national healing and reconciliation obliquely because the clause is a promise to ‘give consideration’ to what would be merely an advisory mechanism on what ‘might’ be required with regard to past violence.

JOMIC, which was set up by the GPA, was tasked to record and investigate all violations of the GPA. It opened offices at the provincial and district levels. According to Eppel, JOMIC was successful as a credible structure of balanced interventions after political violence, and in many ways it performed activities that might have been expected of the ONHRI.¹³⁸ Furthermore, from 2009, through JOMIC all three major political parties investigated violent incidents together, after interviewing those involved within areas where violence occurred, all three parties signed on one agreed version of what actually happened.¹³⁹ Raftopoulos noted that Tsvangirai was frustrated at the slow pace at which the GPA was being implemented. Hence the role of JOMIC to ‘ensure full and proper implementation of the GPA’ became

¹³⁷ S. Eppel, “Repairing a Fractured Nation Challenges and Opportunities in Post-GPA Zimbabwe” in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, 2013, p212

¹³⁸ Ibid, p238

¹³⁹ Ibid

crucial. The body played a key role in providing a platform for continued dialogue between GPA negotiations. It also set up committees, composed of the three parties, in all districts to ensure a more reliable system of collecting information on violence, human rights abuses and issues relating to the GPA.¹⁴⁰

Pertaining to Bulawayo, Joseph Nkatzo asserted that there was no political or inter-party violence during the GPA and GNU. Nevertheless, whenever there was a political rally, members of JOMIC were present to ensure that there was no violence that erupted among members of different parties.¹⁴¹ Also commending JOMIC for its good work, Zephania Nkomo asserted that the body promoted human rights by advocating for tolerance among supporters of different parties in Bulawayo.¹⁴² In spite of the good work accomplished by JOMIC, the body faced some challenges. Raftopoulos noted that JOMIC was hampered by an initial lack of resources for its operations, and the undermining of its functions by the “parallel government in the security sector”. Moreover, in 2011 the body failed to meet regularly resulting in delays in dealing with GPA issues, and there was lack of interaction between JOMIC and SADC, and the discord between agreements made in JOMIC and the public positions taken by parties thereafter”.¹⁴³ So considering the tensions in the government structure of the GPA, especially between the powers of the President and the Prime Minister, it was not surprising that disjuncture emerged not only in the functions of JOMIC but in the area of policy implementation generally.

¹⁴⁰ B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement. National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma,” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p21

¹⁴¹ Interview with Joseph Nkatzo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo , 18/03/2020

¹⁴² Interview with Zephania Nkomo Lobenvale, Bulawayo, 11/03/2020

¹⁴³ B. Raftopoulos, “An Overview of the Politics of the Global Political Agreement. National Conflict, Regional Agony, International Dilemma,” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p20

ONHRI was established in February 2008 by elements of the ruling ZANU-PF and MDC. The initial members of the Organ were John Nkomo (ZANU-PF) Gibson Sibanda (MDC-M) and Sekai Holland (MDC-T). Its mandate “was to facilitate the creation of a society imbued with values of mutual respect, tolerance and development, a society where individuals enjoy freedoms enshrined in the constitution.”¹⁴⁴ Recognising the sensitive nature of the national healing and reconciliation project the tripartite team was asked to come up with a policy framework that would be presented to the council of ministers for debate, approval and ratification into an act and bill. However, the three ministers were not eligible to attend Cabinet since they headed an ‘organ’ and not a ministry. They also inherited no enabling legislation, no bureaucratic framework or staff and no budget to speak of.¹⁴⁵

The weaknesses inherited in ONHRI show that the GPA was a document of political compromise which undermined ONHRI’s power to act. The formation of ONHRI made victims of violence hope to see justice being served for themselves and meted out to their perpetrators. Eppel asserts that in the period 2009-10 ONHRI embarked on countrywide consultations which culminated in a report that summarised the transitional justice demands that had been raised by the public and civil society organisations. It also held meetings with traditional leaders and churches separately in all provinces.¹⁴⁶ The aim was to chart a way forward on how best to bring healing to victims of violence in Zimbabwe. Also, Marongwe notes that ONHRI was supposed to liaise with regional and international partners such as the

¹⁴⁴ N. Marongwe, “Rural Women as invisible victims of militarised violence: the case of Shurugwi District Zimbabwe 2000-2008,” University of Western Cape, D. Phil Thesis, September, 2012, p340

¹⁴⁵ S. Eppel, “Repairing a Fractured Nation Challenges and Opportunities in Post-GPA Zimbabwe” in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, 2013, p212

¹⁴⁶Ibid, p214

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), bilateral partners and donors. In addition, the Organ was supposed to offer “oversight, monitoring, facilitation and evaluation of the healing process.”¹⁴⁷

Another accomplishment by the Organ was submission to the government, in 2011, of a document for the establishment of National Peace Council. The move would be in line with African Union and United Nations Resolutions which call for African countries to establish national frameworks for the prevention, management and resolution conflicts.¹⁴⁸ Also during the period 2009-2011, the three ministers attended gatherings and conferences, both nationally and internationally and contributed to the national debates on Transitional Justice¹⁴⁹

However, ONHRI faced various challenges which militated against its attempts to promote ‘national healing’ among Zimbabweans. First, ONHRI had no clearly spelt out plan of action, other than “to be consultative” and not “prescriptive.” Sekai Holland, one of the co-ministers of the Organ, stated, “Our terms of reference are to establish an organ of national healing reconciliation and integration of Zimbabwe society.” Its role would be to ‘coordinate, which is really to see what progress is being made and it is to guide not to do’ and “Zimbabweans would be invited to participate in its activities and determine the programme.”¹⁵⁰ Another

¹⁴⁷ N. Marongwe, “Rural Women as invisible victims of militarised violence: the case of Shurugwi District, Zimbabwe 2000-2008,” University of Western Cape, D. Phil Thesis, September, 2012, p306

¹⁴⁸ S. Eppel, “Repairing a Fractured Nation Challenges and Opportunities in Post-GPA Zimbabwe” in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, 2013, p214

¹⁴⁹ D. Dube & D. Makuwerere, “Zimbabwe Towards a Comprehensive Peace Infrastructure,” *International Journal of Humanities and social Science*, Vol 2, No.18, October 2012, p, 302

¹⁵⁰ N. Marongwe, “Rural Women an invisible victims of militarised violence: the case of Shurugwi District Zimbabwe 2000-2008,” University of the Western Cape, D-Phil Thesis, September, 2012, p305

challenge was the power asymmetry in the GNU since the presidium retained its dominance. The three co-ministers drawn from the GNU, each represented their party interests. So it was questionable how the three would work outside the imperatives of their parties' invested interests in the process.¹⁵¹ Marongwe also noted budgetary constraints as a weakness and challenge encountered by ONHRI especially in its first year of its launch. As it was launched well into GNU, it was not catered for in the government budget in its first year. So it was hard to implement its two broad plans of action, which were to visit provincial capitals and engage civil society organisations, and to launch research on the history of violence which would culminate in a conference where the findings would be presented.¹⁵²

From my fieldwork it was not clear at all if ONHRI held any meeting in the city of Bulawayo. Joseph Nkatazo, an ex-coordinator for Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, explicitly stated that he was not aware of any activities undertaken or meetings held in Bulawayo by ONHRI in order to 'heal' the wounds of victims of political violence. As coordinator of CCJP, he was confident that he would have known about such activities or meetings.¹⁵³ Also Rtd Brigadier Mazinyane dismissed ONHRI as a political gimmick which did not have any effect on the 'healing' required by victims of political violence in Bulawayo or Matabeleland as a whole.¹⁵⁴ Confirming the ineffectiveness of ONHRI, Marongwe asserted that following a seminar in January 2010 which was held at Midlands State University (MSU), various scholars and practitioners, mostly from UZ and MSU, were tasked to carry out research on political violence. They were given a programme of action to follow, and were promised grants to enable them to undertake the research. By the end of 2011 researchers were still

¹⁵¹ N, Marongwe, "Rural Women an invisible victims of militarised violence: the case of Shurugwi District Zimbabwe 2000-2008," University of the Western Cape, D-Phil Thesis, September, 2012, p307

¹⁵²Ibid ,p309

¹⁵³ Interview with Joseph Nkatazo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 18/03/2020

¹⁵⁴ Interview with Rtd Brigadier Mazinyane of Matshamhlope, Bulawayo, 11/03/2020

awaiting grants to go into the field to engage with people and establish what was behind the cycles of violence. The whole project simply fizzled out.¹⁵⁵

Eppel also cited an episode that dented the effectiveness of ONHRI as a body to promote ‘national healing’ among Zimbabweans. The arrest of Minister Moses Mzila Ndlovu of MDC-M after he attended a rural prayer service for *Gukurahundi* victims in April 2011 showed that for ZANU-PF ‘healing’ should take place without ‘revealing’ the truth about political atrocities. The lack of support for Minister Ndlovu by his fellow ONHRI ministers in the wake of his arrest drove a wedge between them, and by the end of 2011 the three ministers were seldom seen undertaking public activities together.¹⁵⁶ Also in 2010 the ZANU-PF Minister of Healing was elevated to become Vice President after the death of Joseph Msika in August 2007, yet he retained his position in the ONHRI. His attention became more concentrated with the powerful presidium than with the Organ. MDC-T Minister Sekai Holland also stepped back from her once vocal position in the Organ.¹⁵⁷ One of the dilemmas that ONHRI faced was the tension about what ‘healing’ entails and what route Transitional Justice should take. Was it to be via amnesty as in other episodes of the past, or retributive justice as wanted by most MDC supporters.¹⁵⁸

Nevertheless, according to Marongwe the establishment of ONHRI marked the first time that some space was officially opened at government level for ordinary people and civil society to engage in dialogue in the search for a healing process for Zimbabwe. Furthermore,

¹⁵⁵ N, Marongwe, “Rural Women an invisible victims of militarised violence: the case of Shurugwi District Zimbabwe 2000-2008,” University of the Western Cape, DPhil Thesis, September, 2012,p308

¹⁵⁶ S. Eppel, “Repairing a Fractured Nation Challenges and Opportunities in Post-GPA Zimbabwe” in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, 2013, p215

¹⁵⁷ Ibid

¹⁵⁸ Ibid

Marongwe states that the setting up of ONHRI signified “an admission of wrong doing by ZANU-PF, which never admitted institutionalised violence, except when Mugabe thinly admitted that the *Gukurahundi* was ‘a moment of madness.’”¹⁵⁹ In addition, in 2011 the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded a consultant to begin developing a way forward for the ONHRI. The resulting paper from the UNDP consultant, entitled ‘National Policy Framework for National Healing and Reconciliation’ acknowledged that there have been calls within Zimbabwe for truth telling, justice and reparation. Yet the outlined policy does not mention a truth commission and has no policy directives in the realms of reparation, retributive or institutional reform which have been widely accepted as discussion points in Transitional Justice Programmes elsewhere.¹⁶⁰ Instead, the paper focuses on the setting up of Peace and Reconciliation Councils nationwide, down to the ward level and on implementing training of traditional leaders, women and youth in reconciliation skills.¹⁶¹

In addition, Eppel noted that the words ‘reconciliation’ and ‘national cohesion’ are frequently used without definition in the document. Yet the intolerance of political diversity that is so familiar to Zimbabweans is at one level, a manifestation of ZANU-PF’s desire for ‘national cohesion’. In Eppel’s opinion reference to the acceptance of diversity of opinion and cultural background would be preferable in a ‘healing and reconciliation’ policy document, bearing in mind that in the last forty years in Zimbabwe there has been a narrow line between

¹⁵⁹ N, Marongwe, “Rural Women an invisible victims of militarised violence: the case of Shurugwi District Zimbabwe 2000-2008,” University of the Western Cape, DPhil Thesis, September, 2012,p311

¹⁶⁰ S. Eppel, “Repairing a Fractured Nation Challenges and Opportunities in Post-GPA Zimbabwe” in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, 2013, p216

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p217

‘national cohesion’ and ‘national coercion.’¹⁶² It is also curious that a policy document on Transitional Justice at this time could fail to mention the possibility of a truth commission considering that this issue has been raised often by other voices in the country including all opposition parties and many civic groups. Moreover, Eppel asserts that what it means to be ‘reconciled’ can vary from one family or community to another. For example, reconciliation can offer a chance of coming to terms with injustice, so that the victims’ life can move forward without daily bitterness, but without necessarily forgiving the perpetrators. In addition, ‘healing’ is a process which can present a long and varied path, one that victims can choose to journey on or not. A victim could feel that she/he has healed at one point and then feel a few years later that she/he has not done so.¹⁶³ This was confirmed by Zephania Nkomo who said he still felt the pain of having lost his parents to *Gukurahundi* atrocities. He also said ONHRI had not been effective in helping the victims of political violence ‘heal’ their wounds.¹⁶⁴ Machakanja argues that in the case of Zimbabwe the international community should help facilitate transitional justice. In the absence of a broad-based international involvement the parties to the conflict may be limited to the option of trading justice for reconciliation and peace as a way of avoiding continuous violence.¹⁶⁵ In July 2013, Zimbabwe held elections; ZANU-PF regained control of parliament and President Mugabe was re-elected. This marked the end of GNU. The question whether the 2013 harmonised elections were in conformity with SADC principles and guidelines or not is however beyond the scope of this thesis.

¹⁶² S. Eppel, “Repairing a Fractured Nation Challenges and Opportunities in Post-GPA Zimbabwe” in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, 2013, p217.

¹⁶³ Ibid, p218

¹⁶⁴ Interview with Zephian Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, 11/3/2020

¹⁶⁵ P. Machakanja, “National Healing and Reconciliation in Zimbabwe Challenges and Opportunities,” *Zimbabwe Monograph Series, No. 1, 2010* Institute for Justice and Reconciliation Africa Programme, Wynberg, 2010, p12

Conclusion

The quest for peace, conflict resolution and reconciliation has been an arduous task for Zimbabwe. As the country experienced one crisis after another there have been mitigation measures instituted locally, regionally and internationally in responding to the crisis, and attempts to have peace in the country. The Lancaster House agreement was a negative peace in so far as it ended the liberation war in Zimbabwe in 1979. The settlement was determined by a series of national, regional and economic forces of compromise that necessitated the policy of reconciliation proclaimed by Mugabe in 1980.

After ZAPU was banned, verbal threats combined with mediation between ZANU and ZAPU culminated in the Unity Accord of 1987. In terms of the accord, ZAPU got a few seats in government and ZAPU ceased to exist as a separate entity. For more than a decade after the repression and massacres of the 1980s, the people of Matebeleland and Bulawayo were forced to live with their silenced memories of horror and fear. By means of amnesties, perpetrators of violence and brutalities were pardoned at the expense of the victims. The Church tried to resolve the conflict between opposition parties in Zimbabwe but was marginalised by political gladiators.

Having been endorsed by SADC as mediator of the Zimbabwean crisis, Mbeki followed a policy of 'quiet diplomacy.' The intensification of violence in Zimbabwe made the AU mandate SADC to facilitate dialogue between ZANU-PF and the MDCs. SADC pressurised the Harare disputants to sign a power-sharing agreement on 15 September 2008. The purpose of the GPA was to plot a route beyond the controversial June 2008 presidential run-off election and prepare the ground for a more acceptable process. The GPA was a negative peace as it was imposed on political disputants who were reluctant to work together.

When the GNU started functioning in February 2009, it had to grapple with an economic and humanitarian crisis that had reached its lowest ebb. The Ministry of Finance under Tendai Biti managed to resuscitate the economy. It adopted a multi-currency regime using the South African Rand as a reference currency. JOMIC which was set up by the GPA was tasked to record and investigate all violations of the GPA. The body monitored rallies to prevent eruption of violence and advocated for tolerance among supporters of ZANU-PF and MDC in order to ‘heal’ the wounds caused by generations of injustice and intolerance among supporters of ZANU-PF and MDC so as to reconcile Zimbabweans to become one nation focussed on social, political and economic development in order to improve the quality of life for all. The GPA also set up ONHRI to promote tolerance among the different political parties as well as ‘national healing’ among victims of political violence. When the GNU came to an end in 2013, Zimbabwe had some political stability and unprecedented dialogue took place across the political divide though much remained to be done to advance democratisation and ‘national healing.’

General Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to examine the various forms of violence emanating from political conflicts in Zimbabwe and analyse their effects on the landscape between 1960 and 2013. In conflict situations, violence tends to be regarded as gendered, the tendency being to present men as perpetrators of violence and women as weak and vulnerable victims. However, the study demonstrated that victimhood is not gendered because in some cases women were perpetrators of violence while in other contexts they were victims. The research revealed the ambivalent role of women in the national flashpoints of violence experienced in Bulawayo Metropolitan province. Whilst in the Bulawayo chapter of the 'zhi' riots of the 1960s women were not active in the violence against colonialism, in comparison women from Harare, then Salisbury, actively participated in the resistance against colonial oppression, with a significant number of women forming part of those demonstrators who marched to Stoddart Hall in order to demand the release of their leaders who had been detained for assisting the activities of the banned ANC.¹ Furthermore, the wives of detainees instigated violence by protesting outside Sir Edgar Whitehead's office against the continued detention of the black nationalists. In short, like their male counterparts, black women recognised the colonial state as the centre of oppression suffered by Rhodesian Africans.

Across the country, the people who protested against the 1961 constitution (it was racially skewed in favour of white settlers) comprised of black men and women, both in urban and rural areas. In Bulawayo, on 8 December, 1961 some women demonstrated at the Magistrate Court and this prompted the colonial state to arrest 75 of them.² When it came to the *Zhanda-*

¹ M. Nyagumbo, *With the People*, Allison & Busby, California, 1980, p137

² E. Sibanda, *The Zimbabwe African People's Union 1961-87: A Political History of Insurgency in Southern Rhodesia.*, Africa World Press, Asmara 205, p60

1st Battalion violence (1964-6) women did not participate in the attacks against fellow black people that were carried out by some young men. Also the Zhanda 1st Battalion violence occurred in Salisbury, mainly in Highfields Township. As for the first ZAPU and ZANU recruits who went for training in guerrilla warfare, women were largely not involved so that they were not amongst the guerrillas who fought the 1966 battle of Chinhoyi. Both Rhodesian Security forces and guerrillas who fought in the 1960s were men. This gender bias against women seems to prove that during that period, the patriarchal society in Rhodesia believed that fighting wars was a masculine domain. However, the 1972 Pearce Commission sent to assess the acceptability of the Anglo-Rhodesian proposals was confronted by an African rejection which involved both men and women not only in Bulawayo but was countrywide.

In the mid-1970s the colonial oppression that Africans endured at the hands of white Rhodesians prompted many young men and women to join both ZPRA and ZANLA forces in the fight against Rhodesian forces. The exigencies of the war made male guerrillas realise the need to include women amongst their forces. Brickhill asserts that by the end of the war, ZPRA had over 20000 soldiers, the bulk of whom had been recruited and trained between 1976 and 1978. Ten percent of these ZPRA soldiers were women who were incorporated into one unit, the ZPRA Women's Brigade.³ The female guerrillas were trained in various courses which were essential for the war effort. For instance, some trained as nurses and medics who treated ZPRA soldiers who got hurt either in training or in combat. Others engaged in administrative duties or were tailors who sewed uniforms for the guerrillas. Furthermore, some female guerrillas engaged in intelligence work or were teachers to give academic

³ J. Brickhill, "Daring to Storm the Heavens: The Military Strategy of ZAPU 1976-1979," in N. Bhebe and T.O. Ranger (eds) *Soldiers in Zimbabwe's Liberation War Vol 1*, UZ. Publications, Harare, 2000, p66

education to children who were too young to fight.⁴ Some of the women who remained in the city of Bulawayo or in rural areas as members of ZAPU were commissariats and also carried out reconnaissance work. Apparently, most of the women cadres were assigned secondary roles and were absent from the actual theatre of war as soldiers. Nevertheless, the female guerrillas' involvement in the liberation struggle was essential for the success of the war against Rhodesians.

Like their male counterparts, the Rhodesian white women were involved during the Second Chimurenga. Their RWS unit performed the bulk of the administrative and clerical work in camps in order to release men for combat duties. The same applied to those who joined the Rhodesian air force though a few of them flew on duty to operational areas for various functions, including looking after VIP passengers. Those who joined the BSAP were mainly deployed in urban areas where they worked besides their male counterparts sharing every aspect of work and taking their turn at night and weekend duty in the charge office and information rooms.⁵ White women from Bulawayo were among members of the RWS unit, the Rhodesian air force as well as the BSAP. Whilst women's roles were apparently peripheral, they were necessary for the Rhodesian war efforts against the African nationalists. Post-colonial Zimbabwe has experienced flashpoints of violence such as murderous *Gukurahundi* of the 1980s, episodic election-based violence, land invasions of 2000-2003 and the violence of Operation *Murambatsvina* of 2005. Towards the end of 1980, the relocation of guerrillas to Entumbane, a suburb in Bulawayo, resulted in ZPRA and ZANLA living not only in close proximity to each other but also their civilian supporters. This intensified tension between ZPRA and ZANLA ex-combatants. As discussed in Chapter Five, coinciding with this development ZANU-PF held a rally at White City Stadium at which

⁴ See interviews carried out with various female ZPRA ex-combatants in chapter 4

⁵ Rhodesian Gvt, *A Carrier in the BSA Police of Rhodesia*, Salisbury, 1968, p13

Enos Nkala made an inflammatory speech. After the rally both male and female party supporters clashed in the streets and guerrillas were drawn into the fray. At Entumbane ZPRA and ZANLA male guerrillas fought a pitched battle for two days before being brought under control by their commanders. Many male guerrillas lost their lives during the clashes- showing that victimhood is not gendered. As female ZPRA guerrillas were housed at Sierra Camp in Gweru, far away from Bulawayo, during ZPRA-ZANLA clashes at Entumbane it is logical to conclude that they were not directly involved in this round of violence. Clashes at Entumbane as well as disillusionment with their experiences in the APs prompted some ZPRA cadres to defect from the APs and subsequently led to the start of the ‘dissident’ conflict in Matabeleland in the 1980s⁶

In January 1983, the Government strategy to the ‘dissidents’ culminated in the deployment of the 5th Brigade- a special brigade trained by Korean instructors specifically to crush dissidents. Though the 5th Brigade did not operate in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province, its atrocities in rural Matabeleland caused a huge refugee problem inside the mostly urban Bulawayo Metropolitan Province since thousands of civilians fled from rural areas to seek refuge in the city. Also the brigade raped some women and civilians perceived this as an attempt to create a generation of Shona babies.⁷

The Fast Track Land Reform Programme (2000-2003) was another phenomenon of the expression of violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The land invasions sometimes termed ‘*Jambanja*’ in Shona were carried out by Chenjerai ‘Hitler’ Hunzvi and his War Veterans Association. The land invasion caused a lot of suffering to black farm workers, both men and

⁶ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence. Building True Peace: A Report, on Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p32

⁷ Ibid

women, who bore the brunt of the campaign. Again the city of Bulawayo provided refuge to various white farmers (and their families) from Matabeleland whose farms had been expropriated. Some of the farmers eventually left Bulawayo and migrated to South Africa.⁸ The FTLRP also had an adverse effect on livestock in Matabeleland. For example, the eviction of farmers from their land resulted in some horses being abandoned by their owners. In 2003, in the aftermath of the chaotic land invasions, 28 horses were rescued from starvation by a Scottish riding instructor who had a ranch near Bulawayo. He organised the transportation of horses from Bulawayo to a rehousing centre in Pretoria.⁹

Furthermore, Operation *Murambatsvina* that was launched in 2005 was another violent episode which provoked international condemnation. It engulfed Bulawayo, Harare, other cities and towns and ‘growth points’ as well as some rural areas until the end of July that year. In Bulawayo the targets of Operation *Murambatsvina* were street vending, foreign currency dealing, backyard industries, illegal structures and flea markets. For instance, operators at Unity Village flea market had their goods (which they had imported from South Africa), confiscated by police. So the operators, the majority of whom were women, lost their livelihoods.¹⁰ Operation *Murambatsvina* also targeted illegal structures. The epicentre of the demolitions was Bulawayo’s western suburbs of Makokoba, Mzilikazi and Nguboyenja. The makeshift structures which were built for the purpose of accommodation had enabled many female-headed households to earn a living by renting out such rooms. Hence such households became impoverished.¹¹ Also children whose homes were destroyed dropped out of school in large numbers.

⁸ Interview with Joseph Nkatzo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo 3/10/2019

⁹ C. Tomalin, “Starving Horses rescued” [@www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk) accessed 9/3/2019

¹⁰ Interview with Goodhope Ndlovu of Mzilikazi, Bulawayo, 2/10/2019

¹¹ E. Mufema, Report on Operation *Garikai/Hlalani Kuhle* [@www.kubatana.net](http://www.kubatana.net), 23 August, 2007, p16

The thesis also analyses election-related violence as most elections conducted in post-colonial Zimbabwe have been accompanied by violence. Organised violence and intimidation against the opposition parties has been a recurrent strategy of the ruling party before, during and after elections to punish constituencies that dared oppose it. In the 1985 election, violence and intimidation assumed the form of retribution against opposition that had contested against ZANU-PF. Besides deploying its violent youth and women's wings to commandeer support during elections, the ruling party marshalled state resources and institutions such as the army, police and intelligence services as well as public radio and television stations to ensure electoral victory.¹² The use of Women's League by ZANU-PF to commit acts of intimidation during elections is evidence of the fact that where there is violence women are not always victims but can be instigators of violence too. The party encouraged the Women's League to intimidate and harass opposition supporters. In 1985, ZANU-PF also resorted to the strategy of detaining opposition ZAPU officials and supporters before and after elections. The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights estimated that in February 1985 about 1 300 people were detained in Bulawayo. In August 2000 Bulawayo City council employees, both men and women as well as 200 other ZAPU supporters were detained. Some ZAPU officials claimed that 415 of their members were kept in detention in Bulawayo in the post-election round up.¹³ In November 1985 Amnesty International released a report in which they estimated that about 200 people were being kept in detention in Stops Camp in Bulawayo.¹⁴ The torture and detentions were a retribution to the Ndebele electorate for having voted for ZAPU in the 1985 elections.

¹² J. Muzondidya, "From Buoyancy to Crisis 1980-1997" in B. Raftopoulos and A.S. Mlambo, (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe*, Weaver Press Harare, 2009, p177

¹³ CCJP/LRF, *Breaking the Silence. Building True Peace: A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1998*, CCJP/LRF, Harare, 1997, p66

¹⁴ Ibid

Violence has been a tool of choice if and when opposition parties threatened to erode the ruling party's support base. As if to counter the machinations of ZANU-PF, the electorate has used the ballot box to express their discontent with the government. The 1990 general elections held on 28, 29 and 30 March were held at a time when there was discontent with the government especially in urban areas. In Bulawayo City as well as other cities and towns people experienced problems such as unemployment, shortage of transport, lack of housing and inflation. Though it was on a reduced scale, ZANU-PF used campaign violence against the opposition ZUM and its supporters.¹⁵

In 1995 the culture of fear which formed the background to any national election in Zimbabwe was widespread. Electoral violence was directed at opposition parties, that is FORUM, ZUM and ZANU-Ndonga. According to Joseph Nkatazo, in Bulawayo the electorate resorted to passive resistance as there was a low turn-out of voters during the elections. He explained that desisting from voting was an indication of the electorate's protest against the ZANU-PF government.¹⁶

The launch of a new opposition party, MDC, on 11 September, 1999 followed by the 'No' vote in the 2000 referendum exacerbated the tension between the government and groups pushing for more democratic reforms and a change of the ruling guard. Violence prevailed in the form of farm invasions, brutal murders, arson, rape, torture and robberies throughout the country. In his electoral campaign for the June 2000 parliamentary elections Mugabe used racial rhetoric by invoking a distinction between white landowners and landless black Africans, though the government claimed to have recently seized enough land from white

¹⁵ L. Sachikonye, *When a State turns on its Citizens*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, 2011, p19

¹⁶ Interview with Joseph Nkatazo of Lobengula West, Bulawayo, 3/10/2019

farmers.¹⁷ However, in Bulawayo and the whole of Matabeleland the racial politics failed to induce the electorate to vote for ZANU-PF. In Bulawayo urban as well as outside Bulawayo the electorate decided to vote for change- they voted for MDC. All 8 seats in Bulawayo urban fell to MDC. Of the 23 seats in Bulawayo and Matabeleland, 21 fell to MDC.¹⁸ Post- election violence rocked the nation and hate speech continued. The government passed such restrictive legislation as POSA and AIPPA in 2002 which signified a return to pre-independence repression. Many MDC activists, both men and women, were arrested and imprisoned after an official of the War Veterans Association, Cain Nkala, was killed in Bulawayo. A ZANU-PF mob rampaged through the city and burned down the opposition party headquarters.¹⁹

Prior to the 10 March 2002 presidential election Mugabe decided to emasculate the MDC by changing the electoral system. In the election Mugabe would compete against Tsvangirai of the MDC. City dwellers were required to produce proof of residence in the form of title deeds, rental agreements or utility bills. The result was that in Bulawayo and other urban centres many of Tsvangirai's supporters were disenfranchised.²⁰ In addition POSA and AIPPA made Zimbabwe's political landscape very restrictive. In addition, Mugabe resorted to using youths trained at various centres in the country. At election time opposition members, whether they were men or women, were beaten, tortured or killed by this militia. Hence it is logical to conclude that political violence as well as victimhood is not restricted to one gender. Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF would not hesitate to resort to extreme subjective violence in order to retain power. In 2008 the period preceding the 29 March elections was relatively

¹⁷ B. Lindgren, "The Green Bombers of Salisbury: Elections and Political Violence in Zimbabwe," in *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 19 No.2 April 2003, p6

¹⁸ D. Blair, *Degrees in Violence Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*, Continuum, London, 2003, p162

¹⁹Ibid, p238

²⁰ Ibid, p246

peaceful. They were conducted against the backdrop of the SADC mediated negotiations between ZANU-PF and the opposition formations of the MDC. The MDC-T won seats in all the ten provinces, had a clean sweep in Bulawayo and won all except one of the 26 House of Assembly seats in Harare.²¹ Tsvangirai won the presidential election but did not get above 50% of the valid votes making it necessary for a presidential run-off to be held. To ensure that he would win the June 2008 presidential run-off election Mugabe and ZANU-PF unleashed violence against the MDC and its supporters during the interval between April and June. In order to terrorise and frighten Tsvangirai, threatening utterances were accompanied by Tsvangirai's arrest and harassment of about 10 MDC members of parliament and 2 senators. It is plausible to argue that the violence and terror achieved its aim as Tsvangirai was compelled to seek refuge in the Dutch Embassy, a few days before the 27 June election.²² Furthermore, in the face of intense violence and intimidation against the MDC and its supporters, Tsvangirai withdrew from the presidential run-off, paving way for a one-horse election. On 22 June Tsvangirai proclaimed "a credible election which reflects the will of the people is impossible",²³ thus justifying his withdrawal from the run-off election.

To end the violence of Second Chimurenga it was necessary for Zimbabwe to engage in a conflict resolution mechanism. The country tried to build a politics of reconciliation in the context of gross inequalities inherited from settler colonial rule and within the constraints of particular international pressures. On the whole, as analysed in Chapter 6, this was largely constituted as a part of negative peace. The Lancaster House agreement which marked the

²¹ E.V. Masunungure (ed) *Defying The Winds of Change Zimbabwe's 2008 Elections*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2009, p76

²² B. Raftopoulos and S. Eppel, "Desperately seeking Sanity. What Prospects for a New Beginning in Zimbabwe?" in *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, Vol 3 November, 2008, p372

²³ ZHRNGO Forum, *Outreach Report Taking Transitional Justice to the People* Vol 2, ZHR NGO Forum, Harare, 2010, p11

end of the liberation war in Zimbabwe in 1979, and the constitution that emerged from it, embodied compromises over minority rights, especially on the future of land ownership in the country and guaranteed white representation in parliament. However, the main principles the guerrillas had been fighting for- one man one vote elections, majority rule independence- were all contained in the agreement even if the constitution was flawed on points of detail and obnoxious in some of its racial provisions, the fact remained that the reasons for going to war had been removed.²⁴ The settlement was determined by a series of national, regional and economic forces that established contours of the compromise that necessitated the policy of reconciliation proclaimed by Mugabe in 1980. It can also be argued that from a gender perspective, the agreement was flawed as it did not promise gender equality in the new Zimbabwe despite the fact that both young men and women had fought against colonial oppression.

The mid-1980s crisis in Matabeleland and violent state response to it depicted various traits that would mark the authoritarian statism of the post 2000 period. After ZAPU was banned, verbal threats combined with mediation between ZANU and ZAPU culminated in the Unity Accord of 1987. In terms of the accord, ZAPU ceased to exist as a separate party. The Accord offered ZAPU very little except a commitment that killings in ZAPU strongholds would stop.²⁵ It is plausible to argue that the agreement showed the swallowing up of ZAPU by ZANU-PF as an analysis of the agreement shows that ZAPU did not gain meaningful concessions from ZANU-PF. For more than a decade after repression and massacres of the 1980s the people in Bulawayo and Matabeleland in general lived with their silenced

²⁴ D. Martins and P. Johnson, *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Publishing House. Harare, 1980, p319

²⁵ S. Eppel, "An Overview of the circumstances of the Unity Accord of 1987 in comparison to those of the Global Political Agreement of 2008," p9@www.solidaritypeacetrust.org. Accessed 21/06/2019

memories of horror and fear. By means of amnesties perpetrators of violence and brutalities were pardoned at the expense of victims. To demonstrate the stranglehold of negative peace, by 2000, Zimbabwe had no fewer than 5 blanket amnesties, which in almost every case have benefited those who perpetrated crimes against fellow Zimbabweans. Amnesties have helped to muzzle the truth of atrocities at national level.²⁶

Various players tried to mediate in the various episodes of the post-colonial Zimbabwean violence. Among others, the church tried to bring about conflict resolution between the opposition parties in Zimbabwe. Not only were church leaders involved in the Lancaster House Conference but they also played a supportive role in post-independence reconstruction programmes.²⁷ The church also tried to mediate between ZANU-PF government and opposition parties, to resolve conflicts and bring out national unity. However, political gladiators marginalised the church from effectively influencing the conflict resolution and reconciliation process and charting the political trajectory of the country.²⁸ Internally South Africa played an important role in trying to solve the Zimbabwean crisis. Attempting to avoid isolation from the liberation legacy in Southern Africa while at the same time pursuing its goal of continental leadership, the South African government under Thabo Mbeki followed a policy of ‘quiet diplomacy’ on the Zimbabwe crisis. The signing of the GPA evidenced

²⁶ Eppel, “An Overview of the circumstances of the Unity Accord of 1987 in comparison to those of the Global Political Agreement of 2008,” p9@www.solidaritypeacetrust.org. Accessed 21/06/2019, p50

²⁷ D. Muchena, “The Church and reconciliation. A mission impossible.” In B. Raftopoulos & T. Savage (eds), *Zimbabwe Injustice and Political Reconciliation*. Weaver Press, Harare, 2005, p259

²⁸ D. Munemo & E. Nciizah, “The Church in Zimbabwe’s Peace and Reconciliation Process under the Government of National Unity,” in *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, (IOSR-JHSS), Vol 19 No.10, p69 [@www.iosrjournals.org](http://www.iosrjournals.org) accessed 21/6/2019

Mbeki's success as a mediator though he was criticised for taking a soft approach towards Mugabe and ZANU-PF's political transgressions.²⁹

The Zimbabwe crisis also promoted intervention from the AU and SADC. The intensification of violence in Zimbabwe made the AU mandate SADC to facilitate dialogue between ZANU-PF and the MDC formations. In spite of numerous challenges, SADC pressurised the Harare disputants to agree to a power-sharing arrangement. The purpose of the GPA which was officially signed on 15th September 2008, targeted to plot a route beyond the controversial June 2008 presidential run-off and the problem of legitimacy that this entailed and prepare the ground for a more acceptable process.³⁰ When the GNU started functioning in February 2009, it grappled with the economic and humanitarian crisis that had reached its lowest ebb. To resuscitate the economy, the Ministry of Finance under Tendai Biti adopted a multi-currency regime using the South African Rand as a reference currency. In Bulawayo and other towns basic goods reappeared in shops, schools and tertiary institutions resumed normal duties, hospitals were equipped with necessary drugs and equipment, and civil servants were paid on time and foreign trade revived.³¹ The humanitarian crisis which the GNU had to grapple with affected the masses of Zimbabwe that is men, women and children. Hence, when the economy was revived, everybody benefited.

JOMIC was set up by the GPA and was tasked to record and investigate all violations of the GPA. Pertaining to Bulawayo, there was no political violence during the time of the GPA and GNU. Nevertheless, whenever there was a rally, members of JOMIC were present to prevent

²⁹ S. Ndlovu- Gatsheni, "Politics behind Politics: African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe" in B. Raftopoulos (ed) *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, 2013, p161

³⁰Ibid, p162

³¹T. Biti, "Rebuilding Zimbabwe: Lessons form a coalition government," *Centre for Global development* Johannesburg, September 2015, p20-21

eruption of violence and they advocated for tolerance among members and supporters of different parties.³² ONHRI was set up to heal the wounds caused by generations of injustice, intolerance, exclusion and impunity so as to reconcile Zimbabweans to become one nation focused on social, political cultural and economic development in order to improve the quality of life for all. Eppel asserts that ONHRI embarked on country-wide consultations which culminated in a report that summarised the transitional justice demands that had been raised by the public and civil society organisations.³³ Also Dube and Makwerere pointed out that ONHRI submitted to the government, in 2011, a document for the establishment of a National Peace Council. The move would be in line with African Union and United Nations Resolutions which call for African countries to establish national frameworks for the prevention management and resolution conflicts.³⁴

However, ONHRI encountered challenges such as lack of funds which militated against its attempts to promote ‘national healing’. From the fieldwork I embarked on, it was not clear if the Organ held any meetings in the city of Bulawayo. Nevertheless, when the GNU came to an end in 2013 Zimbabwe had some political stability and unprecedented dialogue took place across the political divide in order to advance democratisation and national healing.

³² Interview with Zephania Nkomo of Lobenvale, Bulawayo, held on 11//03/2020

³³ S. Eppel, “Repairing a Fractured Nation: Challenges and Opportunities in Post- GPA Zimbabwe,” in B. Raftopoulos (ed), *The Hard Road to Reform. The Politics of Zimbabwe’s Global Political Agreement*, Weaver Press, Harare, p214

³⁴D. Dube and D. Makuwerere, “Zimbabwe: Towards a Comprehensive Peace Infrastructure,” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol, 2 No. 18, October, 2012, p302

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