The Electoral Authoritarian Regimes and election violence: The case of Manicaland Communities in Zimbabwe 2008-2013.

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ABSTRACT

The Zimbabwean elections have been marred by unprecedented acts of election violence, intimidation, coercion, harassment and manipulation and this has systematically disenfranchised the citizenry from the much-desired democratic transition. These acts of violence have reversed the government's efforts and commitment to democratize the country which had been under an autocratic colonial regime for almost one hundred years. This localized empirical research study explores and unpacks the dynamics of the 2008-2013 election violence in the communities of Manicaland in Zimbabwe. The study also examines the socio-economic and political effects of election violence on the lives of the people. The aims and objectives of the study have been achieved basically through an in-depth empirical exploration of the people's election violence experiences in three Manicaland communities, namely Nyamaropa, Honde Valley and Mhakwe. The data collection process was carried out in 2013 from May to December. This period also covered a crucial general election that marked an end to the Government of National Unity established in 2009 after the bloody 2008 election violence. The primary data was collected through qualitative in-depth interviews in the three communities with people with impeccable experience and vast knowledge of state-sponsored election violence. The empirical evidence leads to several results. The central finding is that the regime resorts to organized state-sponsored violence as a strategy to suppress and inhibit a smooth democratic transition in the country. This strategy is executed primarily by local perpetrators who reside with the people they victimize in the same communities. The regime boasts of its community mobilization strategies as a critical methodology of perpetuating the use of election violence to thwart the desired democratic transition in the country. The use of violence incapacitates the community members mentally, physically and economically, by making them vulnerable to intimidation, harassment, suppression and manipulation. The physical harm on the bodies of the victims and their property has serious socio-economic and political consequences. Thus, violence is constantly being used to impoverish and emotionally enslave the citizenry. The regime takes advantage of this desperate economic and emotional situation of many families in the

communities and gives food aid as patronage to support the ruling party. The people are politically enslaved by the acts of violence. The research study demonstrates how the state institutions, such as the instruments of violence and the institutions of law, have been usurped by the ruling party to preside over election violence in the communities. Violence is thus a fundamental strategy used by electoral authoritarian regimes to steal the elections and to remain in power.

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List of Acronyms

AU	African union
Agritex	Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services
AIIPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
ANC	African National Congress
CCJPZ	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe
CC	Constitutional Commission
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CIBD	Coercion, Intimidation, Beating, and Displacement
CIO	Central Intelligence Organization
COPAC	Constitution Parliamentary Select Committee
CYL	City Youth League
DC	District Councils
DC	Delimitation Commission
DDF	District Development Fund
EA	Electoral Authoritarianism
FLELIMO	Liberation Front of Mozambique
GMB	Grain Marketing Board
GPA	Global Political Agreement
GNU	Government of National Unity
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ISO	Immorality Suppression Ordinance
JOC	Joint Operational Command
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai
MSO	Masters and Servants Ordinance
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NDP	National Democratic Party
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations

NLHA	National Land Husbandry Act
NOCZIM	National Oil Company of Zimbabwe
NR	Native Reserves
NRZ	National Railways of Zimbabwe
NYS	National Youth Service
OP	Operation Murambatsvina
PISI	Police Internal Security Intelligence
PTUZ	Progressive Teachers Union in Zimbabwe
POSA	Public Order and Security Act
RDCs	Rural District Councils
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance
RNA	Rhodesia Native Association
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SRAC	Southern Rhodesian African Congress
PF-ZAPU	Patriotic Front- Zimbabwe African People's Union
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UANC	United African National Congress
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UOA	Unlawful Organizations Act
US	United States
ZANLA	Zimbabwe National Liberation Army
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZEC	Zimbabwe Election Commission
ZESN	Zimbabwe Election Support Network
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZLPPD	Zimbabwe Liberators' Platform for Peace and Development

ZNWLA	Zimbabwe National War Veterans Association
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement
ZWVA	Zimbabwe War Veterans Association

Chapter One: General Introduction

1.1-The problem and aim of the study

General elections in Zimbabwe have been overwhelmed by bloody violence, intimidation, coercion, harassment and manipulation that have systematically disenfranchised the citizenry from the much-desired smooth, democratic transition. These acts of violence have become a setback to the effort and commitment by the government to democratize the country which had been under an autocratic, colonial regime for almost one hundred years. The 2008 state-sponsored election violence has seriously compromised and subdued the democratization process. There has been an unconcealed defiance by the regime to pave the way for a smooth transition which the electorate had sanctioned through the peaceful and democratic election of March 2008. The harmonized election was characterized by a peaceful environment which enabled people to express their political preferences and choice (Human Rights Watch 2008:13). Unfortunately the results of this free and fair election triggered a wave of brutal violence ahead of the June 2008 Presidential runoff. The research study endeavours to understand how violence is strategically organized and used in a smokescreen democratic electoral environment to successfully suppress and inhibit the people from achieving a democratic transition. This research study also seeks to examine the socio-economic and political effects of election violence on the life of the people. The aims and objectives of this empirical localized research study will be achieved basically through an in-depth exploration of the people's election violence experiences in the three communities in Manicaland.

The central problem in this research study is the correlation between the use of election violence and the practice of cosmetic competitive multi-party elections which are structured within the frameworks of democratic elections. The background to this sticky mishap is the nationwide wave of violence which erupted after the March 2008 harmonized elections. These elections were held in a conducive and peaceful environment that conformed to the SADC electoral guidelines. The March elections

were the most peaceful since the genesis of Zimbabwe's mega-crisis in 2000 while the June elections will go down in history as the bloodiest since independence (Masunungure 2009:61). The March 2008 election results ignited nationwide brutal state-sponsored attacks on civilians ahead of the proposed runoff Presidential election scheduled for June 2008. The severity of the wave of terror forced the opposition leader to boycott the Presidential runoff election. The acts of violence thus blatantly denied people the political rights for a democratic transition after having voted out the revolutionary party and government. These physical attacks, which were directed on all the people deemed to have voted against the ruling party, demonstrate a clear insolence of the regime to hand over power to a democratically elected party and supporting opposition political parties.

Thus elections in Zimbabwe typify the Schedler (2002:37)'s electoral authoritarian regimes whose electoral systems are framed only to try to obtain at least a semblance of democratic legitimacy and to reap the fruits of electoral legitimacy. Elections have become the means by which the regime reproduces itself. The Zimbabwean elections are only meant to satisfy the external observers and international community who have loose connections with the realities that exist on the ground long before the election period. The 29 March 2008 election resembled the formal democratic election which was competitive and multi-party but failed to meet the substantive democratic test as demonstrated by a wave of terror. The struggle for liberation was a struggle for majority rule and national self-determination. Whereas liberal democracy envisages the principle of majority decision-making as being constrained by respect for the rights of individuals and minorities, there was is a tendency embedded in national liberation thought which equates majoritarianism with democracy (Southall 2014:85). Nonetheless, the tree of democracy was easily uprooted and substituted by the tree of presidentialism in the late 1980s (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2011:68). After the formation of MDC in 1999 as a formidable opposition political party, election violence escalated with the March 2008 violence topping the list.

1.2-Research objectives

(i) To explore the dynamics of the 2008-2013 election violence in the communities of Manicaland. The objective is achieved by mapping out the issues, perpetrators, the networks, the patterns and how violence has been instituted in these communities.

(ii) To investigate how election violence has been used successfully by the regime to subdue people from achieving a smooth democratic transition? This objective will be achieved by analyzing the possibilities available for the people to counter acts of violence. An analysis of the structures of violence and the effectiveness of acts of violence will be probed from the community members.

(iii) To examine the socio-economic and political effects of the 2008-2013 election violence on the lives of the people (in their quest for a democratic transition). Violence has devastating effects on all the spheres of life. To fully grasp this, the people directly affected by election violence narrate their experiences and explain how life has been affected by acts of election violence. The effects of election violence need to be contextualized in socio-economic and political spheres of life in this case.

1.3-Research questions

The research study embarks on an empirical inquiry and a holistic investigation on three research questions:

(i)- What are the dynamics of the 2008-2013 election violence in the communities of Manicaland? The question is intended to unpack the dynamics of election violence. This captures the post March 29 2008 election violence ahead of the June 29 2008 runoff and the violence that gripped the Inclusive Government period until the 2013 election. The empirical information provided by the people who witnessed the episodes of violence is the basis in the process of providing systematic and reliable answers.

(ii)) How election violence has been used successfully by the regime to subdue people from achieving a smooth democratic transition? The question intends to unpack the strategies of violence used by the regime to thwart the much-desired democratic transition in the country.

(iii)-What are the effects of election violence on the socio-economic and political life of the people? Through an in-depth qualitative investigation, this question endeavours to unpack the effects of election violence on the lives of the people.

1.4-Motivation

The research study has been profoundly inspired by the researcher's involvement in civil education and conflict management initiatives to try to water down the political impasse in the communities. For several years the researcher had been working with civil society organizations dealing with peacebuilding but incidences of politically related violence have been escalating with time. The efforts to come up with sustainable and effective conflict management and resolution strategies seemed to be neutralized each time by occurrences of acts of political violence. In 2008, the researcher personally witnessed the gruesome election violence instituted by different perpetrators, most of whom were enforcing personal laws in the communities while defying free political participation and freedom of expression, and abusing other people's rights as prescribed in the constitution. There were torture camps established and the communities were no-go areas to some people. These issues motivated the researcher to have an empirical research study on the local politics for a deeper understanding of the dynamics of election violence in the communities of Manicaland.

1.5-Justification of the research study

This localized approach on the local politics has been adopted for this research study realizing that much has been written, especially during the last decades, about the

alleged third wave of democratization by elections in Africa. However, the focus has usually been on rather narrow institutional questions such as introduction of multi-party elections, political reforms, democratic transition, free and fair elections, and others. The analysis has also generally been focusing on national politics as being played out in the capitals and urban areas with limited attention on rural localized politics in communities. In this research study the researcher intends to deepen the understanding of the rural localized politics while trying to establish the link with national politics and democracy election. The researcher intends to distinguish the theoretical constructions from the realities and experiences of local politics in rural communities which in most cases is generalized and synchronized into the broader spectrum of the national politics. This in-depth empirical study will form the foundation for further research aimed at conflict management mechanisms to mitigate the electoral and political conflicts in the country and beyond.

The research study intends to unravel the subtleties, dynamics, patterns and forms of election violence through an in-depth exploration on personal experiences of the affected community members in Manicaland. The understanding of the local politics, dynamics of violence and the effects on the socio-economic and political life of the people will pave the way for effective intervention mechanisms to the current political impasses in these communities. The assumption is that the empirical study on the local politics will generate scientific constructions about the dynamics of election violence in Zimbabwe. This type of research study on the dynamics of violence in the communities of Manicaland has not been done with the same magnitude and rigor before, although it is in most cases the local politics which dictates the national politics. This therefore will enrich the existing literature on national political violence since the efforts by researchers and political analysts have been more on national political events, theoretical arguments and broader institutional questions. In this context, debates from the research will inform future investigations on election violence. The findings of the research study will be used to supplement

the existing body of knowledge on election violence in Zimbabwe in particular and Africa in general.

1.6-Scope of the study

This research study is concerned with the dynamics of election violence that happened between 2008 and 2013 in the communities of Manicaland, namely Mhakwe in Chimanimani, Nyamaropa in Nyanga, and Honde Valley in Mutasa. However, the historical background of conflicts and violence in Zimbabwe plays a significant role in this research's conceptual framework. The acts of violence perpetrated by state-supported perpetrators are a priority in the study taking into cognizance the important role played by the security sector during the wave of violence. Given the sensitivity of the study, the chosen three communities are ideal for the researcher to extract hidden issues given that the researcher has worked in these areas for more than twelve years as a teacher and conflict management facilitator. This empirical study of the local level politics has a quantitative scope which is concerned with the depth rather than the breadth of the acts of election violence in the communities of Manicaland. The qualitative information on election violence is to be gathered using in-depth qualitative interviews about life experiences and witnessed narratives.

1.7-Research context

After the formation of the MDC in 1999 as a formidable opposition political party in Zimbabwe, elections have become increasingly very competitive, contentious and violent. The traditional dominant revolutionary party ZANU PF witnessed the first ever loss of a general election at the polls in a nationwide referendum in February 2000 (Sadomba 2013:87). This marked the demise of ZANU PF and a perpetual threat to its political hegemony. There was a need therefore for ZANU PF to reclaim the traditional support in order to win the subsequent June 2000 parliamentary and the 2002 Presidential elections. The war veterans and the majority poor peasants were also promising to depose President Robert Mugabe because of the delays in fulfilling

the liberation promises. Accordingly after pressure from the war veterans and having also lost a referendum, the government authorized land occupations under Fast Track Land Reform (Chaumba, Scoones and Wolmer 2003:7). These land invasions happened ahead of the 2000 parliamentary elections and the 2002 Presidential election. These land invasions turned violent as the invaders clashed with the white commercial farmers (Kriger 2005:26). The acts of violence spread from the commercial farms to the rural areas where some perceived MDC supporters were targeted. This conflict was basically because the opposition MDC had connived with the commercial farmers to campaign against the constitution that would have legalized land redistribution. The land invasions were well planned and coordinated by the security sector personnel under the Joint Operation Command (JOC) but used the militia, party activists, and war veterans as front runners (Chitiyo 2009:4). During the farm invasion, the farm invaders established Pungwe Bases (night vigil meetings) in the farms. The pungwe base is a liberation war concept which was modelled to boost the morale of the liberation fighters and to propagate the objectives of the struggle. However, during these land invasion period, a lot of people were tortured harassed, beaten, raped and assassinated at these bases. These bases were eventually used as the launching pad for atrocities and terror attacks in the neighbouring rural communities on opposition supporters, who were mostly teachers who were being accused of having campaigned for a NO vote during the February 2000 referendum (Reeler 2003:15).

These violent land invasions were, however, followed by a series of election violence during general elections as MDC became stronger and stronger. It is important to indicate that all the subsequent general elections that were implemented after 2000 - namely the presidential election in 2002, the parliamentary elections in March 2005, the harmonized presidential and parliamentary elections in March 2008, and the presidential run-off in June - were marred by severe election violence. However, the 2008 Harmonized election was very special and unquestionably the most historic of the post-independence elections because for the first time ZANU PF lost its

parliamentary majority and President Mugabe lost to Tsvangirai by 47.87 percent to 43.24 percent in the first round of the Presidential election (ZESN 2008:41). When President Mugabe lost the presidential elections to Tsvangirai, security forces intervened by unleashing terror and violence in order to ensure that President Mugabe won the run-off presidential elections. The March 29 election result was an indication of an end of ZANU PF political hegemony engineered and championed by active civic society movements, opposition forces, labour movements, civilian populace and vibrant opposition political parties.

Nonetheless, the March 29 2008 elections were the most peaceful and free since the genesis of Zimbabwe's mega-crisis in 2000 while the June run-off 'will go down in history as the bloodiest since independence (Masunungure 2009:8). This is because the electoral environment was peaceful and conducive for all the citizens to participate freely in the elections and to vote for the political party and candidates of their choice. When the results were released showing that the MDC-T had won the election, the ZANU PF leadership were shocked and they panicked. The subsequent campaigns for the presidential runoff turned out to be very violent. The brutal campaign was codenamed CIBD, an acronym for Coercion, Intimidation, Beating, and Displacement which functioned as Operation Makavhotera Papi (Operation Who Did You Vote For?) (Sachikonye 2011:49). During this period, the regime's rhetoric of defying the will of the people was being put into action by those in the corridors of power who openly declared that an X by a pen on the ballot paper would never defeat the bullet of an AK47. The same famous political rhetoric in Zimbabwe has been pronounced in the words of Major-General Engelbert Rugeje in May 2008 when he said: 'This country came through the bullet, not the pencil. Therefore, it will not go by your x of the pencil. We cannot let the efforts of such people as the late Chimombe to liberate this country just go to waste. Today I came here by helicopter with the late Chimombe's body. The next time I will come to Jerera, the helicopter will be full of bullets. You know what you did.' quoted in (Rupiya 2011:12).

The involvement of the security sector in electoral affairs and the perpetration of violence against the citizens is retrogressive and reverses the efforts made by the government to democratize. The government managed to create the much conducive electoral environment prior to the March 2008 harmonized election before the security sector intervened and brutalized the electorate. While the state has the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence, it is also the state's obligation to provide security to the citizens rather than terrorizing them. However, Weber (1946) in his clarification of the relationship of the state established that part of the power of the state comes from establishing the legitimacy of its power so that it does not have to use the violence and physical force upon which it rests. The Zimbabwean regime has been continuously using the instruments of violence to inflict acts of violence and abuse the right of the people both in the communal areas and urban areas, mostly during election time. The regime has allowed perpetrators of violence to use physical force, which is the sole responsibility of the state's implements of violence. The security sector has been used to manipulate the political process using election violence, intimidation of the electorate and coercion of the vulnerable community members. Based on these contradictions and mishaps, this research study intends to unpack the dynamics of election violence in the communities of Manicaland between 2008 and 2013 and to examine the logic of use of violence in a democracy.

1.8-Research methodology

1.8.0-Introduction

This chapter deals with the research methodology, research design and the research methods used to collect data, the process of collecting data, and the organizing and integration of data in order to achieve the objective of the research study. To accomplish the objectives of the research study, detailed explanations were done to illustrate why some decisions and methods were taken and how they were implemented to achieve desired results. Also provided in this section are insights on how the research was done, procedure, and various tasks which were conducted. The

research study was conducted during the 2013 election period and the communities were overwhelmed by tension and politically charged activities. During this period, strangers, journalists, foreigners and opposition political party supporters were treated with suspicion and were liable to a lot of harassments and detention by secret security agents, war veterans, youth militia and political hooligans. In this regard, extreme caution was necessary for the safety of the researcher and the interviewees from the beginning up to the end of data collection process.

1.8.1-Research design

An empirical inquiry on the dynamics of election violence and the local people's perception of the use of election violence could most appropriately be achieved through an in-depth study of the lived experiences in the selected communities. In this regard, the methodology required a clearly defined purpose that embraced coherence between the research questions and the methods or approaches proposed to generate valid and reliable data. This framework of collecting data, data analysis and decisions about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process comprise the research design. A research design is a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analyzed (Parahoo 1997:142). Therefore, a research design included a description of how the sample is to be identified and recruited, ethical considerations, confidentiality, anonymity, access to the research site, how the data had to be collected and analysed. During this empirical study, the researcher was concerned with realistic arrangements of the study in order to come up with effective and practical processes given the sensitivity of the study, the nature of the investigated people and the time of the research study.

The sample of the people who became principal interviewees had to be identified during the peacebuilding and conflict management workshops in which the researcher was a principal facilitator. The researcher also used his previous connections in the communities under study where he has worked for a number of years as a teacher and as a human rights activist and conflict manager. Snowballing was very important

during the selection and identification of the sample because the initially identified interviewees had to refer the researcher to the most appropriate people who had important information. Some of the people who were referred were real victims of violence and those who witnessed the acts of brutality. Practical organization was very important in order to obtain reliable and objective answers to the research questions and also to achieve the objectives.

1.8.2-Case study approach

A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates the contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and contest are clearly evident, and in which multiple evidences are used (Robert 1989:23). The localized empirical research study on the dynamics of election violence based on the lived experiences of the people of the communities of Manicaland was an intensive study of local politics at grassroots level designed to demonstrate election violence at national level. Since the methodology of the research study embraced a multi-perspective investigation to provide a full account of election violence conjunctures, a localized inquiry was used for a deeper, inclusive, holistic and comprehensive investigation. The data and first-hand information needed to be contextualized based on the experiences of the people and their personal understanding of the situation, events and interpretation at a local case to give a national flare of violence.

In-depth interviews and participant observation methods have been adopted during the process of soliciting detailed and in-depth accounts of community members' experiences, perceptions and understanding of election violence. The methods enabled the researcher to construct the meaning, and understand the dynamics of violence and implications of election violence to the community during the process of information extraction. This has been possible because qualitative research typically involves systematic and detailed study of individuals in natural settings, instead of settings contrived by the researcher which has the capacity to dilute the information.

Qualitative methods therefore facilitated a delicate and responsive questioning process that helped to unpack complex and deeply-rooted dynamics and narratives of election violence in these communities.

1.9-Sampling

It is practically impossible for a researcher to study all cases or units that make up the study population but only a sample population that represents the study population defined by the researcher. Sampling is a process of selecting a group of people, events or behaviour with which to conduct a study (Burns and Grove 2003:31). Sampling in this research study has been done firstly on the communities in the province of Manicaland (Nyanga-Nyamaropa, Mutasa-Honde Valley and Chimanimani-Mhakwe). The three communities were hotspots for election violence during the 2008 election violence in several instances. Thus the researcher wanted to talk to people who had vast experience with election violence terror. Sampling has also been done on the interviewees from each of the three communities. The researcher had to identify and select informants to solicit relevant information about the acts of election violence. This included those individuals who had been directly attacked, those who have witnessed people being attacked and those people who work for civic organizations in these communities in relevant thematic areas. As a qualitative research study that seeks to discover and unpack the dynamics of violence, and how the people make sense of violence, it was important to target the right people with relevant information. Purposive sampling was therefore an ideal sampling technique used by the researcher in order to gather reliable information about election violence dynamics in the communities.

1.10-Entry into the communities

Good fieldwork research can be compromised from the outset by inadequate negotiation of entry in the field setting (Erickson 1986:141). This is true considering the volatility and sensitivity of election violence especially during election periods, like when data was collected here. This process of negotiating for entry into the

research area started with very simple procedures like establishing rapport with the workshop participants, which the researcher did through simple communications by telephone with the potential informants and pre-interview meetings. The existent political environment in the communities of Manicaland characterized by deadly terror attacks, fear, suspicion, persecution and victimization required a high degree of vigilance, caution, high-level negotiating skills, vigilance and trust for a researcher to be able to carry out a study of this nature successfully and with minimum hindrances.

The situation in these communities during the period in which the research study was done (May-December 2013) has been so intense that it has posed security threats both to the researcher and to the interviewees. The village heads in these communities keep a clear list and check on new people in their area and the purpose of their visits. Confidantes to the village heads try by all means to gather enough information concerning new people in the communities so that no one comes and writes about the political situation and violent activities. The communities are under highly sophisticated and well-developed surveillance networks which monitor activities of opposition supporters who are frequently subjected to violence, intimidation and all sorts of political threats. There are Zanu PF party structures, militia and war veterans who are on high alert to guard against any activism by opposition political parties in their strongholds.

The researcher has worked in these communities for more than ten years as a teacher, peace builder and conflict manager and this has resulted in the creation of strong mutual relationships with the community members. Aside from the established contacts, the researcher has been attached as a peace building workshop facilitator to a local peace building organization, CCJP, which has been carrying out workshops in these three communities throughout the nine month period of data collection. The organization is a respected Church organization with well established grassroots structures in all these communities. This enabled the researcher to smoothly gain access into the communities and establish potential informants for the research study.

In this regard, the researcher established several contacts with the interviewees during these workshops visits.

1.11-Data collection

Data collection and analysis in this sense were partially parallel processes which proceeded via an iterative procedure where partial research findings were critically analyzed and the results of the analysis led to a refinement of research questions and adjustment of the data collection strategy. This bilateral process provided the researcher with opportunities to increase the density and saturation of recurring categories, as well as to assist in providing follow-up procedures. The major sources of evidence and information for this research study have been both secondary and primary. The secondary data sources have been mainly published books, journal articles, published newspaper articles, parliamentary debate articles, relevant Acts of Parliament and bills, court cases on violence, television interviews and civil society organizations publications. Field observations and interviews were raw data sources from empirical inquiries on people who had experienced and witnessed acts of violence.

1.11.1-Interviews

Interviews were used during the empirical research study to acquire empirical information for a deeper understanding of the dynamics of election violence, the people's understanding of violence and the effects on the socio-economic and political life of the people. An interview is a conversation between two people, one of whom wants to get information from the other (Robinson 1993). Face to face talk with individuals with vast experiences of election violence was very important during the research because this generated an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of violence, the forms, patterns, perpetrators and how the people make sense of violence. Further probing of information during the interviews helped the researcher to construct meaning and understand implications of violence for the socio-economic and political lives of the community members.

Most of the interviews were recorded on audiotape and field notes were taken simultaneously to enrich the taped discussions. Field notes enabled the researcher to record non-verbal behaviour and reactions of the informants which were very important during data analysis and the interpretation processes. However, permission to use the tape recorder was sought before the interview and most of the informants consented to its use with the exception of a few who declined. The use of the audiotape was considered very important for the preservation of the informant's original information and also to capture all the information provided by the interviewee. It is important to indicate that as well as the targeted informants identified through purposive sampling, some more important informants were interviewed after being identified through respondent-driven chain referral sampling.

A total of 69 informants were interviewed from the three selected communities including 4 officials from local civil society organizations operating in these communities and 5 political party activists. There was a fair split between male and female interviewees per community. This is a sizable number which could be handled and was also manageable during data analysis. Interviews were conducted generally in Shona, the local language, except for a few informants who preferred English, and these were mostly civil society organization officials.

1.11.2-Observation

The researcher has been working and interacting with the community members in the targeted study areas for a very long period of time including the period under study. This was an advantage because during the data collection period the researcher had the opportunity to stay in these communities to observe the social events. The researcher stayed for nine months in the communities. Observation entails the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study. By making a field visit to the case study site, Yin

states that you are creating the opportunity for direct observation of some relevant behaviours or environmental conditions available for observation (Yin 2003:92). The researcher's field visits to establish entry points and research contact persons were the initial stages of the observation process which was later consolidated during direct engagement with research informants during interviews and informal conversations. Observations were also done during some visits and attendance by the researcher at some political gatherings, community dialogues meetings and food distribution processes since the data collection coincided with political party campaigns ahead of the 2013 general election.

1.11.3-Document research

The use of documentary methods refers to the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon we wish to study (Bailey 1994:294). Document analysis as a form of qualitative research was used by the researcher to interpret documents to give a theoretical footing, voice and meaning around issues of violence in Zimbabwe. The researcher recorded facts on the dynamics of the 2008-2013 election violence which is a scientific and a moral underpinning of a social inquiry. The researcher reviewed a wide range of data sources including local newspaper articles, parliamentary debates, Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) publications, journals, documents published by civil society organization, information accessed through the Internet, official records of the Ministry of Information, political party archives and reports on violence by other national and international bodies. Published and unpublished documents were also valuable sources of information during the research study. Most importantly also was the collection and review of documentation on election violence and electoral management from election management and monitoring bodies in Zimbabwe. The researcher managed to synchronize data collected from these documents with the information gathered through other sources to explore and unpack the dynamics of election violence in terms of the underlying political issues, patterns and forms of violence, networks of perpetrators and the effects of violence on socio-economic and political life of the

people. Documents - just like other sources of data- enabled the researcher to construct objective and constructive conclusions regarding election violence in Zimbabwe.

1.12-Data Analysis

The researcher had to interpret the content, both written and recorded, during the data collection process through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns. This process of qualitative content analysis began during the early stages of data collection since the researcher had to transform the initial interviews following the initial observations. This early involvement in the analysis phase helps you move back and forth between concept development and data collection. This may also help direct your subsequent data collection toward sources that are more useful for addressing the research questions (Miles and Huberman 1994). Preliminary data analysis was done concurrently with data collection since the researcher constantly reviewed the information gathered to map out the best strategy possible given the existent political environment in the communities which was characterized by political campaigns, victimization and violence ahead of the general election.

However, fully fledged data analysis was done after the researcher had completed the whole process of data collection and got settled at the University. This was done because the collected data was highly sensitive, especially the material recorded during the interviews, newspaper cuttings and field notes which needed to be hidden and protected against the secret security agencies. There was a need also to protect the informants and the researcher before he returned to Freiburg University, Germany. The process of transcribing the recorded audio interviews into written text took a long time, and this had to be done before the researcher could start identifying, coding and categorizing the primary patterns and themes emerging from the data. The researcher broke down the written texts into units by establishing links and then categorized the information based on the objectives and research questions.

1.13-Ethical Issues

Throughout the research period, ethical considerations have been prioritized. Issues such as confidentiality of the respondent were given ultimate importance throughout the interview process and the entire study period. This has been very important given that the security of the community members in such a crude political environment needed to be prioritized since any careless management of the gathered information could result in political harassment or imprisonment of the interviewees. In administering the interview, it was also necessary to seek the consent of the interviewees especially during the recording of their ideas as some of them were very sceptical about recorded data. The data collected during the research would be used exclusively for academic research. Given the illicit nature of the election violence and political persecution in Zimbabwe, many people deserve confidentiality in their deliberations and revelations.

1.14-Conclusion

This chapter sought to introduce the research study, the aims, and objectives and to explain in detail the research methodology. An extensive description was given on the procedure used in designing the instrument and collecting the data. The purpose of a research design is to maximize valid answers to a research question. This was achieved by using a qualitative, exploratory approach that was contextual at local political level. Special attention was given to the conduct of qualitative interviews, as this method represents the essence of the research methodology. The researcher has identified interviewees during workshops and through personal visits to the research areas where he interacted with existing relationships. Snowballing has been fundamental in accessing sensitive information from people with life experience with violence in the communities. The researcher managed to define the dynamics of election violence, understand the people's reasons and deduce the community members' perceptions about election violence in the contested and polarized political environment. The data was collected by means of qualitative in-depth interviews

which were recorded separately from observations. The conducted in-depth interviews have been complemented by the researcher's personal observations of the political events in the field and the analysis of secondary literature. Principles of confidentiality, cultural value sensitivity, beneficence, human dignity as well as justice were observed to ensure that the participants were morally and ethically protected.

1.15-Thesis Outline

In an endeavour to thoroughly explore the dynamics and intricacies of election violence and the experiences of the people and to understand how the local community members make sense of election violence, the researcher identified a number of themes, issues and topics relevant to the Zimbabwean history of violence suitable to achieve the objectives of the research study. The research study is therefore organized into five chapters. Chapter One deals firstly with the introduction and the background to the research. It also discussed the research problem, research's aims, objectives and research questions, justification of the study and the scope of the study and research methodology where research methods have been detailed. Included in this chapter is also the research design, the entry into the community, the data collection methods, data analysis and the ethical issues of the research. Chapter Two traces the Zimbabwean history of violence from the pre-colonial era to the post-independence period. Phases of violence have been discussed here under different themes in an attempt to deepen an understanding and appreciation of the politics of violence in Zimbabwe in the quest for a democratic transition. Violence in this regard has been captured under the pre-colonial era, the colonial era, the liberation struggle, and post-independence periods which include violent land invasion and operation Murambatsvina (clean-up campaign). Chapter Three is the research's theoretical chapter where the correlation between democratization, democratic transition and violence has been discussed. The themes included in this chapter include the meaning of democracy, democratic elections, violence, election violence and the state. Chapter Four discusses the violence situation in the three communities under study mostly as narrated by the community members. An overview of election violence from 2008 to

2013 has been detailed based on the experiences of the local people. Comprehensive mapping of violence in the communities, organization of violence, forms of violence, variety of perpetrators, patterns of violence, pungwe bases (night vigil meetings) and socio-economic and political effects of violence have been explained by the interviewees during the research study. Chapter Five is the conclusion of the research study

Chapter Two: Exploring the culture of political violence in the Zimbabwean history

2.0-Introduction

This chapter seeks to track and examine different political scenarios and governance systems practised during political administrators in the Zimbabwean history in order to situate and contextualize the country's current political scenario in terms of democratic governance and violence. The country is overwhelmed by a host of governance problems, political conflicts and electoral violence despite some remarkable gains made by the revolutionary government after independence in embracing democratic governance. The idea is to examine and analyse traces of political conflicts and virtues of good governance throughout the political history of the country. This historical analysis helps us to understand the current political conflict in Zimbabwe which is characterized by unprecedented scourges of election violence on the citizenry. Zimbabwe's political culture is largely a product of four main influences: the pre-colonial period, the colonial period, the armed liberation struggle, and ZANU PF rule (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003:102). Thus an analysis of violent events and governance systems that characterize these historic epochs of the Zimbabwean political history is important as a point of departure for sustainable mechanisms of resolving electoral challenges. The Zimbabwean political history is patched with segments of oppression, violence, permanent ruler-ship, dictatorship and authoritarianism, although democratic structure and function of the institution of the Chieftainship existed in the pre-colonial period (Makahamadze, Grand and Tavuyanago 2009:37).

2.1-Pre-Colonial period

Pre-colonial Zimbabwe was a multi-ethnic society inhabited by many ethnic groups within the same territorial boundaries and naturally this ethnic diversity was associated with a plethora of conflicts, clashes, wars and violence as a result of the diversity in customs, values, beliefs, norms and traditions (Muzondidya and Ndlovu-

Gatsheni 2007:277). The pre-colonial Zimbabwe was composed of the Shangani in the south-eastern part, the Venda in the south, the Tonga in the north, the Kalanga and Ndebele in the south-west, the Karanga in the southern parts, the Zezuru and Korekore in the northern and central parts, while the Manyika and Ndau resided in the east. For these and other reasons, raids, wars, conflicts of interest, power dominancy and competition for resources were natural and well pronounced (Garbett 1976:144). These clashes were likely to be exacerbated by the fact that there were no defined and established conventional boundaries defining particular geographical areas inhabited by particular ethnic groups (Ranger 1989:121). As such population migration, invasions and population growth would result in fatal ethnic clashes as people were driven by needs.

Intra-conflicts and political violence were minimal since the governance system was effective in terms of conflict handling and management. The Chief/King relied on the council of advisors and the spirit mediums in dealing with political issues. The decisions taken by the leaders were always after a wide consultation with relevant advisors and were usually welcomed by the subjects (Garbett 1976:144). Each ethnic group had peculiar but effective governance systems in place to contain and mediate disputes and conflicts. However, political power was not up for public contest while the leader was still alive and able to rule. Political leadership competition was regarded as illegitimate and dangerous and anyone who sought power was liable to be killed. Political power was not open for competition as in the modern-day democracy and competitors were not tolerated. Chieftaincy/Kingship was not only sacrosanct but also had no term limits for the leader on the throne. Power contenders were enemies not competitors. The traditional leaders could stay in office until death as long as they obeyed the precepts of the ancestors. *Hakuna zuva rinobuda rimwe risati radoka* (There is no sun that rises before the other one has set) (Makahamadze, Grand and Tavuyanago 2009:37). Opportunists of the throne and ambitious people who coveted political leadership were often subjected to direct violence, harassment and intimidation to circumvent bloody coups.

Accordingly, the culture of political violence has been loosely linked to leadership succession and leadership competition. However, in the present day democracy where political power is open for contest through elections, the process has been characterized by election violence. Competition for political leadership is today still treated with suspicion just like in the pre-colonial period. Any political contender is regarded as an enemy and a traitor in modern-day Zimbabwe. Permanency in Kingship or Chieftaincy can be contextualized to the present day Presidency where President Robert Mugabe, who has been the sole leader since independence, seems unwilling to hand over power either to any of his party members or the opposition. In 2014 more than fifty percent of ZANU PF's top-ranking officials including the country and party Vice President were dismissed on allegations of plotting to assassinate President Mugabe and take power. In 2015, a group of opposition MDC-T leadership led by the party's secretary general Tendai Biti and Elton Mangoma deserted the party accusing the party President Morgan Tsvangirai of being a dictator who is refusing to hand over power. Just like in almost all ethnic groups, rulers were meant to rule for the rest of their lives since traditional leaders were considered to be installed by the spirit mediums who then advised the Chief or the King in governance matters.

However, in other ethnic groups the traditional leaders were not tyrannical as to wielding the power of life and death over their subjects, nor did they use excessive force to maintain law and order without the interference of the ancestors. Tyrannical rulers were removed from power with the assistance of the spiritual agents and neighbouring traditional leadership. The case referred to by Makahamadze, Grand and Tavuyanago (2009) was the issue concerning Chief Chirisamhuru of the Rozvi Empire who ignored the advice of the ancestral spirits during his rule. His army, with the help of a neighbouring female chief, Nyamazana, rebelled against him. To a certain extent, the traditional chiefs would not deliberate alone on the issues affecting their people, particularly those with important political, economic, religious and

social dimensions, but instead, they consulted their administrative machinery which was comprised of councillors, spirit mediums and headmen. Without the approval of the elder council, a traditional leader was powerless as he could neither pass any legislation nor make political decisions. The most important injunction was that the chief should never act without the advice and full concurrence of his councillors, the representatives of the people (Dusing 2001:99). This indicates that the decisions by the chief in such a community-based decision-making process were a reflection of a collective decision and opinion of advisors.

Apart from permanent leadership, the pre-colonial political history of the existent ethnic groups is endowed with good governance elements and institutions similar to the present day democracy. The institution of traditional Chieftaincy in pre-colonial times originally provided societal, political, economic and religious functions for local communities. The term chief, *Ishe* or *Vashe* in Shona and *Induna* in Ndebele, refers to an individual who, by virtue of ancestry, occupies a clearly defined leadership position in an area and, traditionally, chiefs were installed by the most senior headmen in the area in consultation with the spirit-mediums of the chiefdom (Makahamadze, Grand and Tavuyanago 2009:37). The medium acted as the voice of the ancestors in the whole process of the installation and this procedure was meant to curb any possible dispute that might arise from the people. The involvement of the ancestors in the choice and appointment of the chief made him an important religious functionary. Traditional leadership (Chiefs) was the link between the ancestors and their subjects which denoted the link between the supernatural and the temporal existence of the present. They had extensive religious powers that generated fear, respect and obeisance from their subjects who looked up to them in times of drought, famine or any natural disaster.

Since land in pre-colonial Zimbabwean ethnic groups was viewed as a sacred commodity, the traditional leaders were also responsible for protecting and distributing land among their subjects to avoid natural disasters like famine and

outbreak of diseases. Land belonged to the ancestors and the Chiefs were its custodians who were mandated to distribute the land among their people equitably. Chiefs were expected to administer justice and democracy in their areas of jurisdiction and were bound by law to rule with the consent of their people. Many chiefs indeed complied with this requirement. However, during the 2000 land invasion, traditional leaders defied this principle and allowed the politicians to spill blood on the same land they were supposed to protect. During the process, several government officials acquired for themselves several large tracts of land in contrast to the traditional beliefs of keeping the land sacred and as a communal commodity. 'I am yet to meet a Matabele chief who says he makes a decision without consulting the people' (Ranger 2001:xiv). The culture of political violence is thus inherent in the political history of Zimbabwe and the current regime's legacy of election violence has some similarities with the political historical culture of violence. Despite some elements of present day good governance, the leadership throne was holy and just like it is in the present day Zimbabwe.

2.2-The Colonial era

The entry of white settlers into the territories occupied by the indigenous Zimbabwean ethnic groups marked a period of intense violent conflicts, dehumanization of the blacks, land and livestock grabs, legalized exploitation, racial discrimination and segregation and forced free labour (slavery). This new political power system that depicted master-servant (colonizer-colonized) relations generated a new antagonistic template of political violence and conflicts which further strained the existent inter-ethnic political violence. The colonizers thrived on the divide and rule principle to firmly assert their authority. Colonialism that succeeded pre-colonial rule was, by definition and design, an autocratic governance system which was essentially undemocratic especially against the ethnic groups, and there was no pretence at all by the settler colonial government of creating democratic institutions that embraced the Africans (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003:102). There were stringent laws forbidding the indigenous people from participating in politics.

Colonialism was an exploitative capitalistic economy dominated by the colonial masters who stamped their authority using guns. This obviously clashed with the existent political culture practised by the ethnic groups who lived within the confines of what is today Zimbabwe. This new political system not only consolidated the existent political cultures of violence and conflicts within and without the ethnic groups but also aggravated them through the use of unjust laws imposed on the indigenous people. The institutionalization of racial difference in all facets of the colonial state's institutions and private arena was meant to elevate the status of the whites above that of the blacks (Chitiyo 2000:6). Race in coloniality was used not only to condemn black people but also to deny their very humanity so as to justify such forms of violence as slavery, colonial conquest, dispossession, imprisonment, rape, shooting and killing (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:126). The colonialists thus deliberately disenfranchised the indigenous blacks politically, socially and economically using uncouth racial laws to perpetuate discrimination, segregation and polarization. Some of the discriminatory laws include the compulsory taxation of land and livestock, forced labour, and pro-white inter-racial sexualities. These unjust laws incapacitated the black indigenous people on the one hand whilst propping up whites in all aspects of life.

Land was taken from the black communities by force and these communities were driven to parts of the country characterized by adverse climatic conditions and minimal productivity (Southall 2013:22). Land seizure and animal grabs were rampant and this was a well calculated move to drive the Africans from all productive areas into Native Reserves (NR) which functioned as reservoirs of labour. The act of grabbing land and livestock by force was designed to impoverish black people and to facilitate exploitation and slavery. The period 1935 - 1955 saw the forcible removal of 67 000 African families from their traditional lands into new NRs to make way for white-owned farms on state woodlands (Chitiyo 2000:4). This removal of the African families was accompanied by yet another draconian law, the Native Land Husbandry

Act (NLHA) of 1951, which forced rural families to reduce their cattle herds. This was exacerbated by the racial laws which restricted Africans' access to land, thereby reducing African agricultural production. It is important to emphasize that land and livestock grab policy was supported by legal laws and this elevated the status of whites over that of blacks. This also created a servant-master relationship. This however, resulted in blood conflicts and wars with the ethnics groups. In this regard land dispossession reduced productivity on the part of the Africans and maximized settler production with minimum costs, and this created a wide wealth gap between the whites and blacks. These violent conflicts exacted a heavy toll on black people's political economy, robbing them of their developmental potentials and possibilities.

A significant contribution to the legacy of the culture of political violence and the history of conflicts in colonial Zimbabwe was in 1957. The City Youth League (CYL) and the Bulawayo-based African National Council came together to form the country's first national political party, the African National Congress (ANC) under Joshua Nkomo (Southall 2013:36). The main aim of the Council was to encourage the colonial authorities to provide a more tolerant and accommodating socio-political and economic dispensation and not to overthrow colonialism. Nonetheless, in February 1959, the colonial government declared a state of emergency and banned the ANC under the newly created Unlawful Organizations Act (UOA) and detained most of its leaders. However, African nationalism grew increasingly militant resulting in numerous urban forms of protest against an increasingly repressive state. The National Democratic Party (NDP) was subsequently formed under Michael Mawema since Nkomo was out of the country. The NDP's militancy, particularly the country-wide protests from late 1960 that resulted in widespread destruction of property and some deaths of protestors, led to its banning in December 1961 (Bhebe 1989:70-103).This resulted in the famous militaristic war of liberation. Nonetheless, the colonialist government passed the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act in 1960, a draconian piece of legislation excessively increasing power for repressive measures meant to constrict development. A landmark demand by the NDP was majority rule

under universal suffrage. Thus, the early 1960 urban forms of protest against an increasingly repressive state gave birth to the militaristic war of liberation.

Zimbabwe's liberation struggle was a militaristic response by the black nationalists to an institutionalized and ruthless governance system by the colonial settlers. This included unjust laws, institutionalized land and animal grabs, forced labour, horrifying physical abuse, political exclusion and many other abuses. The unjust and alienating laws disempowered the indigenous ethnic groups while elevating the socio-economic and political status of the white settlers. The long spell of resource and land dispossession, stringent laws, white political superiority and military power militated heavily against the nationalists in their endeavours to immediately defeat the settler government. The settlers already had some black people recruited into the police and army making their military might even more formidable.

2.3-The Liberation Struggle

The war of liberation which is codenamed the *Second Chimurenga* was launched as an intensified black resistance and armed attacks against the colonial government forces by the liberation movements' fighters. Initially this war began as primarily urban forms of protest involving the Southern Rhodesian African National Congress (SRANC) in the 1950s as the first African 'mass' political organization to challenge the status quo in Southern Rhodesia (Bhebe 1989:51-69). SRANC was banned in 1960 and its membership re-emerged under the name National Democratic Party (NDP) which was subsequently banned the following year. In 1962, the NDP re-surfaced as the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo. However, in 1963 ZANU fragmented from ZAPU forming another formidable liberation party under the leadership of Ndabaningi Sithole and later Robert Mugabe (Southall 2013:37). At this juncture the black political organizations that had been employing strategies of non-violent civil disobedience against the colonial government began advocating for violent struggle to achieve independence. This was adopted as it became clear and evident that the settler regime was not

tolerating political involvement of the blacks nor desire to welcome majority rule. ZAPU and ZANU accordingly began to form military armies and mobilized people for military training in neighbouring countries.

Despite the fact that the liberation struggle was a war of the black indigenous people against the white settlers, the liberation movements disagreed on several issues. The two rival liberation movements vied for control of the Zimbabwean people against each other and also against the settler regime. The armed phase of the struggle for Zimbabwe added some negative tendencies to the whole nationalist movement revealing African nationalism itself as a social movement which was basically hegemonic and intolerant of diversity, and full of dissent. It was subject to both internal and external criticism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003:106). The Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU) and its armed wing, Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), consisted primarily of Shona speaking tribes. The Zimbabwean African People's Union (ZAPU) and its armed wing, the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA), was led by Joshua Nkomo and consisted primarily of Ndebele ethnic groups.

It is important to note that inter and intra movement conflicts and disagreements sometimes resulted in capital punishment and gruesome acts of violence. For instance, in 1963 and 1964, ZAPU and ZANU bitterly fought each other in the townships. During this war, loud and silent violence escalated to the peak and both the liberation movements fighters and the colonial forces unleashed large scale acts of violence towards each other as well as to the civilian populace (Chitiyo 2000:4). The loud violence took the form of whippings, beatings, torture, murder, shooting or stealing livestock, burning crops and scorched earth policy by the settler government which sometimes extended to the razing of the entire village. Intolerance was demonstrated by the use of rigid and annihilatory terms such as patriots versus puppets, freedom fighters versus sell-outs, as well as by officially sanctioned violence against those defined as puppets and sell-outs (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003:107).

The split between Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) of 1963 was attributed variously to ethnic differences between the supposedly Ndebele identity of ZAPU and ZANU identity of Shona, or to leadership conflicts within the original ZAPU from which ZANU split (Kössler 2010:34). The split was immediately followed by a period of savage conflict among the youth of both parties, mainly in the townships of Salisbury (Harare), which set the scene for the acrimonious relations between the two factions that were to become a decisive feature of Zimbabwe's politics during the following 25 years. The split was over methods, rather than objectives, and reflected the greater militancy of the ZANU leaders, for both were strongly committed to the creation of an independent Zimbabwe. Those who formed ZANU viewed Nkomo's leadership as obsessed with international diplomacy rather than organizing resistance (Southall 2013:40). For whatever reason, the split caused deep conflicts, rivalry, hostility and violence between ZANU and ZAPU which prevented the two liberation movements from forming a strong alliance against the settler regime. ZANU was more radical and wanted immediate armed confrontation, while ZAPU, in the early 1960s, was still seeking intervention from Britain and hoping that settlement might be reached through peaceful negotiations. Obviously the ZAPU-ZANU split resulted in faction fights and violence in urban areas, which increasingly took ethnic dimensions.

The inter-party hostility and violence brought about by the split of the liberation movement which broke into ZAPU and ZANU obviously escalated the animosity in the townships and exacerbated the already significant violent conflict against the settler regime. It was believed that the violence was initially instigated by ZAPU, using the slogan that it was essential to destroy the *snake inside the house*, (referring to ZANU), before destroying the *snake outside*, (meaning the colonial-settler regime of Ian Smith) (Chung 2006:60). ZAPU could not accept and stomach the reality of the existence of ZANU as an autonomous nationalist movement (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003:107). Groups of youths roamed the townships demanding party cards from all

and sundry and petrol bombing each other's houses was becoming a daily occurrence. The Smith regime was able to maximize the violence by torching both ZAPU and ZANU houses in the townships using agents with their faces painted black (Chung 2006:60). The settler regime - which was the common enemy - obviously escaped responsibility and shifted blame onto the two nationalist parties which were tussling with each other because of the split. Adversarialism and antagonism took the form of ethnic differences that divided the two major political parties. Throughout the 1960s the conflict between the two parties (ZAPU and ZANU) was about issues of leadership and mass mobilization (White 2003:16). OAU and the frontline states of Botswana, Tanzania and Zambia, joined by Angola and Mozambique after their independence in 1974/1975, acted as a powerful influence in several attempts to unite the two factions within the liberation movement (Kössler 2010:34).

These inter liberation movements' conflicts that emerged in the 1960s remained unsolved throughout the period of the liberation struggle of the 1970s. It is therefore logical that after independence intolerance and hatred still existed between the two movements. This may be a reasonable explanation of the post-independence conflict that erupted in Matabeleland and parts of Midlands which killed more than 22 000 people (CCJPZ 1999). This could squarely be a result of this long, bitter relationship. The ZAPU slogan '*snake inside the house'* which was being used against ZANU in the early 1960s in townships, has also been used constantly by ZANU leadership during the Matabeleland civil war. In a public statement Prime Minister Mugabe said: 'ZAPU and its leader, Dr. Joshua Nkomo, are like a cobra in the house. The only way to deal effectively with the snake is to strike and destroy its head' (Todd 2007:57). The enmity that saw ZANU breaking away from ZAPU did not end during the liberation struggle when in principle the two liberation movements cooperated to end the colonial rule in Zimbabwe.

The liberation movements were also subject to internal conflicts separate from the inter-conflicts. In several cases, these intra-conflicts resulted in many deaths and

imprisonment during the struggle. Deep leadership conflicts have manifested more in ZANU than in ZAPU. The movement has witnessed cases of junior cadres rebelling against the leadership as well as revolts within the leadership ranks. In 1974 Ndabaningi Sithole was challenged by a group of detainees who appointed Mugabe as a new leader of ZANU but Mugabe was met with the refusal of leaders to recognize the coup and demanded that Sithole be reinstated (Southall 2013:46). The situation was then transformed by the assassination in a bomb blast on 18 March 1975 of Hebert Chitepo, national chairman and leader of ZANU's external supreme council. Chitepo's death in March 1975 was seen by many as a continuation of leadership rivalry between the Karanga and the Manyika. Mugabe himself benefited from the death of a powerful rival who had refused to accept his coup despite the fact that several accused him of having orchestrated Chitepo's death. The Zimbabwean nationalist movement was a revolution that ate its own children, where revolutionary justice was used to eliminate other Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2003:107). Another serious case that gripped ZANU at one point is when some cadres fighting in Mozambique mutinied against the military high command. The infamously known Thomas Nhari and Dakarai Badza led the rebellion. They were young, educated commanders who had recently been demoted to ordinary soldiers, and who had considerable support at the front, among both male and female guerrillas, and in Lusaka (White 2003:19).

The liberation movements inflicted episodes of violence on the colonial government forces as well as on the civilian populace separately from their own intra and inter-liberation movement violent conflicts and hostilities. Violence by the liberation movements' fighters towards the black peasants was directed to those perceived to be sell-out, those who were against the liberation struggle and those who were siding with the settlers. The peasants often found themselves in serious dilemmas because of the presence of different warring armies operating in the same community (battle ground). The predicament was that the white settler army and the liberation fighters demanded peasantry support to each other's side and no support to be offered by the same peasant to the enemy. If you gave them food and the white soldiers became

aware of this, you were killed. If the white soldiers came and asked for food and you complied, you were killed by the comrades if they became aware of it (Schmidt 2013:156). The rural entrepreneurs became a target because their exposed economic position made them conspicuous as collaborators yet at the same time obvious as potential suppliers for guerrilla needs. These people were therefore targeted by both the liberation fighters as well as the colonial forces. The rural populace in this case suffered tremendously because each time a different army approached them demanding support whilst holding a gun. No one would dare deny the request but granting the requested demand would mean committing a crime against the opposing army. It was therefore important for both of the two armies to understand the quandary in which the peasants were in and avoid victimizing them for having offered food or any assistance asked for by the enemy.

Another genre of violence perpetrated against the peasants by the liberation fighters was centred on the concept of sell-outs and wizards. From 1975 especially in Manicaland, the newly arrived ZANLA units asked the local population about their grievances and drew up hit lists of those who were perceived as socially harming in their behaviour, including *varoyi* (witches and wizards) and *vatengesi* (sell-outs) who would be publicly beaten and assassinated (Schmidt 2013:160). This was done to draw as much support as possible and at the same time to set an example of the power the fighters wielded. Disciplinary beatings and killings were publicly executed at the *Pungwe base* (nightly vigil meetings). Pungwe base meetings were being held as mobilization and politicization meetings by the liberation fighters mostly during the night in rural communities. Death was the most common penalty for those found guilty by the liberation fighters but amputations of hands, legs, ears, toes, tongues, fingers and lips were also used as punishment on the wrongdoers. As a means of casting fear into the peasants, the liberation fighters would order the dead corpses of the killed peasants to be left to rot in the open and the relatives were not allowed to bury them. As this was done in public, fear effectively led to very few people willing to associate themselves with the settlers or to be found on the wrong side.

Violence, intimidation and harassment by the liberation fighters to the peasants was also pronounced during mobilization and politicization processes to lure support and recruit young people to join the war. The guerrillas could not survive without peasant support but the methods they used to gain that support involved not only persuasion but also violence and coercion. The methods of politicization could be either protracted or abrupt, depending on the area where they had control. Sometimes the guerrillas held day-time politicization meetings to explain who they were and what they were fighting for (Chitiyo 2000:5). They would also try to convince the peasants that they all shared a similar cause. In unfamiliar areas or areas held by the RSF, the liberation fighters conducted their politicization and recruitment campaigns abruptly and haphazardly. There was little time to persuade locals to support their cause, so support was often garnered through coercion. This obviously created confusion in the minds of villagers since violence was being used to force them to perform violence against state violence. In several cases the liberation fighters were also drawn into class struggles and conflicts, for example between chiefs and headmen, wealthy and poorer peasants, shop-owners and different levels of farm workers.

In essence the atrocities and nasty episodes of violence inflicted by the liberation fighters on the peasants as a means to force them to support the cause of the liberation struggle by then seemed normal and justified. This cast less impact in the minds of the people such that it did not overshadow a barrage of brutality perpetrated by the colonial settlers which included the notions of injustices, segregation, racial discrimination, exploitation, dehumanizing laws, land seizure, oppression and all other forms of violence. These injustices were the driving forces that enabled the generality of the peasants to rally behind the liberation fighters in order to liberate the country at all cost. Land issue was at the centre of the struggle as well as a milieu of injustices and oppressive laws perpetrated by the colonialists on the black population. Complementing land seizure was the need to regain birthrights, ownership of the country's vast resources, self-rule, one man one vote, and socio-economic and political freedom, and achieve the eradication of racial discrimination and economic

imbalances, equality, human dignity and self-determinism as a nation. In this regard the citizenry expected the redress of injustices by the revolutionary government as a top priority at independence. The people expected a just government that fulfilled the promises which made the liberation struggle a success story and most of all a government that honoured their freedom and socio-economic and political rights.

Violence against the peasants by the liberation fighters was to a certain extent a result of frustration on the part of the fighters who might have felt that they were sacrificing their life for the people who at some point were betraying them by selling out to the enemy (Schmidt 2013:160). The feeling would always be that the people being rescued from oppression should show appreciation by supporting the liberator. This is not to justify violence but to a certain extent it was necessary to stamp out bad elements which had the potential to derail the struggle. For the liberation fighters, there was no need for the peasants to support the oppressors (white settler's army). Since this was a guerrilla war in which the fighters move among the people like a fish in water, as propounded by Mao Zedong, the water - in this case the peasants - needed to be as clear as possible (Ellis and Sechaba 1992:96). In fact the peasants are very important for successful guerrilla warfare. Without the support, trust, coexistence and active aid of the people, the liberation fighters would merely be outlaws and could not survive for long. Mobilization and recruitment were essential to achieve the objectives of the struggle. More fighters were needed and with war being a scary adventure, very few people would volunteer to join without coercion.

There has thus been the proliferation of intra and inter party violence and factionalism in Zimbabwean politics from 1963 to the present day. This argument can explain the rivalry and competition for power and the desire to eliminate challenging leadership contenders that characterize Zimbabwean politics today. Political intolerance and the desire to eliminate political competitors have a long history in Zimbabwean political history. Election violence, intimidation, harassment and persecution of voters and political candidates are more pronounced during electoral periods in Zimbabwe. The

contradictions and ambiguities within the Zimbabwean nationalist movements nurtured intolerance and authoritarianism which manifest themselves in ZANU PF today (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003:106). However, these contradictions and political intolerance which riddled the liberation movements also existed in the pre-colonial ethnic groups where those who coveted the throne were eliminated - mostly by killing.

Nonetheless, several virtues of positive and constructive ways of handling conflicts - which are principles of modern-day good governance - prevailed and were part of the liberation struggle agenda. In February 1969 ZANU established a Supreme Council known as 'Dare re Chimurenga' which presided over the affairs of the party and advised the political leadership. Party affairs were thus never individual affairs. The council advocated for all the members of the liberation movement to behave as nation builders and to conduct themselves in an exemplary way when they worked among the citizenry. The leaders were expected to display good leadership qualities, discipline, obedience and love for the people. Leaders were always reminded that they were servants of the people they lead. These are all good governance qualities which entail democratic governance. Chungu (2006) talks of the virtues and education that were supposed to be followed by both the political leadership and the fighters in the forefront. The popular freedom fighter song, Nzira ye MaSoja (Soldiers' Guide song) was sung every day at rallies and pungwe bases. This teaching which was based on a mixture of Maoist, Christian, and traditional values, summarised the ZANLA Code of Conduct which was characterized by the three main rules of discipline: to obey orders in all the actions, not to take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses, and to turn in everything captured (Chungu 2006:80). The major lessons which resonated from the above rules were to speak politely, to pay fairly for what you buy, to return everything you borrow, not to hit or swear at people, not to damage the crops of the masses, not to take liberties with women, and not to ill-treat captives. Accordingly, the struggle for Zimbabwe was purely based on equality, democracy and human rights for all. The liberation

movements' manifestos were basically people-centred, i.e. based on respect for every citizen.

Zimbabwe's first post-colonial constitution, the Lancaster House Constitution, which was negotiated for by the liberation movements, introduced universal adult suffrage which allowed the majority blacks to vote in the 1980 general elections. Thus, the ZANU PF government assumed power in a newly independent country with a host of promises made during the liberation struggle, such as to redress colonial injustice and bring about a socialist transformation. These historic elections brought ZANU PF to power in a newly independent country. It thus came as no surprise that part of the agenda of the national liberation struggle was "one man one vote", which in essence meant expanding the vote to millions of disenfranchised blacks (Sellström 1999). The right to vote accorded to black Zimbabweans also allowed many people of foreign origin but with residency to vote. Notable among these were immigrant workers from neighbouring countries, particularly Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique. These foreigners constituted a significant proportion of the working class in the country's farming and mining sectors. The Zimbabwean government did not backtrack on the provision enshrined in The Lancaster House agreement that ensured that 700,000 white people would elect 20 (white) MPs, while the 11 million black people would elect 100 MPs for a considerable time after independence (de Waal 1990:121).

2.4-The Post-Independence period

After many years of bitter armed conflict and protracted war between the liberation fighters and the colonial forces, Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980 amid much joyous celebration over what was expected to be the beginning of a new era (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2008). For many people inside and outside Zimbabwe, this was to mark the beginning of racial equality, the abolition of racial discrimination and segregation, the end of violence, and the beginning of fairness and coexistence. The high expectation for the newly established nation was based on a combination of the highly sophisticated economic power base inherited by the government which was

viewed by many as the best in Africa at the time, and the potential for the leadership to implement seemingly model principles of modern good governance. However, the revolutionary government had to deal with numerous challenges to reconcile the realities on the ground with the promises which were being preached by the liberation movements during the struggle. The promises included guaranteed employment for the black populace, access to land and the country's wealth, and full participation of the blacks in the economy. This was a mammoth task given that the colonial era was based on white supremacy, racial segregation, social inequalities between blacks and whites, parallel economic development based on race, institutionalized violence and oppression of the majority African populace by the white minority. The economy was basically characterized by racial inequalities where access to resources and social services was done along racial lines with the minority whites getting the lion's share. The much-hailed economic power base inherited by the revolutionary government was basically for the white minority whilst excluding the black majority.

Nonetheless, the first ten years of independence were committed to rectifying the social inequities created by the former colonial regimes (Mapolisa and Tshabalala 2014). To reduce Zimbabwe's deep socio-economic disparities, the government invested heavily in health and education and, through parastatals, in rural development and the production sectors. The new government was committed to the creation of a socialist state, which was guided by the principles of social justice and equity based on the principle of 'Growth with Equity' (Zhou and Masunungure 2006:16). This principle was adopted so that the government could redress the inherited inequities and imbalances manifesting in access to basic needs such as education and health facilities and services delivery. Growth with Equity in general asserted government desire to develop the country guided by socialist and democratic principles in the allocation and distribution of resources and social benefits. The positive returns of these policies were most visible in the education and health sectors where access to public services, resource allocation and distribution was deracialized. Given the high inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities during the

colonial era, the post-independent government intervened extensively in the labour market to correct the distortions. The intervention was aimed at uplifting the standard of living of ordinary black Zimbabweans by ensuring access to employment and job security whilst guaranteeing greater worker and peasant participation in the economy. The government also initiated wealth redistribution plans based on massive subsidies to keep staple food prices low, strict price controls to keep all other goods affordable, accelerated pay increases to all employees below management levels, and a salary freeze for all management and senior business people. During this period, the government played a major role in the provision of services as well as in the redistribution of resources. The government made tremendous progress considering that an economy which was previously catering for only a few white settlers was now supporting more than seven million, which included the black populace. This led to an increase in public expenditure, which for most of the 1980s made up 45 percent of the GDP (Stokke, Suhrke and Tostensen 1997:407).

One of the remarkable successes of the government was achieved in education which the government declared to be a human right. The adopted policy by the government was to ensure that there were equal educational opportunities for all races. Education was also a government priority because it was regarded as a potent tool for social and economic transformation. Major transformation was done on education because the education system inherited by the government at independence was characterized by unfair and unequal distribution of educational resources and facilities between the black majority and the white minority Zimbabweans. There has also been a shift from the provision of quantitative education to the attainment of quality education. At independence in 1980, the majority of the black populace did not have access to quality schooling. Most of the people only finished seven years of primary schooling. During the first 25 years of independence, the government in partnership with local communities, managed to build schools, train teachers and improve resource accessibility. As a result Zimbabwe boasts one of the highest literacy rates in sub-Saharan Africa. However, in pursuing the policy of education being a basic human

right, the government faced many challenges. Adequate financial resources were required to provide education facilities, particularly in remote and newly resettled areas. The demand for learning and teaching materials rose as the result of massive expansion. The need for qualified and trained teachers had to be satisfied in order to promote the quality of education. Early childhood education had to be completely integrated into the education system. These financial challenges strained the economy.

The revolutionary government made major transformations to embrace some democratic principles in its governance system despite the autocratic structure engraved in the country's governance system by the previous colonial government which was undemocratic to the core. There was need for structural changes and the government committed itself to establishing an order based on democracy, social justice and equity (Raftopoulos and Mlambo 2008:174). Nevertheless, the new government faced the pressing challenge of reconstituting and realigning the inherited national governance policies to embrace democracy and popular participation by the citizenry. The template of challenges also had to do with the new administration which had minimum experience and knowledge in national governance tasks. The concept of democratic participation as applied to both national and local government discourses has various meanings. In a more generic sense it can be understood to refer to the manner in which governmental institutions allow communities to take part in the decision-making process intended to delineate their operations. It involves a multi-partite approach to decision-making in the interest of all (Houston, Mpanyane, and Liebenberg 1999:78). Thus, democratic participation involves going out to the communities to find out what their needs are and rationalizing these with institutional objective conditions in terms of financial and technical capacity and then concocting a mixture of goods and services that have a community flavour.

Democracy is expected to promote rationality, morality, equality and liberty. The basic principles of democracy include popular sovereignty, political equality, popular

consultation, and majority rule (Ramney 1971:76). Democracy as a social process is viewed as the tendency of a political system to continuously promote equal access to fundamental human rights and liberties such as the freedom and right to engage in self-determining endeavours that raise one's consciousness to remake his/her world while acting within the confines of social parameters (Ntalaja 1997:7). The government made some remarkable achievements in ensuring basic democratic principles in its governance system and structures. The observance and adherence to the rule of law has been demonstrated by several cases being won against the government, for example by human rights activists, the opposition political parties, the trade unions and workers as well as by white commercial farmers. The courts of law have been delivering justice even against the government and this is fundamental in a democracy. Thus, a democratic dispensation is expected to protect human rights and individual freedoms, of which free expression and choice are critical components. Important achievements have been made by the government in electoral institutions which enabled all Zimbabweans to be accorded the chance to participate in elections. This involved the active participation of multiple political parties, competitive and regular elections, the active participation of a vibrant civil society for checks and balances, and the revamping of the constitutional and civil courts throughout the country to deliver justice. It should also ensure regular and free elections and the promotion of public accountability (Thornhill 2005:471).

In an endeavour to harmonize the nation's development agenda with peace and coexistence in the country, the government adopted a reconciliation policy. This has been an important policy because democracy as a value also encapsulates issues of tolerance of one another, acknowledging people's diversity and the ability of these people to coexist harmoniously amidst diversity. In a statement after the announcement of the first democratic elections in independent Zimbabwe, the then Prime Minister Robert Gabriel Mugabe emphasized the need to establish a society in which there is space for everyone and a sense of security for both the winners and the losers, and forgiveness and forgetting (de Waal 1990:87). The Prime Minister Robert

Mugabe demonstrated the commitment to make the newly independent nation a model of post-colonial governance that promoted reconciliation and solidarity with the settlers and other ethnic groups while seeking to empower the long-oppressed black population when he declared:

> *'Henceforth you and I must strive to adapt ourselves, intellectually and spiritually to the reality of our political change and relate to each other as brothers bound one to the other by a bond of comradeship. If yesterday I fought you as an enemy, today you have become a friend and ally with the same national interests, 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. Is it not folly, therefore, that in these circumstances anybody should seek to revive the wounds and grievances of the past? The wrongs of the past must now stand forgiven and forgotten…It could never be a correct justification that because the Whites oppressed us yesterday when they had power, the Blacks must oppress them today because they have power. An evil remains an evil whether practiced by white against black or by black against white. Our majority rule would easily turn into inhuman rule if we oppressed, persecuted or harassed those who do not look or think like the majority of us'* (Mugabe 1980) quoted in (Raftopoulos 2004:x).

The reconciliation policy was based on the need to build sustainable peace, equality and peaceful coexistence between races and ethnic groups in the country as alluded by Raftopoulos. However a genuine reconciliation would have been achieved by engaging all the former warring parties to a sustainable peacebuilding agenda aimed at achieving mutual tolerance and recognition by all parties. Both the black and white communities needed to embrace each other as equal partners in the country's

economy and citizenry. In this regard, a peacebuilding and reconciliatory transitional justice in the form of social engagement and authentic exoneration of the past conflict was ideal. This strategy would have been a bona fide transformation from the past racial discrimination policies, structural inequalities in the distribution and access to resources and unequal social-economic and political opportunities which were upheld by the colonial government. This would have consolidated Robert Gabriel Mugabe's independence statement in which he deliberated on the need to establish an enabling society for everyone, a sense of security for both the winners and the losers, and forgiveness and forgetting. These were to be the building blocks of a democratic nation casted on inclusive citizenry.

Despite all these efforts and the proclaimed commitment for democratic governance and reconciliatory national agenda, the country plunged into the first military operation codenamed Gukurahundi against banditry in the early 1980s. This operation overwhelmed Matabeleland and parts of Midlands killing more than 20 000 people as Sachikonye (2011:15) indicated. Gukurahundi, in Shona means the rain which washes away the chaff before the spring rains. This was a litmus taste of the reconciliation policy pronounced by the then Prime Minister Robert Mugabe. It is regrettable that the unfolding political conflict in Matabeleland shattered the hopes of many people who had predicted the potentials of what promised to be Africa's prosperous nation that inherited a strong economic base. The newly independent nation had casted a hope of modern-day good governance and what sounded like good leadership style to international community. The revolutionary government had proclaimed a commitment of reconciliation and empowerment of the poor black majority.

In November 1980, ZIPRA and ZANLA forces fought a pitched battle for two days a few months after the military integration before being brought under control by ZIPRA and ZANLA commanders (CCCJP 1999:43). Some ZIPRA cadres defected from Entumbane barracks citing mainly hostility and maltreatment they received

from ZANLA commanders after the clash. Some were said to be afraid of staying in the army as they felt some of their colleagues were disappearing mysteriously. Between 1980 and 1981, levels of violence between the two guerrilla groups, and against civilians, including robberies, shootings (often in altercations at bars after drinking), and carrying arms illegally were fairly high (Kriger 2005:5). This formed the overture of the bloody violence that rocked Matabeleland for the better part of the 1980s involving dissidents, small numbers of the South African-sponsored 'Super-Zapu' and the infamous Fifth brigade, recruited from ex-ZANLA fighters and trained by North Korean experts (Kössler 2010:35).

The discovery of the arms caches worsened the tension which was already at its peak, resulting in a number of ZIPRA commanders being arrested and ZAPU leaders sacked from the coalition government (CCJP 1999:5). Joshua Nkomo was sacked from parliament in 1982 on charges of treason following the discovery of arms caches in ZAPU-owned properties around Bulawayo. ZANU PF was now openly accusing ZAPU of plotting another war and this led to the arrest and removal from cabinet on treason charges of many ZAPU leaders (Kriger 2005). However, the treason trial in 1982 involving Dabengwa, Masuku and four others failed to prove a case against them. These latest events provoked further defection of ZIPRA fighters from barracks and the army to join those who had already deserted. The incarceration of the ZIPRA commanders and the treason charges levelled against the ZAPU leadership cast fear into the ZIPRA fighters who were in barracks together with ZANLA colleagues. Apparently with the arrests of most of the ZIPRA commanders, ZANLA commanders were now fully in charge of both ZIPRA and ZANLA fighters. This was a sure case that the remaining junior ZIPRA fighters would be in a tight position given the issues of arms caches, defected fighters, arrested commanders and politicians sacked from the government. One is therefore bound not to condemn the ZIPRA fighters who later deserted the army and barracks on the basis of safety and to stay alive. With their leaders all locked up or in exile, thousands of ex-ZIPRA cadres felt there was nobody to protect them within the army.

Gukurahundi was the first post-independence military operation carried out by the ZANU PF-led government to contain the dissidents who were operating in Matabeleland and parts of Midlands. The infamous North Korean-trained 5th Brigade, the Zimbabwean police, the Zimbabwe National Army and the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) operatives carried out the operation (CCJPZ1 999:7). Kriger states that in late January 1983, 5th Brigade was deployed in Matabeleland North and within weeks, the troops had murdered more than two thousand civilians, beaten thousands more, and destroyed hundreds of homesteads. The forms of violence perpetrated against the people included severe torture, beatings, flogging with rifle butts and iron bars, mutilation, and murder. The soldiers generally preferred to attack the head, the feet, and the buttocks which resulted mostly in death. Numerous forms of torture were also used to subject victims to both physical and psychological sufferings. Beatings were sometimes combined with rape, electrocution and interrogation while some women were pitted against each other, as if they were gladiators, while soldiers watched. Some people were abducted from their homes at night by unidentified men in unclear circumstances and disappeared. The soldiers would steal goods from the villagers and engaged in kidnapping (Kriger 2005:7).

Activities of dissidents after independence also occurred in some parts of the country and in trying to contain the insurgencies many civilians were victimized in a bid to wipe out these rebel elements. In Manicaland too, as in Matabeleland, dissidents killed and raped women and this prompted the Zimbabwean government to carry out military operations to wipe out the armed groups. RENAMO declared war against Zimbabwe because the latter supported the FRELIMO government's war effort (Schmidt 2013:194). Honde valley inhabitants are of the view that the effects of RENAMO war were worse than the Chimurenga, because of the insurgents' cruelty and indiscriminate killing. However, the dissidents engaged in unspeakable acts of brutality targeting ZANU PF officials and innocent civilians. The ex-ZIPRA dissidents who were operating in Matabeleland and the Midlands never exceeded 400

in number but the government's massive counter-insurgency campaign was indiscriminately directed at both the armed rebels and the innocent civilian populace. Prime Minister Mugabe himself in April 1983 said 'When troops were in rural areas where people were thought to be feeding dissidents, we eradicate them. We don't differentiate when we fight because we can't tell who is a dissident and who is not' (CCJP 1999:6).

It was evident that there were dissidents operating in Matabeleland and parts of Midlands but the magnitude and the longevity of counter-insurgence was enormous. One wonders how and why the counter-insurgents operations targeting only 400 poorly armed dissidents could prolong for about five years. Nonetheless, the operations were carried out by the heavily armed and highly trained 5th Brigade accompanied by the police and secret security agents against moderately armed rebels. However, these military operations covered the period the 1985 election which means the insurgences can easily be classified as election violence. One would not rule out the fact that most of the terror attacks by the military operation in Matabeleland took the form of election violence given that ZAPU was a threat to a ZANU-led government. During the first four months of 1985, violence and intimidation of suspected opposition supporters continued and at least 80 ZAPU officials and ZIPRA ex-combatants were abducted and then disappeared, and scores of homes of suspected ZAPU supporters were looted and destroyed (Kriger 2005:8). Robert Mugabe was publicly quoted then advising his ZANU supporters to 'go and uproot the weeds from your garden and to take the rotten pumpkins from your patch' (Sachikonye 2011:18). ZANU PF's Youth Brigade was reported to be actively involved in forcibly bussing villagers to party rallies and ordering them to vote for the ruling party while local ZAPU party offices were attacked, and by the time of the election, outside Bulawayo, virtually every urban and rural ZAPU office had been closed or burned out. The government however, could have deliberately prolonged the military operation until the 1985 election and beyond in order to disturb ZAPU political campaigns since it was a political threat to ZANU.

The Unity Accord of 1988 was a landmark victory in the political life of ZANU PF because the subsequent elections were not marred by severe violence or threatening opposition political parties. Kriger cites that violence against ZAPU/ZIPRA and all Ndebele civilians ended in a Unity Accord in December 1987 that merged ZAPU into ZANU PF (Kriger 2005:13). On a much reduced scale, campaign violence in 1990 was directed at the opposition Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) while in 1995, it was directed at Forum, ZUM and ZANU Ndonga parties (Sachikonye 2011:19). Edgar Tekere, himself from Manicaland, was expelled on 21 October 1988 for his criticism of the corruption and greed of the ruling party and formed a new opposition party, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) on 30 April 1989. Edgar Tekere's party was not a threat to ZANU PF which had now absorbed ZAPU and some of its supporters. However, ZANU PF's character of intolerance persisted even with minimum threat. Throughout the election period, ZUM was routinely denied permission to hold public rallies under state of emergency regulations throughout the country. A special incident in which ZANU PF demonstrated its bigotry was the violence in Gweru, Midlands's province, where ZANU PF and ZUM youth confronted each other at Kombayi's mini-mart. Patrick Kombayi was once the ruling ZANU PF mayor for Gweru but was now the ZUM candidate. At one point ZANU PF youth stoned, looted, and burned the store, and then shot and injured three ZUM youth members, and, in the presence of police, the driver of the lorry who was taking the injured to hospital was shot at by CIO operatives. When Kombayi arrived on the scene, he too was shot (Kriger 2005:8). This is one of many incidences where ZANU PF has demonstrated its intolerance and defiance towards reconciliation.

Thus, the acts of state-sponsored violence that gripped the country soon after independence have been centred on political power and the need to maintain political hegemony by the regime. Whilst there is evidence of violence perpetrated by the ZANU PF regime against the citizenry, the regime has effectively used the inherited structured instrument of the monopoly of legitimate use of physical violence to

oppress its own people. The use of the state surveillance units and the special security agents that were used by the colonial regime to deal with Black Nationalism, opposition voice and all forms of dissent have been replicated and adopted by the ZANU PF regime. This enabled the party to fortify its capacity for a permanent grip on power leading to the creation of a one-party dominant system in the country. ZANU PF regime has managed to assimilate and manipulate the state security structures to crush the dissenting voices in the country.

It is understandable from all the incidences and occurrences that there was an irreconcilable difference between the two liberation movements. The reaction by the government officials and ZANU PF leadership demonstrate that Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's reconciliation statement at independence was not binding or was flouted. Whatever the case, it is important to understand that reconciliation is a process through which a society moves from a divided past to a shared future. The differences which hatched in 1963 and persisted throughout the entire war of liberation were supposed to have been erased entirely following the Prime Minister's reconciliatory speech at independence. Reconciliation is looking at the past in a way that allows people to see it in terms of shared suffering and collective responsibility, and may help to restore confidence (Bloomfield, Barnes, and Huyse 2003).

In this vein, reconciliation seemed to have been temporarily extended to the white community only. However, reconciliation needed to be across the board including other liberation movements and it was also supposed to sustain unity and peace initiatives. All post-conflict warring parties need to be treated with respect and equally. The issue of winner take all always downplays efforts of reconciliation and peace initiatives. It was very important for the government and ZANU PF leadership to be tolerant and engage sustainable conflict handling mechanisms in order to heal the wounds acquired during the long, bitter war of liberation. It was unfair and crude for ZAPU leadership to be harassed over the arms caches given that it was too soon after the bitter liberation struggle. The wounds and pain were still fresh in the minds

of both the fighters and the leadership. Given that antagonists live in close proximity, not addressing these legacies means risking that they will form the causes of new spirals of violence. The fighters then decided to leave the barracks with their guns and become rebels. Reconciliation is regarded as being necessary to prevent such desires of revenge and falling back into conflict.

2.5-The Land invasions

At independence, the revolutionary government led by ZANU PF inherited a thriving agro-based economy characterized by racially skewed land ownership patterns and production (Zikhali 2008:3). On the one hand, the white large-scale commercial farmers who constituted 1% of the total population occupied 45 percent of all agricultural land, of which 75 percent was found in the most agriculturally productive areas (Shaw 2003). On the other hand the black majority constituted the small-scale communal agricultural sector with communal land ownership practising agriculture in unproductive lands. This unequal land distribution has been the case since the advent of colonial settlers in 1890. The land question in Zimbabwe has singularly had the most significant impact on Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political history. The systematic dispossession realized largely through violence, war and legislative enactments by successive colonial Governments led to the racially skewed land distribution and ownership pattern that until the beginning of 2000 was characteristic of Zimbabwe. The created land imbalances have been at the centre of the long history of social inequality in Zimbabwe before and after independence. However, land is the fundamental component to the country's political, economic and social development. During the late 1990s, the issue of land redistribution increasingly became the root of political tension in the country between the landless black majority and the white commercial farmers.

Land redistribution was overdue because the land question was one of the main liberation struggle objectives which were intended to correct the inequalities in land distribution and access to resources. The main long term objectives of land

redistribution have been to address the imbalances in land access while alleviating population pressure in the communal areas in order to improve the base for productive agriculture in the smallholder farming sector (Kinsey 1999). The main long term benefits of land redistribution were to achieve socio-economic and political stability. Political stability was to be achieved by a vibrant land market where land becomes available at reasonable prices and reasonable and affordable sizes. This would improve productivity whilst guaranteeing the present and future generations a fair chance to have a successful and fulfilling life. Economic development could be achieved once a greater amount of the rural populace engaged in profitable and commercial farming (Moyo 1995). This would be achieved as rural incomes rise and the demand for industrial goods rises. Food prices for urban workers would decline as food becomes more abundant. Social integration is an ultimate objective which is a result of continued economic growth based on a peaceful and progressive non-racial society. The integration of the rural and urban communities could be based on shared values because of the improved economic status of both communities. Accordingly both economic development and political stability would contribute greatly towards the goal of social integration.

By the end of the 1990s, the government had not implemented robust land redistribution despite the significant socio-economic and political benefits it would bring. This was because of logistical and constitutional challenges which were attached to the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979. Large tracts of productive land was still in the possession of white commercial farmers and more than 8 million black Zimbabweans were still without enough land even to produce their own food. By the end of the 1990s the country was facing severe economic meltdown, and unprecedented levels of civil unrest and strife. These conditions in the country had the potential to depose the ZANU PF regime and end its political hegemony. There was a sharp rise in the prices of food and other commodities resulting in numerous food riots, especially in 1998. Workers, university students, opposition political parties and the general public joined forces against this and other grievances and

protested in the form of mass stay-aways, strikes, peaceful demonstrations, marches, foot riots, and spontaneous land invasions (Raftopoulos and Sachikonye 2001). The war veterans and the landless peasants become increasingly impatient and even threatened to depose President Robert Mugabe because of the failed liberation promises and deteriorating living conditions. People became more organized against ZANU PF's attempt to impose a one-party state, absence of the rule of law, bad governance, corruption in the ruling party, maladministration and the continuation of the colonial strategy of maintaining a State of Emergency in the country.

The vibrant civic movement that emerged from civic groups, Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), human rights Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), lawyer organizations and interested individuals coalesced with the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) to lobby the general public for a broader popular process of constitutional reform in 1998 (Raftopoulos and Sachikonye 2001:15). The civil political agitation strengthened and culminated in the formation of a strong political party in 1999 - Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) – which was led by the former labour leader Morgan Tsvangirai. Accordingly, the formation of MDC was a response to the economic meltdown, ever increasing hyperinflation, ZANU PF authoritarianism and the closure of democratic space. The situation was worsened by the deterioration in service delivery, astronomic rates of unemployment, poor living conditions, corruption by ZANU PF political elites and the very high cost of living. MDC was fully backed by NCA, civic society, student unions and ZCTU, while considerable financial support was provided by white commercial farmers. This new party posed a great threat to ZANU PF support both in the rural areas and the urban centres. The new party immediately garnered most of its support from the pro-democracy and good governance Civic Society Organizations (CSOs) as well as the white commercial farmers and most of their farm workers who were also disgruntled over the significant land grab by the regime and its loyalists.

As the situation deteriorated in the country, the war veterans became more impatient and were losing faith in ZANU PF. They therefore regrouped and started some spates of localized and largely spontaneous land invasions, challenging the state laxity regarding solving inherited racial imbalances in land ownership (Sadomba 2008:97-100). The war veterans used their mobilizing power to mobilize the landless citizens and form a strong coalition with enough power to repel the government from their land invasion evictions. Disappointed at the pace of land redistribution and the reluctance of the government to address land imbalances, war veterans and landless peasants resorted to vigorous protests and land occupations. In an unprecedented move, villagers in Svosve communal areas in June 1998 occupied Igava farm vowing to stay on until the government had made a written undertaking to resettle them (Mamndani 2009:5). The villagers cited poor soils and congestion as factors that had compelled them to occupy white farms contiguous to the villages. Similar and widespread occupations of white commercial farms followed in Nyamandhlovu in Matabeleland, Nyamajura in Manicaland, and Nemamwa in Masvingo.

The government had to find solutions to the predicament at hand. However, with the white farmers joining the fight against ZANU PF regime by funding MDC and the refusal of the British government to finance land redistribution as provided for in the Lancaster House Constitution, the government sought to amend the constitution (Human Rights Watch 2002:9). The proposed constitution was to allow the government to acquire white-owned farms without compensation, increase presidential powers and also specify presidential term limits. However, the constitutional changes which the government had proposed triggered a country-wide brawl among workers, civil society and the white commercial farmers. There was a vigorous campaign by the civil society, students, workers, MDC and white commercial farmers to reject the proposed constitution. When the referendum was finally held on 11 and 12 February 2000, the *NO* vote prevailed and the land issue exploded, with nationwide occupations spreading at an unprecedented speed

(Sadomba 2013:87). The rejection of the draft constitution was clear evidence and indication of the impending ZANU PF defeat in the subsequent elections.

The government was to handle the threatening situation at hand with caution and strategically for the President to remain in power since his position was severely under threat. The British Government had snubbed the Zimbabwean regime in terms of compensating the commercial farmers for land redistribution as was agreed at the Lancaster House Conference in 1979. This has been despite President Mugabe's efforts to safeguard agricultural production which was being done by the white commercial farmers. Ironically, the same commercial white farmers who were being protected by the government against invasions by the landless blacks and the war veterans for several years were now funding a new political party: MDC. On the other hand, the war veterans who wielded ZANU PF's political power were threatening to depose President Mugabe. For his political survival and to remain in power, President Mugabe would not opt to keep on protecting the farmers who were now clamouring for his removal from power via the MDC. The best alternative for President Mugabe was to honour the demands of the war veterans and the landless peasants. This was to mark the beginning of the government-supported land invasions.

Despite the rejection of the draft constitution, parliament went on to amend the constitution in April 2000 in favour of a Fast Track Land Reform Programme. This enabled the government to acquire commercial farms without an obligation to pay for the land, but only for the farm improvements. The amendment did not stop farm invasions as was expected. Instead, the invasions became more violent as the June 2000 parliamentary elections approached. Despite the ruling party winning the majority of seats, invasions continued. The Land Acquisition Act was further amended in May 2000, using the power given to the president to enact six month temporary legislation under the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act of 1986 (Human Rights Watch 2002:9). Naturally there was violence during the farm invasions because the white commercial farmers were not ready to vacate the farms

based on the legality of the invasions. The white commercial farmers whose land had been earmarked for acquisition initially challenged the legality of the land reform in general and the fast track resettlement in particular. The Commercial Farmers' Union (CFU) challenged the new laws and policies in the courts and in December 2000, CFU was successful in obtaining an injunction from the Zimbabwe Supreme Court barring further land acquisitions on the grounds that the fast track program was unconstitutional. CFU also claimed that the process was being carried out in a violent and haphazard manner. However the government criticized the courts generally for standing in the way of land reform and the government therefore did not abide by court orders. In the process several judges of the court, including the chief justice, were allegedly forced to retire and replaced with individuals perceived to be loyal to ZANU PF. Chief Justice Gubbay in particular was accused of making some Supreme Court decisions that were viewed by the government as a ploy to derail the land reform programme (Sims 2015:142). On November 1 2000, the Land Acquisition Amendment Bill was passed amid protracted debate in the parliament. The bill replaced temporary regulations and improved procedures for compulsory acquisition of agricultural land for resettlement.

The government therefore legalized the compulsory acquisition of commercial farms after the referendum of 2000 ahead of the 2000 Parliamentary elections and the 2002 Presidential elections. The assumption is that these elections were very special for ZANU PF given the threats and challenges posed by the opposition MDC. The party boasted of internal support from the white commercial farmers and their workers, the urban populace and the international community. There is no doubt that the programme was a strategic election campaign for ZANU PF. The party campaigned for the June 2000 parliamentary elections under the slogan 'Land is the Economy; the Economy is Land.' The government revived the call for radical land redistribution to fulfil the promises made at independence, giving official blessing to a new wave of land occupations led by members of the War Veterans Association that had rapidly accelerated following the referendum result. The initiated land invasions became fully

supported by the government. These invasions were marshalled by groups of landless peasants led by war veterans, ZANU PF youth and the militia. The police, military and secret security agents backed up the groups of invaders and provided logistical support (McGregor 2002:10). As well as coordinating and facilitating these occupations, the army made sure that there were no attacks by the white farmers on the invaders because the farmers had promised resistance and to shoot at the illegal invaders.

The process of invading and evicting the white commercial farmers and their workers who were regarded as supporting opposition political parties was brutal and resulted in fatalities. In a carefully coordinated campaign starting on 26 February 2000, gangs armed with axes and pangas invaded white-owned farms across the country (Sachikonye 2003:36). During this time of Jambanja, President Mugabe and the war veterans' leaders, such as Chenjerai Hunzwi and Joseph Chinotimba, were deliberately deploying the language and symbols of the liberation war (Chaumba 2003:8). Violence perpetrated on the farmers and their farm workers can be viewed as threefold. Firstly, grabbing of property belonging to the farmers can be assumed to be violent because there was no mutual consensus on the process. Secondly, it was instituted as retribution because the farmers were heavily sponsoring the MDC to topple the ZANU PF government. Thirdly, the white farmers had instructed their workers to vote NO to the ZANU PF proposed constitution that was to legalize compulsory acquisition of land without compensation in the 2000 referendum. The first objective of the invasions was to seize the land and thus punish the white farmers for their political stance, and the second was to close off the commercial farming areas to campaigning by opposition parties (Sachikonye 2003:36). The overall objective of the invasions during this phase was to prevent a repetition of the referendum defeat. However, violence spilled from the farms and affected anyone sympathetic to MDC, anywhere in the country. Several civil servants, teachers, journalists, and residents of rural areas believed to support opposition parties were

victimized for having campaigned for the rejection of the constitution and also for supporting MDC.

The land invasion process was fashioned to bring back memories of the liberation struggle and to invigorate the invaders' desire to accomplish the main objective of The Second Chimurenga of repossessing the land. Thus, the emphasis on wartime methods of political mobilization such as all-night vigil meetings known as pungwe base meetings, and the considerable use of coercion and violence against both farm workers and farmers, was paramount. The idea of pungwe base meetings was obviously to weed out the reincarnation of the wartime sell-outs in the form of the MDC which was being funded and supported by the white commercial farmers. The pungwe base became the launch-pad and platform to coerce people to denounce the opposition political party while promoting the idea that the whites were using their puppets (MDC) to block redistribution of the land. Hence, all elements that were found to support the opposition were dealt with ruthlessly.

Thus, the period between July 2000 and the end of 2001 would witness a concerted implementation of an agrarian revolution - or the Third Chimurenga - and one vehicle of implementation for this phase was termed Operation Tsuro (Operation Rabbit) (Chitiyo 2009:4). This involved approximately 1,500 war veterans, 1,000 soldiers of the 5th Brigade, 300 CIO operatives, approximately 200 members of the police, and 5-6,000 ZANU PF volunteers, including ZANU PF youth members. These were under the leadership of the Joint Operations Command (JOC), popularly known as the Securocrats. JOC is the supreme organ for the coordination of state security in Zimbabwe. Operation Tsuro had three objectives, which included forcibly taking over the farms of the 1,600 white commercial farmers, and intimidating and using violence against known or suspected opposition supporters to ensure that they voted for the ruling party. Operation Rabbit, which began in 2000, had three main facets (Sachikonye 2003:37). The first facet was command and control which was undertaken by a coordinated group from the police, the Central Intelligence

Organization (CIO), the war veterans through the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA), and, for a brief period, the Ministry of Information. This group met for regular briefings to discuss the direction of Jambanja (a name given to violent land invasions) (Chaumba 2003). The second facet was the establishment of operational zones meant to identify loyal and opposition zones and communities, with the ultimate aim of converting rural areas into politically liberated pro-ZANU PF zones. The loyal zones were rewarded, and the opposition zones punished. The third facet was the ground troops which were the land-hungry peasants (armed with farming implements such as picks and axes) led by war veterans with the state acting as armourer. By the time Operation Tsuro ended, it was estimated that 700 farmers had been driven off their land, 135 opposition members had been killed, and dozens more traumatized by violence (Chitiyo 2009:4).

The regime has thus used the state implements of violence to step up the party's political campaign against the commercial farmers and the opposition political party. Land invasions have been used to punish the white commercial farmers who had openly funded the opposition MDC. Land invasions were also used as encouragement for the electorate to pledge their support for ZANU PF in the subsequent elections. Land was also used as bait to lure the disgruntled war veterans who were fast losing faith in the ZANU PF government because of its failure to honour the liberation war promises. Land redistribution played an important role in correcting the long overdue unequal distribution and access to resources as well as in empowering black people. The attacks on farm workers and opposition political party supporters have been used as punishment for rejecting the proposed referendum and supporting the opposition MDC. This move was to maintain ZANU PF political hegemony and to weaken the threatening MDC.

2.6-Operation Murambatsvina

In May 2005, in the aftermath of the March 2005 parliamentary elections which illustrated that ZANU PF had lost political control of Zimbabwe's urban areas, the

security apparatus of the government launched a massive violent urban clean-up campaign codenamed Operation Murambatsvina (Operation Restore Order). Murambatsvina, like Gukurahundi, is a Shona word that literally means 'sweep out the dirt' or 'clean out the rubbish', and in this case the 'dirt' was the urban poor of Zimbabwe. 'Sweeping' refers to the actions of the military and the Zimbabwe Republic Police backed up by municipal police, when they smashed, burned and destroyed the homes, businesses and livelihoods of about a million Zimbabweans (Ndlovu 2008:217). Operation Murambatsvina, just like Gukuruhundi, was meant to clean up the unwanted elements in particular parts of the country which threatened ZANU PF hegemony. This operation was justified as a strategy to eradicate illegal dwellings and to eliminate informal trade. Operation Murambatsvina was described by the government as an attempt to control economic saboteurs who were operating the black market and to improve the quality of urban housing stock by ensuring that planning permission and building regulations were obeyed as well as restoring order and sanity (Bird and Busse 2007:5). However, the assumption was that ZANU PF had sought to destroy the political support base of the opposition MDC by sending people to the rural areas where they came from. Ironically rural areas are a political support base for ZANU PF. The scope of Operation Murambatsvina was wide and the main victims were younger, unemployed families whom the state security agents saw as potential recruits for social unrest (Bratton and Masunungure 2006:21).

ZANU PF has a proven history of resorting to acts of violence whenever it comes head to head with a threatening political competitor. After independence ZAPU was a potential menace and Gukurahundi was unleashed to Matabeleland and parts of Midlands during the early years of the 1980s. Activities of dissidents in these provinces were a justification for the terror campaign that caused more than 20,000 civilians to lose their lives. The formation of MDC in 1999 was a huge blow to ZANU PF's political dominance and an operation in the guise of violent land reform was instituted as a campaigning strategy. This violent operation was directed towards the white commercial farmers who were funding MDC, civil servants such as

teachers, and other perceived MDC supporters in the rural and urban areas. Operation Murambatsvina, which was launched in May 2005 after the March 2005 election in which MCD had performed extremely well, should therefore be viewed as consistent with ZANU PF's policy of intolerance. Operation Murambatsvina is seen within the context of a long history of ZANU PF's failed effort to establish its rule as hegemonic through consent rather than coercion and threats (Moore 2008:25). Operation Murambatsvina appeared as an example of a post-election retribution by Mugabe's regime mainly against opposition movement that had become strongly rooted in urban centres (Sachikonye 2011:27). The election result had proved that the political support base for opposition were urban areas -hence the need for political retribution. This observation also tallies with the idea of threatening ZANU PF's political hegemony given that those who were viewed as potential protesters were mostly opposition supporters and the success of the forecasted strikes would mean an upgrading of MDC political status.

Economists and activists speculated that the operation may have been an effort by the Zimbabwean government to regain economic and political control in the aftermath of the 31 March 2005 parliamentary elections, thereby returning the country to a system of political patronage overseen by ZANU PF officials, based on the fact that the program was aimed at unlicensed businesses. The government's real motive seemed to have been to recapture official control over sales taxes and hard currencies - hence the decision to blame black marketers for hoarding goods, creating artificial shortages, and driving up prices (Bratton and Masunungure 2006:25). This was to be accompanied by the seizure of the US dollars and South African Rand that were freely circulating in the informal sector after failing to extract such reserves from commercial farms, industrial firms, and international hotel chains. Bird and Busse (2007:7) allude to three alternative explanations which were suggested to have prompted the ZANU PF government to embark on the clean-up campaign. The first was a desire to punish opposition supporters, many of whom were urban-based, and to tighten control over the population. The second was to disperse potential sources of

political agitation from urban areas to rural areas because in rural areas people could be disciplined more easily and less transparently. The third was that if the informal sector were crushed, the control of the economy would return firmly to the government and the population's dependence on the state for food would increase, reducing scope for opposition. Warned by the Central Intelligence Organization that price increases and commodity shortages could spark food riots, the Joint Operations Command seems to have recommended a pre-emptive strike to nip protest in the bud and disperse prospective demonstrators to the rural hinterland (Bratton and Masunungure 2006:25). The then Minister of State Security, Didymus Mutasa, had warned of the possibility of spontaneous uprising in urban areas as a result of food shortages and economic crisis (Sachikonye 2011:27).

On May 19 2005, the Chairperson of the Harare Commission announced that the city of Harare, with the assistance of the Zimbabwe Republic Police, would demolish all unlicensed dwellings, marketplaces, and other illegal structures within the city limits in an effort to stop all forms of illegal activity. Five days later, the city of Harare issued an enforcement order pursuant to Section 32 of the Regional, Town and Country Planning Act, stating that demolition of all illegal structures would commence on June 20 2005 (Nicolai 2006:818). No one in his right senses can dispute that this was not enough time for the affected people to either seek legal assistance or brace themselves for the upcoming disaster. It was also not even proper for the government to come up with such an operation to destroy the homes and informal business establishments given the economic crisis that was at hand and the shortage of accommodation in urban areas at the time. By indiscriminately bulldozing shantytowns without giving effective notice or providing residents with sufficient opportunity to comply with housing statutes, the Zimbabwean government violated its own laws (Kreykes 2010:338). Destroying illegal dwellings and structures requires that residents be served with notice in the form of an enforcement order and given one month to either appeal or come into compliance before action can be taken to eliminate unlicensed structures. No individualized notice was given to residents

during the Operation. This is a clear indication of the regime's defiance and failure to abide by the rule of law, accountability and transparency which are fundamental principles of good governance.

The police spokesman Chief Superintendent Oliver Mandipaka told the state media that the police would leave no stone unturned in their endeavour to flush out economic saboteurs (Bratton and Masunungure 2006:23). The army and the police swept through the nation arbitrarily arresting flea-market traders, and dismantling, torching, and demolishing thousands of structures serving as homes, market stalls and businesses. The police forced citizens to destroy their own property while beating those who resisted arrest or refused to participate in the demolition of their own homes (Hughes 2007:325). They confiscated or destroyed the goods on sale including food stuffs, flowers, clothes, shoes, and curios, as well as arresting the traders, and assaulting anyone who resisted. The affected people, who had nowhere to seek refuge, were bundled and shoved into lorries and trucked to hastily established and unprepared transit camps where they were left in the open with minimal shelter - often no more than plastic sheeting in the cold.

The scale and magnitude of the destruction and violations of the rights of the Zimbabwean people caused by this operation prompted the U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan to send Special Envoy Anna Tibaijuka to Zimbabwe to report on the scope of the crisis and present recommendations on how to address the humanitarian problems (International Crisis Group Working to Prevent Conflict Worldwide 2005:1). Tibaijuka's report strongly condemned the forced displacement and suggested that the Zimbabwean government could not handle the consequent crisis. The local people referred to the destructive operation as Tsunami: a reflection of its speed, ferocity and the havoc it wreaked on the lives of the people who lost their homes or jobs, and those who were affected indirectly. It is estimated that some 700,000 people in cities across the country lost their homes, their source of livelihood, or both and indirectly, a further 2.4 million people were affected to

varying degrees (Tibaijuka 2005:7). The report also indicated that education for thousands of school-age children was disrupted. Hundreds of thousands of women, men and children were made homeless, without access to food, water and sanitation, or health care. Government figures suggested that 92,460 dwelling units had been razed, leading to around 570,000 people, or 133,534 households, losing their homes; a further 98,000 were reported to have lost their informal sector livelihoods (Potts 2006:276). Many of the sick, including those with HIV and AIDS, no longer had access to care. The vast majority of those directly and indirectly affected were the poor and disadvantaged segments of the population.

It is important to express that whatever the motivation behind the crackdown was, it had profound social-economic and political consequences. The United Nations described it as a disastrous venture that provoked a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions. It is clear that violence was unleashed on the citizenry and this caused untold suffering when most of the victims lost their livelihood and homes, and some had to endure the harshness of the cold winter time, not to mention those who lost their lives. The implementation of Operation Murambatsvina violated not only national statutory law, but also Zimbabwe's Constitution (Kreykes 2010:338). During Operation Murambatsvina, many evictees were forced to board trucks that transported them to rural outposts where they were detained against their will. Murambatsvina was also a direct violation of the Zimbabwean Constitution's guarantee against the arbitrary deprivation of property. The Constitution clearly states that government seizure of property is permissible only when the authority acquiring or destroying such property gives reasonable notice of its intent to do so, allows time for the owner of the property to contest the acquisition by appeal to the courts, and pays fair compensation.

2.7-Conclusion
This chapter sought to explore the Zimbabwean culture of political violence and modern-day virtues of good governance exhibited in different historical periods to

provide an understanding of how the current political dynamics are connected to the past occurrences and political culture. It is important to reiterate that throughout Zimbabwean political history, there are virtues and principles of good governance, authoritarianism as well as political oppression. However, the revolutionary government successfully assimilated and institutionalized democratic principles and norms in both local and national governance structures. The people were allowed to participate actively in politics and to make decisions in almost all spheres of life. The principles still play a significant role in the governance system of the country. The government was committed to delivery of justice, human rights protection, and guaranteeing political freedoms and the rule of law. Accordingly, there have been several legal cases where the state lost. Some human rights activists have won cases against the government while opposition political parties appealed against the use of violence and other fraudulent electoral practices. This is a sign of the rule of law and commitment to democracy and good governance. However, the nation is still grappling with political conflicts, election violence and succession issues, both at national level politics and in individual institutions like political parties. These political issues have resulted in some sections of the society subverting and abusing democratic norms, human rights, justice and the rule of law. The courts of law have on a number of occasions been manipulated to rule in favour of the state in cases where the state had acted unlawfully. The ZANU PF government has been - for instance - caught up in controversial election violence which still overwhelms the political affairs of the country. The use of state-sponsored violence against opposition political party candidates and supporters is at the centre of the current political conflict and election dispute in the country. There are severe leadership wrangles and acts of violence which date back to the liberation struggle. Opposition politics and dissenting voices have not been tolerated during the pre-colonial period within the ethnic groups, during the liberation struggle, and in the post-independence era in Zimbabwe despite the democratic institutions and competitive multi-party elections being practised today. This culture of intolerance and repression has also been practised by the colonial government on the black majority and this was one of the

reasons for the war of the 1970s. Ironically, the revolutionary government is violating the same right which the liberation movements fought for. The perpetual use of election violence, restrictions on freedom to participate in politics, and bad governance, has resulted in an economic quandary and the persistence of political illegitimacy on the part of the current Zimbabwean government.

Chapter Three: Conceptual deliberations

3.0-Introduction

This chapter deals with the conceptual constructions which are intrinsically connected to the issues of democracy, election violence and the protection of civil liberties which many countries and Zimbabwe in particular, grapple with during the process of transition to democracy. The chapter contains an analysis of relevant concepts and ideas which are correlated to the current Zimbabwean political conflict and governance challenges, such as electoral authoritarianism, the meaning of democracy, democratic elections, violence, election violence and the state. This is to demonstrate the links, complexities, controversies and dynamics involved in the transition process from electoral authoritarian regimes to democracies. While Zimbabwe has demonstrated commitment to democratic principles, this brighter side has been stained mostly by state-sponsored acts of violence. These acts of violence derail the electoral process into bloody confrontations which stifle the whole exercise from being free and fair.

3.1-Electoral Authoritarianism (EA)

The demise of the cold war ushered in fundamental challenges and threats of collapse to several authoritarian regimes and undemocratic systems all over the world. The spread of democracy forced most of the dictators around the world, be they in Latin America, Africa or Eurasia to reconfigure in order to remain relevant. The authoritarian leaders therefore resorted to pseudo-democratic principles as a means of complying with internal and external demands to democratize. Most of these regimes today are formally pursuing basic norms of democratic elections in a deceitful way as a way of holding on to political power. One of the major reforms assimilated and embraced by the authoritarian regimes and several dictators is the permitting of multi-party competitive elections. Multi-party competitive elections have been manipulated by several dictators in order for opposition political parties to enjoy just the privilege of contesting political power which is almost impossible to acquire. This new

category of governance system that combines authoritarian rule with formally democratic elections has invaded the whole world since the late 1990s. These new forms of authoritarianism do not fit into our classic categories of one-party, military, or personal dictatorships (Schedler 2002:36). The category thus, has been given many names, including "hybrid regimes" (Diamond 2002), "illiberal democracies" (Zakaria 1997), "semi-authoritarian regimes" (Ottaway 2003), "pseudo democracies" (Diamond 1999) and "electoral authoritarianism" (Schedler 2006). This study adopts 'electoral authoritarianism' by Schedler (2006) as regimes which combine democratic principles with dictatorship.

Schedler defines electoral authoritarian as regimes which conduct regular multi-party elections at all levels of government but which seriously and systematically violate the will of the majority and basic democratic standards (Schedler 2002:36). Electoral authoritarianism regimes are therefore civilian regimes in which formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the primary means of gaining power. At the same time, electoral fraud, election manipulation, civil liberties violations and abuse of state and media resources, skew the electoral playing field such that the regime cannot be labelled democratic (Diamond 2002:29). These regimes hold elections, tolerate some form of pluralism and inter-party competition but severely violate the minimal democratic norms in an endeavour to remain in power. Thus electoral authoritarian regimes have constitutional provisions which enshrine democratic electoral norms of multi-party elections but in practice they violate the essence by failing to meet the substantive test, or do so only ambiguously. In form, the electoral authoritarian regimes have the characteristics of democracies such as constitutions, principles of good governance, independent media and the holding of regular multi-party elections. However, they are ruled by authoritarian elites who remain in power through deceitful means of manipulation and coercion.

According to the definition and characterization, electoral authoritarian regimes manipulate democratic institutions by engaging in electoral gerrymandering, overt

election fraud, election violence, and intimidation of opposition supporters and opposition candidates in order to win elections. Independent media exist while opposition political parties are able to operate and criticize the government in the media. However, opposition politicians, judges, journalists, human rights activists, and other government critics are subject to harassment or arrest, and in some cases they are violently attacked by state-sponsored perpetrators. Independent media is frequently threatened, attacked, and in some cases, suspended, closed, or taken over by government allies (Levitsky and Way 2010:8). Many of these electoral authoritarian regimes rarely separate power to the point that the Head of State controls the judiciary and the legislature. These arms of the state protect the incumbent authoritarian leaders by allowing undemocratic practices such as election fraud, institutional manipulation, violent repression, suppression of justice and patronage distribution to create an uneven playing field. Electoral bodies such as electoral commissions, courts of law and registrars' offices are filled with regime loyalists who in most cases influence the electoral processes by manipulating voter's roll, registration processes, and even election results. This always severely interrupts and ruins the democratization process.

Electoral competition between opposition political parties and incumbent political parties is always compromised in favour of the incumbent. The incumbent's abuse of the state institutions places both the incumbent political parties and leaders at a significant advantage against their opponents and thus makes competition real yet unfair (Kou and Kao 2011:9). Incumbents may place barriers on opposition parties' ability to campaign freely, generate a pro-government media bias, fill electoral commissions and courts with their supporters, or resort to the tried and tested methods of stuffing ballot boxes as well as manipulating vote tabulations. The competition is therefore very unfair because incumbents enjoy political advantages by way of abusing state resources and employing authoritarian methods. However, in all political systems which hold elections, incumbents have structural advantages over challengers who always have fewer opportunities to win elections. Incumbent

advantage also exists in a democracy which is characterized by widespread clientelism and politicization of state bureaucracies which is not compatible with democracy. Incumbents go into the election with more attributes due to their previous success stories and achievements in office. The incumbents have easier access to the state media, ample campaigning resources, and political privileges to their name.

These tactics can be employed by both incumbents in electoral authoritarian regimes and in democratic governments. However, at some point the incumbent abuse goes beyond the usual concept of 'incumbent advantage' to the point where it undermines political competition (Chu 1999: 63). The question of where to draw the line between acceptable incumbent advantage and a truly uneven playing field is a difficult one. However, uneven playing fields exist where the state institutions are widely abused for partisan ends, the incumbent party is systematically favoured at the expense of the opposition, and the opposition's ability to organize and compete in elections is seriously handicapped (Levitsky and Way 2010:9). It is true that electoral authoritarian regimes are characterized by a highly uneven electoral playing field between incumbents and opposition. Elections held under such circumstances are liable to be regarded as unfair whether practised in a democracy or authoritarian regime. Nonetheless, the incumbents can also be at a disadvantage due to past failures, which may also put the opposition contenders at an advantage.

Unfair advantages between candidates differentiate more electoral authoritarianism elections from democratic elections and this determines the degree of unfairness of both elections. Although the ruling party has some advantages in competition it does not severely undermine the fairness of elections and the playing arena is virtually even in a democracy (Kou and Kao 2011:9). This contradicts Andreas Schedler's assertion that elections may be considered democratic if and only if they fulfil each item of democratic norms; gross violation of any one condition invalidates the fulfilment of all the others. The mathematical analogy is multiplication by zero, rather than addition (Schedler 2002:41). While it is very difficult for all the systems which

hold elections to satisfy all the democratic norms, elections in electoral authoritarian regimes are necessary, though not a sufficient condition for modern democracy. The most important thing is that these regimes increase electoral fairness and political liberalization regularly in order to move ahead with the democratization process.

Elections are 'free' when the legal barriers to entry into the political arena are low, when there is substantial freedom for candidates and supporters of different political parties to campaign and solicit votes, and when voters experience little or no coercion in exercising their electoral choices (Diamond 2002:28). Elections are fair when they are administered by a neutral authority and when the electoral administration is sufficiently competent as well as resourceful to take specific precautions against fraud in the voting and vote counting. They are free also when the police, military, and courts treat competing candidates and parties impartially throughout the process. This is difficult to achieve in an authoritarian regime where the arms of the state have been usurped by the dictators who appoint and dictate the terms and conditions of work to these institutions. The heads of the state appoint the generals and court judges who are loyal to them. The electoral process can be regarded as fair when all contenders have access to the public media and also when independent monitoring of the voting and vote-counting is allowed at all locations for some considerable time during the electoral period (Lindberg 2007:9). It is not enough to have these observers only a month before the election date because electoral manipulation, fraud, violence and intimidation of voters and candidates can take place far before the arrival of the observers. The courts and the police are supposed to adhere to clear and impartial procedures for resolving complaints and disputes in a non-partisan manner. Elections may be considered non-competitive when: major candidates are excluded (via bans, imprisonment, or exile); repression or legal controls make it impossible for opposition parties to sustain public campaigns; or fraud is so massive that there is no observable relationship between public preferences and electoral results (Levitsky and Way 2010:7).

Several electoral authoritarian regimes have, however, been put to task by opposition political parties that have seriously and fully utilized the democratic principles and institutions. However, the threats staged by these opposition political parties trigger widespread violations of the same basic norms and best practices of democratic elections by the regimes. When threatened by the opposition political parties, the electoral authoritarian regimes resort to naked electoral fraud, patronage, and abuse of state institutions and the media (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013). To a greater extent, the regimes employ deadly state-sponsored election violence against opposition political candidates and potential voters before, during, or after elections. The incumbent political party and leadership monopolize and control the state institutions, thereby turning the electoral institutions into private entities of the incumbent political party. This not only compromises the elections, but also impedes the envisaged transition of these regimes into a democracy. Access to resources is uneven and the incumbents in electoral authoritarian regimes use the state to create or maintain resource disparities that hinder the opposition's ability to compete. Incumbents may make direct partisan use of state resources, while denying other parties access to those resources, and, in a few cases, this state financing is legal. In Guyana and Zimbabwe during the 1980s, special public ministries existed to finance the activities of the governing party (Levitsky and Way 2010:9).

Opposition political players competing in these regimes are not only handicapped by a highly uneven playing field but also compete at their own risk because the electoral processes are very dangerous. Militarization of election violence is one of the deadly electoral malpractices used by electoral authoritarian regimes to defy transition to democratic governance, as well as a plethora of institutional principles being randomly flouted. The police and the military are the arbiters of last instance over the electoral arena, because the nested game of authoritarian elections is inherently conflictive, and the security apparatus often has the last word (or the last bullet) in deciding the grave conflicts they provoke (Schedler 2006:19). Sometimes even if the opposition political parties and candidates win the election, they may not be allowed

to assume power, for example in Zimbabwe when the opposition MDC-T won the March 2008 elections. Electoral authoritarian rulers tend to employ all sorts of strategies to hold on to power because quitting executive power after defeat may be a painful choice.

However, to qualitatively differentiate the electoral authoritarian regimes from democratic governments is tricky because the electoral processes differ in regard to their respective degree of electoral fairness. The category of democracy is a cluster of regimes with a higher level of electoral fairness than electoral authoritarianism. Thus electoral authoritarianism can be understood as a cluster of regimes where elections are severely manipulated to favour the incumbent government (Wahman 2012:26). Schedler (2002:42) defined a plethora of election manipulations used by authoritarian leaders to minimize competition and to contain the troubling uncertainty of electoral outcomes. They create reserved positions for key decision-makers to eliminate potential threats, while letting voters fill official positions that are not within crucial policy areas. In 2008, the President appointed 12 additional members and 8 provincial governors who held reserved seats in parliament. The other 10 seats were held by traditional chiefs who were chosen by their peers. All the appointed members are loyal to the President and the ruling party. There are also efforts by the regime to split or marginalize inexperienced opposition parties through killing, banning, or disqualifying candidates, or excluding them via electoral laws. To some extent, opposition political parties are prevented from disseminating campaign messages via media or public forums, thereby supressing their civil and political liberties. There is also massive disenfranchisement of other sections of the electorate effected through discriminatory voter registration processes, identification requirements, and discriminatory voting procedures. There were severe voter registration irregularities in Zimbabwe's 2013 general election. There were about 750,000 missing urban voters and at least 400 000 young voters from the electoral roll (ZESN 2013:30). The number of people registered exceeded the total population, and the number of people on the roll who were 100 years or over stood at 116,195. More than a million people

on the voter lists were either dead or had moved away. The most common form of manipulation is intimidation of voters to stop them from exercising free choice or attempting to buy the vote of poor people.

Democratization, however, is a gradual process where elections become less manipulated over time, or vice versa, and one cannot expect an authoritarian regime to shift directly to democracy by suddenly complying with all the democratic norms stated. The revolutionary government in Zimbabwe inherited autocratic governance structures and institutions established by the colonial government. Naturally this is not achieved overnight. It is also important to acknowledge that democratization is not a linear process, where the level of democracy is always on the rise. On the other hand, the process from electoral authoritarianism may take a very long time, also manifesting retrogressive tendency where the regime becomes more authoritarian and/or more stable. Zimbabwe in 2008 had advanced tremendously in its democratization process that resulted in the opposition MDC-T winning ahead of ZANU PF. The regime had created a conducive electoral environment that enabled the electorate to freely express their political needs and preferences. Nevertheless, the progress has been tainted by state-sponsored election violence which did not totally reverse the gains made during the democratization process. This also demonstrates some instances of instability which the cluster of electoral authoritarianism regimes experience during democratization. The process can thus exhibit forward and backward movements or even moments of stability for a very long time. Another very important point to highlight is that elections held in electoral authoritarian regimes do not guarantee a transition into a democracy but rather can stabilize the regime or lengthen the democratization process. Zimbabwe has now been governed for 35 years by the same leader - President Mugabe - and the same political party - ZANUPF - which has been dominating the political arena for several years. The regime has existed much longer than several military regimes in the world.

At the same time an opposition victory should not be seen as the moment of transition from autocratic to democratic rule as claimed by Przeworski et al. The conditions in Zimbabwe currently indicate that the regime has not adequately liberalized. The opposition victory in 2008 happened before total liberalization. The ZANU PF regime conformed to the SADC electoral guidelines since it was under severe pressure from the regional body resulting in the opposition gaining more ground. The conducive electoral environment which was peaceful enabled the electorate to vote for the opposition MDC-T against ZANU PF. The election outcomes later ignited violence and this means that more transformation was still needed for the process of democratization to be complete. Liberalization is sometimes aborted and this may lead to renewed repression, and successful transitions to democracy are usually characterized by constant vicissitudes: threats by the hardliners to lead a coup, efforts by the softliners to use the threats of the hardliners to bolster their own situation, real if temporary reverses in the process of liberalization, or authoritarian crackdowns (Mainwaring 1989:5).

Most of the electoral authoritarian regimes partially satisfy the above itemized conditions but the elections are competitive in that major opposition candidates are not excluded; however, elections are often not free and fair. However, electoral contests are subject to severe, widespread, and systematic state manipulation because the regime and the leadership want to keep power at all cost while they compete with the challengers (opposition political parties). The rulers reap at least some of the benefits of democratic elections (legitimation, coalition building, and international recognition) while diminishing their prospects of losing power (Levitsky and Way 2010:4). The reason is that in electoral authoritarian regimes, the desire is not to attain high quality democracy but the indispensable attributes of minimal democracy which distinguishes this category from autocracy. However, holding regular multi-party elections has some degree of democratizing effect on electoral authoritarian regimes despite the fact that the rulers may want to consolidate and retain power with a democratic disguise. Staffan Lindberg is of the opinion that regular multi-party

elections (even rigged ones) can indeed have a democratizing effect on the regime in the long run although in the short term it may seem that unfair elections are only harmful to democratic aspirations. Equal legal opportunities for participation in terms of suffrage, organization of political parties, and their right to participate as contestants in elections are therefore criteria for inclusion of elections as having the potential to have democratic qualities (Lindberg 2007:9).

Accordingly, electoral authoritarian rulers use elections as a strategy to legitimize their rule and obtain international and national recognition in order to remain in power. This is likely to perpetuate autocratic rule rather than achieve genuine democracy since several regimes have compromised the notion of democratization for decades. Nonetheless, many electoral authoritarian regimes fail to contain the national demands for democratic transitions through manipulating the established democratic norms, thereby resorting to open election violence. This is mostly done to constrain transition by making the entire electoral process unfree and unfair. Election violence, impunity, electoral manipulation, political suppression and intolerance by the regime usually result in the regime losing political power because the electorate re-aligns with the opposition that will be preaching democracy. At the same time, falling out with the international community attracts some punitive measures in the form of sanctions and this will result in economic deterioration or collapse. The Zimbabwean scenario is a good example of the wrath of the economic sanctions imposed on President Mugabe's regime since 2002 that resulted in the country's economic collapse.

Despite of the similarities in the manner in which democratizing governments fraudulently win elections and manipulate democratic principles, the Zimbabwean regime has displayed a high level of democratic competency in its democratization process. Regular multi-party elections have been competitive to a greater extent and this is demonstrated by the freedom given to the opposition political parties to campaign and participate freely in the national and local electoral processes. For

example, during the February 2000 referendum, the people were allowed to vote for or against the government-proposed constitution. About 58% of voters rejected the proposed constitution and the government honoured the outcome. The constitution was never imposed on the people as could have happened in an autocratic regime. During the same year, the newly formed MDC participated in a general parliamentary election barely 9 months after its formation and managed to win 45.6% of the votes and 57 seats against ZANU PF which won 47.2% of the votes and 62 seats (ZESN 2008). This was a remarkable shift in the Zimbabwean parliament and this enabled the opposition voices to be heard by the government. The inclusion of the opposition in government with such a large number of members of parliament was important for checks and balances. This meant that there were no arbitrary and unilateral decisions to be adopted and implemented by the ZANU PF government without the approval of the opposition. Two years later, the MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai challenged President Robert Mugabe in the 2002 presidential elections. President Robert Mugabe narrowly defeated Morgan Tsvangirai by winning 56.06% to 42.10% of the total votes. This is an indication of the competiveness and inclusivity of the electoral system which the government has been engaged in. The March 2008 elections have been labelled the most free and fair elections both internally and externally. These elections were won by the opposition MDC-T and the Presidential candidate Morgan Tsvangirai ahead of the ruling ZANU PF and President Mugabe. Unfortunately the country plunged into bloody election violence ahead of the runoff scheduled for June 2008. However, a truce was reached and there was a Government of National Unity in 2009.

3.2-The Meaning of Democracy

Debates about the concept of democracy are old indeed and the concept remains contested despite countless attempts by academics and practitioners to find common ground, especially when it comes to a common definition. It will be challenging and far from straightforward as well in this study to come up with a universal notion, let alone to authenticate a collective definition of democracy. Schmitter and Karl

(1993:39) once asserted: 'we are stuck with democracy as a catchword of contemporary political discourse'. On the other hand Dahl (2000:3) claimed that the twenty-five centuries during which democracy has been discussed, debated, supported, attacked, ignored, practised, established, destroyed and then sometimes re-established, have not, it seems, produced agreements on some of the fundamental questions about democracy. Thus, in the process of its development, democracy has meant different things to different people in different periods. Democracy cannot be sufficiently defined even in terms of the liberties or freedom or human rights which underlie the Gastil (1980, 1990) or Freedom House scales. Accordingly, defining and rationalizing democracy in terms of the liberties or freedoms or human rights which are conventionally associated with the Freedom House scales and other internationally recognized measures is also not adequate. Przeworski (1996:19) in this respect affirmed that the American concept of freedom perceives it as a condition, not as a predicate of actions, and people are free even if they never exercise their freedom. Democracy accordingly is a contested concept because of its positive connotation and aspects which manifest themselves in other political systems, such as electoral authoritarianism. Some scholars conversely hesitate to use the term democracy without adding qualifying adjectives because of the ambiguity that surrounds it (Schmitter and Karl 1996:49). Studies of elections, democratization and transition tend to avoid debating normative democratic theory (Lindberg 2006:27).

However, with the emergence of electoral authoritarian regimes which tend to embrace several democratic attributes, principles and norms in a concealed form, the meaning and definition of democracy needs to be more precise and conclusive. Without a robust definition with specific parameters which demarcate clear boundaries it will be very difficult to distinguish democratic governments from these electoral authoritarian regimes. The persistence of democratic attributes and norms in electoral authoritarian regimes blurs genuine and meaningful democracy even though it is known that electoral authoritarian regimes are not democratic governments. For instance the practice of regular multi-party competitive

elections, a broad range of civil liberties, and independent media, among others, help these regimes to masquerade as democracies. In this regard, this research seeks to explore different definitions put forward by different democratic scholars and theorists in an endeavour to unmask these electoral authoritarian regimes which are disguising as democratises. This research study, however, does not intend to adopt, endorse or propose a particular definition, but rather to unpack and analyze the proposed ones. The idea is to elaborate and expound those important and core aspects of the proposed definitions in order to help differentiate the two political categories (electoral authoritarian regimes and democratic governments). The research explores both the minimalist and maximalist philosophies in an attempt to put into perspective the most agreeable meaning and the scope of elements required for a polity to be classified as a democracy.

The body of minimalist democratic theory is drawn from several theorists and thinkers such as Przeworski (1986), Popper (1962), Alvarez, Cheibub and Przeworski (1996) and others who coined their thoughts from Schumpeter's famous ideas on electoral competition among political elites and political parties. The minimalist perspective has defined democracy in terms of the institutionalization of politics through free and fair elections (Silander 2005:27). Free and fair elections are perceived as the symbol of the establishment of a democracy. Joseph Schumpeter (1943:242) defines democracy as 'that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote.' The definition emphasizes electoral competition but does not entail rule by the people. Accordingly, meaningful and extensive competition for decisive political leadership which is attained by means of inclusive regular elections should in this case result in the transfer of power without bloodshed. Following this thought, Alvarez, Cheibub and Przeworski (1996:4) indicate that democracy is thus a regime in which some governmental offices are filled as a consequence of contested elections. Some election competitors should lose and pave the way for winners to assume power. It is therefore not part of a democratic

process to refuse to hand over power or resort to violence after losing an election. Competition for leadership to gain power is an essential value of a democracy. Schumpeter compared the political competition for votes to the operation of the (economic) market; voters, like consumers, choose between the policies (products) offered by competing political entrepreneurs and the parties regulate the competition like trade associations in the economic sphere (Pateman 1970:4). Thus, minimalist perspective focuses on competition and selection of the powerful collective decision-makers through free and fair elections by the adult population. By this method everyone is, in principle, free to compete for leadership in free elections. In this regard, democracy is a means of protecting citizens against arbitrary rule.

The role of the voters here is very crucial in the sense that they have the power to dictate the leaders they prefer and reject those who are problematic in an attempt to protect the society from the worst politicians. However, in electoral authoritarian regimes voters are not of paramount importance since the dictators have the liberty to downplay, coerce and suppress the electorate. Nonetheless, democratic life ought to be the political struggle between representatives where voters have the ability to check the power through elections and thereby prevent the breeding of tyranny. The importance of elections in a democracy refers to the idea that procedures (form) matter because procedures are important tools for rights and liberties (Linz & Stepan 1996:3). Competition and selection of preferred decision-makers have to be implemented in a free and fair process. It is, however, sad to note that in the struggle for people's vote, some competitors and regimes resort to deceitful means such as electoral manipulation, intimidation, physical violence on the supporters of opposition political parties, and disenfranchising other sections of the citizenry from the right to vote. The political leaders force, rather than persuade, the voters to like and vote for them.

The minimalist perspective has defined democracy as a procedural system focusing on the institutionalization of politics through free and fair elections (Silander

2005:27). Free and fair elections have been perceived as the symbol of the establishment of a democracy. Both the electoral authoritarian regimes and democratic governments embrace regular multi-party elections to some extent. The assumption is that no ruler can impose himself or herself in power. However, the degree of freeness and fairness of the elections differ within the same category of regimes and also from category to category. Those elections held in electoral authoritarian regimes are usually not free or fair while in democracies they are regarded as free and fair. The people are seen in the final instance to decide which representatives will govern for a predefined length of time. Elections in this regard are meant to consolidate and confirm people's interests. From the minimalist perspective, democracy is a means of protecting citizens against arbitrary rule. This means that all people have the equal opportunity and right to participate in politics freely without coercion. Dahl refers to this as the idea of intrinsic equality. This means that when the people are allowed to participate willingly in an election, they are also being empowered to delegitimize a fraudulent election outcome. It is the governed who give the elected government and candidates the legitimacy status.

However, the minimalist conceptions of regular competitive elections which are free and fair as a central component of democracy do not conclusively guarantee a robust notion of democracy. Accordingly, beyond the procedural electoral minimum conception, maximalist scholars of democracy have advanced social prerequisites for citizens further than just a competitive free and fair election for a meaningful notion of democracy. The argument is that an inclusive concept should guarantee civil liberties, such as the freedoms of speech, association and assembly, rather than just elections. These civil liberties are severely infringed and denied in electoral authoritarian regimes. Nonetheless, Dahl (1971:221), a maximalist, coined polyarchy by adding the dimension of participation to Schumpeter's definition of democracy, with emphasis on competition. Thus polyarchy is defined as the existence of institutional guarantees: freedom to form and join organizations, freedom of expression, the right to vote, broad eligibility for public office, the right of political

leaders to compete for support and votes, the availability of alternative sources of information, free and fair elections, and that institutions for making government policies depend on votes and other expressions of preferences.

The concept of polyarchy in this case is not simply defined by an electoral process, but also by more or less inclusive citizenship and by the right of these citizens to oppose and vote out their governing officials. This is moving beyond the free competition for free vote to include the provision of complete rights of participation and contestation. The political and social freedoms are not only minimally necessary during and between elections but also as a condition for elections to be fair and competitive. This means that the civil liberties and freedoms qualify an election to be qualitatively free and fair. The social aspects guarantee an active political participation that provides the choice for the electorate to select candidates in free and fair elections and civil and political liberties that enable citizens to express themselves without fear of punishment. The attributes advanced in polyarchy raise the quality of democracy and also help to ensure the rule of law. The aspects can also foster separation of power, which in most electoral authoritarian regimes is concentrated within the executive. Larry Diamond, another maximalist, sees the definition of democracy as encompassing 'not only a civilian, constitutional, multi-party regime, with regular, free and fair elections and universal suffrage, but organizational and informational pluralism; extensive civil liberties (freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom to form and join organizations); effective power for elected officials; and functional autonomy for legislative, executive and judicial organs of government' (Diamond 1988:33).

The social dimension advanced by Dahl is important because a regime can hold competitive elections with broad participation, yet in the absence of guarantees of civil liberties, the regime is not unequivocally democratic. Many electoral authoritarian regimes fall short of this dimension; hence the continuance of meaningless elections and persistence of repression. Therefore ccertain civil rights are

needed to hold meaningful elections. The fairness of political systems is not only determined on Election Day, depending on the fairness of the expression of preferences. There also has to be fairness in the formation of preferences, and such fairness is impossible without a certain level of civil liberties, such as freedom of press, speech and association. Dahl's definition of democracy is thus inclusive of essential elements of both the minimal and maximal definitions of democracy, whereby the dimension of civil liberties which Schumpeter neglected has been embedded in contestation and participation. Therefore the civil liberties become meaningful if they are entrenched in contestation and participation.

Despite the many differences in how democracy is defined and propounded above, be it in minimalist, maximalist, processes, outcomes or in institutional terms, there are fundamental principles which are universal: that all people are equal and free, respect for human rights and the rule of law, collective deliberation, choice and participation, and representative and accountable governance. In addition, certain minimum conditions must be met in order for a system to be labelled as democratic. These essential elements are not put into practice by many electoral authoritarian regimes and this means that they are undemocratic. However, this research study gives credence to a conventional and empirical understanding of democracy propounded by Joseph Schumpeter (1947:269) and elaborated by Robert Dahl (1971:3). This is therefore a political system in which ideologically and socially different groups are legally entitled to compete for political power and in which institutional power-holders are elected by the people to represent people. Thus, democracy prioritizes the political and moral values of equality, reciprocity, and respect for the views of others.

3.3-Democratic elections

The rise of electoral authoritarianism has caused a fierce wrangle in political science, especially about the practices, procedures, quality, meaning and processes of electing political and public candidates for public offices. In most of these regimes, elections are just symbolic and are not valued the same as they are respected by democratic

governments. The question would be whether the parameters qualitatively distinguish the electoral process implemented in electoral authoritarian regimes from that of democratic governments. This research study intends to unpack the electoral process and practices practised by electoral authoritarian regimes in an endeavour to differentiate a democratic election from a non-democratic one. The idea related to this research study is to expose the undemocratic nature of elections that are associated with electoral authoritarian regimes which (Schedler 2006:3) are regarded as broadly inclusive, minimally pluralistic, minimally competitive, and minimally open.

Among other distinctive attributes that separate democratic elections from those held by electoral authoritarianism are a host of civil liberties, freedoms and rights advanced by Dahl (1971) in his concept of polyarchy. Minimalistic scholars and thinkers thus share the view that elections are a crucial concept for the functioning of a democracy and an institutionalized attempt to actualize the essence of democracy. Elections are ideal mechanisms of translating the people's power to governmental power and a fundamental component of modern democracies. The elections which have the potential to transform an electoral authoritarian regime into a democracy have to be free and fair, and competitive, based on full adult suffrage and a broad protection of the civil rights and liberties of the electorate. Free and fair elections are essential to assure the consent of the governed, which is the bedrock of democratic politics. The environment that enables a free and fair election must embrace freedom of speech, media freedoms, and tolerance of divergent political ideas.

Kirkpatrick (1984) defined democratic elections as competitive, periodic, inclusive, definitive elections in which the chief decision-makers in a government are selected by citizens who enjoy broad freedom to criticize government, to publish their criticism and to present alternatives, quoted in (Pandey 2005:18). Democratic elections are competitive in the sense that opposition parties and candidates must enjoy the freedom of speech, assembly, and movement necessary to voice their

criticism of the government openly and to bring alternative policies and candidates to the voters. Therefore elections in which opposition political parties or opposition candidates are restricted from accessing public media airwaves or restricted from holding rallies or harassed during campaigning periods are not democratic. However, this is the behaviour of several electoral authoritarian regimes towards opposition challengers. Most of the opposition political parties are drawn into the elections with the hope of gaining access to power but the regimes make sure that they do not win the race. These elections therefore do not translate into the envisaged democracy. The ruling parties in these regimes and the incumbent leaders enjoy the incumbency advantage and control of the state institutions, which are misused. These dubious electoral malpractices and rules derail the whole electoral process.

The elections are periodic in that the elected officials are accountable to the people, and they must return to the voters at prescribed intervals to seek their mandate to continue in office. While elections are regularly held in an electoral authoritarian regime, the elected leaders are usually dictators who are re-elected over and over again. The re-election of the same dictators through flawed elections again and again renders the election illegitimate and undemocratic. Inclusivity of democratic elections requires that the definition of citizen and voter must be large enough to include a large proportion of the adult population. It is regrettable that in some electoral authoritarian regimes voters are marched to the polling stations to vote by traditional leaders or by ruling party structures and instructed to vote for specific candidates. This harassment and intimidation of voters disqualifies the inclusive component of a democratic election. Elections are definitive because they determine the leadership of the government and, backed by the laws and constitution of the country, popularly elected representatives hold the reins of power. Finally, democratic elections are not limited to selecting candidates because voters can also be asked to decide policy issues directly through referendums and initiatives that are placed on the ballot. This research study adopts/recognizes this inclusive definition as its referral definition and meaning of democratic elections.

Elections may be held even in authoritarian and communist countries, but only in democratic system or polyarchy do they meet all the required conditions and can thus be called free and fair (O'Donnell 2004:14). The notion of free and fair elections is an indispensable qualitative element of a democratic election. An inclusive meaning of freeness and fairness was also adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council in 1994 which reads: 'In any State the authority of the government can only derive from the will of the people as expressed in genuine, free and fair elections held at regular intervals on the basis of universal, equal and secret suffrage' (Godwin-Gill 2006:viii). The declaration set out the meaning of universal suffrage, and the rights of citizens to vote, to join a party and to stand in an election. In this regard freeness means that all adult citizens must have the right to be registered and to vote and must be free to make their choice and have the right to establish and join parties and campaign freely within the country. Elections can to a greater extent be qualified as free when there are no constitutional obstacles for any political candidate and political party to participate in the electoral process. This also means that there must be considerable freedom for candidates and supporters of different political parties to campaign for votes while the electorate experience little or no coercion in exercising their electoral choices.

However, the assessment for the freeness and fairness of elections is usually done by regional and international observer bodies which draw their judgements from the prevailing political environment which they observe mostly during the short period of time of their stay in the country. The judgement of whether the election was 'free and fair' is usually based on these few days, the environment during the voting day and the counting process. However, election rigging, election manipulation and election violence does not only happen on the day of the election, but also far before and after election processes. Bernard Kamillius Membe, who was the head of the SADC Election Observation Mission to the 2013 harmonized elections in Zimbabwe, declared the electoral process of the 2013 Zimbabwean election to have been characterized by an atmosphere of peace and political tolerance in which political

parties and candidates were able to freely undertake their political activities unhindered. It is nonetheless very important to assess the entirety of the electoral process including the lengthy period long before the usually considered electoral period, which is just a few days before and after the Election Day. The Zimbabwean 2013 elections have been declared unfree and unfair by the local civic society organizations, local observer bodies and opposition political parties who cited a lot of irregularities, ranging from election violence, voter intimidation and harassment and verbal threats by traditional leaders. The right to vote, the registration of voters, the freedom to stand as a candidate in the election and campaign freely, and access to the media are all important events and processes in the run up to the elections and these play an important role in the legitimation of an election.

Free and fair and institutionalized elections are a central component in the democratization process because they are the most assured means of accessing political power. They are guaranteed by equal participation, equal competition, and are largely legitimate. Popular political participation is primarily exercised through voting under regulated circumstances that ensure that universal suffrage is guaranteed by law. These elections are also participatory in the sense that individuals and political parties have equal rights to exist and to field candidates to contest. Equal legal opportunities for participation in terms of suffrage, organization of political parties, and the right to participate as contestants in elections are therefore criteria for elections to have democratic qualities (Lindberg 2007:9). The integrity of political competition and participation is ensured through a highly inclusive selection of leaders and policies through regular free and fair elections engraved in civil and political liberties expressed through the freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and the freedom to join desired political organizations. Given the size and complexity of today's societies, it is generally more practical for citizens to elect representatives who will govern and make decisions on their behalf via democratic, regular, free and fair and competitive elections to hold the government accountable to the people (Diamond, Linz and Lipset 1988:4). However, in a regime that does not practise

constitutionalism and that disrespects the rule of law, this remains a challenge to the democratization process. Electoral authoritarian regimes even change the rules of the game to suit their political parties and candidates in an endeavour to put them at an advantage over the opposition challengers. Sometimes the regimes resort to open physical violence, harassment and intimidation of the electorate and this will make the whole election process not free or fair.

Political competition means the struggle for the highest executive or legislative office, and in a democracy, this struggle is channelled through specific kinds of electoral processes. Those processes are constituted by a particular set of rules governing candidate, party, voter eligibility criteria, political rights of speech, association and information, electoral management bodies, the electoral system, district boundaries, campaign contributions, voting requirements, rules for complaints and abjuration, and so on (Lindberg 2006:23). Thus, for a political system to have the potential to be democratic, it must legally provide for political participation in elections based on equal distribution of sovereignty, and provide equal shares of legal political freedoms for all citizens. To ensure this, the administration of elections which are to be qualified as free and fair must be done by a neutral and credible electoral authority. This is when the electoral administration is sufficiently competent and resourceful to take specific precautions against fraud in the voting and vote counting; when the police, military, and courts treat competing candidates and parties impartially throughout the process; when contenders all have access to the public media; when electoral districts and rules do not systematically disadvantage the opposition; when independent monitoring of the voting and vote-counting is allowed at all locations; when the secrecy of the ballot is protected; when virtually all adults can vote; when the procedures for organizing and counting the vote are transparent and known to all; when there are clear and impartial procedures for resolving complaints and disputes (Diamond 2002:29). A high level of competition in Zimbabwe has, however, been demonstrated by severe election violence and the fear by the regime of losing elections, especially in 2008 and 2013. In Zimbabwe for

example, there has been an inverse relationship between the level of real competition and the trustworthiness of official results. The more competitive the political struggle for power, the more unfair, violent and untrustworthy the regime's machinery of election rigging.

Legitimacy is perhaps the most obvious cut-off point between elections in democracies and non-democracies. Elections are not legitimate just because certain procedures have been used fairly but when actors involved consent and testify to their legitimacy (Lindberg 2006:58). Although legitimacy is often framed in terms of attitudes and sentiments, behaviour is arguably the best indicator. If the incumbent and opposition challengers genuinely support democratic elections and respect the rules of the game, the constitution and the rule of law, they are ready to accept the outcome if they have been defeated. Thus, election competitors are obliged to enhance the legitimacy of democratic elections by accepting and honouring the outcome of free and fair elections. Unrest and relative peace during pre-election periods, campaign periods, polling periods and even post-election periods, qualify an election as legitimate or otherwise. Use of violence is a core symptom of failed institutionalization (Schedler 2001). Election violence, terror attacks on political opponents, voter intimidation, attacks against the liberty and property of political adversaries, violence against election officials or electoral administrators and all other unprecedented actions which are election-related have the tendency to illegitimate an election. Democratic elections also enhance the domestic legitimacy of governments by increasing citizens' willingness to be governed if they consider the government to have followed electoral procedures fairly.

3.4-The Concept of violence

Understanding and conceptualizing violence is of paramount importance to such a research study on election violence. However, it must be noted that the concept has a wide array of elements, meanings and fields of operation which are specific and peculiar to each context under study. Violence thus is a complex concept with

conceptual meanings related to philosophical, political, and sociological spheres; hence there are misconceptions, omissions, irrelevancies, irregularities, exaggerations and misunderstandings from one case to the other as well as from time to time (Coady 2008:22). Accordingly, even when sticking to the same area of study, the phenomenon of violence still has numerous characteristics which make it difficult to generate a universal or inclusive definition. Despite such an assortment of controversies and paradoxes that embroil the concept, this research study sought to examine and analyse some of the existent definitions and conceptualize the fundamental notions. This is done to demonstrate the grievous and brutal activities perpetrated by state-sponsored actors in some electoral authoritarian regimes. It is important to express that the views and debates about the concepts can never reach closure as invariably good theoretical, methodological and moral arguments can and will be made in favour of one or another definition.

De Haan (2008) reminds us that violence is notoriously difficult to define because as a phenomenon, it is multifaceted, socially constructed and highly ambivalent. It is multifaceted in the sense that there are many different forms of violence, which are exhibited in a wide range of contexts, for example youth violence, gang violence, school violence, street violence, teen violence, dating violence, intimate violence, domestic violence, urban violence, interpersonal violence, random violence, racist violence, media violence, and others. Violence is socially constructed because who and what is considered as violent varies according to specific socio-cultural and historical conditions. In this sense, not only do views about violence differ, but feelings regarding physical violence also change under the influence of social and cultural developments. Violence is also highly ambivalent in the ways it is socially sanctioned, legitimized and institutionalized, culturally transmitted and experienced. Depending on the context and perspective, violent actions may either be condemned and considered immoral, illegal and disruptive, or admired and considered moral, legal and functional. Therefore this diversified and multifarious nature of violence as a concept means that the phenomenon is defined differently and does not only take on

many forms but also possesses very different characteristics. The present variety of explanation based on forms and types of violence is considerable and generates adequate arguments concerning how violence ought to be defined and understood.

Honderich (2002:91) defines violence as a use of physical force that injures, damages, violates or destroys people or things. It is important to realize that the meaning of violence is often conflated with that of violation which may also mean infringement. In this case physical force is viewed as resulting in the violation of norms, rights or rules. However, violence does not always require the use of physical force, for example poisoning someone is an act of violence but no physical force is needed. At the same time physical force can violate not only people, but also civil liberties, people's rights and freedoms, and even laws. The banning of private media or freedom of expression in electoral authoritarian regimes severely violates the people's rights more than physical force. In his definition, Honderich does not name the perpetrator of violence who uses physical force. Individuals are responsible for some gruesome acts of violence as are groups or sections of the community, for example the terrorist groups Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria and ISIS in Iraq and Syria. Some regimes are organizing violence against some sections of the community carried out by state-sponsored groups or the security sector.

The notion of violation has also been captured in Garver's definition of violence which states that violence in human affairs comes down to violating persons (Garver 1977:270). Garver defines four types of violence: a) Personal overt violence (overt physical assault of one person on the body of another, e.g. assault, mugging, rape, murder, police brutality); b) Overt institutional violence (people obeying orders: the extreme manifestation being war, but the category includes both riots and 'war campaigning'-type policies of law-enforcement agencies); c) Quiet personal violence (a human being deprives another person of autonomy, dignity, or the right of self-determination through the manipulation of symbols; one person driving another to suicide (psychological violence)); d) Quiet institutional violence (when people are

systematically denied access to social options open to others). The notion of violation underpins the goal of violence. The assumption here is that whenever an individual or a group of people is a victim of violent act, they are being violated in a certain way. However, it should be known that not all violent acts on people result in violation, for example when one violently pulls a child from an oncoming car which could have hit the child. The act could have been violent but the child was not violated in any way. The perpetrators of institutional violence cannot be easily identified and traced and this makes the act of violence not well defined in terms of perpetrator-victim relations.

Garver insisted that the focus on violence is not as a matter of physical force but rather as the violation of a person which is about the basic human rights which are undeniably and indissolubly connected with the fact of being a person. This accordingly implies the right to one's body and to determine what one's body does and what is done to one's body. These rights are unchallenged because without one's body one would cease to be a person. Apart from a body, what is essential to one's existence as a person is dignity. The real dignity of a person does not consist of remaining "dignified", but rather in the ability to make decisions. The right to one's body and the right to autonomy are undeniably the essential and natural rights of persons. This means that when someone is a victim of violence they have either their body or their autonomy violated, or both. The issues of freedoms and civil liberties are fundamental not only to the right to decide but also to the right to cope with the consequences of one's action. Nonetheless, the issues pertaining to autonomy are contestable when it comes to the identification of the perpetrator as well as to what extent this can be regarded as violence. The aspect of autonomy advanced by Garver is inclusive and wide to the extent of including everything that makes up the dignity of a human person.

The issue of violation of human rights and institutional violence as propounded by Garver can be viewed to include any obstacle or impediment to the fulfilment of basic

human needs and realization of human potential. This is similar to the notions advanced by John Galtung on structural violence where the perpetrators of the structural impediments are quite remote and not traceable, if not absent. He defined violence in a much broader and inclusive way to include everything undeliverable by people, saying: 'violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations (Galtung 1969:168). This wide definition of violence bundles structural violence, direct violence and cultural violence in one basket. This definition packs together everything synonymous with all human obstacles to the attainment of successful life such as socio-economic and political injustice, physical forms of violence, discrimination against minorities, debt burdens and anything that impedes self-actualization. Violence is stretched to encompass the personal, the institutional, and the cultural and is then linked to a questionable ontological account of the satisfaction of human needs, survival needs, well-being needs, and freedom needs that makes violence indistinguishable from experiences like harm, misery, unhappiness, alienation, cultural discrimination and repression (Kean 2004:35).

David Riches, however, defines violence as an act of physical hurt deemed legitimate by the performer and illegitimate by (some) witnesses (Riches 1986:8). Riches claims that violence must be seen as an act in a relationship involving two persons, which is deemed legitimate by the performer and illegitimate by some witnesses. In this definition, a dynamic and relational triangle of relationships that captures the performer of violence, the victim, and witnesses is generated. On the contrary to Riches' claims, the violator or the perpetrator more often than not performs the act of violence out of the confinements of the laws and norms (unlawfully) of the society; hence the issue of legitimacy is questionable. In this sense, violence is inherently liable to be contested on the question of legitimacy. However, in recent times, several political parties, heads of states, security sectors, and other sections of society have been abusing the privileges of the state's monopoly of the legitimate use of the implements of violence. There are blatant and illegal uses of implements of violence

for personal or group ends. There is a more general tendency of exonerating the use of violence by the state security institutions and even by individuals linked to them. Justification of acts of violence against the citizenry is more pronounced especially where the principle of separation of powers between the executive, legislature and the judiciary has been compromised. This compromise also cascades to the individual members such as those in the police force and military to empower themselves with the powers and acts of violence and justify them as legitimate. They are getting away with it in most instances mainly because of the compromised judiciary and the executive.

In Riches' definition, violence is deemed legitimate by the performer and illegitimate by (some) witnesses while the view of the victim is silent. There is no clear viewpoint posed in the definition pertaining to the victim in relation to the legitimacy of the act of violence. There are also no defined forms of violence which are classified as legitimate. Legitimate and illegitimate forms of violence tend to be ideologically or morally constructed and have more to do with variations in the extent of social outrage and in the political denial or awareness of these particular forms of violence than with the seriousness of harms. Indeed, injuries from other kinds of harms are often no less (and sometimes even more) painful and tragic than those from acts that have been defined as 'illegally violent' (Barak 2003:26). Herbert Marcuse once commented saying, 'Thanks to a kind of political linguistics, we never use the word violence to describe the actions of the police, we never use the word violence to describe the actions of the Special Forces in Vietnam. But the word is readily applied to the actions of students who defend themselves from the police, burn cars or chop down trees' (New York Times Magazine, October 27 1968:90) quoted in Coady (2008:23).

Intrinsically linked to legitimacy of the acts of violence are acts of violence which are institutionalized and legalized under the auspices of state coercive power vested within the institutions of security, the military and the police force. Those who inflict

physical pain and suffering upon others do so not because they are thugs and sadists (although they may be this), but because they are trained in the habits and skills of behaving in accordance with the logic and imperatives of the institutional system in which they are operating (Kean 2004:2). These acts of violence in a democracy are referred to as law and order meant to protect the public interest or decency against thugs and criminals, or counter-terrorism, while authoritarian rulers boast of what Weber called a power instrument of the first order for the one who controls the bureaucratic apparatus. Violence is violence whether implemented in a democratic or authoritarian state. Even if the operations are performed by professionals, the essential elements of violence manifest themselves under such circumstances and the subjects are subjected to the consequences of the actions. This legal use of violence, including inflicting serious bodily harm, up to actually killing a person, is governed by law and fixed procedure, both of which are administered by specialised agencies under the purview of the state.

Violence has been defined by Henry (2000:3) as the use of power to harm another, whatever form it takes. Harm is not only physical pain and suffering, but also occurs across dimensions beyond the physical to include psychological or emotional, material or economic, social or identity, moral or ethical, and other types of harm. Within each dimension in with violence is instituted, the harm can be of two kinds: 'harms of reduction' or 'harms of repression' (Henry and Milovanovic 1996:103). In this case harms of reduction remove or deform the person's existing status or physical stature as a human being. In other words, harm has a diminutive effect on the physical status of a human person in all the spheres of life. The victims partly experience a loss of some quality related to their existent standing. Pertaining to the physical body of the victim, this manifests itself through physical deformities, bodily pain, loss of blood, damaged organs, such as legs, hands, limbs, and other parts disturbing the efficient physical functioning of the body. The perpetrator of violence more often than not wants the victim to suffer or submit, or wants to induce fear, but in the process, physical bodily attacks usually result in severe bodily injuries. There is also

deliberate targeting of particular parts of the body during the attacks, for example cutting the ears, hands, toes or fingers of the victims. During the election violence in Zimbabwe, the perpetrators were sometimes chopping the hands of the victims from above or below the elbow which they called 'long sleeve or short sleeve' cut respectively. So there was long sleeve cut and short sleeve cut.

Physical harms therefore have a tendency of also affecting the psychological, social and economic spheres of the victim. The physical injuries can incapacitate the victims and thereby affect economic prominence and status. This is because severe injuries more often than not result in the victim being unable to fend for him or herself. If the victim has no arms or legs or any other part of the body, this will affect the work output of the body. However, more related to physical attacks on the human body, attacks are also perpetrated against property (wealth or money). Attacks on property affect the economic status of the victim. Victims are likely to have their property destroyed and this renders them liable to severe economic problems. To a greater extent, both the physical attacks on the property and body of a victim have destructive effects on the human mind and weaken a person's emotional or mental (psychology) functioning. On the other hand physical attacks have a tendency to degrade the victim's social status through the symbolic violation of human, sexual, moral and social identity rights.

In contrast, harms of repression reveal how the exercise of power acts to systematically limit another person's capability of achieving higher levels of accomplishment across any of these dimensions (Haan 2008:33). In this case violence is considered as the exercise of power over others by some individual, agency, or social process that denies those subject to it their humanity to make a difference, either by reducing them from what they are or by limiting them from becoming what they might be (Henry 2000:5). Usually, the use of force or its threat is pre-emptive and aimed at gaining dominance over others. The victims partly experience a limit or restrictions preventing them or denying them the opportunity to attain a position they

desire - a position that does not deny another from attaining her or his or their own position. This is Abraham Maslow's humanistic psychology and the idea of the drive for the fulfilment of potential (self-actualization). This dimension has the potential of broadening violence to include almost any situation that any person finds disagreeable; hence this could confuse connotation and denotation, and leave analysts referring to very different events and experiences whilst using the same conceptual apparatus.

3.5-Election violence

The dynamics of political power struggles between political candidates, and the incumbent and opposition political parties, more often degenerate into election violence and electoral manipulation. The reason that competitive multi-party elections trigger violence is simple: elections always generate the winner and loser, and the winner is entitled to implement the policy which damages the interests of the loser within the certain institutional limits (Toyoda 2012:3). As a result, fearing defeat at the ballot box, competing parties try to win elections by resorting to unscrupulous means - mostly physical violence against opposition candidates and their supporters. However, all efforts and strategies to prevent election violence are grounded in the problem or the phenomenon itself; hence the dire need to clearly understand the concept and context of election violence. This research study therefore intends to explore and deliberate on the crucial issues that characterize election violence by analysing pertinent issues advanced by different scholars and researchers.

Fischer (2002:8) defines electoral conflict and violence as any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process through threats, verbal intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced 'protection,' blackmail, destruction of property, or assassination. This includes all forms of organized acts or threats (physical, psychological, or structural) aimed at intimidating, harming, or blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during or after an election with a view of determining, delaying, or otherwise influencing an

electoral process (Albert 2007:133). Election-related violence refers to acts or threats of coercion, intimidation, or physical harm perpetrated to affect an electoral process or those that arise in the context of electoral competition (UNDP - United Nations Development Program 2009:4). The authors captured similar important issues about election violence but also highlighted other very crucial aspects differently. In most cases, members of the security forces, police, militia, party activists, gang groups and traditional leaders are some of the outstanding perpetrators of physical forms of violence in election violence-prone countries. This research study focuses more on the organized acts of violence since they are consciously and systematically used by political contenders as a means to particular political ends. The research, however, recognizes that elections more often generate spontaneous and random acts of violence mostly during the post-election period. This is ignited mostly by undesirable election outcomes and the manner in which counting and other processes would have been conducted.

One of the fundamental aspects captured in the definitions is that acts of election violence are intended to influence, intimidate, determine, harm, threaten, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process. These acts of violence can be in three dimensions: physical, psychological, or structural, according to Albert. However, the most prominent form of election violence highlighted in all definitions is physical and this is more pronounced in societies and countries affected by election conflicts, for example in Zimbabwe in 2008, or Kenya during the 2007 elections. The common physical forms of violence include beating, maiming, assassination, arson, looting, torture, arbitrary coercion, kidnapping and hostage taking, abduction, detention, property destruction, eviction, shooting, distracting campaign activities and materials, disturbing public gathering and educational activities, shutting down offices, and establishing no-go areas. The physical acts of violence have the potential to influence an electoral process by coercing the potential voters to vote for the candidate or political party preferred by the perpetrator. Usually the political parties and the candidates instigate and sponsor the perpetrators of violence, for instance in

Zimbabwe where they are state-sponsored. The acts of violence are meant to reduce voter turnout on the part of the opposition, block the potential opposition supporters from voting, demobilize opposition candidates and supporters, or manipulate and coerce voter turnout in the incumbent's favour. Violence can coerce would-be opposition voters into voting for the incumbent and also can threaten voters who would otherwise prefer to abstain into turning out to vote for the incumbent, boosting turnout rates in her favour (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013:8).

The structural forms of violence mentioned by Albert in his definition subtly infringe more on the rights and freedoms of people thereby making an election an unfair process. They are a product of structural imbalance, including coercion of citizens by government to register or vote, or unequal opportunities for political parties and candidates, for instance having all their members registered, abuse of power of incumbency, falsification of election results, and the politicization of security and electoral officials (Omotola 2010:56). However these are more institutional than physical violence, meant to injure people or property. The perpetrator of this kind of violence is difficult to find and press charges against, since they are institutional. These were not topically contentious issues, for example during election violence in the Zimbabwe 2008 election, but their effects were disastrous too. It is a fact though that those structural and institutional factors in most cases precipitate and fuel the physical forms of violence which become more pronounced and bloody. The structural and institutional driven forms of violence are capable of making people vulnerable to state manipulation and deprivation of rights and freedoms.

Albert, unlike Fischer and the UNDP, mentioned the periods during which election violence is perpetrated; namely before, during and after the election. Election violence happens at any or all of the election times: in the run-up to the elections when voters and parties are being registered and campaigning takes place, on the day of the election, and on the post-election periods when the votes are being counted and results announced (Höglund 2011:136). This can be perpetrated both by the

incumbent to avoid defeat and by opposition elements seeking to wrest political power. However, soon and well after the announcement of the election results, violence is usually perpetrated against the opposition supporters by the winning political party members and supporters as retribution. However in the case of the Zimbabwean March 2008 elections, the losing incumbent state-sponsored perpetrators of violence unleashed violence on the winning opposition political party supporters and candidates. This had been won by the opposition MDC-T of Tsvangirai ahead of ZANU PF of President Mugabe but the military launched an operation that sought to identify and punish those who had voted against Mugabe in the first presidential round (Sachikonye 2011:49). Violence was perpetrated ahead of the scheduled June 2008 presidential runoff election. Nonetheless, in particular cases violence can stretch from one general election to the other, for example in Zimbabwe where the 2008 scourge continued through the Government of National Unity until the 2013 election. It is very important to understand the types and aims of violence perpetrated during the different periods of the electoral process. It is also vital to identify the real perpetrators of violence as well as the victims of violence. The three definitions did not clearly outline the perpetrators and victims of violence.

During the pre-election periods, election violence can be perpetrated by the incumbent power-holder in order to avoid defeat, as well as by opposition political parties and candidates seeking to wrest political power from the governing party. Electoral violence is targeted at electoral stakeholders such as voters; candidates; party agents; election workers, media and monitors; electoral information such as registration data, vote results and ballots; campaign materials, such as vehicles and public address systems; electoral facilities, such as polling and counting stations; and electoral events, including campaign rallies (Höglund 2006:8). During the campaigning periods, political parties and candidates use threats, assassinations, or attacks on candidates, campaign managers, or supporters; block attendance or attack rallies; destroy headquarters or homes of candidates; instigate clashes between supporters; kidnap; tear or seize posters; carry firearms when unauthorized, etc.

Violence is also perpetrated during periods when political parties are restructuring and holding their primaries to find suitable candidates who will participate in the general elections against the candidates of other political parties. There is also intensification of unethical acts of vote buying and manipulation of other administrative electoral processes, especially by the incumbent political party. Also prevalent during this period are structural forms of violence which include structural imbalance, including coercion of citizens by the government to register or vote, unequal opportunities for political parties and candidates, abuse of power of incumbency, voter registration falsification, and the politicization of security and electoral officials (Albert 2007:133).

Violence during this period can alter the election results in favour of a particular candidate or political party by reducing her electoral competition. More specifically, violence staged by the incumbent political party activists and supporters can provoke the political opposition to boycott the election or influence voter turnout in the incumbent's favour or even block potential voters from voting. Violence can convince opposition voters to stay home on election day, reducing turnout in favour of the opposition. Violence can coerce would-be opposition voters into voting for the incumbent. At the same time, violence has the potential of forcing voters who would otherwise prefer to abstain to vote for the incumbent, thereby boosting voter turnout in favour of the current leadership (Hafner-Burton, Hyde and Jablonski 2013:8). Political leaders are usually major instigators who fan election violence through socially constructing certain –often bipolar - identities and images for supporters and rivals of their party ("us" vs. "them") through militant rhetoric and hate speech (Höglund 2010). Major-General Engelbert Rugeje addressing a rally in Masvingo in May 2008 stated: 'This country came through the bullet, not the pencil. Therefore, it will not go by your x of the pencil. We cannot let the efforts of such people as the late Chimombe to liberate this country just go to waste. Today I came here by helicopter with the late Chimombe's body. The next time I will come next week to Jerera, the helicopter will be full of bullets. You know what you did (The Financial Gazette 19

June 2008) quoted in Rupiya (2011:12). The more exclusive the rhetoric and the constructed identity, the more likely it is to motivate acts of violence.

On election day, violence is usually minimal, especially when the actors of violence are convinced of having done a good job during the pre-election period. Voting needs to go on during this day while waiting for the results. The Zimbabwean elections are generally peaceful on the election days, especially on the March 2008 harmonized election which Masunungure (2009) described as Zimbabwe's most peaceful and fair election. The most crucial factor which contributed to this peaceful atmosphere was the presence of election observers and monitors in the country. At the same time, the Zimbabwean government was under pressure from SADC to adhere to the electoral guidelines. The government tried by all means to suppress violent activities as a move to legitimize the election. However, after the significant defeat of ZANU PF and President Mugabe, the country was overwhelmed by a brutal wave of election violence. Violent attacks manifest themselves soon after the announcement of the election results in conflict-prone countries. The defeated political party stages some protests against the winning party. These protests are also usually bloody. On the other hand, the winning political party can stage a retribution hunt on the defeated political party members. The political leaders mobilize perpetrators to perpetrate violence against political opponents using incentives, usually in the form of patronage such as cash payments, provision of food, alcohol and drugs, or in the form of longer-term incentives such as expectation of getting employment for family members, gaining powerful positions, or state contracts for various jobs, etc.

3.6-The State and violence

The research and scientific discussions regarding the relationship between the state and violence have been centred on the historical state formation developments of the North-Western European nation-states. The state formation process has also been linked to a series of political transformations, social dynamics and wars. The formed structural relationships and institutional arrangements generated societal

contradictions and political thoughts of such people as Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527). Machiavelli recognized that without a well-organized, ordered and militarily strong state, no country could have hope of survival in international politics. He believed that an ordered state was the only security against forces of external aggression and internal chaos, so he (Machiavelli) advocated absolutism and an effective government (Owen 2006:1). Niccolo Machiavelli had lived and witnessed anarchy, lawlessness, corruption and misrule that prevailed in Italy during his times, which led to his idea of the Powerful State (Bondanella 2005). However, the most important period of thinking began in the late eighteenth century when the concept of the State was defined and redefined by a series of thinkers from Hegel onwards, culminating in Max Weber's notion of the modern State and monopoly of violence. This modern state has been understood by Tilly (1985) as a product of war and violent conflict that was able to establish a monopoly of the legitimate use of violence inside its territory, providing the basis for internal pacification or civilization. This research study intends to unpack the fundamentals of the modern state and the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence. This is done to understand the logic of the use of violence during elections by governments against the same citizens which they are supposed to protect, as purported by Max Weber.

Max Weber (1919) defines the state as a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory. The defining component of a state which Weber prioritizes is the control over the means of violence for internal pacification and the protection of the citizens. Monopoly of legitimate use of violence thus can be used for preserving law and order for the benefit of the inhabitants, and for hindering attacks from outside (Kurtenbach 2011:9). The state guarantees peace and tranquillity to the citizens. The idea of protecting the citizens came about as a result of what Charles Tilly said, 'up to the great eighteenth-century consolidation of Western states … marauding mercenaries, bandits, private armies, town militias, and armed rebels repeatedly brought large-scale collective violence home throughout Western Europe' (Tilly 2003:60). Thomas

Hobbes (1588–1679), the Englishman who many see as the first theorist of the authentically modern state, was also insistent that, to avoid collapse into civil war, individuals needed to establish over themselves a Common Power, to keep them in awe, and to direct their actions to the Common Benefit (Pierson 2004:7).

For Hobbes, it seems that the only way to erect such a *Common Power* is to confer all the power and strength upon one man, or upon one Assembly of men. This is to ensure that the wielder of this *Common Power,* the *Great Leviathan* has the use of so much Power and Strength conferred on him, that by terror thereof, he is enabled to form the wills of them all. In this regard, Hobbes believed that the state possessed absolute and unlimited sovereign powers and civil society sovereignty must exist. Without sovereign power, law, order, peace and security could not be maintained in the society and without these, individuals cannot survive (Hobbes 1968). The monopoly therefore of the legitimate use of the instruments of violence is surrendered to the state by the citizens who need their freedom and peace to be protected. Tilly alluded to four important mechanisms for the establishment of the state's monopoly of legitimate use of violence, namely: *war making,* which involves eliminating or neutralizing one's own rivals outside the territories; *state making,* which is eliminating or neutralizing rivals inside territories; *protection,* which is eliminating or neutralizing the enemies of one's clients; *extraction,* which involves acquiring the means of carrying out the first three activities (Tilly 1985:181). The illegitimate use of power of the sovereign group is to be taken over by the professional military and police forces that regulate the state's rules and monopolize the power. The concept of the state is therefore centred on the existence of institutions with the ability and knowledge of the use of violence to avoid anarchy. The state however, has the power to confer the legitimate use of violence on other private and genuine security companies.

The monopoly of the legitimate use of violence as a central feature of the modern state refers to a comprehensive notion of social reality, but strictly to the sphere of

publicly exercised violence (Kössler 2003). This is more to do with cases of inter-personal and non-state violence (homicide, massacre and murder) which are restricted by the state, but also occasionally to do with the use of the armed forces to thwart anarchy and uprisings and to maintain public order. If these are not controlled using the apparatus of violence by the state, the country can degenerate into chaos and become ungovernable. However, some countries' central authorities (governments) lack the ability to implement and enforce rules and decisions or the legitimate monopoly over the means of violence, resulting in areas of limited statehood where their domestic sovereignty is severely circumscribed, for example Somalia and Mexico, which has been consumed by drug cartels (Börzel and Risse 2010:118). Apart from the policing function, the state performs other very important functions such as addressing public health concerns, urban planning, maintenance of order, and some economic functions (price regulation) (Karuse 2009:194). Every society is dependent on a host of relationships that are never covered by the state completely, although the state may try to condition most of them in the modern era, e.g. by labour legislation or social security systems (Kössler 2003:19). The essence therefore of statehood is the ability of the state to enforce collectively binding decisions, ultimately through coercive means, via its monopoly over the means of violence.

Nonetheless, in the current political world order, the state which is traditionally public, is inserting itself in the private domain, for example in family life, private organizations and other private entities, in order to protect the citizens against various types of abuse, such as domestic violence. The state can also intervene through the courts of law, constitutions, and using the police to arrest abusers. The claim of the modern state to monopolize the legitimate use of violence and force is as essential to it as its character of compulsory jurisdiction and continuous operation. Nonetheless, the ramification and broadening of the scope of operation of the state today into the private domain coupled with the social dynamics and world order has contributed to the current compromised status of impartiality of many states in terms of the use of violence. Corrupt and incompetent bureaucracies as well as other dynamics in the

governance system of the state might be causing the abuse and selective use of the apparatus of violence for individual and personal interests. Many ruling political parties, bureaucrats, political elites and governments are using traditionally impartial state security institutions for corrupt activities, selective protection and abuse, looting of public resources for personal interests, subversion of the rule of the law, suppression of the rights and freedoms of the citizenry, and many activities. Some corrupt political parties in both democratic and authoritarian regimes have used the apparatus of violence to perpetrate violence on the citizenry as well as to abuse the citizenry. State authorities sometimes trigger large scale violence by mobilizing one group of the population alongside state forces to unleash violence against another group of society, or against another political party. In 2008, ZANU PF connived with the security sector to unleash violence against the people who were perceived to have voted for MDC-T. The monopoly of the legitimate use of violence itself has of late even in the former European colonies been the object of threats of various kinds in both political and social life.

3.7-Conclusion

The chapter deliberated on the most relevant theoretical concepts for this study, and captures five key themes, namely electoral authoritarianism, democracy, democratic elections, violence, election violence and the state. It was of particular importance to disentangle fundamental issues between the concepts electoral authoritarian, democratic elections and democratization. The idea was to distinguish between electoral authoritarianism and democracies as well as to explain the importance and crucial role of democratic elections during the democratization process. From the discussions, it can be deduced that during the period of democratization, most of the electoral authoritarian regimes engage multi-party competitive elections within the frameworks of democratic principles and institutions. However, these elections are severely compromised by massive rigging, manipulation, violence and other undemocratic norms to the extent of rendering the electoral process undemocratic and

not free or fair. These regimes embrace multi-party elections and other democratic principles in form only, but severely defile the essence of the democratic values.

Electoral authoritarianism combines authoritarian rule with formally democratic elections in some way. The democratic norms, institutions and practices are a strategic tool at the ruling elite's disposal in their quest to hold on to power and sometimes to maintain the regime stability. This is evidenced by the fact that some of these regimes have been playing the game of multi-party competitive elections for a number of years, suppressing any transition to democratic government. Zimbabwe for example has been practising multi-party elections for more than 30 years and yet the opposition forces have not managed to successfully overthrow the traditional regime. The incumbent political parties in electoral authoritarian regimes use the elections to suppress uprising and also to measure their political support from the citizens. The incumbent political parties in electoral authoritarian regimes also use the state's implements of violence to suppress opposition political parties, to coerce and intimidate voters and to weaken opposition political support. The use of state surveillance mechanisms, and detainment and harassment by the police, militia, party activists and other organized groups, prevents the opposition forces from seizing political power from the incumbent authoritarian regime leaders.

Chapter Four: Voices from Manicaland

4.0-Introduction

This chapter seeks to articulate and synthesize the critical issues that emerged during the localized empirical research study data collection process in the three communities of Manicaland. The main aim of this localized empirical research study is to explore and establish the forms, dynamics and patterns of the 2008-2013 election violence in the communities of Manicaland in Zimbabwe. This is to understand how the affected people at grassroots levels make sense out of the use of election violence in the context of smokescreen multi-party democratic elections. In an attempt to achieve the objectives of the research study, the discussions with the interviewees were tailor-made to extract relevant and important information to answer the research questions and to add value to research study. Some of the fundamental questions are: i) What are the dynamics of the 2008-2013 election violence in the communities of Manicaland? The question is intended to unpack the dynamics of election violence which include the organization, the main perpetrators of violence, and forms of violence. This captures the post March 29 2008 election violence ahead of the June 29 2008 runoff and the violence that gripped the Inclusive Government period until the 2013 election. The empirical information provided by the people who witnessed the episodes of violence is the basis in the process of providing systematic and reliable answers; ii) How election violence has been used successfully by the regime to subdue people from achieving a smooth democratic transition? The question is more concerned with demonstrating how election violence has been used systematically by the regime to thwart the moves by the majority of the people to achieve a democratic transition in the country and; (iii)-What are the effects of election violence on the socio-economic and political lives of the people? Through an in-depth qualitative investigation, this question endeavours to unearth the effects of election violence on the lives of the people. The question is relevant to the study of election violence given that it sheds light on the type of people likely to be moulded by violence and the potentials of violence itself.

In this regard, a detailed account of the interviewees' responses and experiences related to the main components of the research study objectives and questions has been synchronized and condensed in different thematic areas presented in this chapter to tell a pragmatic story of election violence in the communities of Manicaland. The information provided under each thematic area is part of the experienced 2008-2014 election violence and personal observations of interviewees which form the empirical foundation of the research study. It is important to reiterate that due to different factors that differentiate each of the studied communities from the others, the dynamics of election violence and their manifestation has not been uniform. There have been considerable variations but there have been important generalities which emerged. First, all the studied communities experienced similar forms of violence throughout the period under study. Second, acts of violence have been linked to the concept of the pungwe bases. Third, those involved in organizing and perpetrating violence in the communities and at established pungwe bases were the military personnel police, Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) agents, war veterans, traditional leaders, militia and party activists in all the communities in the province. Fourth, those who were mostly targeted as victims were linked to the opposition MDC in one way or another. Fifth, the acts of violence persisted in these rural communities in the guise of convoluted network sporadic intimidations, victimizations, rhetoric and threats of eviction of the perceived traitors and opposition supporters from the traditional home communities driven by the traditional leadership throughout the period of the government of national unity. Meanwhile, patronage government farm input aid as well as food aid was available generally to ZANU PF supporters, militia and war veterans.

4.1-Zimbabwe administrative division setup

Zimbabwe is divided into ten administrative provinces which are each then subdivided into different districts. The rural districts are under the administration of the Rural District Councils (RDCs) in conjunction with the traditional leadership,

namely, Chiefs, headmen and village heads. The districts are further split into different constituencies which are politically under an elected Member of Parliament from a political party who represents the constituency in Parliament. The constituencies are made up of several Wards which are also under an elected councillor from a political party to represent the people in the District council. At a local level, the Wards are made up of different villages which are composed of different family units. However, once elected, the political leaders represent all the people regardless of their political affiliation in collaboration with the traditional leaders who are the custodians of the rural communities.

The President of the Republic of Zimbabwe appoints the Chiefs under the Traditional Leaders Act Chapter 29:17. Machingauta points out that the Chiefs, headmen and village heads promote and uphold cultural values among community members, particularly the preservation of the extended family (Machingauta 2010:48). Chiefs are ex officio members of the District Councils (DC) who are in charge of a number of headmen within their community. The headman is subordinate to the Chief and so performs such duties as to assist the Chief in performing his duties. The headman carries out all lawful and reasonable orders assigned to him. The headman takes care of numerous villages which are headed by village heads. The headman recommends persons for appointment as village heads to the Chief, and can also recommend their removal from office. In this regard, village heads assist the Chief and the headman in the performance of their duties and carry out all lawful and reasonable orders issued by them. The village therefore is the basic organizational unit of rural life in Zimbabwe, and is made up of several families. The village head knows virtually every family member in his village and is the sole leader in all the traditional, cultural, judicial and developmental initiatives in the village. In this respect, the traditional leaders have undisputed overall power and influence over the community members because of their status and authority.
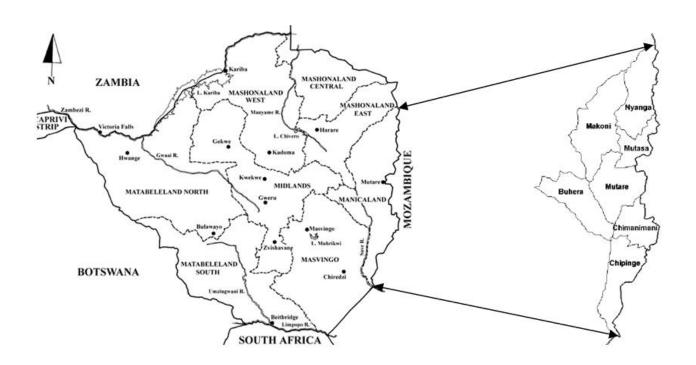
4.2-Manicaland overview

Manicaland is one of the ten provinces in Zimbabwe covering an area of about 36,459 km2. It is divided into seven districts: Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare, Mutasa and Nyanga. Mutare is the administrative centre of Manicaland Province and is the fourth largest city in Zimbabwe. The name of the province is associated with the Manyika people who have in recent history occupied the area. Manyika are a Shona sub-tribal grouping with their language variant Manyika Language. The people of Manicaland speak Shona but different districts have their own sub-dialects. For example, Mutasa District uses the Manyika sub-dialect, Makoni district uses the Maungwe dialect, Ndau is spoken in Chipinge, Hwesa spoken in parts of Nyanga, while the people in Mutare speak the Bocha and Jindwi dialects (Dube 2009:14). The province lies in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe and it stretches north and south along the eastern border with Mozambique. The province generally falls into areas inhabited by the eastern Shona people, with the Manyika in the north and the Ndau in the south. However, currently the province is home to people of varied ethnic backgrounds because of its resource potentials.

Zimbabwe is geographically classified into five (V) natural farming regions with region one (I) being the most productive agro region with high rainfall, while region (V) is characterized by arid environmental conditions with low agriculture potential. Manicaland region has the best farmlands ranging from natural farming regions (I-II) with best climatic, edaphic and topography conditions. Manicaland region is an area of high elevation and mountains, with wide river valleys, while on the western parts of these mountains lie flat arable plateaus with generally deep, reddish brown sandy loam soils that stretch as far north as Nyanga. These soils have good moisture retention capacity - a characteristic essential for ensuring adequate moisture for growth of plants ranging from timber to coffee and tea, from a variety of crops to a wide range of fruit trees and animal domestication.

The highlands of the Manicaland region receive annual rainfall of between 45 and 55 inches, which is higher than in any other region in Zimbabwe and very reliable, thanks to light winter rains. The temperatures in the highlands are generally comfortable all year round, with the mean daily temperature averaging between 55 and 70 degrees F. The region is rich in mineral deposits including gold in the north, particularly around the Penhalonga area, north of Mutare in Zimbabwe, Chimanimani and the Nyanga area while large reserves of diamond are found in the southern part of Mutare in Marange and Chimanimani. The wide fertile highland rivers valleys, rich soils, mineral resources, vegetation, and livestock-rearing potential attracted both African and European settlement, and is capable of supporting dense populations.

Generally Manicaland province is rich in history of political activism stretching as far back to the colonial days when the prominent Chief Rekayi Tangwena and his people fervently resisted the settlers' demand for him and his people to vacate their land in the Nyanga Nyafaru area. The early vibrant senior nationalist leaders such as Ndabaningi Sithole, Herbert Chitepo, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, William Ndangana and Edgar Tekere played an important role in the liberation struggle, motivating the current activism in the province. Bishop Abel Muzorewa played a crucial role during the liberation struggle and later became the first black Prime Minister of the then Zimbabwe Rhodesia in 1979. Ndabaningi Sithole remained on the helm of the splinter ZANU after his dismissal from ZANU and even contested the 1980 election and won one seat in 1985 which he held until 1995 (Chung 2006:165). Political activism in Manicaland resulted in the large number of liberation freedom fighters who crossed to Mozambique or Zambia. This was also a result of the province's proximity to Mozambique, which was the main country which hosted the liberation fight.

4.3-Research communities:-Location in Manicaland, Zimbabwe

4.3.1-Nyamaropa (Nyanga)

Nyanga district, in which the Nyamaropa area is located, lies to the north of Manicaland's border with Mozambique which is demarcated by the Gairezi River. Nyamaropa is under headman Nyamaropa in Chief Saunyama's area and lies in the Nyanga North constituency which was won by an MDC-T Member of Parliament during the 2008 election. Nyanga is well known for its horticultural products, such as flowers, apples, pineapples, garlic, potatoes, bananas, oranges, and avocados, as well as timber production from wattle, gum trees, pine trees, and cypress trees. Zimbabwe's major tourist resorts in Nyanga include Nyangani Mountains, Montclair Casino Hotel, Troutbek Inn, World's View, and the Pungwe gorge, which is

Zimbabwe's potential site for hydroelectric power generation (Saungweme 2011:5). These are very popular. Nyanga is mostly inhabited by the *Hwesa*-speaking people even though one can find many more dialects because of inter-marriages and internal migration.

The Nyamaropa area is largely a farming area with a vibrant irrigation scheme that was established before independence. The people who live along the Gairezi River use the water from this river for their perennial vegetable gardening. The people in Nyamaropa grow crops throughout the year in their irrigated fields and the main cash crops are beans, tobacco and potatoes. The Gairezi River separates the two neighbouring communities that are Nyachigo on the Mozambiquean side, and Nyamaropa on the Zimbabwean side. The villages in these two communities are mainly located along the Gairezi River valley and are less than 200m from the river on either side. There is daily movement of people across the river since on the Zimbabwean side there is a shopping centre known as Nyamaropa where people from Nyachigo village buy their goods. There are two local schools in the Nyamaropa area which pupils from the Nyachigo area attend every day. These are the Bumhira secondary school and the Sanyamaropa primary school. These schools are also situated less than 300m each from the Gairezi River. Livestock too cross the river into the harvested fields dotted along the river valley on both sides and the animal herders cross over in search of their cattle every day.

During the research study an old man (Interviewee 21, 28.07.2013), whose home is less than 400m from the footbridge that links Nyamaropa and Nyachigo, indicated that these two schools have been disturbed several times during some periods of political instabilities that affected Nyamaropa throughout history. The Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) rebels used to fire bullets from across the river in Mozambique which at one point struck some school buildings while pupils were learning. The researcher was shown one of the bullets which is still stuck in the wall of a pit toilet at Bumhira secondary school. RENAMO inflicted violence worse than

that of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe due to the insurgencies, cruelty and indiscriminate killings which they were carrying out on the Zimbabwean side (Schmidt 2013:195). It has been gathered that during the 2008 election violence, these schools were turned into pungwe bases where victims were subjected to severe torture. The researcher also had a chance of crossing the river into the Mozambican side through one of the crossing points in the company of Interviewee 21, since there is free movement of people between the two countries.

However, Nyamaropa experienced most of the major historic political violence that Zimbabwean citizenry endured including the 2008 election violence (Interview 23, 28.07.2013). During the liberation war in Mozambique, Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) fighters crossed the Gairezi River into the Nyamaropa area through a makeshift footbridge made by the local people out of very strong poles. The famous Mangondo footbridge is situated across the narrow gorge along the river and is approximately 3m wide. The bridge is refurbished by the local people every year to facilitate the free passage of people between Nyachigo and Nyamaropa. The same bridge was also used by Zimbabwean liberation fighters during the war of the 1970s to cross in and out of the country. Young people who crossed into Mozambique to train as liberation fighters escaped via Mangondo Bridge. It has been gathered during the study that Chief Rekayi Tangwena assisted President Mugabe and Edgar Tekere in crossing the Gairezi River into Mozambique but by using the other crossing points in an area called Nyafaru (Tangwena). Tangwena lies approximately 40km south of Nyamaropa. During the 1980s, the RENAMO rebels from Mozambique infiltrated the Nyamaropa area, sometimes via the Mangondo footbridge or other crossing points to loot goods and animals, as well as to violate the people in the Nyamaropa area. In this sense, the Nyamaropa people endured the brutality of the RENAMO rebels soon after independence as Schmidt (2013:224-225) wrote. During the 2008 election violence, people from Nyanga and Nyamaropa in particular would escape the terror into Mozambique via the footbridge and other crossing points along the river (Interviewee

23, 28.07.2013). This rich political experience has a bearing on the high level of political consciousness in Manicaland as well as in Nyamaropa.

4.3.2-Honde Valley (Mutasa)

Honde Valley lies in the Mutasa district and it shares borders with Mozambique in the east, Nyanga in the north, and Mutare in the south. Mutasa district is known for horticulture and market gardening and the main products are yams, fruits (avocados, bananas, plums, and lychees), tea, ginger and carrots. The district is famous for gold mining at Redwing Mine in Penhalonga and is also Zimbabwe's home for Zimbabwe Forestry College and Wattle Company's processing plant at Selbourne. The local people in Honde Valley transport their fruits to Mutare - which is the capital city of the province - apart from the buyers who come to buy from the fields. Honde Valley is also home to the country's major tea and coffee estates along the border with Mozambique. The people in Honde Valley speak the *Chimanyika* dialect (Dube 2009:14).

During the liberation struggle, Honde Valley was the major ZANLA infiltration route from Mozambique and was also being used as the training ground inside the country (Schmidt 2013:169). This is so because of the area's proximity to Mozambique which was the host country for the liberation fighters. The mountainous relief which is split by wide valleys covered by thick bushes also provided the liberation fighters with an ideal environment for guerrilla warfare which the liberation fighters were employing against the colonial forces. Some of the young people who crossed into Mozambique were child labourers in the Tea Estates which are in Honde Valley: Katiyo, Aberfoyle, Eastern Highlands and Rumbizi (Sadomba 2011:25). Honde Valley has endured different types of wars with nasty experiences, including the war of the 1970s where there were two brutal warring factions which inflicted horrible attacks on the civilian populace (Interviewee 2, 6.06.2013). The colonialist forces and the liberation fighters brutalized the people, accusing them of giving support to the other. This is always referred to as a moment of horror by the Honde Valley community

because each time the other group rounded up the civilian citizenry and several people would be victimized or killed. However, the civilian populace would incline more in favour of supporting the liberation fighters to fight the common enemy which was the colonial forces (Interviewee 2, 6.06.2013).

During the liberation struggle, the colonial forces used to round up the civilians and enclose them in protected villages called Keeps (Interviewee 6, 13.06.2013). The protected villages were surrounded by a very high security fence and were manned by the government security forces (Schmidt 2013:186-187). The rules and regulations which were governing the lives of the civilian population in the protected villages were defined and prescribed by the colonial government. This was done in order to restrict the community members from supporting the liberation fighters and also to cut the supply of foodstuffs, information and moral support. Some of the ruins of these Keeps still exist, for example at Green shopping centre, which was used to keep the people from the Mupotedzi, Muparutsa and Sahumani villages during the liberation struggle. The RENAMO rebels from Mozambique also indiscriminately killed innocent civilians in Honde Valley. The RENAMO rebels used the area just as it was being used by the Zimbabwean liberation fighters. Violent life experiences prepared the Honde Valley people to be politically active to the extent of voting the ZANU PF Member of Parliament and councillors out and replacing them with an MDC-T Member of Parliament and councillors during the May 2008 election (Interviewee 6, 13.06.2013).

4.3.3-Mhakwe (Chimanimani)

Mhakwe is located in the Chimanimani district which is a mountainous region up to its eastern border with Mozambique. It borders with the Mutare district in the north and Chipinge District to the south. The Mhakwe community is under the rule of Chief Muusha. The Chimanimani district is well known for its diamond and gold deposits and the people produce pineapples, bananas, peas and cotton which they transport to Mutare for marketing. It was in Chimanimani district that a group of seven trained

freedom fighters killed a white farmer on 28 April 1966 and this marked the start of the second Chimurenga (Bolding 2004:18). The district became one of the first liberated areas, almost completely under the control of the Mugabe led ZANLA forces by 1978. This was partly due to the district's proximity to Mozambique and the ruggedness of its terrain that provided optimum conditions for guerrilla warfare. Ironically, during the March 2000 parliamentary elections, the Chimanimani seat passed to a white farmer representing the opposition MDC-T: Roy Bennet. Subsequently the district's population was subjected to intense repression and torture by activists and military loyal to the ZANU PF regime (Interviewee 36, 21.09.2013). The people in Chimanimani speak the Ndau dialect (Dube 2009:14).

The liberation struggle was launched in the district by the liberation fighters in collaboration with the local people, most of whom were deserting the farming estates because of the brutality of the settler farmers (Interviewee 36, 21.09.2013). There was a lot of fighting spirit to oust the colonial government and especially to oust the settler farmers who were oppressing the local people. However, the interviewed people expressed a lot of displeasure towards the ZANU PF government which has inherited and adopted all the colonial means of oppression to brutalize fellow black people who even helped the liberation fighters during the struggle to liberate the country. There is no clear explanation to this sudden turn by the war veterans who were given adequate support by the civilian citizenry against the brutal colonial forces. Answers to election violence during the so called democratic election by the ZANU PF government baffle the Mhakwe community given the liberation agenda for one man one vote, which was meant to abolish oppression (Interview 36, 21.09.2013). Nonetheless, the Mhakwe community and the entire Chimanimani people have always been critical of oppression and injustice since the arrival of the colonialists, and by 2000 activism in Chimanimani against the ZANU PF regime was very high.

4.4-General dynamics of 2008 election violence

The Manicaland province's historic reactionary and rebellious nature in the politics of Zimbabwe was replicated during the March 2008 harmonized election when for the first time ZANU PF's post-independence hegemony was challenged and defeated by MDC during the election. President Mugabe garnered 141,592 votes against Tsvangirai's 212,029 votes while MDC won 20 parliamentary seats against 6 won by ZANU PF in Manicaland (ZESN 2008:52). This is a reflection of the province's historic high level of political consciousness. MDC also made significant gains in traditionally ZANU PF dominated provinces like the Mashonaland provinces which was a clear indication of the total rejection of President Robert Mugabe in June. Unfortunately during the run-up to the June 2008 presidential runoff, the country slipped into a terrifying wave of violence in which the perpetrators were asking the people whom they had voted for in the May 2008 election (Makavhotera Papi). The wave of violence that besieged the country was prepared by the military but involved the police, CIO, war veterans, and the dreaded Green Bomber and youth militias, while the senior army staff co-ordinated the strategy (Chitiyo 2009:6).

This violent militarized campaign became popularly known as operation Makavhotera Papi Sachikonye (2011:49). The retribution of the ruling party was signalled by a march of 400 war veterans on the street of Harare on the 4th of April 2008, accusing MDC of bribing election officials. This was followed in the days to come by the arrest of election officials accused of assisting the MDC (Sokwanele 2011:15). The plan for this violence was disseminated at provincial level through JOC commanders, and through meetings such as that held on Monday 4th of April 2008 at Nkayi Business Centre, at which senior members of the police, army, prison service, CIO and war veterans were in attendance. At this meeting, the violence plan that would be the central pillar of Mugabe's runoff campaign was discussed. This vindictive and retributive wave of terror swept intensively and extensively through the Manicaland communities also in response to the outrageous rejection of ZANU PF by the province. This military-styled election violence terror which was being

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directed by senior members of the JOC started with more intensity in the two Mashonaland provinces which have always traditionally been the stronghold of ZANU PF, and then engulfed the whole country, including Manicaland, in a well-structured, systematic and highly coordinated operation (Masunungure 2009:81). The victory by MDC and Tsvangirai over both ZANU PF and President Mugabe in the March 2008 election sparked the historic military intervention to violently campaign for President Mugabe to ensure victory in the subsequent June presidential runoff election. The acts of violence which were executed in a pungwe base fashion were brutal and symbolic enough to revitalize the memories and experiences of the 1970s liberation struggle which culminated with the ascension of ZANU PF to power in 1980.

The violence that rocked the country after the March 2008 election is a design of the militarized state that started several years before with the onset of what ZANU PF and the government termed the third Chimurenga, a reference to the often violent take-over of white-owned farms from 2000 onwards (Masunungure 2009:81). The JOC declared in 2002 that the security forces would not accept, let alone support or salute, anyone without liberation struggle credentials, meaning of course Tsvangirai (Alexander and Tendi 2008:9). The securocrats have increased their leverage over the various organs of the state, the economy and party ZANU PF structures, as well as in the legislature where they contested elections as retired members of the security service (Chitiyo 2009). The militarization of the state institutions took the form of a growing number of senior military officers in politics and being appointed to strategic positions in various state institutions responsible for governance, such as the judiciary, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), the Delimitation Commission, local government institutions, and state-controlled companies such as the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), the media, the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) and the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM) (Rupiya 2011).

Nonetheless, despite the heavy presence of military personnel in politics and the economy, President Mugabe wields effective control of military elites because of his power as ZDF commander-in-chief. His pre-eminence in ZANU PF's 1970s nationalist hierarchy and the use of the security surveillance network, patronage and selective victimization on individuals, serves to maintain loyalty and totally control the securocrats. This intimate relationship between ZANU PF, the military, and President Mugabe has been the driving force behind this election violence. The increasing penetration of the security sector is closely associated with the party-state phenomenon in which the ruling party is attached to the state, with the result that party and state structures at all levels are fused. Moreover, in the party-state duality, the party is supreme over the state. All formal organs of the state including the military and security services are closely linked to the party without being officially integrated (Masunungure 2014). The fact that the securocrats are already active players in the economy automatically qualifies them to participate in politics given that their involvement in the economic realm was through corruption and political patronage. The military therefore has an obligation to defend the authoritarian system at all cost including through ultimate violence as they did in 2008.

The scourge of terror attacks that engulfed the country, including the communities of Manicaland, was planned and executed in the symbol of the war of the 1970s which was buttressed on the pungwe base concept (night vigil meeting camps). These bases were established soon after the announcement of the March 29 2008 harmonized election results. The militias, CIO, police, regular army officers, war veterans, ZANU PF youth and the local ZANU PF structures were using the established bases to terrorize the defenceless civilians. It was a Gukurahundi prototype militarized policy implemented in Matabeleland underpinned by the philosophy of the annihilation of political opposition (Bratton and Masunungure 2008:51). The suspected opposition political party supporters were rounded up in the villages and subjected to gruesome assaults, torture, brutal attacks, beating, maiming and murder at these pungwe bases. The bodies of some abducted activists have been found dumped on farms and in

hospitals and morgues; many are simply missing (Alexander and Tendi 2008:12). The terror attacks were worst in Mashonaland - apparently as retribution for the betrayal vote for MDC, as well as to restore the lost political millage (Sokwanele 2008:36).

However, this systematic and well-organized pattern of violence, torture and intimidation has been replicated throughout the country, including in the communities of Nyamaropa, Honde Valley and Mhakwe, where this research study was done. A local field report from Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) based in Manicaland stated that:

> *'The superficial and negative peaceful environment that prevailed prior to the harmonized 29th March Election has been turned into a turmoil of direct and open violence, torture, beatings, arson, abductions, kidnapping and mass displacement, initiated and spearheaded by government agencies, security forces (military junta), war veterans, youths militias and Zanu PF supporters. The period between March 29 2008 and June 27 2008, the date set for the runoff elections thus can be described as 'days of Armageddon' for the Zimbabwean populace,' (CCJP: Manicaland) quoted in (Masunungure 2009:88).*

The study conducted in the three communities in Manicaland revealed similarities in several aspects of the 2008-2014 election violence dynamics, mostly in terms of the organization, the methodology, targeted groups (victims), perpetrators, and general forms of violence. The backbone and prominent feature that has been driving and sustaining election violence is the pungwe bases. They were used effectively during the 2008 election violence terror attacks and were in operation until the 2013 elections which saw an end to the Government of National Unity. An important revelation captured in the communities is that the major objective of the violence was to block MDC from bringing the whites back into the farms and from ruling the

country. This is a reflection of the May 7 2008 Herald report which stated that an increasing number of white former commercial farmers were reportedly threatening resettled black farmers throughout the country with eviction from their farms, or else the wrath of an anticipated incoming MDC government. A similar statement has been said by war veteran leader Jabuli Sibanda who warned, 'it has come to our realization that the elections were used as another war front to prepare for the re-invasion of our country. As freedom fighters, we feel compelled to repel the invasion,' quoted in (Ploch 2010:20). Zimbabwean national politics is buttressed by local and grassroots politics but it is so often the case that the grassroots people are kept in darkness in terms of the direction and organization of national politics (Interviewee 55. 25.11.2013). Thus, local community members can only explain violence in terms of the perpetrators who were torturing them, such as local war veterans, ZANU PF supporters, identifiable army officers, CIO, militia and police.

4.5-The Pungwe bases

Pungwe is a night vigil session adopted from the pungwe celebration concept of the 1970s war of liberation. During the liberation struggle, the liberation fighters used to meet with almost all community members – both the youth and the adults - deep in the night at secluded places, usually at the fighters' base. These sessions were modelled in the form of songs, dances and speeches meant to remind the community members of their grievances against the white colonial settlers. These sessions were designed as courts, to be morale boosting, help with communicating, recruitment, mobilizing and for liberation war propagating in the areas where liberation fighters were operating (Mugari 2008:12). The most remarkable activities at a pungwe were singing and dancing by everyone including the liberation fighters themselves. Pungwe was a symbol of black collective resistance to white oppression and the most credible source of trusted information about the true state of the war in the country. These sessions were used to counter the colonial state propaganda carried in the state media and local authority channels of communication. The liberation fighters needed to secure political control of the rural population as well as winning the hearts and

minds of the rural populace so that they could fight together against the colonial government. Controlling the civilian population was the key to defeating the government forces and this was done by intensifying the pungwe sessions. They were also used as events when wrongdoers such as witches, sell-outs and anti liberation struggle people were disciplined by beating, torturing or assassination (Schmidt 2013:161). Disciplinary beatings and killings were publicly carried out at the pungwe but still the liberation fighters would communicate to the people that they were still their sons who had come to liberate the country at the same meetings.

The generation that experienced the liberation struggle heap a lot of praise on the pungwe bases established by the liberation fighters, who were popularly known as 'comrades' in their communal areas of operation. An elderly man from Honde Valley (Interviewee 3, 6.06.2013) said:

> *'The pungwe bases that we attended with our sons who liberated us were morale boosters and most of the community members were very happy and enjoyed every moment that we were at these bases. All of us including the freedom fighters had one common goal of liberating the country. These pungwe sessions unified the local community members with the fighters for one common cause which was to liberate the country. Discipline was one fundamental value which was upheld by the freedom fighters during the pungwe sessions. They followed the rules and strict values which guided the liberation struggle. The base commanders were mature comrades who were well respected by all members of the community and other fellow comrades themselves. This was the reason why all of us who were not comrades would organize ourselves and take turns to cook food for these sons and daughters who were fighting for our liberation. We sacrificed our goats, chickens, our girls, clothes*

and many other things voluntarily to make sure that these fighters were kept healthy and motivated so that they can liberate us all. Of course bad elements in the communities were punished during the pungwe sessions because they slowed down the efforts to liberate the country. These were witches, sell-outs, and those who supported the colonialists' fighters and governments. The punishment ranged from thorough beating using tree branches, and chopping hands and legs, to murder. These disciplinary measures were sanctioned not by any ordinary comrade but by the commanders who controlled the execution of the punishment'.

It has been gathered during the research study that the people who were subjected to disciplinary acts during the pungwe sessions were confirmed both by the liberation fighters and the community members to be elements which were slowing the smooth flow of the liberation struggle. Some sell-outs were informing the government fighters where the liberation fighters were which resulted in the bases being attacked, which killed a lot of the fighters and other civilian people. If these sell-outs were identified in the communities, their punishment was simply death. The corpses of people who were killed were left to rot in the open in most cases. At times corpses were mutilated and the parts thrown all over the bushes. Community members were not allowed to bury the corpses but sometimes the relatives used to smuggle the corpses away secretly and just bury them. The reason was that the crimes were very serious and this was to send a message to the rest of the community members that they could face similar treatment were they to commit such crimes. This system of scattering body parts all over the places cast severe fear into the community members which was intended to eradicate thoughts of betraying the liberation fighters. The strategy of scattering body parts was called 'kill one and frighten a thousand' and was adopted when the liberation fighters realized that killing everyone deemed a traitor would end up killing the whole country (Interviewee 9, 13.06.2013). This was to cast and spread terror and fear among the people so that they desisted from any evil acts

that could slow the smooth flow of the struggle. The community members became more loyal to the liberation fighters by default. There were also others whose sons were in the colonialist fighters who were fighting against the liberation fighters and these were also harassed at the pungwe sessions.

However, the killings performed at the pungwe sessions were not part of the liberation struggle agenda although they were necessary to some greater extent. A former liberation fighter from Honde Valley (Interviewee 8, 13.06.2013) indicated that:

> *'Most of the killings at pungwe bases were driven by the need to survive since civilian populace were like water to us while we were like fish to them. Sell-outs and traitors were within the civilian populace; therefore their presence risked the lives of the freedom fighters and the peasants. So violence was intentionally against only those who collaborated with the colonial security forces. Violence in this case was intended to protect the lives of the civilian populace as well as those of liberation fighters. In unfortunate instances, the liberation fighters executed innocent people who were incorrectly judged to be traitors or who were also sold out by their enemies in the communities. Remember in a community people can hate each other because of several reasons so it was very possible that someone could intend to settle scores with another fellow community member by telling lies to the liberation fighters about that person. We were guided by spirit mediums as you know; therefore we were not obsessed by the idea of vengeance but rather justice to each and every member of the community. Not every one of us fighters was entrusted with the power to sanction disciplinary acts at a pungwe but a commander had the right to direct disciplinary*

*action following stipulated regulations against sell-outs, traitors
and witches'.*

However, from the way the alleged sell-outs were treated at pungwe bases, participation at a pungwe session was not voluntary to a certain extent. Both the community members and the liberation fighters were bound to coerce every member of the community to participate because the general mood was to overthrow the colonial government. This would mean that those who remained behind were regarded as retrogressive elements working with the enemy. They were therefore perceived as against the liberation struggle since everyone wanted to overthrow the colonial regime. Nonetheless, because of the lengthy period and the intensity of the war, pungwe bases became part of the civilian populace and the liberation fighters' lives to the extent that participation became a routine and necessary. The civilian populace became more aware of the objectives of the liberation struggle; hence many people became committed to the struggle as a result of these indoctrination sessions. The pungwe sessions became more effective because they constantly emphasized what the people would gain, such as land, abolition of racial discrimination, prosperity, majority rule and freedom - all of which were the expectations of the rural people who were craving for the removal of the unjust colonial system.

However, the same pungwe concept of the liberation struggle was adopted and extensively used during the violent land invasions in the beginning of 2000 and the infamous 2008 election violence. During the 2008 election violence, established pungwe bases throughout the country, including in the three communities under study in Manicaland province, played a central role for the success of the terror attacks. They were part of the security securocrats' JOC to violently campaign for President Robert Mugabe ahead of the June 2008 presidential runoff election. The pungwe bases were established and supported by the military in terms of logistics, coordination and strategy (Masunungure 2009:8). There were main bases in almost each of the constituencies in the province where logistical decisions and coordination

of the terror attacks were made. These main bases were under the leadership of retired or serving high-ranking personnel who gave orders to several other base commanders of pungwe bases established throughout the constituency. These other bases were usually under the leadership of a local war veteran, a party chairperson or a traditional leader. The main base developed strategies and tactics used by other commanders in various pungwe bases. In the case of Nyanga North constituency, for example, the main base was at the Ruwangwe District Development Fund (DDF). This main base coordinated and gave orders to other bases in the constituency like the Bumhira pungwe base in Nyamaropa.

Pungwe bases were very necessary for the success of violent activities since the election results clearly indicated the dominance of opposition MDC supporters rather than the ruling ZANU PF. Violence was supposed to be carried out until the day of the proposed presidential election or beyond in case fighting back by the victims was strong. The participants needed to be housed in one place to avoid reluctance or defection given that some of them would not be fully committed. It has been revealed during the study that some of the perpetrators were not fully committed to violence because they had been coerced into taking part. Those who refused to participate or to perpetrate violence were accused of being MDC supporters. Therefore it was necessary to have a coordinating point. The three communities for example had voted for an MDC Member of Parliament and several MDC councillors during the 29 March 2008 election. That meant that for violence to be effective there was a need for serious planning, strategising, coordinating, and provision of necessary resources for communication and movement, and also military backup. These were exactly the roles of the pungwe bases. There was a need for reinforcement in terms of human capital to boost the number of perpetrators of violence from elsewhere outside the communities to support the local people during the violent attacks. These outsiders were accommodated and fed at these pungwe bases. Pungwe bases in this case became the focal points where violence was coordinated and where perpetrators were housed, since most of the attacks were held during the night. They also served as a

dispatching point where perpetrators of violence were unleashed onto the communities to hunt down victims who were brought back to be beaten, brutalized, tortured, assaulted, intimidated, harassed or murdered.

These pungwe bases were mostly established at government structures, such as schools, post offices, District Development Fund (DDF) structures, Council structures, local clinics and other government buildings. Nyamaropa Agricultural, Technical and Extension Services (Agritex) offices were used as a pungwe base in Nyamaropa. In most cases, the traditional leaders in collaboration with the ZANU PF leadership and war veterans authorized and nominated places which were to be used for pungwe bases in each village. The heads at these government structures would permit the perpetrators of violence to use the facilities for the purpose of re-orientation meetings (Interviewee 56, 25.11.2013). Any head who would object to the use of these institutions as pungwe bases was labelled as a traitor, sell-out or supporter of the opposition political party, and they too were severely punished. There were nonetheless some makeshift structures established as pungwe bases in the bushes and mountains as well as those established at already-existing structures. Sometimes these were small bases which were near points where roadblocks were mounted or meeting points where the militia, war veterans and local party leaders met regularly to inform each other of the progress of violent attacks or to share any logistical information.

Most of the people who were taking part in the perpetration of violence at the pungwe bases were most the local people. The local pool of perpetrators was assisted by other people from other communities brought to boost the local community actors of violence. Since the acts of violence were generally coordinated from the same main base in the constituency, there were instances where some perpetrators of violence were swapped. The use of outsiders was also part of a strategy designed to limit identification of the attackers aside from the fact that the local perpetrators of violence were not adequate to sustain acts of violence until the election day. There

were possibilities of resistance from the targeted victims. However, generally, local militia, war veterans and party activists aided by some officers from the security sector were in charge of the atrocities committed in a particular community. The initial number of perpetrators eventually increased as time went on as many people were forced to perpetrate violence at the pungwe bases. Unemployed youths and school pupils, including girls, eventually increased the number of the perpetrators of violence. Nonetheless, not all the people who were now found at the pungwe bases were perpetrating violence; for example, some were used to carry out other menial jobs like cooking, washing and other things. The war veterans and the militia in conjunction with the base commander were still directing the operations at the base and the surrounding villages. This increase in number of people who were participating in violence meant that there were possibilities of relatives or family members perpetrating violence against their fellow relatives.

The establishment of pungwe bases was done concurrently with other acts of violence in the communities, for example the barricading of the communities creating no-go areas. This was done by using sporadic roadblocks manned by local and foreign militia, war veterans, youth activists and very few armed military men in the background. The people manning roadblocks imposed curfews in rural villages and restricted freedom of movement and interaction both between villages and within villages. In some communities very close to these roadblocks, there were makeshift bases where those manning the roadblock were sleeping and also where identified opposition supporters were brutalized. Curfews were also imposed inside the communities by the perpetrators of violence (Interview 19, 20.07.2013). All these other activities going on in and around the communities enhanced the effective establishment and use of the pungwe bases in the communities.

Unlike the pungwe sessions staged during the liberation struggle, the bases established during the 2008 election violence wave were better known as torture camps because of the main function they were associated with. Perpetrators of

violence used to go out into the villages, mostly during the night, and drag the perceived opposition political party supporters in for brutal assaults at the pungwe bases. They stormed the home of the suspect in large numbers and were well-armed with sticks, machetes, stones, axes, bicycle chains, iron bars and other deadly weapons to abduct the victims and drag them to the base. On many occasions the armed military personnel provided backup support in case the victim fought back. This is because the suspected victims were also prepared to take on the perpetrators and fight back during the raids. Most of the victims were opposition election agents, known opposition party activists, opposition party officials and teachers who had been working in the polling stations. Perpetrators were also dragging children and their mothers to the base after the home raids. This meant that the targeted person and the whole family faced gruesome harassment and torture at the base as well as during the raids.

At the established pungwe bases, the abducted victims were thoroughly beaten, assaulted and tortured using all sorts of weapons, which included horn branches, bicycle chains, machetes, electric cables, iron bars and logs. Perpetrators of violence took turns to torture the victims, some of whom succumbed to death while others sustained permanent injuries such as broken legs, arms, ribs and backbones. Beatings were indiscriminate because the perpetrators mobbed the victim and beat everywhere, including the head, chest and buttocks. It has been gathered that gruesome acts of violence like deliberate chopping of hands were committed. Perpetrators would savagely ask the victim whether he or she preferred a 'long sleeve cut' or 'short sleeve cut' meaning cutting the hand from the arm or from the wrist respectively. The victims were asked to chant slogans and denounce opposition political support and to swear allegiance to the ruling party. People succumbed to the demands made at the base because of the frightening environment created by the presence of people with varied backgrounds and training, and professionals who included soldiers, police, war veterans and youth militia armed with guns, logs, sjamboks, iron bars, bicycle chains or barbed wire which were used to assault victims (Interviewee 7, 13.06.2013). Apart

from severe assaults and beating, victims were subjected to atrocities such as rolling of top of thorny branches, rolling on gravel and also frog jumbling. Female victims and small girls were gang-raped, sometimes in the presence of the husband, father or brother if the victim had been labelled a traitor.

It was easy for the perpetrators of violence to identify the perceived opposition political party supporters from the rest of the community members for victimization at the bases. Voting information obtained from the polling stations was used for easy identification of dissident areas where pockets of opposition MDC supporters had voted against ZANU PF since election results were displayed outside the polling station. These Wards became primary targets of violence. The traditional leaders had real names of people known to be opposition supporters because they had campaigned openly before the March 29 2008 election. These people were definite targets. MDC activists were singled out as they were known local people who had campaigned openly days and weeks before the election days (Interviewee 4, 6.06.2013). Social interaction in the community enabled people in the village to know each other quite well since they lived in the same villages, and also the free campaigning environment created by the government prior to the March 2008 election exposed the victims. As a result it was a matter of mentioning those who support MDC and those who support ZANU PF to the pungwe base commanders, thus making victimization easy. After severe assaults at the base, it was very possible for one victim to divulge many more of his or her colleagues.

Pungwe bases were also being used during the day - as well as night - as re-orientation and re-education venues. All community members were forced to attend and watch the victims being tortured. The people were told to vote correctly during the presidential election or else they would be tortured in the same way. During the re-orientation session, people, especially those suspected of being opposition political party supporters, were forced to chant slogans of the ruling party and denounce opposition political support. The names of all the warned people were written down

and they were eventually issued with the ruling party cards. Sometimes people were asked to sign on death lists circulated at the base to declare that if they were caught again supporting the opposition political party they would die.

The pungwe bases had no proper source of support in terms of food and other materials; therefore the perpetrators of violence relied on looted foodstuffs including chicken, goats, grain and groceries from the homes of victimized people, and groceries confiscated at the roadblocks. Several shops belonging to business people who supported MDC were destroyed and goods looted to sustain life at these torture camps, although not all the goods stolen were used at these camps (Interviewee 16, 30.06.2013). Many shops were robbed of goods even though the owners were not associated with opposition political parties, because the bases had opened up opportunities for people to loot goods for their own personal use at their homes in the name of the pungwe base. Most community members lost their property. This too was never used at the bases but was taken directly by the perpetrators during the raids (Interviewee 8, 13.06.2013). Several people in the surrounding villages were later seen in possession of looted property acquired during the raids of the 2008 election violence. Hardware property such as ploughs, hoes, and shovels which had nothing to do with sustaining the people operating the bases were looted by young local men taking the advantage of the pungwe bases (Interviewee 52, 30.06.2013).

Perpetrators were at liberty to raid a home and victimize the owner as an opposition political party supporter and, during these raids, they would loot any property they could find at these homes. A woman from Mhakwe (Interviewee 46, 30.10.2013) said:

> '*You know, there are people in this community who got rich and made a lot of money from political violence. Political violence was a big business for them since they gained several things through looting other people's property and selling it in the name*

of disciplining sell-outs. Some people used political violence to settle their personal grudges with their enemies so they just find a way to turn it into a political issue and organize and pay youth militia, war veterans, and political gangs to beat you up. Some related people or from extended family have been making such wild accusations in this community, for example that so and so who is their relative has received some money from MDC which he used to start a business but then this will be out of jealousy. They would arrange for the perpetrators to come and raid and victimize this person not on the basis of politics but their family enmity'.

It has been gathered during the research study that there have been discoveries of cattle, goats and other items which had been stolen from the victims and sold in far away villages, some months after the pungwe bases had temporarily stopped operating. Several people demanded their property back from the people who were in possession of their property and this has strained relations in the communities. It has been gathered that many of those people who lost their property during the pungwe base violence of 2008 engaged in witchcraft to recover their goods, since the police knew everything that happened during this time. Efforts to involve the police reaped no positive results because the police told people to identify their property, but some of the goods had been used or eaten at the pungwe bases (Interviewee 47, 15.11.2013).

A villager in Nyamaropa (Interviewee 17, 30.06.2013) narrated a story that happened in the nearby community of Katere, in which a man got back all his property with the help of witchcraft saying:

'People should never underestimate our culture because of politics because it does not bind people together as our norms,

and remember whatever goes around always comes around in our culture. A certain man lost all his property to these perpetrators of the 2008 election violence during these base periods you are asking about. It is alleged that after some time well after the bases had ceased to operate the man went to a witch doctor in Mozambique so that some of his property, including cattle, should be returned. After a week in that village there was a baboon which was now going to the homes of those who had looted his property. The baboon would come in broad daylight and go straight into the kitchen and sit on the bench and tell the one who had done the robbery to return all that he had stolen back to the owner (name mentioned); on failure to do that they would see what would happen. The baboon would immediately leave and go to the other person who was also involved and do the same. There was panic and havoc in Katere (laugh). All those people who had stolen this man's property hurriedly returned virtually all that which they had taken and/or replaced every item. What the owner would simply say to those who would be returning the property was that he needed two goats on top from each returning perpetrator. The goats were to be sent to the witch doctor in Mozambique'.

The research revealed that very few cases have been able to be settled in the formal courts because many people do not know about the legal channels since the police were also acting as gatekeepers to such cases. The community members have no financial capacity to engage lawyers to help them get back their stolen property, and because of this and other challenges, the victims choose to forget about their loss and pain (Interviewee 10, 20.06.2013). The same challenge was faced by the people when they approached the village head with similar cases since most of them were alleged to be sympathizers of the pungwe base operators. Many people therefore preferred

not to talk about their victimization and the pain which they endured during the time of these pungwe bases. Some people deliberately tend to forget that they had gone through such brutal moments and choose to move on with life, preferring the pain to heal with time. 'I do not remember anything that happened during the pungwe bases because I have decided to put every pain and injury behind my back', said Interviewee 10 (20.06.2013).

Several opposition political party supporters, human rights defenders, and others who were suspected to have voted for the opposition MDC died after severe torture and beatings at these pungwe bases. The perpetrators had a tendency of also victimizing the spouses, children and parents of the suspected victims in the event that the real victim was not found to pay the price. As a result, many homes belonging to these victims were also destroyed, the victims' food reserves plundered, their livestock killed, or the victims were injured so badly that they could no longer earn a living (Interviewee 54, 25.11.2013). Victims of the pungwe base torture explained that they were not allowed to seek either medical treatment or judicial assistance even though the police would have been informed. In fact it was illegal to report these things to the police because they too were accomplices in these injustices which people endured (Interviewee 11, 20.06.2013). Seeking medical attention and legal attention was not allowed because this could expose the acts of violence being perpetrated against the community members. At the same time the injured people were bound to attract the attention of human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists who could call for investigations. Therefore the restrictions to public attention enabled the acts of violence to continue until the polling day without interruption.

The mountainous and deep river valleys that characterize the three communities under study enabled victims to evade several terror attacks during this scourge of violence. People used to escape and hide in these nearby mountains, bushes, forests, rivers and valleys which also made it very difficult for the perpetrators to locate them for victimization. People used to sleep outside their homes in mountains and come

back in the morning, but while in the mountains they could see what was happening in the village. However, often in the morning on their return, the villagers would find their homes torched, property looted and granaries destroyed (Interviewee 19, 20.07.2013). The period from March to June also coincided with the harvesting time in the rural communities and as a result of blight most of the crops perished in the fields or were destroyed by the perpetrators in case the owners had run away in fear for their lives. The destroyed homes and crops in the fields were a clear indication to the escapees that they were candidates for victimization and re-orientation at the pungwe base (Interviewee 16, 20.07.2013).

However, the research revealed that the raids by perpetrators of violence from the pungwe bases had a different effect in Nyamaropa because of its geographical position. Nyamaropa shares a long stretch of its eastern border with Mozambique. Most of the families are located along the Gairezi River which separates Zimbabwe and Mozambique. There is a tradition of free movement of people between the two countries since the families along this border have relations on both sides of the river, making movement frequent and constant (Interviewee 20, 20.07.2013). Thus, many people crossed the border into Mozambique to run away from the perpetrators during the 2008 terror attacks. Some of the families even crossed with their livestock because leaving them behind meant that the perpetrators of violence could loot them and sustain life at the base. However, the homes and other property left behind suffered severe destruction and looting. Some of those people who managed to cross into Mozambique found their way quite easily to Mutare where violence and victimization was not as intense as in rural areas (Interviewee 20, 20.07.2013). This relative advantage for those who escaped impacted negatively on those who remained in Nyamaropa. Since the community was left with few members, there was less resistance from the victims which resulted in perpetrators causing more damage and looting more food from too few so that the base could be sustained.

The research study revealed that torture and victimization of the community members did not end by the purported June 2008 presidential election victory by President Mugabe but continued until after the 2009 GNU. This meant that all those who had escaped victimization by deserting their community had to face their share of violence as they returned during the GNU. This is because the perpetrators were still roaming the communities and very little effort had been made during the GNU to prosecute the perpetrators of violence. The GNU did not do enough to protect the vulnerable community members who had suffered intimidation and torture during the previous election. Bases were being revived at the slightest opportunity during the GNU to demonstrate that ZANU PF was still in power (Interview 39, 21.09.2013). The militia and war veterans were doing well in the communities by saying that the country was not going to be sold back to the whites again using a ballot paper and a pen. They were making all those who supported the opposition repent or risk worse things than the 2008 violence.

4.5.1-Views of the people about the Pungwe sessions of the 1970s and 2008

The views of those who witnessed the 1970s war of liberation, including the former liberation fighters (war veterans), are that the sessions during the liberation struggle had a nationalist cultural and politics realized through the armed struggle. They eventually became acceptable indoctrination, mobilization and recruiting sessions for the liberation struggle. It was during these pungwes that many young people became attracted to joining the liberation, without being coerced most of the time, but only after being filled with the zeal of liberating the country (Schmidt 2013:162). The songs, the dances, and the speeches had a spiritual connotation that united both the liberation fighters and the community members with the spirit mediums who were regarded as leading the struggle. At these pungwe celebrations, some people were filled or possessed by the spirit mediums and were accorded a special audience by all participants, including the liberation fighters themselves. This also made the sessions special and respectable. In this sense the pungwe was understood to strengthen the

fighters and heal the trauma of the unarmed civilian populace through the spiritual celebration that ran until dawn.

The zeal and enthusiasm injected by the pungwe celebrations into the community members therefore triggered the spirit of mutual cooperation and empathy between the liberation fighters and the villagers. The villagers therefore offered maximum support to the liberation fighters in the form of money, food supplies, and clothes, and even took turns to do laundry and to cook the food. Thus the liberation fighters did not resort to looting the people's goods because it was prohibited by the base commanders, and such acts were said to be against the values prescribed by spirit mediums that were believed to be directing and leading the operations of the liberation struggle. The sessions were regarded as spiritual celebrations with blessings from the spirit mediums, who detested the spilling of innocent blood, even though in some cases the spilling of the blood of wrongdoers was sanctioned by the commanders in consultation with the spiritual leaders. Disciplinary actions instigated on people perceived to be slowing the liberation struggle were therefore done following standardized procedures and protocol because brutalizing the villagers was against the rules of the struggle. Upon changing their base, the liberation fighters returned all the materials they were using at that base to the community members who had volunteered to help. In this regard the pungwe bases were a necessary morale booster and offered healing spiritual celebrations both for the liberation fighters and the civilian populace. The civilian populace were supporting the sessions because the liberation fighters were to liberate the whole country from the brutality and oppression of the colonial settlers.

However, the 2008 pungwe bases are generally viewed by those who experienced the war of the 1970s, and the rest of the community members, as a creation of evil spirits that thrive on the blood of the innocent people. The agenda of these pungwe bases is regarded to have been driven by insatiable desires to torture, maim, mutilate, rape, brutalize civilians, destroy and loot people's property. People were abducted and

dragged to the bases for brutal attacks, torture, rape, and sometimes murder. This is the main reason these camps were referred to as torture camps, rather than pungwe bases. The sessions were basically to coerce rather than persuade and influence people to support ZANU PF and President Robert Mugabe. Even the re-education sessions purported to have been conducted were just coercive and gave directives to the potential voters. Pungwe bases were nasty and horrible places because of the intimidating atmosphere created by so many people with varied backgrounds and training, such as professionals who included soldiers, police, the militia and war veterans who were wielding weapons of torture and brutality (Interviewee 7, 13.06.2013). These people used all sorts of frightening weapons to torture people, including guns at times, logs, sjamboks, iron bars, bicycle chains, and barbed wire. Evil and immoral acts were committed by these perpetrators of violence, such as rape, young people beating their parents and relatives, undressing people in public, and murder. This happened at the bases and destroyed the community coexistence and cohesion (Interviewee 45, 23.10.2013).

The bases as observed had no legitimate source of daily needs such as food but relied on looted supplies from the villagers, including chicken, goats, grain and groceries confiscated from the roadblocks and nearby shops. These looting and raiding sprees left many homes destroyed and property vandalized, leaving many in the communities homeless and without any basic needs. Moreover, it has been revealed that some of the people whose homes and property were destroyed were targeted on the basis of personal grudges in the community and not because of political differences as was thought to be the case. People were just selling each other to the perpetrators of violence because of personal differences. The perpetrators mostly relied on other people's reports on the political affiliation of most of those who were victimized. There was no thorough investigation to get full evidence before taking action and this resulted in many people being wrongly victimized. School pupils for instance were reporting teachers to the perpetrators of violence alleging them to be MDC supporters but it was just a way of settling scores with teachers.

The traditional leaders who to a great extent authorized the establishment of the pungwe bases used their traditional power and authority to coerce the deemed opposition supporters to vote for President Mugabe against their will. These leaders threatened their subjects with eviction from their homes if they did not swear allegiance to ZANU PF. Other measures and threats too like deprivation of government food assistance were issued during the re-orientation sessions at the pungwe bases. The pungwe bases were thus used to coerce community members to vote for President Robert Mugabe in the June presidential election. They were very effective forced political rallies for all the villagers since anyone who was found not to be attending them was tortured for supporting the opposition. All those who had voted for Morgan Tsvangirai during the March 29 election were forced to instead vote for President Mugabe. These sessions were used to deter people from voting for the MDC and to persuade them to vote for ZANU PF during the presidential runoff. Apart from that the sessions were successful in displacing all the potential opposition supporters from the areas where they were eligible to cast their vote, thereby making it possible for President Mugabe to resoundingly win. Most of the displaced people had their voting rights disenfranchised since they could not vote. Most of the MDC supporters had to pay allegiance to ZANU PF as they had no protection from either the police or the courts. Many cases of violence which were taken to the courts with the help of human rights activists or by victims on their own were thrown out, or the perpetrators were released with no charges. This is because the President controls the security and justice institutes and also because of the bribes and intimidation of the judges.

4.6-Perpetrators of violence

Information gathered from the three communities shows that the events defining this 2008 election violence demonstrate a high degree of uniformity and order, and are characterized by synchronized patterns. This helps us to discard the idea that the acts of violence erupted spontaneously. This is one of the reasons which indicate that the

wave of terror was highly coordinated and centralized. Nonetheless, the operation and execution of violence in each community were adapted and adjusted in response to local conditions; for example, in the choice of venue used for a base and resourcing. However, senior civil servants and war veterans who were interviewed in Nyamaropa, Honde Valley and Mhakwe mentioned that some senior-ranking army officers, police, secret security agents, war veterans, party leadership and traditional leaders had been coordinating the terror attacks. The research revealed that there was a well-organized pattern of violence, perpetrators, forms of violence and abuses during the 2008 terror attack and this has been replicated in these communities. The perpetrators of violence performed differently though, which confirmed the clear devolution of duties and demonstrated a high level of organization and decentralization.

4.6.1-War veterans

The former war of liberation fighters from the two liberation movements (ZANU and ZAPU) are widely known in Zimbabwe as war veterans and they still possess the frightening wartime behaviour. The Zimbabwe War Veterans Association (ZWVA), which was formed in April 1989, is comprised of ex-combatants from ZANLA and ZIPRA who were not accepted into the ZNA in 1980 (Chitiyo 2009:16). However, the formation of ZWVA was a reactive initiative taken by ex-combatants when it had became clear that government had failed to assist them. After the Unity Accord was signed between ZANU PF and PF-ZAPU in 1987, war veterans reorganized themselves, leading to various episodes of rebellion against the state, President Mugabe and ZANU PF during the 1990s (Sadomba 2013:81). At the ZANU PF summit in Mutare in September 1997, President Mugabe bowed to pressure from the war veterans and announced a package for war veterans that would pay each genuine war veteran a lump sum of Z$50,000 and a gratuity for life of Z$5,000 per month (Chitiyo 2000:19). It is believed that this victory by the war veterans over ZANU PF, the state, and President Mugabe undermined the 1979 Lancaster House compromise and accelerated the deteriorating relationship between white farmers and the state.

The souring relationship eventually led to the downfall of the alliance between settler farmers and the ZANU PF elites, culminating in the violent land invasions.

However, the composition of this group identified as war veterans at one point aroused queries and discrepancies on the authenticity of some people included in this category in Zimbabwe. Many refugees, especially youths who left the country expecting to become fighters but who were denied training, and others whom the party preferred to use as teachers in the camps, see themselves as authentic freedom fighters (Kriger 2003:192). This also applies to former political prisoners and political detainees and *mujibas* and *chimbwidos* (male and female youths who provided logistical support to the guerrillas during the war). These groups to a certain extent equate themselves with those who actually fought in the bushes like the former liberation fighters who are now known as 'war veterans'. This has been pronounced as these groups protested against the official definition of war veterans which only covered those who received military training. The category, however, attracted criticism from all sections of the community regarding ZANU PF youth who regard themselves as war veterans, though they are obviously too young to have fought in the war.

The current group of war veterans who are involved in episodes of political violence is the majority of ex-combatants who were originally recruited from the masses of poorly educated rural poor people, who have remained poorly reintegrated and at the political beck and call of the ruling ZANU PF government (Raftopoulos and Savage 2004:66). However, in May 2000 a group of war veterans, themselves marginalized in post-war politics because of their leadership role in ZIPA and in ZIPRA, formed the Zimbabwe Liberators' Platform for Peace and Development (ZLPPD) and dissociated themselves from war veterans' relationship with the party in land occupations (Kriger 2003:193). The Platform leadership had indicated that true war veterans were not involved in these invasions except for a vocal few that were manipulated by politicians and political hooligans. This group of war veterans was

castigated by the government as sell-outs, just like during the war when educated ex-combatants who were more likely to be critical of the party were often labelled and severely punished (White 2003:29-42).

During the 2008 election violence, the war veterans committed despicable acts of violence despite the fact that they were very few in number and advanced in age. This was possible because this state-sponsored group of perpetrators of violence was still feared by the civilian populace. These former liberation fighters still had the spirit of killing, torturing and intimidating which they acquired during the liberation struggle. They still behaved like guerrillas in a state of war since they never underwent professional trauma-healing sessions after the war. The state still paid the war veterans handsomely and it rewarded them with some other benefits as a reward for terrorizing the opposition supporters as they did during these terror attacks. However, the most vicious individuals who made up this group were the fake war veterans who imposed themselves as war veterans even though they never participated in the war of liberation. ZANU PF recognised them because they boosted the dwindling number of the real war veterans (Interviewee 22, 28.07.2013). This was done to maintain the pillar of power in the community. The group was also boosted by some older militia members, who were trained at Border Gezi training centres dotted throughout the country, who are to replace the older war veterans as they die out. These fake war veterans were carrying out orders prescribed to them by the base commander diligently and much better than the real veterans. The old and real war veterans were also giving instructions at the pungwe bases to the youths and the militia to carry out violent attacks on the identified victims. The war veterans were the ones who were deciding on the type of disciplinary action against the victims at the base or during the raids (Interviewee 25, 28.07.2013). The war veterans worked closely with soldiers deployed in rural areas to punish the opposition supporters who had voted against the ruling party during the March 2008 election and to mobilize support for President Mugabe (Interviewee 23, 28.07.2013).

War veterans directed the torturing, beating, raiding, looting and many other atrocities as base commanders. Some of the war veterans were seen in police uniform or military attire in the company of known serving military officers who were dressed in civilian clothes as a way of boosting their power in the communities. Since they had a general knowledge of the 1970s liberation war as well as military experience, war veterans were also actively involved in the activities at the pungwe base giving instructions, as well as being involved in the actual victimization (Interviewee 40, 09.10.2013). Their other main duty was to incite the militia to commit atrocities. An elderly man from Mhakwe (Interviewee 41, 09.10.2013) pointed out that the war veterans would tell the victims how their colleagues died during the liberation struggle and what they went through to liberate the country. This was done during the pungwe base re-education session to stimulate anger and zeal in the youth and the militia such that they would severely assault the victims. Some war veterans would be drunk and they would exaggerate their suffering by sobbing and crying, saying that they could not tolerate anyone reversing what several of their colleagues died for (Interviewee 45, 09.10.2013). War veterans were in the habit of casting all sorts of fear and intimidation into the victim's mind before they were assaulted by the militia. There were several moments when the war veterans were firing gun shots in the air during the pungwe sessions and swearing to kill all the victims because they were just as bad as colonialists.

During pungwe base sessions, war veterans sometimes forced loyal ZANU PF supporters and those victims who would have been tortured to identify other perceived MDC supporters. The identified people included all those who were seen attending the MDC rallies, MDC polling agents, and those who used to wearing MDC regalia in the communities during the campaigning period. These people were then paraded before the pungwe session attendees before they were subjected to thorough beatings, torture or were asked to denounce their MDC membership (Interviewee 51, 15.11.2013). People were sometimes forced to admit that they were opposition supporters because of excessive beating and torture inflicted on them. After admitting

this, they were then forced to denounce the MDC and swear allegiance to ZANU PF. War veterans also gang-raped girls and women brought to the bases during the raids. Many women were raped at the pungwe base by the war veterans before they were severely assaulted (Interviewee 39, 09.10.2013). The war veterans were actively involved in the looting and confiscating of valuable property from the homes of the victims, after which they took the property to their homes (Interviewee 41 (09.10.2013).

War veterans were able to inflict torture and violence with impunity since they had backing from the police, the Zimbabwe Defence Force (ZDF), and the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO). All these state institutes of violence were run by genuine and highly trained war veterans. Since the war veterans were sometimes seen in the community putting on military and police attire, their presence and participation at pungwe bases induced fear in the people to the extent of the ability to take the whole community at ransom at will. Sporadic payments and other benefits accorded to the war veterans by the state enabled them to give maximum support to ZANU PF and this is corroborated by ZANU PF's policy of systematic repression rather than overt violence. Patronage was intended to ensure their commitment to the ZANU PF cause. The benefits were therefore paid by severe violence so that the party could remain in power.

4.6.2-The militia

The militia group came into existence as part of the National Youth Service (NYS) program in 2001 which was intended to shape youths into truly patriotic Zimbabweans with high political consciousness. The program was intended to indoctrinate youths with a sense of nationalism, patriotism and responsibility to defend the country at all cost, be it ideologically, economically or politically. It is, however, alleged that the NYS program was also involved in military training, lessons in political education, lessons in the teachings of ZANU PF, and lessons in how to kill and torture. The trainees of this notorious NYS program are commonly

referred to as the militia, Border Gezis, or the Green Bombers. The length of the NYS training program was approximately 100 days, after which the graduates could enter a post-secondary, or find work in the police force, the military, the public service, or the private sector (Solidarity Peace Trust 2003:14). Over the years, many former militia members were recruited into the formal military sector and became part of the junior officer corps in the army and police (Chitiyo 2009:16). The militia became the infamous and key perpetrator of politically motivated violence in the Zimbabwean political history with the initial episodes recorded during the violent land invasions. To a great extent, the bloody farm invasions inculcated into the militia the politics of intimidation, harassment, torture, kidnapping, murder, rape, destruction of property and attacks on opposition supporters. The despotic culture was nurtured ever since then and culminated in the despicable June 2008 presidential election campaign terror attacks.

During the violent land invasions of the 2000s, the militia was often equipped with deadly weapons such as knobkerries, spears, axes, clubs and knives, but guns were also available as a backup for the soldiers and the police. The war veterans and the militia were the foot soldiers during the violent farm invasions who attacked farm owners, farm workers and opposition MDC supporters in the communities around commercial farms. During these early assaults by the militia, at least 3,000 farm workers were displaced from their homes, twenty-six killed, 1,600 assaulted, and eleven raped (Solidarity Peace Trust 2003:11). The militia, in collaboration with ZANU PF structures, traditional leaders, the military and the police, occupied the farms and waged a violent campaign against the farm owners and the farm workers to drive them off the land. The reason why the farm workers were victimized together with the white commercial farmers is that they were mobilized to vote 'NO' during the February 2000 referendum. Most of those farm workers who were intimidated into attending political meetings and joining ZANU PF who refused were brutalized. Apart from the farm workers and the white farmers, the militia had to spread the terror to the surrounding rural communities against all the perceived supporters of the

opposition who had voted against the then new constitution. The militia harassed, intimidated, killed, tortured and displaced many people from their constituencies in which they were registered to get them to vote ahead of the parliamentary and presidential elections without restraint from the police.

The notion of the militia defying constitutional authority and the political rights of every citizen was demonstrated during the 2008 election violence to the extent of even interfering with government programs, business activities, and social events. The militia connived with the police to evade all the criminal charges which could have been laid against them for the acts of violence. Traditional authority was compromised resulting in the traditional courts being reluctant to prosecute acts of political violence against the militia. Instead, political violence victims were harassed whenever they attempted to lodge a case against these perpetrators of violence. A teacher from Mhakwe (Interviewee 35, 10.09.2013) explained this, saying:

> *'Actually this has been the moment of lawlessness and madness. The militia virtually became the law unto themselves during the 2008 massacre. The political power and government authority have been literally but unofficially transferred to the militia and the war veterans to run the show in the communities. The police supported their actions by failing to arrest them deliberately. These boys were forcing business operators to abide by their demands and rules. Those who failed to abide by their rules were regarded as sell-outs, traitors, and imposters of the West which resulted in their business being destroyed'.*

Violence was combined with vote-buying at the expense of individual business entities and shop operators who were forced to reduce prices so that people could buy very cheap goods. The perceived business ventures of the perceived MDC supporters were punished by making them provide goods used to buy votes through looting and

price reduction by the militia. The shop owners could not even involve the police or the courts since the electorate needed to be convinced to vote for President Mugabe. They could not even close their shops because doing so meant that one is a sell-out which attracted torture and political re-orientation. Closing a shop, over-pricing and hoarding of basic commodities was regarded as the highest form of sabotaging the ZANU PF government. Those business entities which were therefore found on the wrong side were labelled MDC supporters and sell-outs and so the militia would loot the goods from the shops during the night. Alternatively, the militia would call the people from the nearby villages to come to obtain the goods from these shops at very low prices (Interviewee 35, 10.09.2013). This behaviour by the militia is a clear indication of a mutual alliance between the security structures of violence and ZANU PF ideologically indoctrinated youth. Instead of the police arresting the perpetrators of violence, they connived with the militia and the war veterans. This also supports allegations that the NYS program was a ZANU PF agenda in which the trainees were shaped to defend the party.

Usually it is the mandate of the police to mount a roadblock in the roads but the militia took it upon themselves to capriciously and deliberately impose roadblocks in the communities. The militia were imposing roadblocks and search people without any mandate from the relevant authorities. At these roadblocks, the militia were demanding people to demonstrate their support to ZANU PF and President Mugabe. As such the travellers were supposed to produce ZANU PF cards, regalia or to chant the party slogans vividly and correctly. Those who failed were not allowed to proceed with the journey but were beaten, had their goods confiscated, and were sometimes detained until they demonstrated allegiance to ZANU PF. The militia made sure that all the people in particular villages were all supporters of the ruling party; therefore all those who were entering these villages had to be supporters of the party. Those who defied the call were asked to return to where they came from or tortured until they complied. The militia therefore controlled the movements of the people into different communities and also within the communities by imposing curfews. Shops

and beer halls too closed earlier than normal. 'Anyone who was found walking after the prescribed time would be questioned and sometimes beaten or asked to join the youths at their base until the following day', said Interviewee 32 (10.09.2013). Restriction of movement within the community was done to enable the raids which were being carried out usually at night. The police officers too were abiding by these movement restriction rules in the communities and even at roadblocks because the militia was ruling (Interview 31, 29.08.2013). In some areas travellers were asked to obtain clearance letters or permission from traditional leaders before travelling. The same type of authorizing letter was being demanded by the militia manning the roadblocks and those who could not show them were considered to be traitors or sell-outs who were refused by their traditional leaders. Those who were suspected of being opposition supporters were not given these letters and this meant that they could not travel easily from one place to another.

The research revealed that the militia were working mainly as the foot soldiers and enforcers of trivial rules meant to cripple opposition political party support through violence and intimidation. Some of the major acts of violence perpetrated by the militia included tracking fleeing opposition supporters, raiding and destroying homes, kidnapping suspected opposition supporters and their family members, torturing, brutalizing and gang-raping victims (Interviewee 34, 10.09.2013). Most of the gruesome acts of violence by the militia were at the pungwe bases. Victims were abducted from their homes during the organized raids and dragged to the pungwe bases where the militia was instructed to brutalize them. At the pungwe base, the militia were controlled by the base commander who prescribed the type of punishment each victim was supposed to receive. However, excessive torture and beating by the young energetic men usually resulted in the victims being badly injured. The militia were instructed to execute disciplinary actions such as beating with sjamboks and wire under the feet and on the buttocks, kicking with feet and fists, forcing the victims to roll on gravel or fresh thorns and sometimes burning the victims with plastic. The militia displayed advanced military techniques in torture

activities at the pungwe bases, destruction of homes and sporadic raids since they went through the NYS apart from the training which they continuously received during the time of 2008 terror. At the pungwe bases, trained soldiers continuously trained the militia and war veterans in military marching drills, fist-fighting and karate (Interviewee 34, 29.08.2013). Several times in the morning, the militia and some military men would run through the whole village loudly singing the songs that used to be sung by the liberation fighters during the war of 1970s to create an intimidating environment in the communities. Most of these songs which were also composed during the violent land invasions were being used in 2008 to glorify the President and ZANU PF while degrading Western countries and the opposition leadership

During the raids and kidnappings, the militia were so ruthless since most of the time they were under the influence of alcohol. Politicians and the commanders of pungwe bases provided the perpetrators of violence with beer and other trivial benefits to pay for the acts of violence since they were all unemployed. The pungwe base activities, raiding homes and looting of property became the occupation of the community youth as they needed beer, food and money. As a result of this, most of the victims lost their lives during the process of raids and abductions because the militia were committing themselves to savage attacks to please their commanders. Female victims were sometimes rapped in the bush before even reaching the pungwe base. Homes were completely destroyed as the militia had the tendency of torching the houses of perceived opposition supporters. Since part of the objective of this wave of violence was to induce sufficient fear into the perceived opposition supporters, brutality and ruthless attacks were effective tools to achieve that. Those who could not succumb or sustain the pressure and pain of violence had to flee their villages to safer places where they remained until after the presidential elections. This was also important and part of the objective of the terror attacks because by fleeing their constituency, these people could not participate in the subsequent voting process. Most of those

who remained in their homes gave in and pledged allegiance to the ruling party and President Mugabe.

Although the militia was regarded as the mujibas (wartime young male messenger and informant) and chimbwidos (wartime young female messengers and informants), their role was totally different from that played by the young men and women during the liberation struggle. The role of the militia was a well-calculated ploy by the JOC to violently campaign for President Mugabe and rein in the evident wave of change that had overwhelmed the people and to sabotage the opposition from assuming power. The militia enjoyed total immunity from punishment under the law and were acting with absolute impunity in their quest to retain ZANU PF in power. Violence, intimidation, brutal assaults, property destruction, rape, torture and murder were indiscriminately committed by the militia in the name of defending the nation from imperialists and traitors. Thus the use of the militia for terror campaigns was a frantic manoeuvre by ZANU PF aimed at eliminating opposition political parties and silencing dissenting voices which were clamouring for democratic transition. Socially, the acts of terror by the militia and other state-sponsored groups have caused long-term suffering such as the spread of HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies to the raped victims, family breakdowns, and also strained social relations in the communities. Indiscriminate destruction of homes, looting and destruction of property as well as other projects that were sources of livelihood for most the citizens in the rural communities have resulted in severe poverty and hunger. At the same time, permanent body injuries and pain for those who survived torture and physical brutality is a perpetual cause of fear and trauma as well as the physical inability of these victims to fend for themselves.

However, during the war the mujibas and the chimbwidos were trusted, desired and preferred elements of both the liberation fighters and the civilian peasants. The roles played by the mujibas and the chimbwidos during the liberation struggle contributed to the country's freedom because they aided the liberation fighters as well as being

secret agents and messengers responsible for reporting the activities and locations of the colonial forces (Interview 36, 29.08.2013). The mujibas and the chimbwidos played an important role in liberating the country because the liberation fighters and the peasants relied on the information and help they received from them. They never engaged in brutal activities and violence as the militia were against the civilian populace. In fact it was forbidden to terrorize the people who were sustaining the liberation struggle, such as the peasants. These youths were sources and mediums of vital information needed by both the peasants and the liberation fighters in their endeavour to defeat the colonial government forces.

4.6.3-The police

The Zimbabwean police force is a highly militarized and politicized institution that is controlled by the ruling party through extensive systems of patronage, particularly at senior levels of command (Chitiyo 2009:13). This institution is headed by a leadership which is part of the most powerful security organ - JOC - that makes all security decisions in the country. These securocrats are mostly former liberation fighters and they still have a crucial influence in government and the ruling party. War veterans make up the security leadership although the methods of operation and security strategies were basically inherited from the colonial security structure. The ZANU PF government in 1980 did not just inherit the political economy of the white settler state but also the power of the colonial state, its monopoly of the legitimate use of violence, its security executive and the legislative capacity (Onslow 2011:7). The repressive and authoritarian political culture which was used to repress the black majority and to thwart dissenting voices by the then security institutional structures of surveillance and control remain in force today without restraint, as during the colonial era. The perpetrators of politically motivated violence and human rights abuses in Zimbabwe have thus generally enjoyed total impunity. This has been the case dating back to 1965 when the then white supremacist government of Ian Smith unilaterally declared the then Rhodesia's independence from Britain, ushering in a period known as the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) period from 1965 to 1980.

The politicized and partisan police force overtly resorted to colonial authoritarian methodology during the Gukurahundi massacres of the 1980s in Matabeleland and in thwarting student uprisings and food riots of the 1990s. The agitation of the labour, students, civil society, the Church and other political groupings against ever increasing authoritarian dictatorial tendencies, culminated in the formation of the MDC in 1999. Since then and throughout the 2000s, the police have been increasingly unrestrained and continuously implemented the repressive provisions from the Public Order and Security Act (2002) and Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) (2002) as justification for public harassment, intimidation, clampdowns on public dissent and crackdowns on the independent media. The partisan police armed itself with these pieces of repressive legislation to frequently constrain freedom of association and assembly, and especially to prevent and break up protests and rallies organized by opposition political parties and civil society groups. The ZANU PF government blatantly resorted to the use of the police force to thwart any political manoeuvres that threatened its political hegemony while assisting perpetrators of violence such as war veterans, militia and state-sponsored gangs to perpetrate violence. Thus, police brutality escalated during and around the 2000 elections, violent land invasions, operation Murambatsvina and the 2008 election violence.

During the March 2008 election, ZRP officers were implicated in brutal acts of violence and denial of justice before the courts of law to victims while they were reluctant to prosecute state-sponsored perpetrators of violence. Thus, the police force became part of the state security apparatus of violence that was usurped to criminalize the regime's challengers and critiques. The institution was drawn into the perpetration of election violence by arbitrarily arresting political activists and human rights defenders, using excessive force. This research study revealed that the police openly showed support for the perpetrators of violence, especially war veterans, militia and ZANU PF supporters during and after the 2008 election violence in all the three case

study communities. It has been gathered that the police would ensure that criminal dockets made by the victims of violence were either not opened against ZANU PF supporters or if the docket were opened the cases would not proceed or be pursued. In most cases, the political violence victims reported victimization cases and violence against ZANU PF supporters, militia and war veterans but the police would simply dismiss the case on the grounds of it being a political issue (Interviewee 36, 10.09.2013). The police's reluctance to handle politically motivated crimes was premised on the assertion that they were apolitical and neutral. However, though these acts of violence were politically motivated, they still remained criminal offences because constitutionally every individual had the right to participate and belong to any political party. The perpetrators of violence were committing horrible acts of violence such as murder, torture, brutal assaults and rape only because someone had a different political orientation different from theirs. Thus, perpetrators of violence enjoyed total impunity and immunity as police were unable or unwilling to bring them to justice before the courts of law.

The community members have accused the police of being partisan and participating overtly in the political violence although officially they have condemned political violence. The conditions in the communities revealed that the police were obliged to facilitate or allow violence against opposition supporters who had voted against President Mugabe. The obligation remained within the confinements of the security junta JOC which the police force leadership is a part of. While they were supposed to fulfil their constitutional mandate of preserving internal security and maintaining law and order, the police remained powerless to restrain violence because their current instruction was not to arrest the perpetrators. The ZRP's responsibility of maintaining law and order had been diluted and crippled in practice as the constitutional obligation had been usurped by the JOC that controlled and regulated several roles during the wave of terror. Simple evidence to confirm this constraint was the issue of roadblocks which were now being administered by war veterans and the militia but this was actually the mandate of the police force and not any other dubious group.

The police officers were following orders from the militia and war veterans at the roadblocks during the time of the terror attacks of 2008 (Interviewee 31, 10.09.2013). The police did not interfere with these roadblocks but rather they sometimes assisted the militia and the war veterans. This demonstrates the power of the instruction which guided their operation during the wave of violence.

Apart from dismissing the cases of violence and denying justice to deserving victims of violence, the police were openly terrorizing, persecuting and harassing the victims of violence while giving the perpetrators immunity from prosecution. Victims of violence who happened to be in the custody of the police suffered further brutality by the police officers. The police had a habit of arresting people involved in acts of violence but all the perpetrators were released immediately without charges, leaving the victims to face the wrath of police brutality in custody. In some cases the perpetrators were allowed access where the victims were being kept at the police station to further torture the victims (Interviewee 25, 08.2013). Victims of violence were deliberately arrested, detained, falsely charged and denied legal as well as medical assistance even if they were severely injured. In several instances, the police were reluctant to arrest the perpetrators of violence even if there was clear evidence of victimization and violence (Interviewee 34, 10.09.2013).

The information gathered during the research study indicated that the police openly showed support for the personnel at the pungwe bases and those connected with the structure of violence as explained by a man from Nyamaropa (Interviewee 25, 18.08.2013) who castigated the police, saying:

> *'The ZANU PF police have been refusing to record cases of violence reported to them by the victims, no matter how serious the cases were but rather, they would use excessive force and brutality when apprehending and detaining the victims of political violence. This has been so because the perpetrators of*

violence themselves were very quick to run to the police and report that they have been attacked despite the fact that they themselves would have perpetrated violence. The police would quickly agree to the false accusations by the perpetrators because they were their friends in crime. The police would ensure that criminal dockets were not opened or processed against those who perpetrated violence, destroy the homes and loot property belonging to the opposition supporters. If at all the cases were documented by the police, sooner or later the cases were closed without trial. All this would frustrate the victims to the extent of giving up on pursuing the case. The victims ended up not reporting the cases to the police but rather resorting secretly to retaliatory strategies to counter victimization'.

In a normal situation, the police should have been making frantic efforts to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators regardless of their political affiliation, rather than conniving with the war veterans and the militia in perpetrating violence on the perceived opposition supporters. The police duty is not to subvert or undermine the course of justice.

There have been several cases where the police officers have been seen near, though not actively participating in, the perpetration of violence at the established pungwe bases during the 2008 wave of election violence. They were, however, witnessing torture activities instigated by the war veterans and the militia. Police officers were complicit in the perpetration of election violence simply by virtue of witnessing victimization or being present at the pungwe bases where torture was being instigated on innocent victims and failing to take action against the perpetrators (Interviewee 31, 29.08.2013). Police officers have a duty to make efforts to stop or arrest criminals, such as perpetrators of violence, as required by law and their code of conduct. This is the reason why community members are pointing a finger at the police force as part

of the perpetrators of violence and as proxy forces to the 2008 terror attacks. Several community members who were interviewed indicated that the police should have stopped the torture of innocent people by the war veterans and the militia which happened in their presence (Interviewee 35, 29.08.2013). The police have been very reluctant to arrest identified perpetrators of violence on the grounds that these were political issues and that the police is apolitical, but they were quick to press charges when ZANU PF supporters were attacked by opposition activists.

4.6.4-The traditional leadership

In a traditional Zimbabwean rural community setup, the traditional leaders are the custodians of the members of the community. They administer and preside over traditional, socio-economic and political issues as they are the traditional authorities who lead the villages in all traditional, customary and cultural matters. The traditional leaders have a strong social contact with almost all the people who reside in their area of jurisdiction and this puts them in a better position to be acquainted with the personal information of every villager under them (Machingauta 2010:48). This makes them experienced peace builders who are capable of resolving and mediating disputes and threats of public unrest before the peace is disturbed. They are also expected to administer justice and democracy in their areas of jurisdiction. The leaders are empowered to deal with problems of land and natural resource conservation and management in their areas, preserve and maintain rural family life, and punish crimes like livestock theft and misuse of natural resources. Traditional leaders thus have the monopoly of punishing whoever they deem to be a cause of concern in their area and this gives them the privilege of authorizing any action to be taken against any community member in their area (Makahamadze, Grand & Tavuyanago 2010:37). In this regard the traditional leaders are looked upon by all the people in their area of jurisdiction and they therefore need to be apolitical.

The pre-colonial Chiefs combined an authoritarian governance system with some principles of the modern-day democracy in the deliverance of justice. Nonetheless,

the democratic structure and function of the institution of the Chieftaincy that existed in the pre-colonial period came to an end when the colonial masters introduced administrative structures and legislative laws that reduced the function of a Chief to that of a government officer (Makahamadze, Grand & Tavuyanago 2012:35). In this way, the colonial government disempowered the traditional Chiefs and used them as their agents to bolster their control of African societies. The traditional leaders were made to abandon their traditional role as custodians of traditional values which promoted equity and equality amongst the subjects by adopting the authoritarian system of governance. The same method that the colonialists used the Chiefs to oppress their subjects has been replicated in modern-day Zimbabwe with the same leaders being turned into government instruments and tools for oppressing dissenting voices. The process started by restoring the traditional powers which the Chiefs used to have before colonialism and then giving them the authority to spearhead development programmes, distribute land and to promote cultural values.

The strategy to co-opt the traditional leaders in ZANU PF was based on the mobilizing potential possessed by traditional leaders since they were the custodians of the rural population and had strong connections to all the members of the rural community. ZANU PF's intimate relationship with the traditional leaders had to be sustained by a host of benefits and hefty incentives which included brand new trucks, free fuel for personal use, and beautiful houses constructed by the government. They were given handsome reviewable salaries, farms during the violent farm invasions, farm inputs, and also the mandate to distribute government food handouts in times of drought. In return for these benefits, the Chiefs were supposed to be loyal to the government and ZANU PF as well as to exercise extensive authoritarian powers and control over rural communities and their subjects. Most of the Chiefs therefore unquestionably surrendered their total support and that of all the community members under their custody to the ruling party in order to assure a continuous flow of state privileges and allowances. The traditional leaders were therefore reduced to a mere accessory that ZANU PF used to increase the party's grip on the rural constituencies

support base. All the benefits and restoration of power were a political attention-grabber to mobilize votes in the rural communities which were the party's traditional support base.

During the 2008 election violence, the traditional leaders used their mighty powers to require community members to attend the infamous re-orientation meetings at the pungwe bases. At these pungwe sessions, all the perceived opposition political supporters were thoroughly beaten, tortured, intimidated and forced to renounce any link to MDC and to pledge allegiance to ZANU PF. The traditional leaders used their traditional authority to have all the community members attend the re-orientation sessions where perceived sell-outs were paraded and tortured by the militia and war veterans. No one dared defy the demands of the traditional leaders since they had the power to apply force and use perilous threats of deposing or expelling people from their communities or declaring someone a dangerous element (Interviewee 42, 09.10.2013). All those people who were labelled opposition political party supporters by the traditional leaders were subjected to continuous harassment, intimidation and even victimization by the war veterans and the militias without intervention of the police. The traditional leaders were regarded as enforcers of the law in the communities (Interviewee 44, 09.10.2013). In this regard, the traditional leaders used their powers to threaten people with eviction from their villages and ban opposition political party activities, as well as to deny food aid to the perceived opposition supporters.

An interviewed programmes officer with a local peace building civil society organization (Interviewee 57, 27.11.2013) indicated that some of the current crop of traditional leaders is immersed in partisan politics. This is totally divorced from their prominent legal requirement of being politically impartial in carrying out their duties. The traditional leadership has become an appendage of ZANU PF by abandoning its traditional role of being the custodian of the community members endowed with administrative, judiciary and community development planning functions. By

becoming politically aligned stakeholders, traditional leaders became ineffective in administering their major role of managing, resolving and mediating community conflicts to promote peace. During the 2008 wave of election violence, the traditional leaders were overtly working closely with the militia, war veterans and members of the security sector who were operating the pungwe bases. They facilitated the setting up and operation of the pungwe bases and were summoning people to be tortured at the pungwe bases for having voted against ZANU PF during the March 2008 election. Rather than carrying out their duties in a more dignified manner, the traditional leaders connived with police to ignore crimes of violence perpetrated against dozens of people in their areas, including murder, rape and livestock theft.

The traditional courts which were used to adjudicate disputes and mediate conflicts were not used in favour of election violence victims since most of the traditional leaders were biased towards the perpetrators. Generally these courts were also used as venues to humiliate, intimidate, criminalize, and perpetrate violence against suspected opposition supporters. Village heads convened meetings at the established pungwe bases where they would denounce opposition political parties in their community and threaten to expel all those who were not supporters of the ruling ZANU PF (Interviewee 50, 27.11.2013). These leaders forced villagers to donate groceries, food, goats and chickens to support the personnel at the pungwe bases and anyone who failed to do so risked beating or other forms of punishment, since this was regarded as a clear indication of allegiance to opposition political parties. In some villages, the pungwe bases were actually established at the homestead of the traditional leader who automatically became the base commanders. It was very easy for traditional leaders to parade opposition political party supporters at pungwe sessions because they possessed all the details of their subjects in terms of political affiliation. The reason is that in communal areas, community members lived as one family which made it very easy to know each other's political party. This is different from urban areas where people rarely knew about each other because of the population size. Therefore the role of traditional leaders as perpetrators of violence

and mobilizing agents for ZANU PF was very effective. The coordination and execution of election violence in 2008 was possible to a great extent because of the traditional leaders who used their traditional power and authority with impunity against all those who had voted against ZANU PF. Thus, all the traditional leaders who were conniving with perpetrators of violence at the pungwe bases in the communities were directly involved in the terror attacks and the victimization of the villagers (Interviewee 51, 15.11.2013).

The war veterans, the military, and the militia did not allow people to move freely from one community to the other without permission from the traditional leaders. This was mostly in a bid to bar foreign journalists and human rights activists from witnessing violence and torture during the 2008 terror. The traditional leaders had the privilege of granting permission to the people so that they could be allowed to go through the roadblocks mounted by the war veterans, the militia and the military personnel. However, the traditional leaders refused to offer permission letters to suspected opposition political party supporters resulting in them being harassed, tortured and assaulted by the war veterans and the militia at the roadblocks (Interviewee 60, 27.11.2013). The assumption was that all those who failed to produce the permits had already been screened by the traditional leaders who had enough details about the subjects' political orientation. They even refused to authorize injured victims of violence to go and access medical assistance from the hospitals and this caused a lot of suffering to the severely injured victims who remained trapped in the communities. The traditional leaders refused to give permission letters to the injured victims as a ploy to block people from fleeing their homes after being attacked because this would attract investigation by independent journalists and human rights activists. It would be easy for investigators or journalists to be curious and question the injured people because the injuries were so severe. In most cases these injuries included broken limbs and legs, lacerations, and bruised backs and buttocks. The behaviour of the traditional leaders clearly demonstrated their partisan politics in favour of ZANU PF and the state-sponsored perpetrators of

violence even though this was totally against their role as the custodians of traditional values and people.

4.6.5-The secret security agents

The Zimbabwe Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) is an intelligence organization responsible for state security and operates as a department in the President's Office but is not regulated by any legislation. This department lacks accountability and is answerable only to the President. The CIO has operated more as the intelligence arm of the ZANU PF and has been implicated in serious human rights abuses against ZANU PF's political opponents. This organization has been a well-established and effective organizational structure of surveillance and control that was used by the colonial white settler state (Onslow 2011:7). The CIO is an element of the state surveillance infrastructure and is an intelligence gathering organization which is notorious for secret abductions and the use of torture to extract information from the victimized (Human Right Watch 2013:28). It is the most powerful arm of Zimbabwe's security apparatus and is extremely feared by Zimbabweans inside and outside the country. Like any other secret agencies around the world, the CIO has a tendency to infiltrate other departments within and outside of Zimbabwe, including learning institutions in the private and public sectors. This security department is headed by high-ranking war veteran officials who participated in the liberation struggle and who are hard core ZANU PF supporters. Like other heads of the security sector in Zimbabwe, the CIO leadership forms part of the JOC and the operations of the secret security agents were regulated and coordinated by the securocrats.

The CIO has a record of kidnapping and abducting victims using unregistered vehicles, either in view of the public or secretly. However, the abducted people are found afterwards in police custody charged with treason or banditry. Zimbabwe's Supreme Court for instance established that CIO agents abducted and tortured Zimbabwe Peace Project Director Jestina Mukoko, a prominent human rights campaigner, in December 2008, in an attempt to induce a false confession. During the

2008 election violence, the CIO was implicated in severe atrocities, including the torture of citizens in its custody, organizing and providing logistical support to perpetrators of election violence, and permitting the terror activities. Secret security operatives were mostly involved in the secret abductions and disappearances of villagers who were linked to the opposition political parties, and these villagers were seriously tortured and left for dead in the bushes and mountains (Interviewee 18, 20.07.2013). Many abducted people were not found until several days later, and sometimes the dead bodies were discovered with injuries and marks of beatings because the secret agents used many torture techniques to extract information. The CIO also used their vehicles without number plates to transport the militia and war veterans from one place to another in order to carry out abductions and torture activities. On several occasions, the members of the CIO made themselves known to a number of victims whom they tortured, intimidated, and severely attacked, in order to cast a cloud of fear in all of the communities.

State secret security agents were vital in the gathering of information leading to the victimization of suspected opposition political party supporters by war veterans and the militia. The tracking and raiding of the victims by the war veterans, the militia and the CIO, was done during the night and usually the victims were tortured in the bushes while their homes and property were destroyed and looted (Interviewee 15, 30.06.2013). The tracking, raiding, and gathering information about the suspected victims was very successful since the secret security agents were always disguised in civilian clothes to keep their identity unknown most of the time. They were disguised as the militia or dressed up in police or military uniforms to further hide their identities. The use of unregistered vehicles was so that the community members could not accuse them and so they could not be tracked after raids. However, the research study revealed that apart from that role of gathering information and surveillance, the secret agents in several cases assaulted and tortured election violence victims in police custody if they were accused of supporting opposition political parties. In some cases the agents arrested the victims and ordered the police to falsify charges related

to inciting public violence or threatening state security and peace. The security agents justified their actions with maintenance of public order and defence of the state against foreign aggression. It has also been gathered that the secret security agents were harassing and assaulting people for minor offences and twisted the crimes to become political offences in order to brand the suspects as anti ZANU PF who deserved to be punished and tortured. Just like the police, the CIO arrested and tortured the victims of the election violence instead of the real perpetrators. The acts of harassment, intimidation, abduction and torture by the secret security agents were to induce fear in community members so that they would renounce their support of opposition political parties.

4.6.6-The military

From the time of the Liberation War (1965-79) to the present day, there has always been an uneasy and uneven duality between professionalism and politicization within the security sector (Chitiyo 2009:3). However, there was a qualitative difference between the Rhodesian Security Forces, who exhibited a highly professional but increasingly ideological force, and the guerrilla forces, who were highly politicized and ideological militants - especially the ZANLA cadres. After independence in 1980, the reintegration of the liberation fighters and the Rhodesian forces diluted the professionalism in the army since most of the high-ranking army leadership came from the former guerrilla fighters. During the liberation struggle, the roles of the liberation fighters were multiple; among them were party commissar, propagandist, military man, and recruiting agent, and this war time ideology remained a priority as the military fought to safeguard ZANU PF. The bulk of current leaders of Zimbabwe's security forces, including Defence Forces commander, Air Force commander, the Police Commissioner General, and the Central Intelligence Organization director are all former ZANLA combatants who fought in Zimbabwe's liberation struggle (Human Rights Watch 2013:8). These former liberation fighters currently constitute the leadership of the Zimbabwe security sector that makes up the JOC, which is the powerful security decision-making and implementing body.

Since the 1970s war of liberation, the party-military nexus has been strong in both ZAPU and ZANU PF and the military men have always had a significant say in party politics (Raftopoulos 2013). As a result, the Zimbabwean military does not distance itself very much from ZANU PF; hence the sudden violent takeover of party campaigns soon after the March 2008 election. This mutual and symbiotic relationship manifested itself when the JOC decided within days of the 2008 March election results to unleash an election violence campaign to make sure that ZANU PF, which had been destooled as the ruling party in parliament, would not be dislodged from State House (Masunungure 2009:81). The JOC and the military generals thus regarded themselves as the custodians of Zimbabwean sovereignty and defied the defeat of ZANU PF that delivered independence to the Zimbabweans. As a testimony to this, the Zimbabwe Defence Forces commander Gen. Constantine Chiwenga dismissed the possibility of meeting MDC leader Tsvangirai to discuss reforms to the security sector, saying:

> *'We have no time to meet sell-outs. Clearly Tsvangirai is a psychiatric patient who needs a competent psychiatrist… It's just not possible for me to entertain the MDC-T leader (Morgan Tsvangirai), we are different. Just like oil and water, we cannot mix. As the defence forces we will not respect or entertain people who do not value the ideals of the liberation struggle. Meeting such people will be a mockery to the thousands of people who sacrificed their lives fighting for the country's independence. Who the hell does Tsvangirai think he is? No one can make us turn our back on the ideals of the liberation struggle' (The Sunday Mail May 4 2013).*

The leadership of the Zimbabwean security sector therefore happened to be the guardian of the ruling party, aside from the material benefits accorded to the high-

ranking personnel as patronage. For instance these leaders benefited heavily from the violent land invasions where they appropriated large tracts of farms which belonged to the white commercial farmers. This elaborate patronage system was established to reward partisan senior military officials to keep them loyal to ZANU PF and to President Mugabe (Rupiya 2011:19). These hefty material rewards automatically thrust the military into the mainstream economy, which is the reason why the sector engaged in election violence to protect ZANU PF's political hegemony. This is despite the fact that involvement in election violence and in politics, especially in 2008, is against Zimbabwe's laws, including the Defence Forces Act, the Constitution, and the security sector's code of conduct.

The Zimbabwean military has on numerous occasions disobeyed its mission and professionalism by participating openly in party politics, as evidenced by their involvement in the election violence of 2008. Several military generals expressed a strong allegiance to ZANU PF, including the Army Chief of Staff Major-General Martin Chedondo who unambiguously declared that, 'the constitution says the country should be protected by voting and in the 27 June presidential election runoff pitting our defence chief, Cde Robert Mugabe, and Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC-T, we should, therefore, stand behind our Commander-in-Chief. Soldiers are not apolitical. Only mercenaries are apolitical. We have signed and agreed to fight and protect the ruling party's principles of defending the revolution. If you have other thoughts then you should remove that uniform' (The Herald, 31 May 2008) quoted in (Zinyama 2012:146). This is a clear indication that the military in Zimbabwe is not apolitical and would do whatever possible to keep ZANU PF in power, including violence. On the same note, Major-General Engelbert Rugeje has been cited addressing a rally in Masvingo in May 2008, just before the June 2008 presidential runoff election, as saying: 'This country came through the bullet, not the pencil. Therefore, it will not go by your x of the pencil. We cannot let the efforts of such people as the late Chimombe to liberate this country just go to waste. Today I came here by helicopter with the late Chimombe's body. The next time I will come next

week to Jerera, the helicopter will be full of bullets. You know what you did' (Masunungure 2009:84).

During the 2008 election violence it was evident that the military personnel were tormenting the community members who had voted in the March 29 2008 election against ZANU PF and President Robert Mugabe. The research revealed that the military collaborated with secret intelligence officers and the police force to organize, strategize and coordinate the terror attacks. Apart from that, the military basically provided logistical support to the militia and war veterans during the perpetration of 2008 election violence, such as by transporting them to carry out raids and abductions. Military equipment, such as vehicles, guns and uniforms, were used by the perpetrators of violence to enhance their power over the victims and to induce fear and panic in the communities. Logistical support to facilitate the perpetration of violence in the communities by the military in the form of vehicles and backup support during raids was a direct involvement in the terror. Military trucks were used to transport war veterans and the militia during the raids, as well as to transport looted goods to the pungwe bases (Interviewee 15, 30.06.2013). Moreover the military was reluctant to protect the civilian populace against the marauding state-sponsored gangs who tortured and terrorized citizens in the communities. This failure to restrain criminals from harassing and assaulting people was a technical permission to commit crimes which the security sector granted (Interviewee 43, 23.10.2013). Being part of the state's implements of violence, the military has an obligation to provide security and protect the civilians, rather than being a security threat to the people, as was the case.

War veterans sometimes patrolled in the villages dressed in military uniforms and with guns given to them by the military, since they were trained former military men. This was a deliberate strategy to scare the community members so that they would renounce opposition political parties and pay allegiance to the ruling ZANU PF and President Mugabe. The presence of the guns and military uniforms in the

communities cast fear into both the people who were implicated as opposition supporters, and the community members at large (Interviewee 49, 30.10.2013). There were moments when the soldiers were just firing their guns in the air to remind the community members of the war and death they would face if they defied the demand to vote correctly in the pending runoff election. The message of death was clear to the community members since there were already some people who had lost their lives. The army was involved in overt acts of violence, harassment, intimidation and torture against the suspected supporters of opposition political parties - specifically MDC - at the pungwe bases as well as during the raids. Although their participation was not as active as in the state of war, their presence and moral support to the active participants of violence was enough to cause pandemonium among the persecuted populace.

There were military officers in their communities who mingled with the community members disguised in plainclothes. However, the signal of them having come to terrorize the opposition supporters was very clear to the civilian populace because the local war veterans and militia were boasting about it (Interviewee 15, 30.06.2013). Thus the relationship that existed between the military, war veterans and the militia in the communities was a cause of concern to the community members because they were the very people who operated the pungwe bases. To induce more fear into the people, the army officers together with the local militia and war veterans engaged in such hysterical behaviour like singing the songs sung during the liberation struggle. These were some of the numerous ways the military was engaged as a desperate attempt to woo votes for President Mugabe from the community members (Interviewee 49, 30.10.2013). In the morning, the soldiers, war veterans and the militia would engage in military drills which enhanced the combative skills of these perpetrators. The militia and war veterans were trained how to use guns, grenades, and knives, as well as in other skills like karate, judo and boxing (Interviewee 16, 30.06.2013). The skills acquired by the militia and the war veterans from the military were used against the perceived enemies of the state. The training which was offered

by the military men to the civilians was in itself intimidatory and created a frightening environment in the communities.

Soldiers were directly involved in the brutal daily pungwe base re-education sessions in which they assaulted and tortured local residents to force them to denounce the MDC and swear allegiance to ZANU PF (Interviewee 15, 30.06.2013). The army officers were conniving with the militia, war veterans, and the police to prevent suspected opposition supporters from fleeing their villages as well as to block victims from getting legal and medical help from the courts and hospitals respectively. The nearby clinics and hospitals had been warned and instructed by the army not to treat victims of election violence. Therefore, the presence of soldiers in the community has been a serious threat to the security and rights of the people. The acts of violence perpetrated against the electorate were a gross violation of the freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of political participation and the right to life. People were forced to vote for the leaders, or forced not to exercise their right to vote by displacing them. The fear induced by acts of violence was crippling the smooth democratic transition envisaged by the people.

4.7-Forms of violence

There was a prevalence of similar major forms of violence committed during the 2008 state-sponsored wave of violence in the three researched communities. This systematic and consistent pattern of both the forms of violence and prominent groups of perpetrators is a clear indication of well-coordinated and centralized episodes of terror. The pattern and the forms of violence perpetrated against the targeted victims of election violence showed some resemblances and similarities suggesting that the scourge of violence was highly organized and well-coordinated, although variations would be noted from one community to the other (Interviewee 33, 10.09.2013). The forms of violence perpetrated against the political victims included compulsory re-orientation meetings, beatings, torture, rape, abductions, forced displacements, looting and destruction of property, arson, and murder. The victims of violence were

mostly suspected opposition MDC supporters and activists who were accused of having voted against ZANU PF. The research study revealed that the March 2008 harmonized election violence was characterized by varied forms of violence intended to coerce people into voting ZANU PF and to denounce the MDC. These systematic forms of violence were intended to bar opposition political party supporters from voting as a result of induced fear or failing to cast their vote because of forced displacement. This was designed to increase the number of votes for President Mugabe in the subsequent June presidential runoff election. This was publicly declared by the war veterans and the militia during the violent campaign prior to the presidential election with the backing and support of the state security sector.

4.7.1- Re-orientation sessions

These were infamous sessions where the community members were lectured about the ideology and slogans of the ruling party as well as how the liberation fighters conducted their quest to liberate the country. The ruling party leadership, the security sector, the militia and the war veterans were saying that the people had forgotten the revolutionary party and that is why they had voted against it. For them it was important to force the people to re-join the party and renounce allegiance to opposition politics. Those who were suspected of being opposition political supporters were paraded before the public, scolded, humiliated, intimidated and threatened with expulsion from their villages because they were regarded as sell-outs. At times the paraded victims were disciplined by beating and torture. The assumption therefore was that reminding people about the liberation history and what the revolutionary party stood for would make them regain conscience and vote for President Mugabe. At the same time, the idea was to justify the brutality and torture that was being instigated on those people who were accused of having voted for MDC against the revolutionary party ZANU PF. The educators at these sessions were glad afterwards to force the beneficiaries (victims) to accept the cards and ZANU PF regalia as a sign of repentance for what they had done in the March 2008 elections.

The perpetrators sarcastically referred to this as a re-admission into the party or baptism. These gatherings were also instructive meetings about how to vote and who to vote for in the subsequent runoff election. During the re-orientation session, voting strategies were given to the people in terms of the order (sequence) in the voting queue, and the time to go to the polling station, so that it could be easier to trace those who would vote for Tsvangirai (Interviewee 28, 18.08.2013). Again this was meant to intimidate the electorate in the community to be afraid of voting for the opposition political candidates even if they were alone in the polling booth. All the members of the community were ordered to vote for President Mugabe and those who had voted out ZANU PF and its candidates in 29 March harmonized election were disciplined, forced to denounce the opposition MDC, and obliged to swear to vote for President Mugabe. Literally these were sessions where people were being forced not to vote for any political party other than the ruling party.

Re-orientation sessions were extended pungwe sessions but only differed from pungwes in that they were mostly held during the day, but usually at the same base. The traditional leaders in collaboration with the ZANU PF leadership and the war veterans were mostly in charge of convening villagers to attend these meetings since all the community members obeyed them. The traditional leaders could simply convene their subjects using their traditional powers and authority and also they already had detailed lists of all villagers and their political parties (Interviewee 33, 10.09.2013). It was very easy to categorize people according to their political affiliation because prior to the March 2008 election people were very free to campaign for the political party of their choice. The free political environment was as a result of the SADC's democratic election guidelines which the government of Zimbabwe was forced to implement. The traditional leaders and the local war veterans therefore knew who were definitely against ZANU PF. Thus, opposition political party supporters, opposition candidates and election agents were the main targets during these sessions. The victims were asked to repent and surrender all the opposition political party regalia and membership cards and accept those of ZANU

PF, after having been forced to denounce the opposition and correctly chant ZANU PF slogans.

People had no chance or choice to deny the demands at the session because the perpetrators of violence who were torturing people at the pungwe in the night were also present during the re-orientation sessions. The perpetrators were ready to discipline all those who were brave enough to go against the instructions. The presence of the militia and war veterans at these sessions armed with their dangerous weapons cast enough fear to intimidate victims. This frightening atmosphere was worsened by the presence of other brutalized victims who were tortured somewhere during the night. One young man from Mhakwe (Interview 48, 30.10.2013) said this concerning these meetings:

> *'The re-orientation meetings were the most devastating sessions of the 2008 violence because of what people went through in the hands of the abusers. People suffered all sorts of horrible humiliation when they were castigated, ridiculed, verbally accused, shouted at and labelled in public. However, the most distressing thing about these sessions was the frightening environment which was created. People were fainting and others collapsing when they were called to come in front to be paraded. The most frightening was the large numbers of the perpetrators who would be agitating to thrash people with all sorts of tools including thorn branches, bicycle chains, machetes, electric cables, iron bars, logs and guns. The victims were being asked to chant ZANU PF slogans, denounce opposition, and swear allegiance to the liberation party'.*

Parading people was a very effective way of restraining people from further associating themselves with opposition political parties. No one was ready to die just

for supporting an opposition political party that was not even powerful enough to provide enough and effective security. The act of parading people as opposition supporters and counting the number was very strategic because it was declared from the onset that if ever the opposition were to obtain any votes in future, the votes were from the paraded people. This was an effective threat because people were no longer prepared for similar torture. The paraded people were also warned that there were enough bullets for each one of them depending on the number of votes which Tsvangirai and MDC were given (Interviewee 28, 18.08.2013).

4.7.2-Displacements

Many people were forced by the wave of violence that rocked many communities in Manicaland to flee from their villages where they had a constitutional right to cast their vote. The barrage of acts of violence was meant to cause enough displacements as a deliberate move to constrict and reduce the number of votes for Tsvangirai in the subsequent presidential election. The displaced people therefore could not exercise their constitutional right to vote because they could only vote in their constituency. Displacement was one of the main objectives of the instituted wave of election which was codenamed CIBD (Coercion, Intimidation, Beating and Displacement) (Sachikonye 2011:49). However, it has been gathered that the perpetrators did not prefer the people to find their way into urban areas where they could access legal and health assistance. The perpetrators of violence wanted people to escape to any other remote area or nearby Mozambique so that they could not attract the attention of journalists or human rights defenders (Interviewee 59, 27.11.2013). However, the geographical positions of the communities under study enabled several victims of violence to escape into nearby Mozambique and end up in Mutare and eventually in several other towns where it was safer and easier to get legal and health assistance. Other victims sneaked into other safer areas during the night thanks to the thick forests and mountainous terrain of these communities. What actually made people flee their villages were the severe beating, torture, rape, destruction of homesteads,

looting of property, and slaughter of goats and cattle at the pungwe bases by the state-sponsored perpetrators of violence.

However, perpetrators of violence looted property and destroyed several homes which had been deserted by the fleeing victims. A woman from the Mhakwe community (Interviewee 44, 23.10.2013) indicated that several people from her village escaped to Mutare where they spent the entire 2008 terror period in makeshift tents provided by particular donor organizations, while others were accommodated at the MDC Manicaland province. The crops in the fields were harvested and eaten at the pungwe base as well as the chickens, goats and sometimes the cattle. Most of the people who ran away from their homes because of the terror attacks could only return after the formation of the GNU. Nonetheless, upon returning to their villages several victims were still threatened with violence and torture despite the fact that their homes were destroyed. The returning victims still found the people who were tormenting them roaming in the villages because they were never tried before the courts of law for the atrocities they committed. The perpetrators of violence were instead boasting of having escaped jail and were threatening to commit worse acts of violence because they were law unto themselves.

The notorious war veterans and militia vowed to deal accordingly with all those who had run away from them because they had not received their share of the violence that others received (Interviewee 14, 30.06.2013). Those who perpetrated violence during the wave of violence equivocally declared that ZANU PF was in charge of the government and that the MDC MPs were place-holders who were going to vacate the seats after the next election. The police force was still powerless to deal effectively with perpetrators of violence even though the Ministry of Home Affairs was being co-shared between ZANU PF and MDC (Interviewee 58, 27.11.2013). Apparently it was therefore safer for the people in the communities where the perpetrators of violence were still forcing the community members to support ZANU PF, with impunity from the police and courts. However, the election violence that drove many

people out of their homes resulted in a serious shortage of food in the communities because most of the people's harvest was destroyed by animals, while the granaries were looted by the perpetrators. This meant that all those who left their homes seriously needed food assistance but only ZANU PF supporters were given food aid by the traditional leaders. Because of this predicament, the villagers were compelled to join ZANU PF for food and safety reasons.

4.7.3-Beatings, assaults and torture

During the operation Makavhotera Papi 2008 wave of terror, physical assaults, torture and beating were common acts of violence perpetrated against opposition political party supporters, as revealed by this research study. These acts of violence were instigated with brutality and ferocity that forced victims to apologize, denounce the opposition, and swear allegiance to ZANU PF, as instructed by the executors of these atrocities. The pungwe bases were the main venues where identified people who had voted against ZANU PF and President Mugabe were thoroughly beaten and tortured by the militia and war veterans. The victims were subjected to indiscriminate thorough beating by mobs of the militia and war veterans, mainly on the thighs, the buttocks, the back and the inside parts of the feet (Interviewee 42, 09.10.2013). The amount of beating and the weapons used was the same for men and women, and young and old, and this resulted in more women and elderly people having permanent injuries and disabilities. The perpetrators used deadly weapons such as logs, thorny branches, iron bars, bicycle chains and electric cables that caused injuries all over the body. The pungwe base commanders instructed and prescribed the nature of violence to be instigated on the victims depending on the gravity of the allegations.

However, victims who were punished in the bushes and those beaten during the raids suffered more because no one controlled the perpetrators of violence. Several victims who suffered severe permanent injuries were assaulted and beaten in the night and on other spontaneous raids which were savagely carried out in a war-like scenario. Therefore the assaults and beatings were increasingly becoming brutal to the extent of

breaking the legs, heads, backs and the ribs of the victims, which in several cases resulted in the death of the victim (Interview 37, 21.09.2013). In some raids, the perpetrators used any weapon available to them such as bricks, big stones and iron bars because people ended up arming themselves to fight against the raiders so there was a need to overpower the enemy. There were also some cases where pregnant women were beaten deliberately so that they would abort the child because the perpetrators were saying that they did not want more opposition supporters to be born in the communities. As a result more deaths occurred, not at the pungwe bases, but in the bushes and mountains.

The assaults were also instigated by the secret security agents and the police on the victims in their custody. It has been gathered during the research study that the police were arbitrarily arresting the already victimized opposition political party supporters and further interrogating, and severely beating and torturing them while in their custody. Sometimes the police would tell the victims openly not to support the opposition but to do the right thing (support ZANU PF) if they wanted to be safe. The police were also in the habit of repeatedly verbally abusing the victims in their custody using inflammatory words like sell-outs, traitors and other derogatory statements (Interviewee 19, 20.07.2013). These arrested people were assaulted and tortured while in custody and were subjected to other gruesome acts, including solitary confinement, being locked up in filthy conditions, sleep deprivation, deprivation of medical and legal assistance, and starvation (Interview 10, 20.06.2013).

Torture was used to inflict pain on the victims so that they would confess or swear to support and vote for President Mugabe or for the victims to reveal other people who were opposition supporters so that they too could be disciplined (Interviewee 42, 09.10.2013). Some dreadful methods of torture were also used by the perpetrators at the pungwe bases, such as piercing naked victims with thorns and broken bottles, burning the body with plastic, and forcing people to roll on gravel and fresh thorn

branches. Victims who were identified as having committed serious offences were sometimes asked to remove their clothes and were beaten using fresh thorny branches which pierce the whole body leaving some marks and scratches (Interview 5, 6.06.2013). Sometimes the victimized people were frog-marched to the pungwe base from a very long distance. This form of torture also attracted some assaults and beatings because victims who could not do the task were kicked and whipped along the way. Victims were sometimes asked to sit very close to a bonfire or burning wood was moved very close to the face causing burns on the face and many other parts of the body. Pregnant women were gruesomely tortured to lose their pregnancy by kicking at the womb or jumping on the stomach of the woman while she was lying down (Interview 52, 15.11.2013). Many survivors of these acts of torture sustained permanent scars and very deep wounds which are still a permanent cause of health problems.

4.7.4-Looting and property destruction

Looting and property destruction was common in the communities during the 2008 election violence against the perceived opposition political party sympathizers. During the raids, perpetrators of violence were armed with tools which they used to break into homes and abduct victims, loot property and destroy what they did not need. The major items they were stealing were valuable property, money, goats, groceries, grain, cattle and chickens. Most of these items were used at the pungwe base where they were temporarily camping. Many homes and a lot of property of opposition political party supporters and officials were destroyed and looted as a form of punishment for having voted for opposition MDC during the March 2008 harmonized election against ZANU PF. Interestingly this happened to be the time when several militia, war veterans and ZANU PF supporters got rich instantly by stealing property from homes of the victims. On the other hand, many people who were suspected of being MDC supporters became poor and homeless within minutes of their property being looted and their homes destroyed (Interviewee 35, 10.09.2013). However, the police were not arresting anyone on the grounds that they

were politically neutral, since this wave of violence was politically motivated. This is despite the fact that these were criminal offences perpetrated by the thugs against innocent citizens. Perpetrators of violence were supposed to be arrested and tried before the courts of law. The citizens needed to be protected by the police force at all cost. This also confirms that the terror was state-sponsored and the police were under strict instructions not to stop the wave which was aimed at restoring ZANU PF's political power hegemony.

When the victims of violence approached the police to report the cases of property destruction and looting, the police demanded trivial and hard to find evidence and proof to substantiate their claims. The police ordered the victims to supply them with, for example, the serial numbers and the receipts of the property they claim to have been stolen. But it is a known fact that in communal areas the villagers do not keep receipts for their property or still know the serial numbers of an old piece of property they bought several years back. The villagers have no receipts for the grain they harvested from the fields or the animals like chickens and goats which were raised and born at their homes and which were then stolen by the thugs (Interview 18, 20.07.2013). These demands by the police were to frustrate the victims. The police did not bother to make a follow-up to the reported cases or investigate as they were mandated to do. However, during the raids the perpetrators were very open to the victims that they needed foodstuffs, goats, chickens, and grain at the bases. They were stating that everyone in the village was obliged to feed those operating the base since this was a struggle all against re-colonization which was looming.

The war veterans and the militia were labelling all those who were refusing to give livestock and foodstuffs as enemies of the struggle or sell-outs but they would always take their property by force and physically assault the owner (Interview 18, 20.07.2013). Abandoned homes and valuable property belonging to the suspected opposition supporters were also destroyed during the scourge since the owners had run away fearing for their lives. Shops too and other business establishments in the

communal areas were targeted as long as the perpetrators suspected the owner of being an opposition supporter. The owners were accused of having started the business ventures using the money given to them by the whites who supported MDC so they needed to be destroyed because they were contra-revolutionaries and puppets of the West (Interview 52, 15.11.2013).

Perpetrators of violence were of the habit of also destroying the crops because they alleged that the harvest from these fields was going to feed the opposition supporters to fight the ruling party. The research study revealed that several farmers from Nyamaropa, Mhakwe and Honde Valley also lost their agricultural produce as they were transporting it to market, mostly in Mutare. All the people who were transporting their produce to Mutare or Nyanga were asked to produce a permission letter from the village head at the roadblocks manned by the war veterans and the militia (Interviewee 48, 30.10.2013). Those farmers who failed to produce the letters or failed to prove that they were ZANU PF members were not allowed to proceed with their journey. The produce was confiscated and the owners were subjected to a lot of beating because they were labelled opposition supporters who wanted to sell the farm produce and finance MDC. This was also a control measure to make sure that there were no people who ran away from their constituencies before they could vote for the President.

4.7.5-Rape
Cases of rape were rampant during the 2008 terror attacks. However, the research study revealed that very few women who had been sexually victimized were willing to speak about their experiences, mainly because of the stigma associated with rape and the social implications such as divorce, societal indignation and other disgraces attached to the act. Very few women revealed to the public at the time that they were raped by the state-sponsored perpetrators except those who were found unconscious after these gruesome acts. The perpetrators of violence raped women victims before they physically assaulted and tortured them. The abducted women were dragged from

their homes into the bushes where they were gang-raped by many militia and war veterans during the night raids, after which they were beaten thoroughly to the point of death. Some abducted women were sometimes brought to the pungwe base and were secluded from the rest of the people and then raped by those in charge of the base. The perpetrators sometimes raided a homestead intending to abduct the father but during the process others raped the wife and daughters.

A traditional leader in Honde Valley (Interviewee 7, 13.06.2013) indicated that rape was used on several occasions in his area by the war veterans, militia and military men who operated the pungwe bases. However, there were so many raped women who did not reveal what had happened to them because of the shame and disgrace attached to a raped woman in the society. These raped women would rather keep it to themselves than suffer societal ridicule throughout their lives. In the communal Zimbabwe, a raped woman is discriminated against, stigmatized and sometimes rejected and sometimes divorced by their husbands. Women fear the social impacts attached to rape both on themselves and on their families, especially in an environment where there is no guarantee that the victims and their families will receive adequate support such as counselling, access to HIV testing and antiretroviral drugs. This was the reason why most women preferred not to reveal to the public any sexual abuse suffered during the wave of terror. Very few of the raped women who became unconscious during the process and were later discovered by other people in the bushes or in their homes with clear signs of rape revealed and confirmed that they were raped. These victims could explain how they were raped but they could not remember the number of people who raped them since they eventually succumbed to unconsciousness during the process.

There are important social fabrics that keep the integrity of people intact, for example in homes and marriages as an institution where issues of sexuality are sacred, especially in rural communities. Sexual harassment and especially rape leads to stigmatization and loss of integrity and social dignity of married women. Several

families broke up because women were raped by perpetrators of violence except those whose husbands were tolerant or who received proper counselling. Unfortunately, most of the rape cases committed by the war veterans and the militia increased the number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the communities - including the perpetrators themselves - because the perpetrators never used any form of protection during the acts (Interviewee 11, 20.06.2013). At the same time many women are living in fear because those who raped them have not been jailed or tried but still roam around in the communities. This also applies to other women who were forced to give sexual favours to the base commanders, war veterans, ZANU PF supporters and militia during the course of the terror campaign to avoid physical assaults and torture. For this reason many victimized women are not free to talk about what actually happened to them. The perpetrators sometimes boasted in the communities saying that they raped several women but nothing happened to them because they were in power. They even threatened to reveal to the husbands and families of those women that they raped them for the community to shame them. In this regard the victimized women are compelled to keep the issue of rape to themselves in order to save their marriages, preserve social integrity, have social security and protect social dignity (Interviewee 4, 6.06.2013).

Rape was used effectively to blackmail the victims and force them to renounce opposition political party support. It was the tool used to induce fear and insecurity amongst the community members so that they would give in and become puppets of the perpetrators of violence. Perpetrators of violence used rape as a pre-emptive threat aimed at gaining dominance over women activists and also to cast enough fear into all the women who were supporters of opposition political party. Women were degraded and humiliated and this resulted in them losing their esteem and the spirit of activism. This act of violence was meant to divide and dilute the fighting spirit in the community members. The fact that the perpetrators of rape cases were tried meant that women were still vulnerable and gave in, in exchange for protection and safety.

4.7.6-Abductions and murder

Abductions and murder cases were rampant in the communities during the 2008 atrocities. The main victims of abductions were opposition political party activists, election agents and party officials. Abductions were conducted secretly during the night from the homes of the suspects or during the day when the victims were found in solitary or secluded places (Interviewee 43, 23.10.2013). Several victims were taken or driven by unknown secret security officers in plainclothes who used unregistered trucks to take them to very remote and unknown locations where they were interrogated, thoroughly beaten and tortured for one or two days. Some kidnapped people were abandoned dead or on the verge of death with marks of lashes and torture. Some of the lucky victims were discovered in the bushes and valleys several days after the abductions but still alive (Interviewee 44, 23.10.2013). During the raids and abductions, the perpetrators were in the habit of destroying the home and property of the victim, and then looting the essentials they needed at the pungwe base.

There were several people who were abducted but were discovered in police custody days or weeks after their disappearance from their homes or communities. The police would tell people that the victims had been picked up by other people in the bushes or mountains in an unconscious state. However, these victims who ended up in police custody also suffered further in the hands of the police who, for example, denied them food, medical treatment and access to legal assistance (Interviewee 31, 29.08.2013). Unfortunately some of the kidnapped people deteriorated in terms of their health conditions because of the lack of medical assistance, harsh conditions in remand prisons, and hunger which caused them to die. In some cases other victims did not have access to their medication, for example those who were HIV positive, had their health aggravated by the squalid conditions in police custody, and this sometimes resulted in death (Interviewee 10, 20.06.2013). Women abductees were raped first before they were severely beaten, tortured, and harassed by their abductors. Most of the abducted women were exposed to HIV/AIDS and many other

sexually transmitted diseases aside from the damage to their private parts because of gang-rape.

The cases of abductions, torture and murder were meant to punish and force people to denounce opposition support and to scare people away from voting in the subsequent presidential election or to force them to vote for President Mugabe. Very few murders were of course meant to intimidate people in the community so that they vote for the ruling party. It has been gathered during the research study that cases of intentional murder were very few in number; however, several deaths occurred in relation to people who had been severely beaten and tortured and failed to get medical treatment on time. Most of the deaths which happened during the raids and abductions were as a result of excessive force exerted by the abductors on the victims who tried to defend themselves and fight back. On the other hand, severe torture and excessive beatings instigated by many people on one person with the intention of punishing and restraining people from supporting opposition political parties caused several injuries to the victims. The failure to access medical assistance on time eventually caused most of the deaths.

The use of kidnapping and abductions was very effective during the 2008 election violence in the communities given the history and culture of state-sponsored gangs and the secret security agents. Zimbabwe is littered with numerous cases of abductions and permanent disappearances of people on political grounds, and this is a cause of concern for the citizenry. This wave of abductions and kidnapping was executed in the communities to create a permanent sense of fear, intimidation and insecurity in those community members who were seeking to challenge ZANU PF power hegemony. However, some of the villagers who disappeared even for few days caused pandemonium and a great deal of fear in the communities.

4.8-Violence during the Government of National Unity (GNU)

The wave of violence perpetrated on the community members did not come to an end by the June 2008 presidential election which was won by President Mugabe after the withdrawal of Morgan Tsvangirai. This terror was also never stopped by the coalition government that came into power in 2009 which preceded the Global Political Agreement (GPA) of 15 September 2008. However, it is important to reiterate that incidences of overt physical forms of violence such as torture, assaults, arbitrary arrests, abductions, murder and displacements significantly subsided. Rather, what became evident was a temporary withdrawal of the military element from the anatomy of the infamous wave of violence that was initiated after the March 2008 election. The objectives of the terror were achieved to a great extent because President Mugabe managed to remain the Head of State during the transitional government. Actually a peaceful transfer of power proved impossible in March 2008 as ZANU PF successfully demonstrated how to lose an election and stay in power (Matyszak 2010:46-65). Thus, this violent militarized campaign managed to block the democratic transfer of power to Tsvangirai and MDC while giving an opportunity for Mugabe and ZANU PF to reorganize and regroup.

The formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) with the opposition political parties constituting the majority in Parliament and the government headed by opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai restored the hope of a peaceful Zimbabwe. The transitional government, which in terms of the GPA provision was supposed to enact a number of institutional transformations and to create conditions for free and fair elections as well as an inclusive political participation, revived the hopes and illusions which had been shattered by the wave of terror. The GPA spelt out all the necessary reforms which had the potential to end acts of election violence and pave the way for a democratic transition. The GPA, which ushered in a new government in Zimbabwe, instilled hope at individual, local and national levels in all spheres of life, namely socio-economic, political and organizational. In essence, the GPA and the concept of inclusive government were meant to enable Zimbabwe to return to a degree of

normality, after a decade of political madness punctuated by bifurcation of the nation into 'patriots and puppets', the militarization of state institutions, and governance by military operations and the use of violence (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012:14).

However, the fundamental transformations and institutional reforms prescribed in the GPA, which undoubtedly had the potential to effectively stamp out violence and usher in qualitative change in elections, remained an illusion and elusive throughout the lifespan of the GNU. The major stumbling block to the achievement of the desired changes was the military junta fixed in mainstream politics and the economy. ZANU PF vehemently and starkly resisted transforming the security sector, leaving the JOC - which was the main architecture of the 2008 election violence - intact. Furthermore, in order to ram home the message that nothing had changed in power relations, a wave of abductions of MDC activists and civil society activists followed (Matyszak 2010:98). The need to depoliticize the sector was fundamental as a way of professionalizing the state apparatus of violence. The danger of failing to accomplish that meant a permanent threat to the envisaged democratic transition because JOC had veto power to bar ZANU PF from handing over power to another party even after a clear victory, as in the case of March 2008.

Given the constrains of the GNU to depoliticize the security sector, the structures of election violence continued to overwhelm the communities because the transitional government was only a temporary measure in place for the pending general election. Political struggles and active political campaigns by political parties to downplay one another obviously were marred by violence. Although open physical violence had subsided, other forms of violence took centre stage via the same structures to make sure that opposition political parties were silenced and starved of votes. The forms of violence included threats by traditional leaders to expel anti-ZANU PF supporters, threats to revert to the 2008 wave of terror by the militia and war veterans, as well as isolated cases of abductions by secret security agents. In this regard, the failure to dismantle the institutions of violence which remained empowered and unrestrained

will hamper the efforts to achieve democratic transition and free and fair elections. It is therefore important to mention that the perpetrators of violence who had terrorized the communities during the 2008 election violence remained in the communities determined to cause mayhem amongst the opposition political party supporters. The motivation to continue with violence stems from the fact that they had full security sector support and were sponsored by the state. They were never tried for the atrocities they committed in the past; rather, they were rewarded.

The perpetrators of violence embarked on a vigorous intimidation and victimization campaign to demonstrate that ZANU PF and President Mugabe were still in control of Zimbabwe. The rural communities remained under a de facto control from these structures of violence where the pungwe bases became strategic campaigning venues for ZANU PF politics. The perpetrators continued to instigate sporadic acts of violence at these pungwe bases without fear of punishment from the law enforcement agents who apparently were supporting political violence (Interviewee 22, 28.07.2013). Law enforcement agents and courts of law continued to protect the perpetrators of violence in their quest to thwart the influence and support of the opposition political parties with the majority in parliament. The prevalence of the acts of violence during the GNU was perpetuated by the continuous use of draconian legal acts which trampled upon people's right to free political participation and freedom of expression and which oppressed citizens. POSA and AIPPA were used effectively by law enforcement agents to protect perpetrators of violence from prosecution while they were criminalizing and incarcerating victims of violence. The same pieces of legislation were used to cripple active political participation of opposition political parties and human right defenders. The government and the courts of law repeatedly denied justice to political violence victims in a desperate bid to protect state-sponsored perpetrators.

There was a marked deterioration during the GNU in issues to do with the protection of people's rights, justice provision by the courts of law, and the rule of law and

equality before the law. Perpetrators enjoyed more rights than the victims of violence in the communities. A young man from the Mhakwe community (Interviewee 38, 21.09.2013) criticized the involvement of opposition political parties in the power sharing government in which they seemed not to do much to reduce political violence in the communities, stating that:

> *'I do not understand why MDC is saying that they are in a power sharing government when in actual sense there is nothing to share. They are sharing the Ministry of Home Affairs which controls the police but the police are still perpetrating violence in the communities and in remand prisons. Instead of making those people who terrorized the communities pay for what they did, they are busy fighting for posts in that government. What are they doing for the people who lost homes, property, and livestock and those who lost their lives for them to be in that government? ZANU PF is increasing violence to demonstrate power over MDC which has the majority in parliament. We expected that the perpetrators were going to be prosecuted and jailed but they are roaming all over the communities boasting that they are above the law. The MDC members of parliament are also victimized of false charges of violence by the police and this is absurd. Where is their power in this government and why do they continue to assume to share power which they are not being given? Victimization is on the increase and those whom we suffered for are enjoying parliament with ZANU PF. They have already forgotten about those who lost their homes, property and even lives during the elections. Actually they are dogs without teeth and people should never have sacrificed their lives for them'.*

The people in the communities expected a rapid and genuine reduction of acts of violence since the GNU was an avenue to a peaceful resolution and management of the significant conflict. The people in the communities felt that they were betrayed by opposition officials who seemed not to care about the acts of violence going on in the communities. The people's hope for protection was based on the fact that the opposition political parties were the majority and also that Tsvangirai was the head of that government. However, the fact of the matter was that President Robert Mugabe never gave power to the opposition-led parliament. ZANU PF defied all the major reforms prescribed in the GPA and the President implemented unilateral decisions without even consulting with the head of the government as stated in the GPA.

The frustrations and the continued acts of violence thus seemed to have the potential to force many people in the communities to give in to the demands of the perpetrators of violence because they felt that ZANU PF had the capacity to guarantee security in this system where the rule of law, justice and social security were not accorded to the opposition political supporters. The community members were signalling to support ZANU PF not because they agree with its ideology but to avoid torture, violence and brutality because that way they would be guaranteed protection by the partisan courts, police and perpetrators of violence. The sentiment was that so many people in the communities lost their property and some even their lives. The course of justice and equality before the law were proving to be far-fetched to the people in the communal areas of Zimbabwe. The assumption by many community members was for the GNU to create avenues and conditions to prosecute the perpetrators of violence and guarantee peace, thereby ensuring security for all the people regardless of their political affiliation. The GNU thus failed to have the 2008 election violence structures dismantled in the communities despite vigorous lobbying for their abolition by human rights defenders, opposition political party parliamentarians, and the international community.

Since the GNU was a temporary government in preparation for yet another general election in 2013, the transitional period was packed with a hive of political activities which heightened political tensions in the communities. Activities such as the constitution making process, voter registration, constitutional referendum and political campaigns raised political emotions which subsequently caused acts of violence. During all these processes, political parties were overwhelmed by the desire to demonstrate political superiority. ZANU PF activists and political violence perpetrators applied all forms of force and impunity to demonstrate political might. The pungwe bases, which were fundamental in the 2008 election violence and remained intact in the communities during the transitional government period, were being revived during these political events in the communities. The police however, remained partisan and reluctant to arrest the political violence perpetrators but acted with impunity against the opposition political party supporters and victims of violence. There were arbitrary arrests by the police, mainly of those perceived to be opposition political party supporters and activists. War veterans, the militia, the military and secret agents continued to harass and intimidate those whom they referred to as traitors and sell-outs as a way of suppressing opposition political activism.

The transitional period was an opportunity accorded to ZANU PF activists and party leadership to campaign vigorously ahead of the election set at the expiry of the GNU using violence, intimidation and harassment. Pressure was mounting for the community members who had suffered gruesome acts of violence soon after the March 2008 election. It was a must-win election to end the GNU. An old woman from Honde Valley (Interviewee 11, 20.06.2013) stated that:

> *'Everyone in the communal areas is supposed to be a ZANU PF simply because one lives under a traditional leader who is ZANU PF. If you do not want to be ZANU PF you must find your own area to live - not in a ZANU PF community. The best for us here*

is to join ZANU PF because there is nowhere we want to go and live. MDC has no land to give to the people or security forces to protect the people. We want our lives and we have no one to help us when the boys come for us 'the perpetrators'. After all, those who were beaten and killed last year are all a thing of the past and no one cares. Those who killed are still here and they are promising to kill more. Therefore who wants to die? It does not kill to support ZANU PF but it kills to support MDC. So what is better?'

People in the communities were now concerned more about their security, having a place to live and protection ahead of the subsequent electoral events. This feeling of insecurity was being influenced by sporadic victimization and intimidation by the militia and war veterans who were not restrained by the law enforcement agents (Interviewee 18, 20.07.2013). The perpetrators of violence induced more fear when during this period they embarked on face-to-face and door-to-door voter registration and party registration. This strategy left no one with the choice of resisting their demands because it was one versus all the perpetrators of violence. This campaign strategy left a large number of the community members with ZANU PF regalia and a party card. One could not resist the demands of a group of marauding perpetrators of violence on the doorstep. Thus, the door-to-door voter registration campaign was implemented as a means of intimidating civilians and those who were resisting the normal political campaigns, such as rallies. Most of the people in the communities where the traditional leaders know each of their subjects by location, name and family lineage eventually became ZANU PF members, but not by choice.

Teachers in the communities were also targeted during the GNU period by the ZANU PF structures, the militia, the war veterans, secret agents and traditional leadership. Teachers were perceived to have played a significant role in rigging the 2008 March election in favour of MDC since they were election officials. An official with the

Progressive Teachers Union in Zimbabwe (PTUZ) (Interviewee 58, 27.11.2013) indicated that most of the teachers were regarded as MDC sympathizers because they were accused of using school pupils as a medium for spreading MDC information to the rural population in the communities. Therefore the militia and war veterans targeted the teachers on the basis of the information passed on to communities by the school pupils. The information about MDC and issues about the failure of land reform talked about by the pupils was enough evidence to conclude that teachers were opposition political party supporters. As a way of dealing effectively with the teachers, some of the pungwe bases were established near schools where teachers were abused and intimidated by the perpetrators of violence. Several teachers were forced to attend the political gatherings, including the re-orientation sessions as a way of instilling fear in them so that they would desist from supporting the opposition MDC. Some of the teachers were forced to supply groceries and other basic foodstuffs needed by the perpetrators at the pungwe bases as most of the teachers' houses were located within the school premises (Interviewee 17, 20.07.2013). Targeting teachers was therefore also as a result of some topics which the teachers taught to the children, for example land reform, violence, and peace.

The very popular people-driven constitution making process that took place soon before the 2013 election was marred by violence, intimidation and harassment. Violence in the form of assaults, torture, unlawful arrests and detentions of opposition political party activists and community members was rampant. During the consultative meeting by the Constitution Parliamentary Select Committee (COPAC), political parties were campaigning and contesting for political space to equip the community members with party positions to be included in the constitution. This was mostly about mobilizing party structures and supporters in order to popularize and influence the community members on certain party positions to be voted for in the new constitution. Also it was popular to formulate ideas and coach members on specific party ideological positions so that the people would vote during the COPAC outreach processes. The community members were being coerced by party officials to

support political party ideas during the outreach sessions. The campaigning rigor for this process induced a lot of intimidation, threats and acts of violence mostly against opposition political party supporters and activists.

During the COPAC outreach sessions, war veterans, the militia and secret agents were on a spree to mobilize supporters and induce fear in the opponents so that they would not talk or not participate. Apart from acts of violence, the COPAC sessions were stained by serious rigging acts such as bussing in of outsiders to vote in other Wards since these outreaches were Ward-based. Political parties were appointing political party spokespersons who were tasked and authorized to communicate party positions during these consultative meetings, while other party members were to vote for the position raise. Most of ZANU PF's spokespersons during these consultative sessions have been identified as secret security agents implanted throughout the communities in different Wards. These spokespersons were eloquent and elaborated their points convincingly. However, the presence of these known agents at the consultative meetings cast a lot of fear in ordinary community members that caused total silence (Interviewee 61, 03.12.2013). Some consultative meetings where ZANU PF positions were not well articulated were disrupted by violent militia and war veterans who abused people, including the COPAC officials. Many such meetings were abandoned and cancelled, even in the presence of police officers who were unwilling to take any action to stop the hooligans. The prevalence of violence and intimidation rendered the constitution making process futile given that many people did not have the chance to express their views and also that the captured ideas were political party constitutional ideologies (Interviewee 63, 03.12.2013).

After drafting the new constitution, the communities experienced yet another wave of violence ahead of the constitutional referendum in which people were supposed to vote for or against the change. Again political party supporters and activists clashed

and several people were victimized. Surprisingly, both ZANU PF and MDC were campaigning for a "YES" vote for the constitution but the struggle was in the quantity of the voters each party was able to influence against the other. This was a barometer to measure the amount of voters each political party was going to influence in the subsequent general election. War veterans and the militia were victimizing the MDC supporters who were seen campaigning for a 'YES' vote even though this was also ZANU PF's position. Posters which had been put on walls and trees during this period were torn up, and anyone caught putting up posters or campaigning without putting on ZANU PF regalia was severely victimized (Interviewee 45, 23.10.2013). In some places in the communities, MDC youth gangs and hooligans were also violent against ZANU PF supporters in retaliation to the militia and war veterans' actions but these perpetrators were immediately arrested and detained by the police.

An example of violent retaliation by MDC youths and supporters were the infamous clash that happened in the Nyamaropa area when the then MDC Member of Parliament was addressing community members on the Constituency Development Fund. Interviewee 21 (28.07.2013) who witnessed the incident said:

> *'The violence was started by ZANU PF supporters, militia and war veterans who threw stones and broken bricks at the crowd saying they wanted to use the pitch for their social soccer match. Suddenly some MDC youths and supporters began to fight back and overpowered this group because there were so many people who got involved in this fight. However, several people were abducted and severely beaten by the militia and war veterans who then came heavily armed in the villages after the attack. These victims survived death by the grace of God but right now the tortured victims have broken hands, ribs, legs and other deformities. From that incident onwards, the militia began to move around with guns, machetes, spears, knobkerries, iron bars*

and guns terrorizing people and stealing from innocent civilians. Nonetheless, following this violence the police arrested the Member of Parliament together with other people for instigating violence, including an 82 year old village head who later died of the injuries sustained when the police brutalized him in custody prison'.

In such scenarios, the police tended to track down all the perpetrators of violence and lock them up in remand prison for several weeks or months without trying them before the courts of law. The suspects and victims were thrown in prisons and subjected to severe torture, and denied access to legal or medical assistance.

Disruption of opposition political gathering gatherings by war veterans, the police and ZANU PF militia in the communities was rampant since the period of the GNU was a preparatory period for a general election. The skirmishes by the rowdy militia and war in most cases attracted the police who would immediately make some arrests of opposition political party supporters and throw them in jail without trial (Interviewee 13, 20.06.2013). The arrested opposition political party supporters and officials would be charged under POSA which implied that they had organized public gatherings that disturbed the peace of the community. These victims in most cases languished in remand prisons.

However, a few months before the 2013 elections, some serving members of the military and the police force were spotted in the communities on leave warning the community members of possible violence should ZANU PF lose the coming election. This was a strategy used by the party to send out military men to warn their parents and family members to vote ZANU PF since they were likely to be taken seriously by their own people. The message given by these deployed military men was that people should vote wisely to avoid worse bloodshed than the 2008 terror (Interviewee 30, 20.06.2013). The message was passed on through family members and friends, and even at funerals, ceremonies and other social gathering as a secret. However, they

knew that the message was eventually going to move very fast from one member of the community to the other as a serious message. This strategy worked effectively and was taken seriously by the community members who did not expect lies from their own children.

Apart from the strategy of intimidation, coercion, impunity and threats to force the electorate to vote for ZANU PF, traditional leaders played a crucial role in isolating and victimizing the community members who were suspected of being opposition political party supporters in their area of jurisdiction. They compiled lists of all their subjects and those suspected of being opposition supporters were black-listed and warned in public to repent or risk being expelled from the village, or deprived food aid or any other aid given to the villagers. These people were therefore forced to support and vote for ZANU PF in the coming election. A single mother from Mhakwe (Interviewee 38, 21.09.2013) explained this strategy, saying:

> *'If you are not a ZANU PF here you are a victim and a loser. You lose your vote, your property, your home, your children, your field, food assistance, agricultural inputs by the government and most of all you lose your life. There is no security for you here anymore if you support opposition political party. There will be no police protection for you, no fair legal treatment, no friends, you are shunned by everyone and you are stigmatized. You are treated like someone with HIV/AIDS if you are on the traditional leader's black list. You are everybody's enemy. Actually you don't have a life'.*

The traditional leaders' roles in the communities were fundamental during this transitional period since they had the power to deny any community member access

to resources, food aid, and agricultural subsidies. Food aid was a special assistance for Zimbabwean rural communities for many years because of the critical shortage of food. Relief aid in this regard was used as patronage and bait to lure votes by the ZANU PF government. Therefore distribution of the food aid was designated to the traditional leaders mostly at rallies as a strategy to have all the community members participate at these rallies. However, if black-listed people declined to abide by the demands of the traditional leaders, then they would not only fail to get food aid but they would be physically abused, assaulted, tortured and thoroughly beaten by the militia and war veterans. Because the traditional leaders worked closely with the militia, war veterans and the military personnel, their word was taken seriously by the community members since physical actions had been used. Thus, the upheavals that gripped the country after the March 29 2008 elections qualitatively triggered the intensification of the structural form of violence in the form of patronage (carrot and stick) and threats of eviction complemented by rhetoric, to revive the 2008 terror.

4.9-Effects of election violence

The events and acts of violence in the communities had far reaching consequences to the people socially, economically and politically as revealed by the research study in Nyamaropa, Honde Valley and Mhakwe. Violence, particularly political violence, represents a disturbance to the political equilibrium of a state - a breakdown of its political system (Leiden and Schmitt 1968:3). In essence, the research study revealed that political violence that gripped the communities in Zimbabwe damaged the social fabric, hindered social coexistence, destroyed the social capital, perpetuated poverty and suffering, militated against peaceful coexistence, paralyzed the economy and community development, disrupted law and order, and delayed the attainment of democracy.

4.9.1-Social effects

The Manicaland people's (Manyikas) social fabric, like that of many other ethnic groups in Zimbabwe, is centered around *hunhu* (personal character, socially

acceptable humanity, spirituality, disposition, and sense of responsibility), *kugarisana* (cordial coexistence or living together harmoniously), *kunzwanana* (mutual understanding of one another)*, kugamuchirana* (tolerance), *husahwira* (civic friendship), and many other aspects that make up societal values. These social values have been cultivated and nurtured through time and crystallized on the foundations of communal life in the villages. Village life is made up of a web of social relations based on existent relationships between the village members. There are important social fabrics connecting all the villagers in each village, built as a result of inter-marriages, family bonds, shared totems, ancestral and traditional beliefs, common ancestral graveyards, common sources of water (rivers, wells, and springs) and communal grazing areas. These links and many other connections make all the people in any particular village in the communities of Manicaland related in one way or another, making a village one big family unit, made up of brothers, sisters, cousins, in-laws, aunts, and uncles. Thus, everyone is literally related to every other person.

Based on the connectedness in social relations in the communities, it is beyond reasonable doubt that the local perpetrators of violence had strong social relations with those people whom they were victimizing in one way or another. This was the state of affairs in most of the communities where the perpetrators had inflicted pain and grief on people with whom they shared social relations. The general sentiment amongst community members was that they could tolerate to a lesser degree and accept strangers perpetrating violence in their community, rather than their own children and relatives. The overall perception is that the grief and pain caused by a known perpetrator is unbearable, as compared to that caused by strangers. An elderly woman from Honde Valley (Interviewee 11, 20.06.2013) expressed this with tears rolling down her cheeks, saying:

> *'All those who destroyed my crops in the field are my relatives,*
> *nephews and sons of my in-laws. It is a shame that it happened*

this way because we no longer see eye-to-eye both with them and their parents. These youngsters have destroyed the relations in this village to the extent that we no longer attend funerals together as a community because of the enmity they caused. There are no more social events celebrated together as before because everyone is an enemy of the other. They are now behaving like animals. In any case we have already put whatever happened behind our backs with the hope that the spirits will pass a fair judgment on the whole story'.

The community feels that the communal social fabric has been seriously damaged by the acts of violence perpetrated by the villagers against their own people and innocent victims. These attacks on the community members by the local war veterans and the militia increased the levels of insecurity, feelings of humiliation and feelings of betrayal, as well as damaging social relations. The acts of violence have thus created hatred, instilled relational antagonism, destroyed mutual and harmonious social relationships and propagated hostile feelings like the desire for revenge among the community members. People now isolate and shun the idea of mutual cooperation with the families whose children and relatives were terrorizing the community members even on social occasion like funerals, celebrations, and family gatherings (Interviewee 52, 15.11.2013). Relationships deteriorated to the point where community members attended these social functions such as funerals and weddings according to their political parties. ZANU PF supporters attended only functions hosted by their fellow supporters and so were MDC supporters. These are signs of moral decadence in the Zimbabwean communal life standards.

The traditional leaders taking part in the perpetration of violence against their subjects seriously contributed to the breakdown of social cohesion, disruption of traditional ethics, and disrespect of local governance systems. The strained relations between the traditional leadership and the villagers have the potential to instigate

insubordination, disrespect of the cultural norms and compromise the traditional constructive conflict management mechanisms. This antagonistic relationship is likely to breed anarchical behaviour and bloody conflicts in the communities in the long run. Most of the traditional leaders have lost respect because they diluted their traditional roles of being the custodians of the norms and values of African culture by becoming party political actors and perpetrators of violence, instead of being conflict managers and peace builders. Thus, the atmosphere in the communities is characterized by suspicion and violent behaviour which is a reflection of the brutal attacks perpetrated during the 2008 wave of election violence. Parents who were once peaceful are now very violent towards their children and spouses, and vice versa (Interviewee 9, 13.06.2013). The communities are overwhelmed by cases of theft, robbery, rape, fights and quarrels. Communities are also being overwhelmed by the uncontrolled sexual behaviour of young people who were used to pungwe bases and barbaric political campaigns which allowed them free food and free beer.

Many family relationships and homes broke during the terror attacks in the communities. Many family members were made to victimize other family members who supported different political parties. Brothers attacked brothers or aunts or other family members and this created unbearable family tensions. Those family members who clashed during the scourge of violence are enemies and do not talk to each other. On the other hand, some women who were raped by the perpetrators of violence were divorced by their husbands because culturally speaking, sexual issues bring shame to the family. Very few men tolerated their wives if they were raped. Sexual harassment and abuse leads to stigmatization and loss of integrity and social dignity especially if the victim is married. Others contracted diseases such as HIV/AIDS and their partners became infected too. This caused a lot of problems in many families in the communities.

4.9.2-Economic effects

The scourge of election violence caused disastrous economic consequences in the communities due to indiscriminate destruction of people's property, looting of grain and livestock, and resulting physical disabilities. The community members were very vulnerable as they lacked protection from the law enforcement agents against disabling physical assaults, property destruction, and subsequent loss of sources of income. These economic mishaps therefore increased the gap between productivity and the need for basic commodities, resulting in poverty and hunger which the people in the communities then had to grapple with. The increasing hunger and poverty also increased people's dependency on donor agencies and government food aid. Subsequently the ruling party capitalized on the desperate situation it created in the communities and used food aid as patronage to lure people to vote for the ruling party. Usually, the use of violence or the threat of violence is pre-emptive and aimed at gaining dominance over others as well as casting enough fear. The party sponsored the terror attacks on the people in the communities that caused untold health problems, injuries, deaths, disabilities, loss of property and a serious outward migration of the workforce from the villages (Interview 52, 15.11.2013).

The perpetrated physical harm, injuries, disabilities and persecution have seriously affected the ability of many people to work for themselves without depending on handouts. These difficulties reduced productivity among villagers and put the already vulnerable families in desperate situations since they depend on subsistence farming. If the victim has no arms or legs or any other part of the body, this will affect the work output of the body. Physical attacks on property also affect the economic status of the victim. Destruction of homes, granaries, cattle and other useful property subject the victims to severe economic problems. Those families and community members which were being brutalized and harassed had no time to work in their fields resulting in most of their harvest perishing in fields. Other parents were thoroughly beaten to the point of becoming disabled so they can no longer work in the fields or do any other manual work to support their children in school. Moreover, access to markets

was a major problem because of the roadblocks which were established by war veterans and the militia.

The same families which were targeted by the perpetrators were deserted by their children who are the usual workforce in the communal areas. The frustrated young talented people with potential to develop the communities emigrated into Mozambique, South Africa and nearby urban areas for safety and employment opportunities with the hope of helping their disabled parents. These people could have been working to contributing to the socio-political and economic development of the communities and the country but instead worked to improve the economies of other countries (Interviewee 46, 30.10.2013). This migration of the youth from the villages has affected the agricultural output of many families since the workforce was greatly reduced, leaving only the elderly, the sick, the disabled and other dependents on their own (Interview 52, 15.11.2013). The reduction in productivity not only caused hunger and poverty but also impacted negatively on many other forms of community economic cooperation because of the animosity in the communities. The situation in the communities was characterized by low or an absence of productivity, and a lack of peace and security, and this affected other forms of human economic relations.

The people living with HIV/AIDS were also severely affected since they could not manage the demands attached to the disease due to the disruption of their sources of income. Moreover the perpetrators of violence fuelled the spread of this deadly disease by gang-raping many women during the raids and abductions without using any form of protection. These rapes increased the population of women living with HIV/AIDS in the communities (Interviewee 59, 27.11.2013). The spread of HIV/AIDS included schoolchildren who were involved in pungwe base activities as some school teachers who feared victimization deserted the schools. At the same time, many schoolchildren whose parents could not afford school fees found

themselves indulging in immoral activities, including prostitution and drug abuse (Interviewee 47, 30.10.2013).

Thus, violence had a diminutive effect on the physical status of community members in all spheres of life. People whose bodies were physically damaged became emotionally challenged and live in total fear and insecurity unless they are professionally counselled. The inflicted disabilities and injuries reduced mental stability and enthusiasm in many election violence victims which has the potential to demoralize them in their lives. At the same time, those victims who are now physically challenged as a result of the election violence have difficulties in fending for themselves and their families. To a great extent, both the physical attacks on the property and body of a victim have destructive effects on the human mind by weakening emotional or mental (psychology) functioning. There is always fear attached to being economically disempowered, being unable to work and failure to acquire basic needs. Thus, the perpetrated physical acts of violence have the power to damage the victims psychologically or emotionally, materially or economically, and morally, aside from the obvious physical harm.

4.9.3-Political effects
The acts of violence perpetrated on the people since the start of the 2008 militarized election violence adversely affected the political life of the community members. However, violent attacks which continued throughout the five year period of the transitional government demonstrated the difficulties of building a strong, efficient and virile democratic nation. Issues of human rights, rule of law, political rights, equitable justice and equality before the law were severely compromised and systematically trampled upon. Election violence, impunity and coercion impacted negatively on the quest for freedom of expression, free political participation, conducive political space and a democratic transition in the country (Interviewee 60, 27.11.2013). Political rights of many people were squashed by the militia, war

veterans, traditional leaders and the military in collaboration with the partisan and corrupt judiciary system in the country. These mishaps increasingly marginalized and politically excluded opposition political party supporters. Many of these community members were openly forced to denounce and renounce the political parties of their choice and swear allegiance to the ruling party, which automatically meant that no one in Zimbabwe was entitled to his or her political opinion.

The systematic use of election violence turned the communal electorate into political hostages with virtually no freedom for free political participation. This severe use of coercion and the continuous threats to revert to the 2008 terror attacks throughout the GNU enslaved the people to the extent of them denouncing the political rights they were entitled to (Interviewee 55, 25.11.2013). The power of violence to coerce people can be demonstrated by the results of the 2008 and the 2013 elections. During the March 2008 first round election, Morgan Tsvangirai garnered 1,195,562 votes against President Robert Mugabe's 1,079,730 votes. However, after a terror campaign ahead of the June 2008 runoff election President Robert Mugabe obtained 2,150,269 votes against Morgan Tsvangirai's 233,000 votes. This literally means that the unleashed election violence forced about 1,070,539 voters to reconsider voting for President Mugabe, which was caused by acts of violence which started in 2008. The 2013 election results indicated that President Robert Mugabe received 2,110,434 votes against Morgan Tsvangirai who scored only 1,172,349 votes. This demonstrates that when people are accorded a free and peaceful political environment, they can exercise their political decisions freely too, for example when people voted in the March 2008 election.

The continuous politicization of traditional leaders in the communities which is exercised via selective and partisan distribution of government food aid as patronage is not only perpetuate hunger amongst the community members but also breeding political intolerance and hatred. This political intolerance is being perpetuated and magnified by the traditional leaders who have abandoned their core values to pursue

partisan politics in direct contravention of the Traditional Leaders Act which spells out their roles (Interviewee 55, 25.11.2013). The partisan nature of the traditional leaders and their repressive attitudes towards opposition political party supporters are compromising the traditional governance systems in the communities and this is capable of disturbing peace and order and destroying communal group trust. In communal areas one can only reveal one's support for opposition political party if one has the guts to be harassed, tortured and beaten throughout one's political career (Interview 53, 25.11.2013). It is also not even safer to remain neutral in the communal areas because some political activists, militia and war veterans always force people to join the ruling party and to attend political rallies to defend the country against the West.

4.10-Conclusions

The chapter has amalgamated critical issues expressed by the interviewees into major themes in an endeavour to answer major questions and to achieve the objective of this empirical research study. These themes emerged from the points of view of the interviewees which were synchronized and synthesized during data collection and the transcription processes. However, the issues that emerged were guided by research questions crafted to achieve the research study objectives. The research study revealed that there has been systematic and persistent use of election violence in the communities since the March 2008 election and throughout the inclusive government period. This was as retribution on the perceived opposition political party candidates and supporters who voted against ZANU PF in 2008. The use of pungwe bases established during the 2008 terror did not stop, as expressed by the interviewees, but rather they continued to be used as a reminder to those who might wish to vote for the opposition in the 2013 election. The use of violence seriously affected the socio-economic and political life of the community members to the extent that they failed to take full responsibility for their conscious decisions. Fear of victimization and harassment also influenced the political decisions of the people in the communities.

The continuous use of state-sponsored violence ahead of the 2013 election however, did not influence the regional and continental election observer missions enough to stop them according the ZANU PF government legitimacy status. A fake and a temporary peaceful environment is always created by suspending acts of violence once the external election observer missions are in the country. As a result, the AU and the SADC observer missions declared the Zimbabwean 2013 election legitimate based on the few peaceful days which they observed in the country before and on the election days whilst they were in the country. Nonetheless, given the prevalence of violence over the whole of the five year period ahead of the 2013 election, it would not be justifiable to conclusively label the election free and peaceful based on the relative peace that prevailed in the country for the few days before and on the election day. It is also important to consider violent activities which had been occurring in the country throughout the five year period before the election day. The government is not legitimate unless it is carried on with the consent of the governed. Several civil society organizations, political parties and citizens contested the verdict of the external boards. Apart from election violence dynamics and patterns, interviewees articulated during the interviews important socio-economic and political effects of violence which victims and community members are grappling with.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

5.0-Indroduction

This empirical localized research study sought to explore and unpack the dynamics of the 2008-2013 election violence in the communities of Manicaland in Zimbabwe and investigate how the regime used violence to inhibit and block people from freely participating in the electoral process to achieve a smooth democratic transition. The research intended also to investigate the socio-economic and political effects of election violence on the lives of the people as expressed by the people who were directly affected by election violence. Using a qualitative exploration on the life experiences of the people on election violence in the three communities of Manicaland, the study sought to answer three questions: (i) What are the dynamics of the 2008-2013 election violence in the communities of Manicaland? (ii) How election violence has been used successfully by the regime to subdue people from achieving a smooth democratic transition? (iii) What are the effects of election violence on the socio-economic and political lives of the people?

It is however very important to indicate that the findings of this qualitative empirical research study reflect the general situation of election violence in these three communities but can be a true reflection of the general situation in the country. The findings were based on the empirical research study done in the communities with the victims of violence, the witnesses of the acts of violence, and civil society organization officers who operate in the same communities. In-depth interviews as well as a variety of secondary data sources have been extensively used in this research study. The interviewed people have rich personal experiences of the brutal and violent attacks by state-sponsored perpetrators, most of whom still reside in these communities. The sensitive information about election violence perpetrated in such highly suspicious environments could only be obtained through the establishment of mutually trusting relationships with the victims and experienced community members. The researcher thus has used his long-term relations with the community

members since he has been working as a teacher and a human right activist for more than fifteen years in these communities. Nonetheless, systematic victimization and harassment of community members by perpetrators of violence and secret surveillance structures has caused a lot of mistrust among community members. The community members no longer discuss sensitive political issues or violence with anyone because such information often leaks to the perpetrators who then victimize the concerned people. The results of such a highly suspicious and threatening environment caused the focus group discussions, which were part of the data collection process of this research study, to fail. This is the extent to which trust and respect has been compromised by the culture of violence in the communities.

5.1-The dynamics of the 2008-2013 election violence

The empirical research study in the three communities revealed a complex situation in terms of election violence dynamics. There was an abrupt change of social and political relations in the communities during and after the 2008 wave of violence. The community members who used to share cordial and mutual relations in the same communities suddenly became rivals and political enemies. The communal relationships deteriorated into violent political confrontations. The people who became deadly perpetrators of violence used to peacefully coexist in the same communities with the victims as good neighbours, friends and family members. This was despite the existing diverse political backgrounds and shared values and beliefs of the community members. Some community members, such as war veterans, the militia and political party activists became brutal and violent against other members of the community who belonged to opposition political parties. An antagonistic relationship also emerged between the traditional leaders and the community members who were perceived to be supporters of opposition parties. The traditional leaders who have the authority to preside over conflicts and intolerance in the communities for the sake of peaceful coexistence and social cohesion in the communities suddenly became intolerant to divergent and diverse political views. These leaders unleashed a barrage of threats, intimidation, harassment and coercion

on the same people they were supposed to protect so that they would support the ruling party. The traditional courts ceased to prosecute perpetrators of election violence mostly because they supported the ruling party. Traditional leaders became vocal against the opposition political party supporters, threatening them with expulsion from the communities. The shift from harmonious and peaceful relationships in the communities was to a great extent the source of the current communal socio-economic and political quandary.

5.2-The use of violence

The use of the war time pungwe base concept as an epicentre of violence, local perpetrators of violence, and the traditional leaderships during election violence has been revealed as an effective strategy used to successfully suppress and inhibit a smooth democratic transition in Zimbabwe. The pungwe bases were extensively - not in a positive way as they were used during the war of the 1970, but to intimidate and harass community members, to physically abuse perceived opposition supporters and to coerce the community members to support the regime. Thus, the use of these pungwe bases as public places where community members were tormented physically and emotionally to denounce opposition political party support and to pay allegiance to the regime, was very effective. Local perpetrators of violence sponsored by the state were also instrumental in the execution of acts of violence in the communities. The use of victimizers who resided in the communities with the victims had a domineering effect on the victims because it cast a lot of fear and insecurity. This helped to control and monitors the political activities of the victims because of the constant interactions which happened between the victimizers and the victimized in the same community. The perpetrator of violence more often than not desired the victim to be frightened, suffer and be submissive especially when the two parties came in contact with each other. To make matters worse, these perpetrators of violence were not restrained or prosecuted by the law enforcement institutions for the atrocities committed but were left to roam around the communities freely.

The traditional leaders suddenly became partisan and victimizers of their subjects who exhibited opposition political mind-sets in their communities. Traditional leaders threatened the perceived opposition political party supporters in the communities with disciplinary actions such as eviction from the villages, denial of government food aid, or physical beating. There was extensive use of the rhetoric of defending the country against imperialism to justify the use of violence against the opposition political party supporters in the communities. Pungwe bases were set up and a lot of people were victimized on the pretext that the perpetrators were simply defending the country against the significant and potential imperialism. The opposition political parties were accused of being sell-outs and being agents of the imperialists.

The use of election violence yielded positive results for the regime; for example during the March 2008 first round election, Morgan Tsvangirai garnered 1,195,562 votes against President Robert Mugabe's 1,079,730 votes. However, after a terror campaign ahead of the June 2008 runoff election, President Robert Mugabe obtained 2,150,269 votes against Morgan Tsvangirai's 233,000 votes. This literally means that the unleashed election violence forced about 1,070,539 voters to reconsider voting for President Mugabe during the runoff election. The 2013 election results indicated that President Robert Mugabe received 2,110,434 votes against Morgan Tsvangirai who scored only 1,172,349 votes. This demonstrates that when people are accorded a free and peaceful political environment, they can exercise their political decisions freely, for example as in the March 2008 election. However, violence has the potential to coerce a substantial number of voters, for example as in the June 2008 runoff election.

It is interesting to note that the ZANU PF-led government has a tendency to use violence also as a way of managing a prevailing conflict or political challenge. Soon after independence violence was effectively used during the infamous Gukurahundi of 1980s in Matabeleland and parts of Midlands against ZAPU supporters. The operation which the government carried out degenerated into the first massacre by the

revolutionary government that killed around 20,000 civilians. The operation only came to an end with the signing of a Unity Accord in 1987 when the ZAPU leadership agreed to join ZANU PF. The essence is that the victim must agree to join the ruling party for safety, protection and peace. In the early 2000, violence was unleashed against white commercial farmers by government-supported land invaders in the name of Fast Track Land Reform, apparently for having heavily funded the opposition MDC. Farm workers and opposition supporters were also targeted by the state-sponsored perpetrators during the same period for having connived with the white farmers to vote against the proposed new constitution in a referendum held in February 2000. After the 2005 general election, the urban populace voted overwhelmingly for MDC but the state responded with the scandalous and callous Operation Murambatsvina which was meant to clean up the cities. The move to clean up the cities has been viewed as a strategy to disband and disperse the threatening opposition political support base while expanding ZANU PF's traditional rural political support base. The operation thus was forcing the affected people to go back to the rural areas. The 2008 state-sponsored election violence was launched against the people following a nationwide vote against ZANU PF in favour of the opposition MDC-T in the March 2008 election. This terror was instigated as retribution on the people for having voted against ZANU PF and President Mugabe. The violent attacks were to coerce people to vote for President Mugabe in the runoff election and to prevent the electorate from voting for Tsvangirai. Violence, however, subsided when the two MDC formations and ZANU PF signed a Global Political Agreement that ushered in a Government of National Unity in 2009.

5.3-Effects of election violence

The acts of violence instigated by state-sponsored perpetrators have inflicted severe socio-economic and political effects on the people in the communities. Acts of violence have seriously damaged the communal social fabric and social relations in many communities. These attacks on the community members by the local war veterans and the militia have increased the levels of insecurity, feelings of humiliation

and feelings of betrayal among the people. The acts of violence have thus created hatred, instilled relational antagonism, destroyed mutual and harmonious social relationships, and propagated hostile feelings such as the desire for revenge among the community members. This is because village life is interwoven by a web of social relations based on existent relationships between the village members. There are important social fabrics connecting all the villagers in each village built upon as a result of inter-marriages, family bonds, shared totems, ancestral and traditional beliefs, common ancestral graveyards, common sources of water (rivers, wells, and springs), and communal grazing areas. Many family relationships and homes were broken during the terror attacks in the communities. There are many family members who were made to victimize other family members who supported different political parties. Brothers attacked brothers or aunts or other family members and this created unbearable family tensions. Those family members who clashed during the scourge of violence are enemies and do not talk to each other. On the other hand, some women who were raped by the perpetrators of violence were divorced by their husbands because culturally sexual issues bring shame to the family.

The physical body injuries, the physical body pain and the deformities endured by the victims have caused serious economic consequences since most of the victims were rendered economically unproductive. The sustained physical injuries and deformities, such as damaged legs, hands, limbs and other parts of the body resulted in serious reductions in the physical efficiency and normal functioning of the bodies of many victims. Thus, many people in the communities became incapable of working in their fields or of doing any other manual work because of body injuries. Physical attacks on the property of perceived opposition political party supporters and candidates were also severe. These included attacks on household property, farm implements, livestock, granaries, houses, and business establishments. The attacks, destruction and looting of property affected the economic status of many victims and their families, resulting in severe economic problems. Violence thus induced economic paralysis thereby making the community members totally dependent on government food aid

and other economic needs. To a great extent, both the physical attacks on property and on the people had destructive and devastating effects on the minds of the community members. This weakened the emotional or mental faculties of many people. The people's reasoning capacity became severely compromised because of the physical pain and stress. It is therefore very difficult for the community members to free themselves from this bandage of hunger, poverty, political manipulation and insecurity. The repressive and inhibiting tactics by the government is incapacitating the people's abilities to independently and creatively think on their own. It is also very difficult for the same repressed people to come up with effective ways of liberating themselves from the servitude of this oppressive government.

The regime is taking advantage of the desperate situation which many families in the communities are in to give food aid as bait for them to support the ruling party. The traditional leaders who have been empowered to distribute government food aid and farm inputs use this aid as patronage. The leaders demand that the hungry community members show that they support the party first in order to receive government food aid. At the same time, all those who opt not to participate in these food aid distribution gatherings are easily identified and labelled as sell-outs because all members of the community are registered as they get their share. The identified people are then targeted by the perpetrators of violence for victimization. People prefer to support the ruling party in order to be safe and receive food aid. Naturally people who are poor and hungry are very easy to manipulate using food as patronage. The community members are severely affected by violence and in the event of any change in the governance system the effects are likely to persist for a very long time.

5.4-Reconciliation challenges

The acts of violence by the government against civilians and other political parties since independence are a clear indication of an intolerable and unforgiving stance. This is despite the famous reconciliation pronouncements by President Robert Mugabe in 1980. The olive branch of reconciliation was apparently extended more to

the white populace than to the black people and their political parties. The white commercial farmers only endured the wrath of massive violence during the demise of the land invasions that took place after 2000. The same token of reconciliation and peace was never enjoyed by the fellow black Zimbabweans with divergent political affiliations. Peace and reconciliation have been eloquently and loudly preached by the leadership while violence and conflict ravaged the nation under cover. This is evidenced by the post-colonial Gukurahundi massacre of 1981-86, the land invasions that was initiated in 2000, the 2005 Operation Murambatsvina, and the 2008 wave of terror. ZANU PF has never reconciled or tolerated any challenging political party that threatens its political hegemony and desire for political power. The punishment is nothing other than bloody and severe violent attacks, torture, intimidation, harassment and murder. These brutal attacks on the civilian populace instil tremendous fear and a sense of insecurity, especially when the instruments of violence are the perpetrators. Such a predicament is prevailing in the communities where perpetrators of violence constantly harass the community members. There is no tolerance for people with a divergent political mindset.

5.5-Persistence of illegitimacy

The persistence of election violence, political intolerance and other governance problems in the country are giving the Zimbabwean government serious legitimacy problems. The legitimate status accorded by the African Union (AU) and SADC to the ZANU PF government after the 2013 election victory leaves much to be desired. This election took place after a five year period during which the country was under a Unity Government. The period was riddled by systematic state-sponsored violence, political in-fights and the failure by the government to address the demands stipulated in the Global Political Agreement. Violence that was prevalent throughout the GNU period was only suspended a few weeks before the 2013 election when foreign observers were in the country. Just a few incidences of politically motivated violence that could attract the attention of the observers were reported on the election day. Nevertheless, many community members and opposition political party candidates

had been subjected to severe intimidation, harassment, abuse, torture, and detention without trial during the entire period of the GNU. However, political legitimacy of any government is derived from the popular and implicit consent of the governed. The government is not legitimate unless it is carried on with the consent of the governed. The failure to abide by the provisions in the GPA had already discredited the elections because the provisions were meant to create a free and fair environment for the elections. The persistence of economic meltdown and the failure of the government to provide the basic socio-economic and political goods to the people is a clear indication of the government's inability to govern.

5.6-Government commitment to democracy

At the 1991 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), Zimbabwe was praised for having achieved substantial strides in executing the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to which it is a signatory. According to Third World Criteria, Zimbabwe's record in ensuring basic education, primary health care, safe drinking water and rural development in general was regarded as a model that other African countries were encouraged to emulate (Zinyama 2012:139). The research revealed that after independence, the government made tremendous efforts to embrace and institutionalize principles of good governance and democratic norms at both national and local level. The governance system and institutions were made to thrive and replace the colonial system which was hard-core autocratic. The government demonstrated consistency and coherence in policy formation and high standards of ethical behaviour as well as competence in respect to the rule of law, transparency, openness, and accountability to democratic institutions. There was fairness and equity in dealing with citizens, including mechanisms for consultation and participation, and efficient and effective services. The assimilation process naturally had to encounter a number of challenges during the process. Regular competitive multi-party elections were adopted to allow free and active participation of all citizens in local and national politics.

Efforts were made to create a conducive electoral environment and to conduct peaceful and free and fair elections. These environments permitted the people to participate freely and this enabled opposition political parties to win many seats in national and local governance structures. This also allowed popular participation in decision-making processes and constitutional matters of the country. Constitutional and civil courts as well as other institutions were set up to preside and deliver justice on political, electoral and civil disputes. On a number of occasions, the state lost cases against human rights activists and also against political candidates in electoral disputes. This is an indication of the rule of law and efficiency in the democratization process. These and other measures of democracy prevailing in the country are an indication of the government's commitment to uphold democratic values. The virtues of good governance have, however, been a common practice in the Zimbabwean culture of governance, for example during the pre-colonial era.

There was a growing tendency of the regime to resort to impunity, intimidation, harassment, and violence against government critics and opposition political party supporters, as well as the closure of political space and abuse of human rights activists and other dissenting voices by the 1990s. The regime increasingly flouted and refused to adhere to the same democratic principles in a number of situations. This greatly defeated the commitment and gains made in the democratization process of the country. Civic and political participation were constrained while freedoms and civil liberties were heavily compromised. The government times contravened and derailed the regular multi-party elections on several occasions, turning them into undemocratic elections due to unprecedented acts of violence and coercion by state-sponsored perpetrators. Constitutionalism has been a challenge in Zimbabwe. The people were allowed to contribute in the drafting of the country's democratic constitution but the government has been disobeying several provisions of the constitution. The rule of law has thus been greatly compromised.

5.7-Conclusion

Election violence has reversed the government's efforts and commitment to democratize the country. The use of violence has put the community members in a devastating socio-economic and political quandary. The 2008 election violence consolidated ZANU PF's political dominance while dismantling the opposition political groups' potential to rebrand. The chances of democratizing the country have largely been jeopardized by the 2008 election violence as has been demonstrated by the subsequent 2013 elections where ZANU PF proved its political superiority over opposition political parties.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Fieldwork Plan May (2013-Januuary 2014)

1-Identify all the interviewees, physical location, contact persons and contact details (June-July 2013)

2- Visit rural based potential interviewees and request for interview dates

3-Set possible interview dates together with the potential interviewees.

4- Conduct interviews (August- December 2013)

5-Gather information from archived sources, newspaper houses and libraries

6- Compile and process the collected data (October 2013-August 2014)

Appendix 2: Sample guiding interview questions

-Election violence dynamics

-The major perpetrators of violence, the forms and the patterns of violence

-How have the acts of violence been instituted by the perpetrators

-What are the chances of challenging the perpetrators of violence at community level

-How has been the government responding to cases of violence in the communities

-How have the courts, traditional leaders and the police been handling the cases of violence

-Are the affected people in a position to use other way of redressing the cases of election violence

-Are the people willing to continue supporting opposition party in election violence prone environment

-What are the existing channels to prosecute perpetrators of violence

-What are the adaptive mechanisms used by the community members

-What are the people's possible effective methods of resolving cases of election violence

-What are the socio-economic and political effects of violence on community members

Appendix 3: Sample Letter Requesting Interviews Sent to Respondents June 12, 2013

_____

_____

Dear Sir/Madam,

Ref: Request for Interviews

I am writing this letter requesting for your permission to conduct an academic interview on election violence with you. I am a Doctoral (PhD) candidate with Freiburg University Germany. I am conducting an empirical research study on the dynamics of election violence in the communities of Manicaland. In this regard, I intend to have an interview with you in order to understand election violence through personal experiences. This study will pave way for possible initiatives to eradicate election violence and pave way for a smooth democratic transition. This study serves also as a theoretical and empirical framework for sustainable constructive transformation of political conflicts, political tolerance and coexistence. I would therefore, be much grateful if my request is given the best of your favorable consideration. I have attached my confirmation letter from my University and the possible dates for these interviews in your community.

Thanking you your favorable cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

ALEXANDER CHIMANGE

Cell: +263 772 466 924, +491724731885

email:alegety@yahoo.co.uk

Appendix 4: Sample fotos of 2008 election violence victims in Manicaland

1-The displaced families in Manicaland during the 2008 election violence

Source: CCJP (2009) The Darkest Hour is just before the Dawn" Election Violence in Zimbabwe 2008: South Africa: Churches in Manicaland & Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (Mutare)

2-The tortured victims in Manicaland during the 2008 election violence

Source: CCJP (2009) The Darkest Hour is just before the Dawn" Election Violence in Zimbabwe 2008: South Africa: Churches in Manicaland & Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (Mutare)

3-Destroyed homes in Manicaland during the 2008 election violence

Source: CCJP (2009) The Darkest Hour is just before the Dawn" Election Violence in Zimbabwe 2008: South Africa: Churches in Manicaland & Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (Mutare)

Appendix 5: Zusammenfassung

Die Zimbabwe-Wahlen sind durch beispiellose Gewalttaten, Einschüchterungen, Nötigungen, Schikane und Manipulation beschmutzt worden. Dadurch ist den Bürgern das so sehr ersehnte Recht zur Demokratie genommen worden. Die Dissertation ‚Die Wahl Autoritäre Regime und Wahlgewalttätigkeit: Der Fall von Manicaland Gemeinden in Simbabwe 2008-2013' betrachtet und untersucht, wie Gewalt von dieser Regierung angewendet wird. Der Schwerpunkt dieser empirischen lokalisiert Studie ist es, die Dynamik der Wahlen im Zeitraum von 2008-2013 in den Gemeinden der Provinz Manicaland in Simbabwe zu entwirren. Die Untersuchung zeigt auf, wie der Staat die Gewalt strategisch einsetzte, um das Verlangen nach einem weichen Übergang zur Demokratie zu blockieren und zu unterdrücken. Diese Art von heftiger Gewalt wird gewöhnlich von Regimen gegen die oppositionellen politischen Parteien und gegenüber den Aktivisten und Kandidaten angewendet. Diese Studie untersucht ebenso den sozio-ökonomischen und politischen Einfluss dieser Art von Gewalt auf die Menschen.

Der zentrale Punkt ist es, die Verbindung zwischen der Gewaltanwendung bei Wahlen und der Praxis eines Mehrparteiensystems aufzuzeigen, was innerhalb eines demokratischen Rahmens eine nur kosmetische Maske erhält. Der Hintergrund dieses ganzen Unglücks war die landesweite Welle von Gewalt, die in Zimbabwe nach den Superwahlen im 2008 ausgebrochen ist. Diese Wahlen wurden in einer nach den Richtlinien des SADC (Southern African Development Community) zuträglichen und freien Form und Umgebung durchgeführt. Bei Wahlen sind alle Meinungen inkludierend, pluralistisch und konkurrierend. (Schedler 2001:36). Die damaligen demokratischen Bedingungen lockten in überwältigender Weise und ohne Furcht viele Menschen zur Stimmabgabe für die politische Partei ihrer Wahl. Das führte zu Gewinnen der oppositionellen Partei MDC-T (Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai) und zu mehr Parlamentssitzen als die ZANU PF (Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front) hatte. Aber das Ergebnis löste in der Folge eine Welle der Gewalt im Land aus. Die März-Wahlen im Jahr 2008 waren die friedlichsten seit dem Ausbruch der Mega-Krise im Jahr 2000 in Zimbabwe, während die dann neuen Wahlen im Juni 2008 als die blutigsten seit der Unabhängigkeit in die Geschichte eingehen werden. (Masunungure 2009:61). Die körperlichen Angriffe auf die wehrlosen Menschen von der Armee und von den vom Staat gesponserten militärischen Gruppen waren brutal und vernichtend.

Die Wahlen in Zimbabwe zeigen einen Wahl-Autoritarismus wie seit Erlangung der Unabhängigkeit nicht. (Schedler 2002:37). Das Wahlsystem findet in einem Rahmen statt, der versucht, wenigstens den Anschein einer demokratischen Legitimität zu

zeigen, um dann die Früchte dieser Legitimität zu ernten. Wahlen sind Mittel, die helfen, dass sich das Regime reproduziert. Die Zimbabwe-Wahlen waren deshalb zur Beruhigung ausländischer Beobachter da, und für die internationale Gemeinschaft, die keinen Einblick in die wahren Verhältnisse im Land hatte. Die Wahl im März 2008 March schien eine Vielparteienwahl zu sein, die jedem substantiellen Test standgehalten hätte. Die Auswertung der Daten wurde vom Mai bis Dezember 2013 durchgeführt. Dieser Zeitraum steht auch für eine wesentliche Parlamentswahl, die das Ende der Regierung der „Nationalen Union" bedeutete, die im Jahr 2009 nach der blutigen Wahl eingesetzt worden war. Die primären Daten wurden durch qualitativ gut geführte Interviews in den drei Gemeinden erhoben. Das geschah mit Menschen, die eine glaubhafte Erfahrung und ein breites Wissen der staatlich gelenkten Gewalt bei der Wahl hatten.

Der empirische Beweis führt zu mehreren Ergebnissen. Die zentrale Aussage ist, dass das Regime seine staatlicherseits durchgeführte Gewaltanwendung nutzt, um einen guten Übergang zur Demokratie im Land zu verhindern. Diese Strategie wird zuallererst von lokalen Tätern angewandt, die ihre Opfer in denselben Gemeinden finden. Das Regime prahlt mit seiner Strategie der Gewalt-Mobilisierung in den Gemeinden als einer kritischen und andauernden Methode, die Unterdrückung der erwünschten Demokratiebestrebungen zu unterdrücken. Diese Gewaltanwendung in der Gemeinde macht die Menschen geistig und physisch, und wirtschaftlich unfähig, und anfällig für Einschüchterung, Schikane, Unterdrückung und Manipulation. Der physische Schaden an Leben und Besitz hat tiefgreifende sozio-ökonomische und politische Konsequenzen. Deshalb wird ständig Gewalt angewendet, um die Menschen in der Armut zu halten und sie in ihren Gefühlen zu versklaven. Das Regime macht sich die verzweifelte wirtschaftliche Lage und die emotionale Situation der vielen Familien in den drei Gemeinden zu Nutze, und verteilt Nahrungsmittel um die Anführer zu unterstützen. Die Menschen sind durch die Gewalttaten politisch versklavt. Die Untersuchung zeigt, wie die Staatsinstitutionen sich mithilfe der Gewalt und des Gesetzes als die regierende Partei an der Spitze durch das Mittel der Gewaltanwendung bei Wahlen einrichtet. So ist Gewalt die grundlegende Strategie eines Regimes, das die Wahlen benutzt, um an der Macht zu bleiben.