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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND
JOHANNESBURG

THE SEARCH FOR POLITICAL LEGITIMACY: ZANU-PF'S Mobilization Techniques in Contemporary Zimbabwe.

**RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
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IN FULLFILMENT OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE BY COURSEWORK AND RESEARCH REPORT IN ANTHROPOLOGY

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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DECLARATION

This dissertation is submitted for the Master of Arts Degree to the department of Anthropology, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

I declare that this dissertation is my own work and has never been submitted for any other degree at any other University and that full referencing has been done on ideas and thoughts that do not belong to me.

Edmore Chitukutuku

Signature……

22 April 2013

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DEDICATION

The strength to live and to do things lies not in me but in the Lord.

Amen.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS……..Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

BA…….....Bachelor of Arts

BACOSSI……...Basic Commodities Supply Scheme Initiative

BEAM……Basic Education Assistance Module

BMIT……..British Military Advisory Team

CIO…….Central Intelligence Organization

DAPP……..Development Aid from People to People

DCC…….....District Co-coordinating Committee

DRC……Democratic Republic of Congo

ESAP……Economic Structural Adjustment Programme

GMB……Grain Marketing Board

GPA…….Global Political Agreement

IMF…….International Monetary Fund

MDC……Movement for Democratic Change

NGO……Non Governmental Organisation

NYS…….National Youth Service

SADC……..Southern Africa Development Committee

WB……..World Bank

ZANLA……Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army

ZANU-PF……Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front

ZAPU……..Zimbabwe African People's Union

ZCTU……..Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

ZIPRA…….Zimbabwe People's Revolution Army

ZRP…….Zimbabwe Republic Police

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ABSTRACT

This research took an ethnographic view in understanding the relationship between rural people and ZANU-PF in post-2000 Bindura South electoral constituency in Zimbabwe. I seek to understand the complexity with which rural people come to make political choices through discussing ZANU-PF's techniques in the maintenance of political power despite the loss of political legitimacy. The complicity between ZANU-PF and rural people is uncomfortably created through these techniques which include mobilizing historical claims, youth violence on villagers, partisan distribution of economic resources, surveillance and spying to create subjects who conform to ZANU-PF's political will. I have argued that rural people's circumstances should be understood through an analysis of their everyday lives and livelihoods. Findings have shown that rural people make political choices because they are life choices there are slight possibilities for alternative political action in rural Zimbabwe.

Introduction

During the liberation struggle in the 1970s Mashonaland Central province in which Bindura South constituency is located played host to ZANU/ZANLA guerrillas and developed a relationship based on the common goal of fighting colonial rule and asserting black majority in the country. After the war and the coming of independence in 1980 like most electoral constituencies in Mashonaland central Bindura South has been a ZANU-PF stronghold, even after the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 when most provinces and constituencies were switching allegiance to the MDC, Mashonaland Central remained a ZANU-PF province. Even Bindura town remained one of the few towns retained by ZANU-PF since the wave of MDC change swept almost all urban areas after 2000. This allegiance lasted until 2008 when Bindura South constituency became one of the two constituencies in Mashonaland Central province to switch political allegiance to the MDC. This was despite a plethora of ZANU-PF mobilisation techniques and strategies, to claim political legitimacy ahead of the MDC and other opposition parties since independence.

In March 2008 Zimbabwe went to vote in the first ever harmonised elections. They were harmonised because it was the first time the presidential, parliamentary and local government elections were held at the same time. In previous years parliamentary elections were held separately from presidential and local government elections. The pre-election campaign unlike most of the elections held after 2000 was peaceful and exhibited some form of tolerance of different political views. This was necessitated by the adoption of Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) guidelines on free and fair elections. These elections were important to the people because they were held at a time of economic and social distress in the country. In 2008 Zimbabwe had a record hyperinflation rate in the

world; hunger and disease were threatening the lives of people. To make things worse Bindura South lacks adequate food aid from the government and donor society. Government agricultural support schemes have not been enough and have been biased in favour of well-known ZANU-PF supporters and officials with the rest of the villagers getting the crumbs of whatever remained. People's only hope for the better lay in political change in the country which they hoped would bring better access to resources for everyone.

I remember how in March 2008 most people including myself were glued to radio sets until the early hours of the morning with pens and papers to write down the constituencies won by either ZANU-PF or the MDC as the results were being announced as they 'trickled' to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) Command centre, situated at the Rainbow Hotel and Towers in Harare. However like most Zimbabweans we had to endure a long month wait to hear the outcome of the presidential poll amid accusations and counter accusations of rigging, vote buying among other irregularities between ZANU-PF and the MDC. The confusion was exacerbated by the MDC officials claiming at first that they had secured a 54 per cent win, the later saying they had 49 per cent, while ZANU-PF MPs were going to the courts to seek recounts of the ballots in areas they lost. To enhance the confusion those who had access to satellite television went around saying that international news agencies had announced that Mugabe had lost the elections basing their claims on results from individual constituencies.

However amid these uncertainties life in Bindura South continued albeit with a lot of anxiety, excitement and fear of the unknown. This had never happened before, ZANU-PF had never lost like this, people wondered whether they were on their way out of power? These were the questions on most people's minds, the silence on election results sounded weird, there had never been such a delay in the announcement of Presidential polls, by this time in previous elections people would have forgotten about the whole process of elections

and would be 'waiting' for the next five years. But this time it was different something seemed wrong, but no one knew what it was. At the business centre, people were busy charging car batteries to power their radio and television sets so that they stay updated on the events. For most people MDC posters with the message "A new Zimbabwe, A new beginning" and a picture of a smiling Morgan Tsvangirai (MDC presidential candidate) seemed to give an answer to people's questions, the MDC defeated ZANU-PF in parliamentary elections, and council elections, what could stop them from winning the presidential poll? Was Mugabe planning an exit strategy? As people debated on these questions they continued to harvest the little maize, groundnuts, and other small grains they had produced during the agricultural season, another one characterised by erratic rains and unavailability of farming inputs, hunger lingered on the doorsteps of many households. But things could change if MDC comes to power most people argued, there was a 'rumour' going around that trucks of food were on standby in South Africa to bring food the moment MDC's victory was officially proclaimed. This shows the extent to which people had become desperate for political change and was an indicator to why people had voted for ZANU-PF.

In the 2008 harmonised elections the opposition the MDC won a majority in parliament and in local government seats. The presidential election failed to produce a winner with the required 50+1 % of the ballots cast, the MDC won 47,9% of the votes and ZANU-PF 43,2% while the remainder was divided among the rest, (Raftopoulos et al 2009:229) hence the two leading parties MDC and ZANU-PF went for a presidential run-off election, on June 27, 2008. After the MDC won the majority in parliament and led ZANU-PF in the presidential elections in March 2008, the Joint Operations Command (JOC) the highest organ of security comprising the armed forces, police and central intelligence, assumed the role of military Junta backing Mugabe, and taking over the June 27 presidential election run-off campaign

(Chitiyo 2009, Matereke 2011). The war veterans and the youth were employed to keep people in rural areas and farms under surveillance through creation of bases (Le Bas 2006, Fontein 2006b). Surveillance is "an act of observing, sometimes taking place in a subtle or covert ways that would enable the observer to predict control and render powerless the observed subject, by employing the gaze to gain power" (Matereke 2011:217). In this case in 2008 the JOC gave the youth and war veterans' power to organise ZANU-PF's rural campaign which was marred by excessive youth violence on suspected opposition supporters. Robert Mugabe of ZANU-PF 'won' the run-off election by more than 70%. Morgan Tsvangirai of the MDC 'pulled out' of the run-off election citing violence and intimidation of his supporters by ZANU-PF as the reasons.

Since the 2008 presidential election run-off the political dust has never settled in Bindura South. Political activity has taken over the lives of people, who are subjected to political rallies, intimidation, and surveillance by Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) youth, local ward committees or District Co-ordinating Committee. Things look so normal to a visitor to the area, what one sees when they enter Bindura South using the Harare-Shamva highway are people going about their everyday activities undisturbed. Along the road people can be seen going up and down, to the shopping centre, churches, funerals, burial societies, community gardens or waiting for public transport between Harare and Shamva. Young men are seen loitering along the road, it has become their meeting place; they sit on the road killing time. At the Rutope business centre people are seen in groups at bottle stores drinking beer and sharing stories, women selling vegetables and fruits are an everyday feature. At the grass and plastic thatched market stalls people go about selling and buying clothes and other accessories, and nothing costs less than USD1, which some people called abuse of the "Obama," as the US currency is called in Zimbabwe. This is probably a reflection of society at first sight in most places in Bindura in particular and in

Zimbabwe in general. People seem concerned about economic transactions and social life, politics is rarely discussed in people's everyday lives. This situation tells half the story of Bindura South.

Argument

In this thesis I discuss ZANU-PF's techniques in the maintenance of political power in the post 2000 period despite the loss of legitimacy. It is a moment poised between what Hannah Arendt (1970) calls violence and loss of power. This contemporary moment in Zimbabwe's political history is characterised by ZANU-PF's attempts to maintain its political dominance in rural areas, amid shifting allegiance by rural people who have for long been seen as staunch ZANU-PF supporters. In describing this moment I dwell on the four types of political action, ZANU-PF's mobilisation of history to claim political power, youth violence, distribution of economic resources and surveillance and subjection. The thesis is a consideration of these four different elements in the production of political power for ZANU-PF. By focussing on ZANU-PF's mobilisation techniques I seek to move beyond binary views of rural and urban voting trends which see urbanites as advocates of political change and progressive, while rural people are viewed as unable to embrace the gospel of change (Matereke 2011). I argue that this narrative is a simplification, as Anand (2011:544) argues of India; "things are more complex on the ground." In using the term complexity I argue that rural people's political circumstances should be understood through an analysis of their everyday lives, from their households to the public arena of political and social participation.

The MDC's election victory in 2008 in Bindura South gave a different perspective to a rather generalised perception about the relationship between ZANU-PF and rural people. Traditional leaders and the youth are seen as complicit with ZANU-PF rule and violence in

rural areas. Matereke (2011), Chitiyo (2009), Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009), Lindgren (2003), LeBas (2006) among others have pointed out the youth militias or village heads and chiefs as loyalists who execute these mobilisation methods with unquestionable loyalty to ZANU-PF and its structures. I argue that understanding rural politics in terms of rural life and livelihoods would help us to understand the predicament of the youths and traditional heads after 2000.

There has been a widespread conceptual division between rural and urban in Zimbabwe in terms of Zimbabwe political allegiance, with ZANU-PF viewing the threat of the opposition to be from urban areas. The MDC and other opposition parties also viewed people from rural areas as conservative and unenlightened to push the agenda of democracy. "This suspicion is still rampant, though it thawed in the prelude to the 2008 elections. The suspicion remains difficult to eradicate as the two clearly divided spaces of rural and urban with their different material conditions, juxtaposed as separate, conflicting and incommensurable, continue to make aspirations which are met differently by politicians." (Matereke 2011:254).

This research takes an ethnographic approach to understanding how power, support and legitimacy of the liberation war and violence and post-independence modes of governance and rule are negotiated and contested, through the lenses of the 2008 presidential election run-off campaign. In order to highlight the political contestations between ZANU-PF and rural people and to show that rural people are no passive followers of ZANU-PF dictates it suffices to not only look at the 2008 voting trend in which the MDC won majority of rural votes. But to look at ZANU-PF's mobilisation techniques as a central point of analysis with which to rethink and understand the nature of the relationship between ZANU-PF and rural people from the liberation struggle. This is possible because the liberation war itself is seen as having been legitimate in the eyes of the people all over the country and political and

ideological contestations about it have been largely downplayed. This downplaying has been carried over to the post- independence relations between ZANU-PF and rural people, and not enough of the Third Chimurenga relations between ZANU-PF and the rural people are being linked to the relations of the liberation war. Rural areas were the strongholds of the liberation war and in recent political and academic rhetoric and literature rural areas have and are still being regarded as ZANU-PF strongholds (Chitiyo 2009, Matereke 2011).

In this research I ask questions about how rural areas (Bindura South) included came to be ZANU-PF's strongholds. I also seek to understand how ZANU-PF has used existing and new techniques of political mobilisation in the making of political subjects loyal to them. The militia base becomes one of the central political and social forms of making this political subject through violence and other forms of intimidation, which taps into the available cultural resources and modes of rule enacted by colonial regimes. ZANU-PF rhetoric goes back to the triumph over colonialism and those who represent the West. What are both symbolic and social forms with which political mobilisation, be it violence or intimidation is organised? Whether they draw from artefacts of memory of the liberation struggle in the same way they drew from the first chimurenga, to what extent do they help us to understand the social and symbolic forms of what ZANU-PF is doing? If that is the case or not, to what extent are those symbols effective to prove a comparative narrative of what people ought to be. What do people say about such symbols and artefacts and modes of representation and enactment with which mobilisation takes place. If it is not compelling what do people do with it, in a charged context, when people are surveying themselves, what forms of resistance do they use?

Chapter Outline

The first chapter presents an argument about the presence of the 1970s liberation war narratives in the 2000s. I bring together information about the 1970s war and the ways in which the 1970s exist in Zimbabwe in problematic ways and how both ZANU-PF and the local people make comparisons between the two periods in Zimbabwe's past. The object of the first chapter is history as a form of political mobilisation. I analyse the ways in which there is a conflation between the 1970s and 2000. The mobilisation of history is the primary form of ZANU-PF mobilisation tactics but it is slipping away because people are beginning to switch allegiance to the MDC.

The second chapter is about ZANU-PF organised youth violence, in this chapter I discuss the establishment of the youth militia bases in 2008 as a way of ZANU-PF youth mobilisation as well as centres where violence was organised and meted out to suspected MDC supporters. The base is one of the forms under the use of historical form and tropes of the liberation struggle as a way of consolidation of power which are definitely linked to violence. Violence and intimidation is the object of this chapter.

The third chapter is about the use of money and resources to create patronage. I tell a story about how particular acts of giving by the state garner massive amounts of political control and how the resources deployed in the complicated context is how ZANU-PF is trying to master political legitimacy. Political subjection is created around access to agricultural inputs, food aid, and employment opportunities in the civil service, including government assistance through paying school fees for vulnerable children. I analyse this through what I term the politics of distribution. Some people have decided to have economic liberation by doing informal gold panning, and other informal business activities so as to escape reliance on ZANU-PF aid which would then make them vulnerable to perpetrating violence or would

create a form of obligation on them to pay back by becoming ZANU-PF youth militia or otherwise.

The last chapter is about the use of surveillance and visibility to create a certain kind of environment and subjection which always stands under the signs of violence. I discuss political technologies of surveillance and subjugation, by understanding how youths, village heads and ordinary villagers are used by ZANU-PF to label others as sell-outs (not that they are told to do so, but they would think that it works to their advantage because they will then be viewed as patriotic and then qualify to access resources). I also discuss how objects of opposition information dissemination are used by ZANU-PF youths as 'evidence' that others are selling out. Of interest is how people negotiate this violence, intimidation and surveillance through 'pretending' to be ZANU-PF supporters, while voting differently or through voting for ZANU-PF or by having alternative spaces to talk about violence, for example the church.

CONCEPTUAL CONTOURS

Political Legitimacy

Max Weber's classical definition of legitimacy has become central to the understanding of the term. Weber conceived of legitimacy as the chance to attain acceptance for specific commands or a general political order from a given group of persons. Weber argues that any political system would have to "inspire and maintain the belief in its 'legitimacy.'" Gilley (2006) argues that legitimacy pertains to how power may be used in ways the citizens consciously accept. While Musonda (2006) sees legitimacy as presupposing the existence of a legal system and of power as force exercised according to legal rules, as well as the justification of legality by conferring on power the special moral attribute of authority for it to be maintained. Legality has since the time of Max Weber been held as the basis of the

legitimacy of the modern state. Political legitimacy, Gilley (2006) argues is a major determinant of both the structure and operation of states. Its absence is believed to have profound implications for the way that states behave toward citizens and others. States that lack legitimacy devote more resources to maintaining their rule and less to effective governance, which reduces support and makes them vulnerable to overthrow or collapse.

Hwang and Schneider (2011:4) asserts that "citizens accept the political systems they live in on a variety of grounds, such as, charismatic leadership, traditions, ideological orthodoxy, a sense of national unity, the way the state delivers its policy of welfare to the citizens, the extent to which the administration is accountable for its actions and so on." Such a conception moves the discussion on legitimacy away from normative questions, such as what type of political system is "good" or "bad"? and instead asks, why does a citizenry accept a specific political order and how did the rulers create this acceptance.

In the case of Zimbabwe, when the independent nation was proclaimed in 1980 the liberation war history ideology of anti-imperialism and communism provided the most, although not the only, convenient way to legitimize ZANU-PF's monopolistic rule over Zimbabwe (Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Muzondidya 2011). Since the turn of the 1990s Zimbabwe experienced a drastic economic, social and political transformation, in particular after the adoption of Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in 1989 (Mlambo 1993), the controversial land reforms, economic sanctions and the MDC challenge (Moore 2005). Zimbabwe thus entered into a period of negative transition from a stable industrialising country on the African continent to highly impoverished one (Jones 2010a). This created dissent and rage in the people. Since the economic, social and political crisis the idea of ZANU-PF as the liberator began to fade away. At the same time ZANU-PF faced a very different international environment compared to the 1980s when the world put a blind eye to

the Gukurahundi[1] atrocities in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces (Brickhill 1995). The rise of an active civic society which questions the government's human rights violations, rule of law and economic policies and an international community that is critical of the government's actions also put pressure on ZANU-PF's interests of maintaining political domination. The US, UK, EU, Australia and the World Bank and IMF have slapped the ZANU-PF leadership with the 'smart sanctions' which put ZANU-PF into further turmoil as the party became more and more alienated internationally. At the same time the opposition MDC became more recognised internationally as champions of democracy and human rights. The ZANU-PF's liberation war rhetoric that offered the original foundation of ZANU-PF's 'one party' rule is fading away. As a result ZANU-PF encounters very different challenges to maintain its power and legitimacy than it used to. A simplistic legitimation strategy no longer fits the complex social and political order of contemporary Zimbabwe.

A central focus of this thesis is the idea that the ZANU-PF leadership is changing the techniques it uses to consolidate its rule. The ZANU-PF leadership has recognised the legitimacy crisis it faces: since the 2000s and the crisis was heavily confirmed by the 2008 election 'defeat' to the MDC. What can be drawn from the 2008 election is that the people were no longer accepting ZANU-PF's "charismatic leadership, traditions, ideological orthodoxy, the way the state delivers its policy of welfare to the citizens, the extent to which the administration is accountable for its actions" (Hwang and Schneider 2011:4). Furthermore ZANU-PF intolerance of the opposition and the Gukurahundi violence in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces of the country destroyed the sense of the nation's national unity hence put ZANU-PF's legitimacy in a serious quandary. Since 2000 ZANU-PF leadership resorted to new mobilisation techniques to consolidate its hold on power

[1] Gukurahundi is a shona name given to the first rains which clears all the dirt signalling the coming of the rain season. Here it refers to the operation undertaken by army in the wake of dissident activities in Matabeleland and Midlands province. In this operation thousands of civilians were killed for allegedly 'supporting' the dissidents.

through election 'victory' based on violence, intimidation of rural people and selective distribution of resources. After the 2008 presidential election violence which consolidated Mugabe's rule the ZANU-PF government has largely been viewed as 'illegitimate' by most Zimbabwean citizens. Arendt (1970) argues that violence is a sign of failed legitimacy; violence seeks to consolidate power but ends with the loss of power.

Musonda (2006) argues that the recognition of the power of the state as rightful or legitimate by obeying its command is not merely to the advantage of rulers in the consolidation of their rule. The primary motivation is to establish moral principles that serve to define when the state has the moral authority to do things involved in ruling, principles that set limits to what the powerful may do if they are to maintain their authority over those subordinate to them and which define the appropriate relationship between rulers and the ruled. Gilley (2006) argues that the state is more legitimate the more that it is treated by its citizens as rightfully holding and exercising political power.

Techniques of mobilisation

The most important concept that helps us to understand what ZANU-PF is doing in Bindura South is the "technique". In order to consolidate political power in Zimbabwe after the 2000 wave of change ZANU-PF employed various old and new techniques to persuade and force rural people in Bindura South to support them. Landau (1993) conceptualised techniques as learned skills that are part of social systems. For techniques to work there should be something that makes them possible. Those become objects manipulated for a particular outcome. In this study there is a concept of objectification that is in the landscape, in the landscape of the liberation war, land as the source of fertility and livelihood (in the distribution and circulation of mundane agricultural objects), land as the dwelling place for

ancestors. The manipulation of such 'cultural resources' (Richards 1996) became ZANU-PF techniques for mobilising people in rural Bindura South.

The technique in this study elaborates a new kind of relationship between rural people in Bindura South and ZANU-PF. They are imbued in forms of rule and governance. Complicity between rural people and ZANUPF is made and produced through methods of subordination that are imbued in the four types of mobilisation used by ZANU-PF to maintain power in Bindura South. Techniques in this instance mean intimate relationships that is created by ZANU-PF, through using local leadership structures and the youth to render visible its presence. Youth surveillance, violence and distribution of resources become practices through which the state encourages new kinds of action among those who are to be governed. Political subjectivity means people are operating in conditions of anxiety. People make political choices because of life choices. The techniques go to that juncture between politics and life. Rural people cannot refuse these techniques because they are about survival.

In this research I have used techniques instead of tactics because tactics imply politics or a political game with expected outcomes in the short term. Techniques however elaborate structured landscapes and different sources of power, and are a long term strategy to maintain political control by ZANU-PF. Techniques in these instances become deliberate instrumentality that works in a context and in a system, they are learned and they are a product of the liberation struggle, pungwes were successful in the 1970s war, the bases in 2008 resembled those of the 1970s. Liberation war alliances between guerrillas and spirit mediums and traditional authority ensured the transference of power from colonial chiefs to spirit mediums and ultimately to the guerrillas (Lan 1985). In 2008, through the creation of youth bases and allowing the youth to take over the ZANU-PF election campaign, power was transferred from the state and elders to the ZANU-PF War Veterans and youth militias.

These forms of mobilisation were vital to ZANU mobilisation in the 1970s and in its 1980 election victory. These techniques are embedded in the ZANU-PF system of mobilisation. The idea in this research was to make sense of this complexity of rural life through looking at techniques ZANU-PF use to control political activity. As well as looking at techniques people use to negotiate this ZANU-PF politicking. The aim of techniques is to give value. As Landau (1993) argues rainmaking as a technique gives value and power among the Batswana, it is linked to currency the pula and hence power and value. ZANU-PF is using techniques to create political value and power among the rural people of Bindura South by giving them a political and survival choice.

Methodological positioning

I undertook this study as an insider in Bindura district and as a Zimbabwean. I was born in Bindura district even though I did not grow up there but spent most of my life living in different towns and cities in Zimbabwe. I visited my rural home in Musana Chieftaincy in Bindura district regularly since most of my relatives stay there. The events that I write about especially in 2008 are motivated by my personal experiences of ZANU-PF mobilisation techniques. I have attended most of ZANU-PF rallies and meetings not as researcher but as a member of this society. In this research I am conflating past lived experience and current research I undertook in 2012. The informal discussions, observations and speeches of various ZANU-PF actors during rallies in 2008, were not electronically recorded or written down during that period but they have stuck to my mind since then and I confidently remember them. This has given me leverage in gaining entry when I went back as a researcher asking specific questions about ZANU-PF mobilisation techniques.

Fieldwork is at the same time a discursive practice and a positioned labour process. Ethnography involves acts at once embodied and emplaced. Mine navigated political rallies,

funerals, church services, people's homesteads and district wards. As I manoeuvred, others' actions governed my conduct politically positioning me while I also positioned myself. As people in Bindura South positioned themselves in actions, not of their choosing, so too did I.

In order to understand the different forms of ZANU-PF mobilisation in Bindura South I focused on the Youth militia who were in these bases in the 2008 violence and the War collaborators who participated in the liberation struggle in the 1970s who were also part of the organizers of the 2008 militia bases, because they are figured as political subjects because of their association with ZANU-PF, as well as ordinary people who experienced both the liberation struggle and the 2008 violence. I engaged in much more conversations with the youth militia, the reasons being that when they are engaged in a more conversational approach; the 'youth militia' 'opened up' their thoughts, feelings and perceptions both about their past and present experiences. They expressed themselves in depth when conversation approach was used; I noticed during interviews that the youth spoke more about their experiences when engaged in a conversation than in a much more defined interview.

Three trips of a few months between end of 2011 and 2012 complemented ten months that I personally experienced the ZANU-PF mobilisation techniques in 2008 during the height of the presidential elections run-off campaign. Living in a politically charged context made me aware of conditions with which people had to make political as well as life choices.

Chapter One

ZANU-PF'S MOBILISATION OF HISTORY

Since the historic 1980 election victory which ushered in black rule under ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe, the history of the liberation war that paved the way for that moment has been used fervently by the ZANU-PF government. ZANU-PF's mobilisation of history has been one of the most significant ways in which the party sought to legitimate its political dominance. This section seeks to show how history is mobilised by ZANU-PF to create political support in rural Zimbabwe. The ZANU-PF leadership might have reasonably expected that drawing on the war of independence for symbols of legitimacy and national identity might capture the popular imagination of the rural people and so legitimize their consolidation of power. Recourse to the liberation war reincarnated in the education system, national commemorations and campaign rallies have served ZANU-PF's interests by reminding rural people their 'heroic' liberation narrative. The liberation war had claimed according to Kriger (1995:139) "an estimated 30 000 to 80 000 lives and had contributed to the liberation from colonial rule, thus making it an important emotional symbol and source of legitimacy for ZANU-PF."

This chapter also seeks to understand how in contemporary Zimbabwe this strategy is not working as effectively because people are starting to see the MDC as their new 'liberators' from ZANU-PF oppression and economic decline. This shift has brought out new narratives of the relationship between rural people and ZANU-PF that were not told in the years after the liberation war. The relationship between ZANU-PF and rural people has not been one characterised by mutual understanding but has been riddled with tensions and contestations since the liberation war. People begin to focus on the future and the past which ZANU-PF relies on ceases to make sense in a context where people continue to be denied the civic,

economic and political rights which were the foundation upon which the liberation war was waged.

ZANU-PF and its historical relation with rural life

It is imperative to understand the relationship between ZANU-PF and rural people in order to know why it is important for ZANU-PF to use the rural space for its consolidation of power and political support. The events and incidents of the liberation struggle are still vivid in the minds of the people of Musana area in Bindura South. In their everyday lives people continue to engage with the landscapes of the liberation war violence, invoking the war memories among the elderly who witnessed it. It is important also to understand in this instance incidents in which people talk openly about the liberation struggle because of its link to ZANU-PF.

In this regard I describe an incident that happened at Mudotwe Bridge, because it invoked people's memories of the liberation war in a public space, and I use it as a way of interrogating what people talk about in terms of the liberation war. This shows how ZANU-PF has been using the history of the liberation struggle for its interests. On a late afternoon in July 2012, I walked jovially with a few friends from the shopping centre to our homes. We were discussing the UEFA Euro 2012 results and possible outcomes at the end of the tournament. I had not had a chance to watch a single game of the tournament but I joined the discussion based on my prior knowledge of the players playing for most favourite teams. As we walked down the steep road we rushed to the side of the road to give way to a big haulage truck which passed us leaving dust wind which threw our hats into the road. We started discussing how dangerous it had become to drive at such speed from a lay bye at the primary school to the end of the village; a lot of things had been happening I learnt from others, cattle and goats were being hit by vehicles, some vehicles' wheels burst. It was

becoming a dangerous spot, most people in the group agreed. I remembered that the previous year a well-known village head who had worked as driver for the Zimbabwe broadcasting corporation ZBC was hit by a commuter omnibus as he was searching for cell phone network along that road, and the traditional authorities were contemplating holding a cleansing ceremony on the spot so that his 'blood' will not haunt the area. As I inquired I heard that the ceremony has not yet been conducted.

As we walked down the steep tarred highway which connects Harare and Shamva a small mining town we saw people streaming towards the bridge and sizeable number of people had already grouped by the roadside near the bridge. We thought that maybe there had been an accident so we ran so that we do not miss the details of what was happening. A Mercedes Benz ML had stopped overlooking the waters of Mudotwe Bridge, I remembered seeing the Benz passing us just minutes ago, so what had happened, there were no signs of emergency breaking or anything? The owner of the Benz was outside shaking his head in disbelief. When asked about what had happened he said he does not even know how he lost his way out of the road. In his account he noted: "All along I thought I was in the road I was driving, even were the car is I did not break it just stopped and when I got out I was surprised to see that I had missed the road and the car is overlooking the water." When people asked him to remove his car from the spot as it seemed dangerous he refused, fearing that he might go into the water the moment he started it. A Kombi driver had to go and remove it from the spot and the owner refused to drive and said, "Something like this had never happened in my life." He said he was going to call someone to come and drive for him and he would ask for a driver at work, saying he would never drive again.

People started saying that its evil spirits from his family which wanted him to die, he is being bewitched. People gave accounts of stories they had heard real and perceived of people who reported seeing ghosts on this bridge. One man in his early 30s said that he once

saw people around 1am when the car which had given him a ride from town dropped him at the business centre about two kilometres away and he decided to walk home. He said he saw two people and he rushed to catch up with them, and they disappeared into thin air, he left all his possessions and ran home only to collect them early in the morning. Some other people seconded his story saying they heard several people reporting stories of the same details. One old woman started to explain that those are the spirits of auxiliary forces popularly known as 'skuzas' who were killed by the comrades during the war when their military vehicle was ambushed. She said;

> *"Many skuzas died at that bridge during the war. Comrade Gore who commanded* the war in this area, ambushed the skuzas with landmines and the Rhodesian soldiers were no longer using this road to go to Mutoko up to the end of the war. That is why that bridge *is a dangerous spot a lot of blood was spilled on that spot".*

People agree that these spots of liberation war violence should be cleansed; arguing that such violence which contaminates the land should never be repeated again. The re-establishment of militia bases reminds people of such violence because there are many landscapes of past violence which haunts people. Creating other areas of violence and allowing people to die in these places opens wounds in people's lives, they use syllables of (munyama) bad luck, famine and disease as results of unnecessary violence and spilling of blood. In this instance people could openly talk about ZANU guerrilla achievements during the war, giving them a dominant place in their lives and in the history of the liberation struggle. But at the same time people find it difficult to talk about the post-colonial ZANU-PF election violence and liberation war guerrilla violence on ordinary people, because it is not permissible to talk about those incidents that gives ZANU-PF a bad image. Incidents in which guerrillas were killed are treated as a sad memory and as signs of sacrifice to the liberation of Zimbabwe.

Mr Murwira was a village head during the liberation war and took active part in mobilising resources for the guerrillas. He argued that the situation prevailing in Zimbabwe from 2000 was not very different from what was happening during the liberation war in the 1970s. In the 1970s he explained "there were mujibas (male collaborators) who spied for the guerrillas and people had to be careful about what they say about the war and the guerrillas." Since 2008 he argued of the same saying that people were spying against each other, so they are careful not to be on the wrong side, hence they glorify ZANU-PF. Schmidt (1997) argued that even during the liberation war people remained silent about guerrilla violence, because of the volatile context there were things which could not be said in front of the armed men. Kriger (1992) noted that in Mutoko, north-east of Zimbabwe people were even afraid to talk openly about the events of the liberation war. Kriger thus argues that the relationship between the guerrillas and the peasants was not rosy. She went on to assert that guerrillas lacked popular support during the war contrary to their claims. Robbins (1996) however argued that peasants' criticism of guerrilla violence did not imply lack of support of the nationalist struggle. In Bindura South, Mr Murwira highlighted that people were however disgruntled by the behaviour of the ZANU guerrilla fighters, especially toward material support. The guerrillas he argued, at times failed to recognise that people were poor and demanded things such as clothes and shoes. Failure to get those resulted in guerrillas punishing members of the liberation war committees in the villages. He argued that people criticised the way sell-outs were killed and the way people were forced to attend pungwes (night rallies) but people supported the war nevertheless, because they believed that a black government would bring political and economic empowerment.

At the heart of the success of the liberation struggle was the legitimacy the war was given by the people and history of prior resistance to colonial rule. Above 'making history' guerrilla fighters relied on history of settler conquest, the early rebellion of 1896 led by

spirit medium Ambuya Nehanda, to strengthen the legitimacy of the war. They sought support from local spirit mediums, and appealed to people's grievances all entangled in people's histories. Comrade Michael is a well known liberation war collaborator (mujiba) in the Mumurwi area ward 16 in Bindura South. I spoke to him in 2012 and he described how the guerrillas first arrived in the area:

> When the war started in the 1960s we just heard about it as a rumour. We thought that this rebellion will easily be crushed so we did not take it seriously. But news of the increase in revolt grew, we turned on to radio Maputo from where ZANU-PF broadcasted to listen to the progress of the war, but I never thought the war would come to our area. One evening the village bell rang and we rushed out not knowing what was happening. We were gathered outside the this big Musasa tree and men *with guns and military like uniforms emerged and chanted, "Pamberi nerusununguko", we all kept quiet, who were these men? Then they introduced themselves as, "Magandanga" as the White government calle*d them. Their leader told us that they had come to do what no one dared to think could be done, to take *back our country from the 'people without knees' (the whites). They were here to* make history and we going to be part of it. (Interview with Michael, a war collaborator)

This is an account of the beginning of what was to become a painful and unforgettable era in the history of the people of Musana Communal area and Zimbabwe in general, the coming of the guerrilla war of independence. The guerrillas had come to live with the people, they were the 'fish and the people were the water,' this was the liberation war motto. The 'fish and water' relationship was important during the war, and ZANU-PF continues to view rural people as the 'water' that enables them to survive politically. This shows that there has been an interesting relationship between the rural space and ZANU-PF politics in Zimbabwe. ZANU-PF politicians count their victory or that it is only possible with votes from the village and this is a site where their power is located. There is still a strong relationship between respective people and supporting political candidates. ZANU-PF used the 'fish and water' slogan in their campaign rallies to persuade people that they are still committed to fulfil the promises of the liberation war.

In 1890, white settlers known as the Pioneer Column, recruited by Cecil John Rhodes and promised gold claims and 3,000acres each, raised up the Union Jack on Salisbury's Harare Hill claiming 'possession" of Mashonaland in the name of Queen Victoria (Moore 2005). Seventy three years later, seven guerrillas launched what is famously known as the 'Chinhoyi battle' outside Sinoia town, in Mashonaland West province to mark the beginning of the war of independence against the white settlers. During the Fifteen year long war, two liberation war movements and armies operated from two fronts. Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) led by Robert Mugabe and its military wing Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) operated from Mozambique and Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) led by Joshua Nkomo and its military wing Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) operated from Zambia and Botswana. After a ceasefire and a British engineered Lancaster House Constitution in 1979 the war ended and in February 1980 Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF won a landslide victory in the first democratic elections and got the mandate to rule the country, then known as Rhodesia, renamed Zimbabwe at independence. At midnight on 18 April 1980, Lieutenant General Amothy Chingombe raised the new Zimbabwe National flag at Rufaro stadium in the Capital Harare, proclaiming majority rule and independence of Zimbabwe from white settlers.

Guerrillas' ability to organise proved decisive and crucial to ZANU-PF's election victory in 1980 (Cliffe et al 1980, Kriger 1992). The grassroots organisational structures which were so crucial to ZANU-PF's victory were a product of the period of the liberation struggle in rural areas (Caute 1983). The ZANU guerrillas managed to mobilise the rural masses to support the war because they had shared political demand which was grounded on the recovery of lost lands and improvement of rural agriculture and other popular appeals to the peasants' grievances (Ranger 1985, Kriger 1992). The guerrilla-peasant relationship was crucial for ZANU-PF and the liberation movement more generally because the rural people

gave their logistical and moral support to the guerrillas. What was also crucial in this context above creating support structures was ZANU guerrillas' ability to make new claims to legitimacy about the war and their presence in the area (Brickhill 1995). The ZANU guerrillas had to justify why they were waging an armed struggle, and why the rural people had to support them. Manungo (1991) argued that the peasants then saw the guerrillas not as strangers but as their children who had come to remove a colonial regime from power with the gun. The guerrillas became vana vevhu (sons of the soil) because they were fighting to return the land to the blacks.

The ability to make powerful claims to legitimacy across many provinces in the country legitimized ZANU-PF rule in 1980 ahead of other political parties. ZANU-PF's mobilisation of history as a political form to claim political legitimacy started in the 1970s during the liberation struggle. ZANU guerrillas forged relationships with spirit mediums during the war, the spirit mediums' role in the war was to lend legitimacy to the guerrillas and the war and also assisted in the recruitment of young men and women into ZANLA (Lan 1985, Manungo 1991, Tungamirai 1995). During the 1970s histories of the 1890s rebellion against colonialism, known as the first chimurenga led by spirit medium Ambuya Nehanda, fed readily into the cultural nationalism and was used to mobilise people for the armed nationalist struggle known as the second chimurenga (Ranger 1985, Lan 1985). Rural Zimbabweans understood spirit mediums to be historically significant because of the first chimurenga and this created conditions for political mobilisation during the 1970s.

Twenty years after Lieutenant General Chingombe ran up the Zimbabwe flag, quoted by Moore (2005:1) speaking on the independence anniversary in Harare, Robert Mugabe decried the "'nominal sovereignty' of flags, anthems, and a black president." After the controversial 'land reform' programme, an economic crisis, and a serious challenge by a strong opposition, the Movement for Democratic Chance (MDC) and an election in 2008

which ZANU-PF lost a majority in parliament and trailed the MDC in the presidential ballot, ZANU-PF turned to the history of the liberation war to claim that they are the only party with the credentials to rule Zimbabwe. Robert Mugabe during the 2008 Presidential election run-off campaign in Shamva district in Mashonaland Central province, warned that, "the gun will lead the ballot" and if ZANU-PF loses the election they will "go back to the 'trenches' and fight to get back the country" arguing that the MDC is "a puppet of our erstwhile colonisers being used to reverse the gains of the struggle and the land reform." (ZBC-TV NEWS, APRIL 2008). Mugabe has reiterated in one of the famous speeches which is repeatedly played on ZBC-TV and radio stations, that,

> Tisu chete ZANLA ne ZIPRA takaunza rusununguko nekuzvitonga muno muZimbabwe. (It is only us ZANLA and ZIPRA who brought independence and majority rule in Zimbabwe). We are the ones who brought democracy and majority rule.

With such rhetoric ZANU-PF located assertions of political legitimacy by articulating liberation war histories to political claims. They grounded their political consolidation to memories of leading a protracted war of liberation against colonial rule in the 1970s. Claims they have been using more successfully from the 1980s to the late 1990s when new narratives about the liberation war began to emerge. In 2012 a local village head Nhengu explained sitting under a tree "ZANU-PF epitomized symbolic resistance to colonial rule in Zimbabwe. The guerrillas had come and lived with us and inculcated within us the spirit of the revolution. At independence we were all ZANU-PF, we even said, kana Nkomo urayai *henyu"* (You can kill Nkomo we don't care). He explained the politics of the early 1980s and divisions between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU, which led to the Gukurahundi massacres in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. His statement shows how ZANU-PF role in the liberation struggle was more celebrated and other nationalist parties like ZAPU were sent out of history. For years after independence ZANU-PF had thrived partly successfully on

mobilising historical claims, as the 'main party' to have liberated the country and still used the narrative that they are the only party that can serve the political and economic interests of Zimbabweans. These claims had been partly successful because there had not been a strong opposition to ZANU-PF and the economy was still in good shape. Headman Nhengu argued that since independence "the only history we have known has been the history of ZANU-PF, in schools children are taught the liberation war history of ZANU-PF, from 1980 but less is told of the other nationalist parties like ZAPU, for most part we did not care about it."

In 2008 in Bindura South during campaign rallies 'comrades' or war veterans appealed to people's memories of the liberation struggle to give credence to ZANU-PF liberation narrative while demeaning the opposition MDC. They conjured war memories in the mountains (mumakomo), sacred caves (muninga), and in the rivers (munzizi) in the land (nyika) of (Chief) Musana, they urged people not to betray the ancestors of this land who protected them, and the many comrades who died in those places, some of whom were never identified, by voting for "people who ran away from the war" (referring to MDC president Morgan Tsvangirai). Through such statements War Veterans entangled people in an inalienable assemblage of landscape, spirit mediums and the dead comrades. Articulations of the landscapes of the liberation struggle became important to ZANU-PF's campaign and modes of creating 'patriotic history,' a history that aims to consolidate and legitimise ZANU-PF's hold on power in Zimbabwe.

Invoking the history-scapes of the liberation struggle

ZANU-PF's search for loyalty and political support has seen the former liberation organisation inculcating 'patriotic history' into the young recruited army officers. In 2012 I held an informal interview with a young Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) soldier who

narrated what happened on their recruit training trip to Chimoio mass grave in Mozambique were the remains of unknown liberation war fighters and civilian refugees where interred in a mass grave. The trip was part of the ZNA's history lectures that are part of their training programme, "to give them evidence that what they are taught is not fictional but a reality." In 1977 the Rhodesian army attacked Chimoio refugee camp in Mozambique and killed over a thousand mostly unarmed young men and women, including children, women and the elderly (Mtisi et al 2009). Most of the young men and women who were at the Chimoio camp had not been trained as guerrillas by that time. Chimoio has been used by ZANU-PF as evidence of Rhodesia government brutality and as a sign of sacrifice by Zimbabwean people who decided to go out and support the war. For Matereke (2011) the horrors suffered by the victims of the Chimoio massacre have been used as a rhetorical weapon by ZANU-PF to show the brutalities of the colonial regime and discredit the MDC which is accused of being bankrolled by white commercial farmers who were in the Rhodesian government.

The Chimoio trip was part of the ZNA's basic army training and the commanders told them that, "the trenches which we teach you to dig, are used in real warfare, we saw trenches in Chimoio and our instructors told us that these trenches were dug while bullets were firing. We were supposed to sleep in those trenches that were dug during the liberation war by the veterans some of whom died in those trenches." He narrated an incident that happened when they arrived at the site, when one of the army recruits was unexpectedly possessed by the spirit of a dead comrade who died in the trench that he was occupying and he went into a spiritual trance:

> He started speaking in the voice of the deceased comrade whom nobody among us knew. We were scared to hold him so that he could not hurt himself. He had unbelievable strength he could throw away the whole platoon with just one swerve, the spirit of the dead who spoke through him asked about the whereabouts of the comrades he travelled with narrating his journey from home, the roads they used, the villages they passed, the rivers and streams they crossed, caves and mountains

> they hid from the enemy, until the time that he died. He demanded that he wanted to go and be laid to rest home, this is not ho*me" he said, I want to go home*. He went to the mass grave were hundreds of comrades and refugees were buried he mourned them by throwing himself on the ground violently, Most of us were scared and we realised the reality of the liberation war. It is real.

The instructors took the recruit soldier who they had with them back to Mutare army base at 3 Brigade and they located the family of the deceased and they took the remains from the trench for reburial. The instructors said after the incident that, "we want to leave with more comrades, so you should all get possessed. I now understand why President Mugabe is refusing to let people who do not respect the sacrifice of the liberation struggle rule the country." By reviving memories of the liberation struggle in the population especially in the youth ZANU-PF wanted them to see that they are not isolated, and being used, or that the Third Chimurenga is not a political gimmick meant to consolidate their hold on power but that what they were doing is not just violence and racism against white farmers but they were participating in human drama. They were continuing with the struggle started by the heroes of the First Chimurenga of the 1890s, and the Second Chimurenga of the 1960s.

Given the impact the Chimoio experience had on this young military man, perhaps, there is a sense in which ZANU PF continues to use liberation war narratives that are skewed in its favour, to make the liberation war a source of emotion and national identity. 'Patriotic history' is in part about creating a history of the liberation war that is exclusively ZANU-PF which they can then return to and re-create in the future, evoking people's memories deliberately. These narratives keep the memory of former conflicts and past violence alive in stories, either by glorifying one's own group achievements and benefits or by the perceived injustices, losses or suffering incurred by one's own (Malkki 1995). This type of social memory has been easily capitalized upon by ZANU-PF elites and elaborated into hegemonic ideology of violence in Zimbabwe, and a continued attempt by the Mugabe regime to proliferate what is called 'patriotic history' (Ranger 2004). 'Patriotic history' is

"intended to assert the continuity of the Zimbabwean revolutionary tradition. It is an attempt to reach out to 'youth' over the heads of their parents and teachers, all of whom are said to have forgotten or betrayed revolutionary values, and the revolutionary spirit would skip a generation," (Ranger 2004:1). 'Patriotic history' is disseminated through television, in the state-controlled press; in youth militia camps; in the education system, in speeches by politicians and war veterans during campaign rallies. This 'patriotic history' according to Tendi (2008) put the MDC on the defensive and weakened the claims of the white settlers who were now viewed as having stolen the land they now farmed and glorified ZANU-PF leadership and war veterans as heroes for the struggle of poor people.

According to Mamdani (2009) there was a link between liberation war politics and post-independence politics in Zimbabwe and in this regard popular ideology and politics played a crucial role in the consolidation of ZANU-PF rule in the post- 2000. ZANU-PF's political rhetoric on race, black economic empowerment and radical exclusive 'black nationalism,' continued to resonate with many Zimbabweans who recognized the unfair balance of the ownership of land (Muzondidya 2010). ZANU-PF's land reform measures, "however harsh, also won them considerable moral and political support, not just in Zimbabwe, but throughout southern Africa and other parts of the developing world where questions of race and continued inequalities exist" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni et al 2011:16). ZANU-PF's consolidation of power thus lay in a combination of unresolved historical grievances and undemocratic postcolonial practices that reproduced authoritarian politics, nativism and racialised discourse. ZANU-PF mobilized the liberation war rhetoric of decolonization, anti-imperialism, black economic emancipation and mass justice and entangled them in its politics of domination, regime survival, violence and patronage (Hammar and Raftopoulous 2003).

The Failure of History to maintain ZANU-PF political hegemony

Even though ZANU-PF was successful for more than a decade after independence to mobilize history in order to consolidate its hold on power, these narratives have been put to strong contestation by people in Bindura South. Am MDC ward executive member argued that in the 1970s when guerrillas came the people believed that they were saviors, who had come to fight for their land with a gun. He said they did not know that ZANU-PF was "devil on the cross" as the post 2000 developments have shown. He asserted that the ZANU-PF elites and war veterans use the history of the liberation war to justify their corrupt actions, while they abandon the principles of equality and justice upon which the liberation war was waged. The massive support given to the MDC seen through the MDC's victory in the March 2008 elections in the constituency was proof that the ZANU-PF narrative that they are the only liberators and champions of economic empowerment in Zimbabwe was easily slipping away. In the March 2008 harmonized elections in Bindura South MDC won most ward council seats in local government as well as Member of Parliament and the MDC presidential candidate Morgan Tsvangirai won most votes ahead of ZANU-PF's Robert Mugabe. People began to view the MDC as their new liberators instead of ZANU-PF. People became more concerned with bread and butter issues more than sovereignty which is at the core of ZANU-PF's political articulations (Worby 2003). In 2008 just after the March elections people circulated a rather fictitious story that there were trucks of food waiting in South Africa to enter the country as soon as the MDC wins the elections and take over government. This shows people's weariness with ZANU-PF historical rhetoric of the liberation struggle and sovereignty while they failed to solve pertinent issues of poverty and disease in the country.

People further contested the use of the liberation history when it comes to distribution of economic resources. During the land distribution and employment opportunities in the

defence forces priority is given to the 'War Veterans' and their dependents at the expense of everyone else. Headman Nhengu lamented these unfair practices and argued that "everyone in Zimbabwe is a war veteran, we the rural masses were the water, they the guerrillas were the fish we are all part of the same river system, the fish cannot survive without the water." He explained the suffering they endured during the war "our homes were burnt down by the Smith army and we lived in the mountains, we lost almost everything we had for supporting the war of liberation but now it's like we never existed during the war, they put us last, but during the war they were saying pamberi neruzhinji rwe Zimbabwe (forward with the masses of Zimbabwe)." In this regard the MDC ward committee for ward 16 in Bindura South holds its own independence and Heroes day commemorations separately from ZANU-PF but on the same official days. They argue that ZANU-PF make those national days about them and not even about the ordinary rural people who collaborated with guerrillas during the war. So the MDC claim to represent the "forgotten masses." Werbner (1998) argues that in post-colonial Africa memory as public practice is increasingly in crisis and "Memory's contribution to the critique of power and to the very grounds of political subjectivity is ever more broadly contested" (Werbner 1998:2). This memory crisis according to Werbner (ibid) "is not merely over what is to be publicly remembered or forgotten but the challenge in everyday life, in major public occasions is to the very means and modes of remembrance," which in the instance of Zimbabwe excludes the population which participated in the war and glorifies only those guerrillas who fought with guns and does not recognize guerrilla terror on the people. Where the regime tries to bury the traces of tyranny, efforts are being made to register memory for future accountability through oral history.

At national level ZANU-PF's narrative of the liberation struggle was being contested on the basis of as Werbner (1998:98) puts it "contradictory appropriations, both in memory and in

memorial, of the land's human remains." This was a result of debates by other political parties and former liberation movements on the rewriting of the correct history of the liberation struggle, in a version that does not exclude other important actors in Zimbabwe's history especially during the liberation war. Werbner (1998) argues that "…nowhere else in the region has there been so much memory politics for the symbolic winning of sacred terrain, so much contesting of legitimacy as a sacred bond with the land" (p, 99). The history of the liberation war is central to Zimbabwe's political economic and social narrative (Peel and Ranger 1993).

Since independence in 1980 ZANU-PF has used the history of the liberation struggle to make claims of remaining in power. I have argued that ZANU-PF's mobilization of history has been partly successful because it ensured that they ruled the country without a credible opposition for more than 20 years. This history articulate people's sense of justice and revives memories that the liberation war was about correcting those colonial injustices and casts the MDC as trying to reverse whatever people had gained from the war. If ever an opposition party came into being it was questioned based on liberation war credentials. However faced with an ailing economy, poverty and dictatorship people in rural areas previously regarded as ZANU-PF strongholds like Bindura South began contesting ZANU-PF's claim that they are the only liberators of the Zimbabwean people and narratives that even question the relationship between ZANU guerrillas and the people during the liberation struggle began to emerge. ZANU-PF's dictatorship and controversial land and economic policies put the country in an economic crisis and the emergence of the MDC as a 'new liberator' from the economic crisis put ZANU-PF's liberation claims in serious contestation and doubt. After ZANU-PF lost its majority in parliament to the MDC in March 2008, it sought to consolidate its hold on power by resorting to other forms of mobilizing support such as their resort to the use of youth violence.

CHAPTER 2

Youth Violence

When the MDC was formed in 1999, it won most urban seats in parliament in the June 2000 general elections and managed to campaign for a NO vote in the February 2000 constitutional referendum. ZANU-PF realized that their reliance on the history of the liberation struggle to consolidate their hold on power was under serious threat. Makumbe (2009) argued that ZANU-PF then resorted to using violence to force people to vote for them during election periods. Machakanja (2010:7) argued that "the elections of 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008 were all conducted in a violent environment in which many people were killed or maimed, whilst perpetrators evaded justice." During the liberation struggle in the 1970s ZANU guerrillas mobilised history and at the same time resorted to coercive and violent means of mobilisation (Schmidt 1997). The use of youth violence by ZANU-PF after 2000 was a major reflection of liberation war guerrilla violence because ZANU-PF resorted to reincarnating militia bases similar in ideology to those of the liberation struggle. This violence played a dual role; first it fed into ZANU-PF's mobilisation of history because of its appeal to liberation war bases as a form of political mobilisation, secondly "it was a different way of transforming the social environment and staging an ideological message before a public audience" (Riches 1986:11). It reminded people of ZANU-PF's ability to use violence.

In Bindura South youth violence happened after the 2008 March harmonised election which ZANU-PF lost. ZANU-PF moved in to re-establish and consolidate power and control of the rural areas. One April afternoon the village heads' messengers went around the villages in the ward summoning people to a ZANU-PF rally at Rutope business Centre popularly known as Musiiwa growth point and everyone must attend. The rally was to be addressed by

ZANU-PF deputy national spokesperson and the then Provincial Governor for Mashonaland Central Province Ephraim Masawi. It was not unusual for the governor to address a rally in the ward. He was no stranger to most people. He sometimes would come for a drink at a local hotel at the business centre, and had addressed many campaign rallies before the elections. But this time people wondered what he had come to tell them since the result for the Presidential poll had not yet been announced and there was a lot of confusion about the poll results. Bindura South Constituency in particular and Mashonaland Central Province in general had been a ZANU-PF 'stronghold' and no single parliamentary seat had been lost to the MDC since 2000. It was in the harmonised polls that two constituencies in the Province were won by the MDC including Bindura South.

The following morning scores of people, including those known to be MDC supporters made their way to the business centre anxious about what the governor would say to them. In his speech at the rally in April 2008, which I attended, the governor did not waste time or mince his words. He told the people straight that he was disappointed by the way they had betrayed the "Party and the struggle" (kutengesa musangano). He announced that a presidential election run-off election was imminent and warned that this should be the last time that people vote for the MDC as they had done in March harmonised elections. In his speech he likened ZANU-PF to a dog with a bone on its mouth and if one tries to take the bone from the dog's mouth the dog will attack the person. Likewise ZANU-PF would directly attack and cut off the hand which tries to take the bone from their mouth. That is what will happen if MDC try to take away the power that ZANU-PF had, to rule this country. He warned people who voted for the MDC repent and go back to ZANU-PF otherwise there would be consequences. He told the people that this was his last warning to them to do the right thing, that is to vote for ZANU-PF or they will see that the gun is mightier that the pen.

After the governor a young lady in an army uniform took the floor and blamed the youths for voting for the MDC arguing that the youths were buying into the empty promises given by the MDC when the MDC has not done any single thing for them. She encouraged the youths to take advantage of ZANU-PF's empowerment and indigenisation policies and programmes to economically better their lives and not wait for some people to come and give them food aid for free, at the expense of their independence. She described the MDC as puppets of the West who are selling the country to the whites, and she asserted that it was duty of the youths to defend the country's hard won independence. She told the youth to work hard on the land and also to join the army, police and work for the country and earn a living other than waiting for someone to come and give them free aid, arguing that there is nothing for free, its aid for freedom. They will take away your freedom. She told youths to organise themselves and apply for funds for projects from the government and to improve their lives.

The rally signalled the beginning of the June 27 2008 Presidential election run-off in Bindura South constituency. It was succeeded by ZANU-PF branch organisational meetings and 'witch-hunt' rallies in which perceived MDC supporters were identified and beaten in public if they did not voluntarily surrender MDC membership cards and t-shirts which they had. Youths were organised and a base was created from which they would operate from. The campaign slogan for ZANU-PF for the run-off elections was:

> June 27!
>
> VaMugabe muoffice, (Mr Mugabe in the Office)
>
> VaMugabe mu Office
>
> June 27

The 2008 presidential election run-off campaign for ZANU-PF was centred and organised around the youth militia bases which resembled those of the 1970s liberation struggle.

The 2008 Base as a remnant of the liberation struggle

After the loss in the 2000 referendum and parliamentary elections, as part of 'going back to the trenches' and appeal to the history of the liberation bases for legitimacy and support ZANU-PF re-established the bases in most rural areas in Zimbabwe as an election mobilising technique. However in 2008 rather than the bases being used as places where torture was carried out or physical injury inflicted, as has been the case in the past, the bases in 2008 were primarily used as a ZANU-PF form of political mobilisation. They were assembly points where perpetrators of violence, especially the youth and their commanders planned and co-ordinated operations. These bases in 2008 were situated at business centres in rural areas, at community halls and in the bushes just close to the business centres. Youths would organise firewood they would cook food and operate from these bases for the duration of the campaign. The bases were headed by youth leaders from the wards who would report to and take orders from district ZANU-PF officials, the army and war veterans on the activities of the youths at the bases. In most instances youths were on standby to get orders from leaders, but at times would organise rallies on their own.

Onias was born in 1981, one year after Zimbabwe's independence. He had a wife and a daughter, lived as a small scale communal farmer at his parents' homestead in June 2012 when I spoke to him about his participation at the militia bases of 2008. Onias argued that in 2008 he and many other youths had to go to the bases because the situation had turned out to be volatile and they had to save themselves from the consequences. ZANU-PF was on a violent campaign to beat up those who did not attend political rallies and the youths who did not go to the base. As a result some youths fled the villages and went to towns. He argued that the main activities of the youths at the bases were to patrol the villages at night especially and to co-ordinate rallies during the day. These bases worked in an associated relationship with the positioning of other instruments of power both formal and informal

especially local government structures which were subverted by ZANU-PF in order to establish or maintain party political control. Traditional leaders used their powers to convene village and ward meetings, to facilitate the agreed activities, which were then implemented by ZANU-PF Youth Militia. At the bases the youths were taught military drills "marching" and they would sing songs most times. ZANU-PF war veterans and officials intimidated most youths to go to the bases and commit violence against their families and neighbours. Most of the songs were glorifying President Mugabe and degrading Morgan Tsvangirai the MDC president, the songs included those composed during the liberation war, and others composed for the Third Chimurenga, affirming that they would not sell out the country. One of the songs had the following lyrics.

> Hatitengese nyika nekuda kwesugar, Mama Elizabeth Zimbabwe yakauya neropa haitengeswe, inotoenda neropa (We will not sell the country in exchange for sugar Queen Elizabeth, Zimbabwe was born out of blood. And with blood it will go)

ZANU-PF used youth violence to create political legitimacy in a polarised environment. Legitimacy in this sense is not only about how people or the government is democratically voted into power, but issues of legitimacy go beyond those legal definitions. Instead people and the youth militia can use the language of legitimacy to create and maintain social hierarchies in a political space, for example in the above song; the addressee is Queen Elizabeth because she represents the British Empire which colonised Zimbabwe in the 1880s. That is the language of 'nativism' and legitimacy, used by the youth and ZANU-PF creating what Bourdieu (1991) calls "symbolic power and domination" where the dominated accepts the power of the dominator in a social matrix in everyday life.

Onias argued that youth patrols in 2008 were done to protect the parents and the councillors and to look for MDC supporters. They were protecting parents because the leaders thought that the MDC activists and their supporters might want to revenge the violence that ZANU-

PF had inflicted on them. The other reason for youths' patrols in 2008 was to prevent the MDC from organising and campaigning for the June 27 elections. Another reason that came out for modelling the bases along the lines of those of the liberation struggle was that the MDC opposition party attracts both male and female youth. Since these young people did not participate in the liberation movement, many have difficulty appreciating what their elders fought for (Lindgren 2003), they had to 'experience' what their elders experienced in the war, as a way of attaching them to the war of liberation, so that they can have an appreciation of what the struggle was about.

These youth activities in 2008 were not new, they could have been incorporated from the liberation struggle. During the liberation struggle in the 1970s, Lan (1985) noted that the guerrillas and the "unmarried boys and girls" who supported and worked alongside them developed a striking relationship. These young boys and girls were 'ZANLA youth' mujibas and their work was looking after all people who were members of the party. The work of the girls was to wash and sew the clothes of the comrades; the boys' work was to guard the camps when the comrades had to sleep. All of them used to inform the comrades of who would support them in villages, who they could trust and who would sell them out. The significance of incorporating liberation war aspects in the youth militia activities in 2008 and beyond was to make them feel important at some point. To make the youth feel that they were taking part in an important historical process that began with the heroes of the 1886 first chimurenga and the 1970s second chimurenga in Zimbabwe's history.

The youth ordered curfews, no one was supposed to be walking around after 8pm, bars and shops were forced to close early, anyone who was seen walking after this time would be questioned and sometimes beaten or asked to join the youths at their base until the following day. Food provision at the base another Youth Cde L told me was mainly done by ZANU-PF officials, the late Minister without portfolio in the president's office and ZANU-PF's

national political commissar Cde Elliot Manyika bought them an ox and other food items and Cde Matangira the ZANU-PF District Co-ordinating Committee Chairperson (DCC) provided them with trucks to carry them to other wards in the district for purposes of beating up MDC supporters especially those who refused to 'repent' to ZANU-PF. According to Cde L, three hundred youths were taken to Nyava area to beat up people. Kriger (1992) and Schmidt (1997)'s work on liberation war violence by guerrillas enlightens us to the role of the youths during the war, the role ZANU-PF sought to duplicate in 2008. They have pointed out that the young male and female guerrilla messengers, mujibas and chimbwidos, frequently were responsible for reporting, beating, and even killing alleged sell-outs and that they often abused their position. Kriger interprets the young people's abuse of power as an expression of generational struggles. According to Schmidt (1997) guerrillas actually encouraged civilians who accused others of being sell-outs to punish them themselves; they gave them guns to kill, since they themselves did not have evidence of the person being a sell-out.

Onias told me of how they operated from the bases, "We started beating up people at Chindotwe Primary and Rutope Secondary schools," four kilometres away from where they were based, "our leaders ordered us to beat everyone we met, especially teachers because they are enemies. Teachers ran for their lives, as we beat them." This concurs with Le Bas' (2006) observation that the effects of party polarisation were most severe for those living in rural areas where teachers, ethnic minorities and others suspected of opposition sympathies experienced violence and intimidation, and where party affiliation was not chosen it was imposed. The then provincial Governor Cde Masawi, according to Onias also told the youths to go to his ward in Mupandira where most people voted for the MDC, and they were told to beat everyone else except for his grandmother. They also carried out Operation Chinyavada (Scorpion) at night, beating MDC supporters who did not want to give up their

support. During this operation youths would just knock at the door, when one opens they "would beat them silently all you would hear were slapping, "kwa, kwa, kwa." Then would say in a whisper, "tomorrow if people ask, you should say you were beaten by spirits of darkness (zvehusiku)" said Onias who also gave me a sample of the songs which they used to sing which denigrated Tsvangirai.

> Tsvangirai agarira razor, akachekwa kuti che, che, che magaro…(Tsvangirai has sat on a razor blade he has been sliced on the buttocks)

Another one was as follows:

> Bonga nekiti zvakasangana zvikazvara Morgan, dhongi chairo…(A wild cat and a domestic cat mate and reproduce Morgan (Tsvangirai)- a real donkey)

One of the slogans of the youth when they were beating someone was that there was no negotiation some people would have wanted to reason with them when they face the reality of being beaten. The youth had a slogan which says, "chokwadi cha Comrade chirikumagaro kana pamubhadha" (The Comrade's truth lies at beating your buttocks or on the beating sticks) meaning they can only be assured that one would change their ways if they are beaten up and really feel the pain. This slogan was used by the ZANU guerrillas as part of their internal discipline in training camps outside the country (Chikozho-Mazarire 2011).

Apart from targeting villagers in the area the youth manned roadblocks along the Harare-Shamva road, here they stopped most vehicles, but mostly public transport operators checking for overcharging on fares and asking passengers for ZANU-PF party membership cards, if one did not have the membership card they would be forced off the commuter omnibus and made to chant the June 27 ZANU-PF slogan, if one fails to do it properly they would be beaten up, for it was a sign that they belonged to the MDC. The rational was "no one is apolitical; if you cannot chant a ZANU-PF slogan then you can chant the MDC one,"

said Cde L. The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) whose mandate is to man roadblocks did not do anything because they had instruction not to interfere with the youths' activities but to assist them in their activities (Chitiyo 2009).

The ZANU-PF War Veterans and soldiers moved around with guns and in government vehicles, mobilising people during the 2008 presidential election run-off campaign, especially Mitsubishi single cab trucks allegedly acquired by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe for the purpose of campaigning for Mugabe. To prove that the guns were real they fired shots in the air. Across the Province's border into Mashonaland East Province there were rumours which were 'confirmed' by many people who were present at a rally that a young man was shot by one of the war veterans after he told them that they were only giving empty threats their guns were not loaded. In anger it is said that the war veteran fired at him and the bullet hit one of his testicles, however he managed to escape to a nearby road where he was taken to Harare for treatment. The young man was the brother to an MDC losing candidate for the position of local councillor in one of the wards in Goromonzi District, Mashonaland East Province, which shares the border with Bindura District, Mashonaland Central.

At the rallies which were frequently held the youth militia and ZANU-PF War veterans used people regarded as bona fide ZANU-PF supporters to identify perceived or known MDC supporters among the people. People would call out names of the people they saw wearing MDC regalia, or attending MDC rallies or openly announced their support for the MDC. If one was identified they would be asked to denounce their MDC membership, most people out of fear denied that they ever supported the MDC or that they own any MDC regalia. So these people were asked to line-up giving their backs to the public and one of the leaders would silently stand behind each person as a sign to the people that they should show by raising their hands quietly if the person was ever involved with the MDC, and if less than

three people would raise hands for someone they would give the person the benefit of the doubt and would not blacklist them. But it was not the case in all wards in other wards one hand was good enough to confirm one as an MDC supporter. Those nominated as MDC supporters were called 'sell-outs' and they had to 'repent' to ZANU-PF.

The use of demeaning language of 'sell-outs,' stooges and puppets was not new, but can be traced from the history of the liberation struggle. Sachikonye (2011:9) argues that political violence has survived for the past 50 years in Zimbabwe's history because "it has been a major instrument of ascendancy to power as well as a barricade against contenders for that power." In order to legitimise political violence against the rural people during the liberation struggle, and in post-independence Zimbabwe, ZANU-PF as a guerrilla movement and as a government developed a supportive ideology, embedded in a version of nationalism in which new forms of belonging and rights began to be defined producing what was characterised as ethnic nationalism (Sachikonye 2011, Hammer and Raftopolous2003). This form of nationalism categorised anyone who supported ZANU-PF and its policies as patriotic and a 'true Zimbabwean' and those who opposed ZANU-PF and its policies as 'sell-outs' and 'imperialist stooge,' and in 2008 this ideology was used to 'justify' ZANU-PF violence against MDC supporters. Sachikonye (2011) and Werbner (1998) have posited that ZANU-PF as the government in post-independent Zimbabwe has provided its subjects with their primary form of belonging with nationalism constituting an ethic of heroic sacrifice that justified violence in the defence of one's nation against enemies. In this instance violence becomes "formative" (Feldman,1991), it shapes people's perceptions of who they are and what they are fighting for across space and time, in this instance people fight for their 'nation against re-colonisation, it is a continual dynamic that forges as well as affects identities (Feldman 1991).

At the height of the 2008 run-off campaign the youth interfered with business activities demanding that shops stop overpricing and hoarding of basic commodities, they demanded to see the warehouses in order to prevent hoarding. If there was evidence of overpricing and hoarding of basic commodities they would call the people nearby and sell those commodities themselves at prices they deemed necessary and affordable to the people. It was a period in which political power and government authority was transferred to the youth and the youth ran the show. During that period the villagers reported that crimes went down or were non-existent, cattle hustlers went underground because the youth were always patrolling the villages, or maybe according to some, these youths were the cattle hustlers.

Even in 2012 four years after the 2008 election run-off violence, ZANU-PF youth used the language and events of 2008 to prove their ability to inflict violence. At a branch meeting held in 2012, the youth organising secretary told the people, Garai makagadzirira ngarava yabooka, (the boat has been gored). That was just after the District Co-ordinating Committees (DCCs) which administered ZANU-PF district operations were dissolved by the party's president Robert Mugabe for conflict of interest. Here the youth had to safeguard the interest of those who had lost their jobs in the DCC most of whom had been campaigning to become ZANU-PF MPs in various constituencies. At the rallies one has to be conversant with the ZANU-PF party slogans and raising the clenched fist in the air, which the young people who claim to be devoted Rastafarians call sando (hammer), because the clenched fist looks similar to the head of the hammer. So the ZANU-PF youth say people must give Mugabe sando dzake (his hammers) which means his greetings through clenched fists, most young people greet each other not through shaking hands but by hitting clenched fists against each other. If one does not give Mugabe sando dzake, they the youth would give that person sando dzamudhara (the old man's hammers) which literary transfers into heavy beatings with clenched fists. This shows that one of the aims of the establishment

of bases by ZANU-PF in 2008 was to remind people of their potential to violence and to legitimize that violence.

C. Wright Mills cited by Arendt Hannah (1970:35) argues that "All politics is a struggle for power; the ultimate kind of power is violence." Weber defined the state as "the rule of men over men based on the means of legitimate that is allegedly legitimate violence." Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power, argued Arendt (1970) is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. When we say, "Somebody is 'in power' we actually refer to his being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name" (Arendt 1970:44).

Power needs no justification, argues Arendt (1970), because it is intrinsic in the very existence of political communities; what is does need is legitimacy. Powers springs up when people get together and act in concert, but derives its legitimacy from the initial getting together rather than from any action that then may follow. When peasants and ZANLA guerrillas came together under common grievances to fight against colonial domination, peasants gave legitimacy to ZANU to lead the war and the nation afterwards. Legitimacy, when challenged, bases itself on an appeal to the past, while justification relates to an end that lies in the future (Arendt 1970). Thus for ZANU-PF when the past failed to consolidate legitimacy, violence became a redemptive option (Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Muzondidya 2011). Violence can be justifiable but it never will be legitimate and as Arendt (ibid) argues, the apparatus of violence, are designed and used for the purpose of multiplying natural strength until, in the last stage of their development, they can substitute for it. Power and violence are opposites where the one rules absolutely the other is absent. Violence appears when power is in jeopardy, but left to its own course it ends in power disappearance, as highlighted by the case of Zimbabwe in which after eight years of consolidating power

through violence, ZANU-PF ceded to a power sharing agreement with the MDC after losing the majority in parliament in 2008.

Politically motivated violence has been pervasive in the post-independence history of Zimbabwe, backdating as early as 1982, two years into independence where clashes between former ZIPRA combatants and government forces took place in Midlands and Matabeleland regions. The government deployed Fifth brigade soldiers to quell the disturbances in an operation code named Gukurahundi (Eppel, 2004; Muzondidya and Ndhlovu-Gathseni, 2007) during which more than 20 000 people most of them civilians were brutally killed by the soldiers for 'supporting' the dissidents. The unity accord was eventually signed between PF ZAPU and ZANU-PF on 22 December 1987, which signaled the end to the Gukurahundi (Chiwewe 1989, Eppel, 2009, Machakanja (2010). This violence was used by ZANU-PF as a way of consolidating power and destroying PF-ZAPU which was a formidable opposition party with the same liberation war history and credentials as ZANU-PF.

Although there were many similar aspects of the liberation war violence and ideologies incorporated in the most recent violence in 2008, the violence of 2008 happened in a completely different social, economic, political and historical context. Allowing former liberation war guerrillas and the army to take over ZANU-PF's campaign resulted in recourse to terror and the recruitment or coercion of youth. They both coarsened and misused guerrilla traditions from the liberation war. ZANU's strategy has been to mobilize support in rural areas during the liberation war and the post 2000 elections. Illegitimate violence survived as one of the legacies of the liberation war. Brickhill (1995) argues that "Complicity in silence allowed Rhodesian terror and guerrilla terror to meet in darkness and mate" producing Gukurahundi violence as a legacy of liberation war in 1983 and in this case the post 2000 election violence.

The establishment of the bases in 2008 and using youth violence as a mobilising technique by ZANU-PF and its allies brings attention to the question of how the management of life, what Foucault (1990[1979]) called 'biopolitics', and Agamben (1998) calls 'bare life' become central to projects of governance. During the period of 2000 and 2008 Zimbabwe has been in a continuous state of emergence with Mugabe ruling by decree through the Presidential Powers Temporary Measures Act which he used to make decisions without the consent of parliament (Moore, 2005). This moment in Zimbabwe's history was "mostly identified under a state of exception or emergence, when the law and the rights it theoretically protects, are suspended. It is precisely at these moments, as Mugabe has made clear time and again, that sovereignty is revealed to be less about who is included in the protections afforded by citizenship, and more about who decides who is included, and who is excluded, from the protective (or violent) embrace of the law. Sovereignty is about who decides who lives and who dies" (Worby 2003:59).

Studies by Lingren (2003), Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2009), Chitiyo (2009), Matereke (2011) among many others have portrayed the youth involvement in violence in binary opposition. They have argued that those who participated in the bases of 2008 and those who received training at the National Youth Training Service centres (NYS) have an unquestionable loyalty to ZANU-PF and the military Junta. However things are more complex on the ground.

I argue that the youth who perpetrated the violence of 2008 were as vulnerable as those they were beating up; as Le Bas (2006) noted where political will was not chosen it was imposed. The people in the rural areas suffered from the same economic problems suffered by everyone in the country and probably most of them could have been eager for change in government more than imagined. However since political violence gave the youth power over their elders there are some youth who used this form of empowerment during and after

the run-off elections to create power for themselves as shall be discussed in the next chapters.

CHAPTER 3

The politics of distribution

Since this is ethnography about the history of ZANU-PF political mobilisation techniques in a rural setting this chapter looks at economic mobilisation. The argument in this chapter is that economic crisis experienced in Zimbabwe has produced a particular technique, that is political mobilisation instrumentalises economic goods. There is a relationship between political mobilisation and the instrumentalisation of economic goods and that relationship is a circle. Conceptually I draw on what is going on in that circle or relationship through what I term the politics of distribution. Empirical evidence from my ethnographic data shows that economic crisis produces politics, that is political mobilisation by ZANU-PF in particular instrumentalises economic activity and goods. Distribution becomes an important way of conceptualising this political action. In this regard I seek to frame how it is that there is a politics of distribution, as a way of explaining how economic crisis produced political activity and how political activity instrumentalises economic goods. In the Grundrisse, Marx (1973) tries to lay out what he understands to be the relationship between distribution, exchange and consumption. What Marx lays out is that these are all operating as part of the single social system. They are not different processes of capitalism; unlike economic explanations-there is a relationship between distribution and production.

From boom to decline

The colonial period presented little opportunities in terms of social mobility, economic empowerment and political representation for the majority of black people in Rhodesia. The situation was further worsened by the land apportionment act of 1930 and he Land Husbandry Acts of 1951 which divide the land on racial grounds (Mlambo 2009, Moore 2005). This legislation saw blacks being pushed to native reserves located in dry and sandy

areas as a way of reducing their agricultural yields to force them to work in mines, and white owned farms. Whites retained huge tracts of fertile lands, for commercial purposes. Social and economic inequalities were visible in education through a bottle neck system which gave education opportunities to a few blacks. People's shared economic and political ideologies at that time in history, included resentment of forced labour on farms, mines and in the industry and better working conditions in those sectors (Ranger 1985). This led to political activism through the formation of the ANC and the youth league. People believed that the economy was in the hands of politics.

The liberation war appealed to people's sense of economic empowerment and freedom. There were higher expectations of boom in the economic opportunities after independence by many people. After independence in 1980 the new government inherited these social and economic inequalities. The post-colonial government took a socialist stance and sought to improve the conditions of black people through social service provision, expansion in education and health services and introducing black empowerment initiatives (Muzondidya 2009). Agricultural production and marketing opportunities for blacks improved. Life expectancy also improved as health and service provision improved in rural areas. But the socialist state was constantly in debt and could not sustain the welfarism, the state was also under pressure from the IMF and the WB to remove subsidies on social services which it eventually did and embraced the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which had devastating consequences for the people who lost government support and jobs due to retrenchment and unemployment rose sharply during the period beginning 1989 (Mlambo 1995). The Zimbabwean currency was devalued and basic food commodities and social services became expensive for most poor people.

As a way of protesting against these conditions especially the rise in food prices workers and ordinary citizens led by the ZCTU staged 'food riots' in 1997 and 1998. These riots

buttressed by mass stay-aways called for by the labour movement further paralysed an already ailing economy. The government's decision to send Zimbabwean army to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) campaign in 1998 further put stress on the economy. This compounded by mass land invasions in 2000 and industry invasions led by ZANU-PF trade union ZFTU scared away investors and forced other companies to relocate to other countries in the SADC region. Persistent droughts and unstable food production led company closures led to critical food shortages in the country and Zimbabwe moved from being the bread basket of Southern Africa to being a starving nation, such that by 2012 large number of the populations relied on food aid from NGOs.

The period between 2006 and 2008 was characterised by a massive economic decline with higher levels of inflation and food shortages on the formal market. It is during this time that ZANU-PF as a party started instrumentalising the economy for political mileage, through a plethora of interventions to 'assist' needy rural people. The party through structures of government such as the Reserve Bank acquired and distributed basic food stuffs and agricultural inputs in rural areas. The basic commodities were distributed under an intervention called Basic Commodities Supply Scheme (BACCOSSI), Operation Maguta (abundance), where the state directly distributed the food so that they are seen in the public eye as 'concerned' with the plight of the poor citizens. This actually could have worked in favour of ZANU-PF because it allowed them to use access to food as a political tool to 'persuade' people to vote for them in the elections and to discredit the opposition by accusing the MDC of working with manufacturers and retailers to make 'things' disappear from the shelf in order to influence the vote in elections. The involvement of the army in the management of these programmes was part of the militarisation of state institutions by ZANU-PF. Retired senior army officers were appointed to head most of the country's parastatals (Chitiyo 2009). The presence in uniform of top army officials in rural areas

leading the distribution of various agricultural inputs could be part of the way ZANU-PF tried to influence people's memories of the liberation struggle, that they are a people's army just like the ZANLA guerrillas called themselves during the war. The sense could have been that they were implicitly sending across a message which told the people that you helped us during the war by offering logistical and moral support, now we will help you by providing you with agricultural inputs.

Politics, power and consumption

Schatzberg (1993) argues that "power and politics in African society often has more to do with consumption than with transformation or the ability to get someone to do something." Power and politics concern the capacity to consume or the ability 'to eat,' as expressed both literally and figuratively in many indigenous languages (Schatzberg 1993). Cohen and Atieno-Odhiambo note that in Siaya a rural village in Kenya, "food is pre-eminently about power; and discussion among the folk of Siaya about scarcity…diet and food colour are in very fundamental sense about the distribution of power and the rights in the wider society" (Cohen and Atieno-Odhiambo 1989:131). In Bindura South the 2008 harmonised elections were about food, as shown in the statement however fictitious that went around that there are truckloads of food at the borders of the country waiting to deliver food as soon as MDC wins the election. Addressing an Independence Day celebration gathering at Gwanzura stadium in Harare on 18 April 2008, Robert Mugabe called the March elections 'a protest vote' implying people were protesting against the deteriorating economic conditions in the country. The MDC's victory in the area can thus be seen in the sense that people were willing to give political power to a party that would give them the ability to 'eat.'

Schatzberg (1993) also draws on the imageries and metaphors of the cultural figure of the 'father' in African politics to understand the conditions under which citizens gives political

legitimacy to political power. African leaders have been given the role of political fathers by their people based on the cultural logic that as heads of state and governments they would provide material needs and protection to all citizens. These fatherly titles have been epitomised in songs and praise poetry. In Zimbabwe president Robert Mugabe has praised as the father of the nation in songs like:

> VaMugabe ndibaba, tavaona nahasi ndibaba vedu (Mr Mugabe is the father; we have seen him today he is our father).

Drawing from this conception of cultural fatherhood Schatzberg (ibid) has thus argued that:

> The imagery and language of father in the family are widespread in Africa because they strike a resonant and a deeply embedded cultural cord. They form part of a culturally valid and largely implicit comprehension of the limits of political legitimacy based on a complex and largely unarticulated moral matrix of legitimate governance derived from an idealised vision of patterns of authority and behaviour within the family (Schatzberg 1993:451).

In this image of the father and the cultural morality it is based on, there is an implicit promise of nurture and paternal care. Fathers in Africa are "providers, nourishers, protectors and people expect fathers to fulfil these roles." The father 'feeds' and 'marries' and is culturally entitled to 'eat' part of the children's labour or the product of their labour. In exchange the children receive protection, care, and security" (Claude Meillassoux 1981, 1973, cited in Schatzberg 1993:452). The problem in Africa is that the 'political fathers' have failed to provide the material well being of their 'children' (Schatzberg ibid). What is implicit in this is that if a father fails to provide he will lose his legitimacy. In the Zimbabwean case the desire or the ability of the political fathers to care for their political children was and had receded dramatically by 2008.

I spoke to Mr. Ticha who is a retired school teacher and one of the oldest people I know in the ward 16 area of Mumurwi in Bindura South. He became a teacher in 1956 and even

taught my father at a local primary school. He described colonial and post colonial period as follows:

> *It's disheartening to see how things have turned worse after independence. Growing* up under colonial rule we experienced oppression, the education system was bottle neck, blacks were taught basic education to allow them to understand instructions on white farms, mines and in industry. Most people went to school up to grade even; secondary schools enrolled a few blacks then. With Junior Certificate (grade nine) one would be very educated you could become a school teacher. Ordinary and Advanced level were out of our scope. If one manages to go to the University blacks could only enrol for a Bachelor of Arts (B.A). Otherwise for other professions like law, medicine, engineering you had to go outside the country to African states which had gained independence. There were a few black businessmen and everything was segregative. We lived like slaves. So independence was supposed to end this and bring a new era in which we could prosper, and enjoy what we called the national cake. Of course this happened in the first decade after independence, but Economic Structural Adjustment Programme adopted by the government robbed that from us before we could fully realise the benefits. After 2000 things began getting worse and by 2008 education had become useless and there was no work, companies closed down, people resigned. Things were so difficult you know it.

Given such expectations I discuss this chapter through what Kauffman (2002) termed the "Loss of the Assumptive World"; to understand the political and economic dilemma that villagers of Bindura South faced not only in 2008 but as they ponder their voting rights and their future. Kauffman (2002:2) defines the assumptive world as, "believed worlds, worlds intended and constituted by believing." In this research I would suggest that the post colonial state can be seen as a "believed world," a world where abundance and freedom would thrive. The everyday life experiences and challenges of poverty and scarcity can be viewed as a "shattering experience" for people. Kauffman (2002) argues that, what are shattered in trauma are beliefs, our basic truth and our external world. Similarly Oleyede writing about Biafra state in Nigeria (2009:4) notes that "when assumptive worlds are shattered, this shattering, a trauma in itself continues to surface in critical moment." In Zimbabwe what has been shattered are the material conditions of life and with it beliefs of access to a future and hope. It follows that the disruption of the world of beliefs, what has

been intended to, is hard to conceive, putting one's sense of identity at risk (Kauffman, 2002).

When the country plundered into crisis under the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in the early 1990s (Mlambo 1995) and late 1990s economic and political crisis, people lost the 'Zimbabwe' they fought for and this led to the people's disillusionment with the ZANU-PF party they had so dearly supported during the liberation war. Loss of the assumptive world as a theory helps in understanding the shifting meaning of people's relationship with the former guerrilla party (ZANU-PF) in the post 2000 era. Oleyede (2009:5) asserts that, "this concept addresses a past unsettled; one that political discourse of the present brings alive in the collective and individual memory." In the discourse, Oleyede (ibid) writes "is the reminder of things unsettled, the collection which is an excursion into meaning reconstruction in the context of a perceived marginalization." Following this argument I argue that the economic determinism of the liberation war promises and expectations and the failure for their materialization in the post colonial state has led to people's shifting support from ZANU-PF to the MDC as evidenced by the February 2008 election results in Bindura South. In this regard ZANU-PF has on the other hand tried to use the economy through distribution of basic commodities to communities as a way of appeasing those who have supported them and as a way of mobilizing those who had lost confidence in them.

Above political violence, the economic crisis deepened with unprecedented levels of hyperinflation, unemployment and as many as two out three adults were estimated to be infected with the virus that causes AIDS (Worby 2003). Most people either deserted their jobs or resigned because no one could earn a salary, one young man told me that it was useless to go to work because a month's salary was worthy about 30 South African Rand on the black market. Most young men either crossed the border to South Africa or made the

'great trek' to Marange diamond fields in Manicaland province to become 'magweja' (panners). In Bindura South most youths went to the nearby gold panning area, called Makiremu near Shamva town. Hanke (2008) notes Zimbabwe was in the stages of a classic hyperinflation and people were refusing to accept it. Jones (2010a) described the Zimbabwe economy as 'getting by'. Jones (2010b) notes that by February 2009 immediately before the Zimbabwean dollar was replaced by the $US, an egg cost two trillion Zimbabwean dollars and the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe had printed a single hundred trillion note. Most people told me that the coming of the multi-currency regime made things stable but the problem is that there are no jobs and it was difficult for people to 'kiya-kiya' because the dollar is scarce. Faced with such a compound economic situation, people in many areas including those well known as ZANU-PF 'strongholds' like Bindura South started to shift their allegiance to the MDC in the hope that a change in government could change their fortunes.

People's imaginations of an independent Zimbabwe that would be democratic offering political and economic freedom they were not afforded in the colonial era never materialized because of the economic and political crisis discussed above and this caused disillusionment and shifting political allegiance. Sekuru VaKuda a man in his late 50s a civil servant told me about how during colonialism jobs were easy to find. He said, "One could leave for the city and easily find a job in the industry and it was easy to change jobs, even though the working conditions for blacks were deplorable." He told me that he should have retired from his job in government five years ago but had to plead with "bosses" to continue working because, if he had retired then he was going home with "nothing" since the money had become "useless paper." By November 2008 Hanke (2008) pronounced the Zimbabwe dollar as dead with an annual hyperinflation index rate at close to ninety sextillion percent and there were virtually no non-cash transactions taking place and the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange had stopped trading. Mbuya va Kuda his wife told me of how in 2008 she had to

go to the farms kilometers away to batter clay pots in exchange for wheat which she then pounded into mealie- meal to cook thick porridge (sadza) for her family. Inflation, getting by, job desertion shows that the social world is set up in such a way that since the people have to mediate their activities through money and money is useless, their activity become worthless. No matter what they do it doesn't produce any future. Devaluation of money devalues people's activities. It follows that the economy is sucking the life out of activity. In order to understand how this politics of distribution came about we need to understand the characteristics of a money economy. Money according to Simmel, has the ability to extend and diversify human interdependence while excluding everything personal and specific (1978[1900]:297-303). Money generates within the individual dissident feelings of self-sufficiency and alienation, powerlessness and personal freedom (Simmel 1978[1900]:307-311). It implies that the value of money and access to resources had a huge bearing on the political and economic choices people made in Bindura South.

A number of studies on people's imaginations in the colonial period in Zimbabwe suggests that the people both in rural and urban colonial Zimbabwe came to long for lavish materialistic lifestyles they were constantly subjected to by radio and television advertisements which were associated with whites, as well as community programmes on hygiene and health by the government and missionaries (Burke 1992, Barnes 1999, Schmidt, 1992, Marechera 1978). Racial segregation in all forms of lives made people believe that if they supported the liberation war they would then achieve the independence to become anything they dream to be. During the colonial period and the liberation war people's assumptions of an independent Zimbabwe were built around these beliefs and the need of a higher lifestyle associated with white people and a better future for their children. The colonial system did not offer the majority of people opportunities to convert the present into the future, the education and economic systems were bottle neck, they allowed a few

people to succeed, for many they had to be content with being farm, factory and mine workers or peasants who worked for 'living' wages and could not invest into the future. For most people post-colonial Zimbabwe was supposed to be a vibrant working society, with opportunities for everyone to convert the present into the future.

The 2008 June 27 presidential run-off election campaign theme for ZANU-PF was **"100% EMPOWERMENT, TOTAL INDEPENDENCE,"** emphasising the importance of economically empowering the majority of Zimbabweans, through as they put it ownership of natural resources like land, minerals, and small and large businesses. Economic empowerment has been at the centre of ZANU-PF campaign messages and the land reform programme. But the empowerment call does however not benefit everyone equally because of lack of planning and corruption by high ranking ZANU-PF government officials who serve themselves first. It is known that for one to have a bite of the national cake one has to belong to or have ZANU-PF connections. Mr. 'Chamisa' an MDC ward committee member has been at the center of mobilising support for the MDC in the area since 2007. I spoke to him in August 2012 at a bottle store at Rutope business centre. He refuted ZANU-PF's claims of empowering people, and argued that what was happening with distribution of material is political mobilisation. He said, "Empowerment and independence is for ZANU-PF supporters and officials, the majority of us have to step on each other's toes or eat the crumbs of their bread. This is just a statement but looking at them there is nothing most of these overenthusiastic supporters get its only that they want 'free' things." This statement and events on the ground shows that ZANU-PF empowered its own, many interventions were implemented in the name of 'public interest' but they ended up as ZANU-PF's mobilising electoral politics (Anand 2011).

During my research, I have observed that the most powerful tool ZANU-PF has used to divide people and to assert their dominance is appealing to people's economic needs. Since

the country plunged into an economic crisis in the early 2000s, ZANU-PF through the government implemented many programmes meant to 'assist' people to access basic needs. In 2008 most basic food commodities 'disappeared' from the shops and found their way onto the 'black market" where they were sold at high unaffordable prices and people's incomes were eroded by inflation to the extent that a month's salary could buy a 2kg packet of sugar on the black market.

In the PoliTechnics of Water Supply in Mumbai Anand (2011) argued that Indian politicians used scarce resources to assert their authority and positions in society through exclusion of some residents as outsiders. I argue that due to economic crisis in Zimbabwe and shortages in food supply and farming implements, local government authorities used the politics of inclusion and exclusion based on political affiliation in distributing these resources. The facilitation of access to resources for some is complemented by the denial of access to others who qualify to benefit from the resource. Traditional leaders were asked by Government officials (District Administrators) to compile lists of those considered to be in need of food aid, frequently resulting in the exclusion of perceived MDC supporters according to a survey published by Sokwanele (2008) on the 2008 militia bases across the country. Similarly the ZANU-PF's involvement in the distribution of vouchers for subsidized agricultural inputs was also open to partisanship and abuse. Denial of access to resources, food aid and subsidies was done to force an individual into giving up his or her allegiance to MDC. In this way pressure as discussed by Anand in Mumbai, was used in Zimbabwe to pressure people to mobilise their votes and support ZANU-PF although in this case it is difficult for citizens to use the same pressure on authorities to access these resources.

One of the programmes launched by the government through the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe in 2006 was Operation Maguta/Inala a programme meant to assist people to

access agricultural inputs such as fertilisers, seed, and pesticides to enhance household subsistence. In Bindura South even though most people were able to access these inputs, people complained about the corruption of ZANU-PF officials, including Government Ministers who took these inputs under the pretence that they would distribute them to their constituencies only to stock them in warehouses and use them for their personal benefits. A village head secretary I spoke to put it in this way:

> In our area we used to get so little, instead of receiving a 20kgs bag of maize seed per household, four households would share that 20kgs bag, meaning a household would end up getting 5kgs. Minister G, went and collected five truckloads of fertiliser from the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) meant for the people and stored them in his warehouse. When the ward committee team went to the GMB to collect the inputs they were told that the minister had already collected most of it and they only returned with a handful of bags not enough for everyone. This causes problems on distribution, there was favouritism and corruption and people turned against each other. Lists are redrawn and preference is given to ZANU-PF ward leadership, they gave each other bags of fertilisers and seed and the remainder was shared among the people. People started accusing others of being MDC supporters so that *they don't get the inputs. Minister G started to ask people to come an*d work on his farm and they will be paid a 50kg bag of fertiliser a week. This is painful when you know that this fertiliser was meant for the people for free. It was painful to see that *the Top dressing fertiliser melted in the minister's warehouse sheds,* this is cruelty and most of the problems we are facing they caused them because they are the government.

Operation Maguta was followed by the farm mechanisation programme in 2007 and 2008 in which rural people were given cattle drawn carts and ploughs. The idea was to make farming easier for rural communities since for most people these assets were way beyond their reach and for those who had them they were old and depleted. Most people relied on 'zero tillage' as they could not afford to buy or to hire draught power from those who had them, because it was expensive. People argued that they were told that every village would get scotch carts and ploughs and these would be shared by everyone especially those who did not have under the supervision of the village heads. These were supposed to be given to the village heads who would manage them on behalf of the village. A closer look at the

events showed that this was not the case, village heads selected other few people close to him or well known ZANU-PF activist in his village, their close allies and ZANU-PF ward and district leadership to get these farming asserts. Those who got them personalised them, even the village heads did not share them with anyone. I spoke to Netsai, a woman in her mid-thirties, from one of the villages during a ZANU-PF rally as we waited for the arrival of the district officials who addressed the gathering. I asked her why they did not go and ask the village heads to share with them as they had been told. Her response portrayed the fear that people have, and why confrontation is not an option, she said:

> Who would dare do that, we know how we live here, there are some things you should not talk about, once you are left out you are left out, we pretended we did not know that we were supposed to share. It is their time to eat let them enjoy, for us we will use our hands to work, free things are dangerous, and you can be killed.

Many people in Bindura referred to doing mabasa emaoko (using their hands to work) operating informal businesses, which include selling vegetable produce to nearby towns or at the business centre. Jones (2010) notes that this is an ethic of working which has been promoted by a variety of churches and government programmes for nearly a century, and "it was quickly adjusted to new times, if only out of necessity." The buzz word to describe this kind of work in Bindura South as in the rest of the country is being "indigenous" meaning someone who is independent. Young men also become gold panners in farms or abandoned gold mines as way of making a living away from ZANU-PF politicking. There are many young men who are engaged in small scale commercial agriculture on small pieces of land. They farm tomatoes, and different kinds of vegetable for sale in Harare or Shamva town. Thomas, a 35 year old man built himself a homestead, a beautiful one, by rural standards through selling his garden produce. This is all he has done in his life and he argues that he does not need aid to survive, while he can work on the land. By doing this they free themselves from being ZANU-PF militia or relying on receiving hand-outs in return for

being ZANU-PF spies and engaging in violence against their kin. The relationship between ZANU-PF and people in the rural areas is not only that of complicity but it is often contested silently. Those who do not do this whom I speak about below have argued that the market is flooded by vegetables and people rarely make profit, except for those like Thomas who has secured a market after being in the business for a long time. But most young men periodically go for gold panning to make quick money although they argued that it is a risky job, since abandoned mines are dangerous to enter. Many households have survived on income from these kinds of informal trades, rather than on handouts from government or NGOs.

In 2008 the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe implemented the Basic Commodities Supply Scheme Initiative, popularly known as BACOSSI when basic food stuffs were in short supply in the country. The shortages were due to inflation and company closures as they were incapacitated to operate. Through the programme each household would get a food basket consisting of cooking oil, salt, rice, sugar, laundry soap, baking flour among other small grocers. Reserve Bank teams went around the country selling these commodities at the lowest prices one can imagine, most of the food was 80% cheaper than the black market prices, and they were not in shops. However there were reports of corruption by government officials, they either diverted the food stuffs to their shops or they removed some of the food stuffs from the food basket entitled to a household. Some people I spoke to told me that they ended up getting a 'food basket' with coarse salt, candles, matches and a small bottle of cooking oil, and when they reached them not everyone could buy the food stuff because they were inadequate but they had send lists of households to the district offices. Again party affiliation was the basis for access to the food basket, it became obvious that known ZANU-PF supporters would benefit ahead of others such had become the life in rural Bindura South.

The seed distributed to the villagers by the village heads were also used to remind people that only those who are recognised as ZANU-PF supporters are the ones who will receive agricultural inputs, because MDC supporters do not attend ZANU-PF meetings and if they do will not be on the party village register. In the area whenever "mbeu" (seed) is mentioned it is associated with at least 10 kilograms of maize seed which people so desperately need and it has skyrocketed beyond the affordability of many people's incomes. The colonial agricultural reforms of the 1940s led by the then director of native agriculture from 1944-1950 E D Alvord, which included Alvord bringing in "Hickory King" hybrid maize from the United States a higher yielding variety than the one introduced by the Portuguese two centuries before (Moore 2005:80-82). Alvord's interventions argued Moore (2005:82) "helped establish maize as a staple food and cash crop and advocated the extensive cultivation of cotton and groundnuts for European markets." Thus maize and other small grains became an important part of most of Zimbabwe's source of livelihood, both for consumption and for the market. When people in Bindura South talk about hunger and famine they do not refer to "lack of bread or sugar" as Mbuya va Kuda stated in an interview. She told me that by hunger they mean the inability to produce especially for their family consumption enough maize stocks. "if we have sadza (thick porridge made from maize) then we do not have any problem, we don't care much about tea or bread we rarely eat bread in the rural areas, we can even eat vegetables without cooking oil or eat sadza with salt, if we have our maize we are fine" she argued.

From the year 2000 access to maize seed and fertilisers on the market became a problem for most people even for those who had the money to buy, stocks ran out quickly, producing companies either operated below capacity or decided to close down, citing higher levels of inflation. This coupled with successive droughts made people vulnerable to hunger and starvation in Bindura South. So people flocked to receive or register for seed whenever an

opportunity to do so arose. ZANU-PF has been using access to agricultural inputs and resources to control the political will of the people and people were discouraged from receiving inputs from MDC sympathisers or organisations, because it was either labelled as GMOs and therefore not good for health, or that would serve as a sign that one is aligned to the MDC. By doing this they thus seed and cultivate relations with people, relations that are characterised by fear and domination of the ZANU elite in the district. Fear that is evident in the two elderly people who walked with aiding sticks mudonzo to the village gathering instead of having someone collect the 'seed' for them. "What will people think of me?" asked an old woman nearly 80 years of age. One of the old ladies told me that the village head's messenger came and said, "the seed has come directly from the chief so I should come in person to collect it, so I did not want to disrespect authority, but had I known that it was this!", she said as she looked at the small packet of seed shaking her head, "I would not have come."

Through manipulations of power, inputs are made available to people. Not only do these practices affect the way that people live but also affect a form of belonging to the village enabled by social and material claims made to agricultural inputs and technology. Produced in a field that is social and physical, this form of belonging is born out of diverse articulations between the technologies of politics (enabled by laws, politicians, and supporters) and politics of technology (enabled by seed, ploughs and carts). It depends on how the furrows of social relations through which everyday political claims are recognised, and the materials that enable villagers to connect to and receive inputs from the political system. As villagers constantly evaluate and respond to selective access of farming inputs these connections both elucidate and differentiate the ways in which people are able to claim and live in the village.

Political Technologies of Empowerment

Comrade Tito is in his late thirties, he is an active member of ZANU-PF at village and ward level and is a member of the primary school development committee. He was not successful with school he failed his Ordinary Level exams, so finding a job was difficult for him. He decided to stay at his rural home with his family and survive as a subsistence farmer. I visited him for a casual chat, his homestead like most if not all was a typical rural home composed of round grass thatched cooking hut and a two 'bed roomed' house which he had built himself because he could not afford to hire a professional builder and that was evident. It was constructed using bricks and mud not cement, he could not afford it either. As is customary we went to sit in his cooking hut because it was cold, men usually sit outside. His wife was cooking the daily staple of maize porridge (sadza) which her strong arms and quick strokes expertly brought beyond boil to a paste thick enough to eat with our fingers. One could tell by his household property, plastic buckets for storing water and old pots and plates, children wearing tattered clothes that life was a struggle for him like many of the people in rural areas.

When I first inquired about his well-being, he said "well things are tough but we are managing". I jokingly asked him how life could be tough to him since I had heard that he holds most of the positions from the ZANU-PF party ward structures, the village, and he is the treasurer in the primary school committee. In response, he said "Haah tirikutonga" (we are ruling), "I cannot complain." Here he was referring to the power he yielded as a political actor in the ward. Comrade Tito had always tried to navigate all pathways of power, from the village secretariat, to the messenger of the Headman (sadunhu), and at one time tried to influence his uncle to have their own village so that they can have access to the benefits of the state such as salaries and farming implements and ZANU-PF incentives, but with no success. He added that:

> Things could be easier if we just go to Bindura to have our own book (village). We will get all these benefits that other village heads are getting, on our own as a family. It is easier because as a family we can share among ourselves without having to beg vatorwa (strangers) to assist us. But my uncle refuses; he thinks we do not have enough households and grazing land to constitute a village. He has a point but we could try, we are Chieftainship household, local government would understand that. But if we cannot have our own village, we use politics to access inputs, because others are enjoying because of involvement in active politics.

In this case he turned to politics as a resort, because it gives him power, people generally become afraid of him because of political influence, especially during the politically uncertain times when people find it difficult to trust each other. The "enjoying" Comrade Tito spoke about referred to the former ward chairperson who was elected into the ZANU-PF District Co-ordinating Committee for Bindura as district administrator of the party, and rumours were that the party (ZANU-PF) had bought him a housing stand in Bindura town the provincial capital for Mashonaland Central Province, whispers at the time were that very soon "he will be driving". With such expectations sacrificing others for social, political and economic gains become the sign for recognition by the party structures.

ZANU-PF members have benefited immensely from developmental projects carried out in the area by NGOs and other people. The Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) a development NGO, implemented a programme on Conservation farming, water and sanitation funded by the European Union (EU) in the area. The programme encouraged all villages to establish community gardens which will be used as sites for teaching conservation farming methods. They provided the fencing, large tanks and pumps for those gardens the idea being that after the programme ends the community will continue using the garden and sell the produce and get income to enhance their livelihoods, as well as enhancing community fabric especially after violence. Most of the community gardens were established on the homesteads of ZANU-PF influential members in the wards, after the NGO handed over the projects to the community, the equipment remained as the sole

property of those people on whose land the gardens were established and the gardens ceased to operate as community gardens as people could not go and claim to use the garden that was on someone's land. People argued that these ZANU-PF members made themselves leaders of the projects at village level and imposed that the gardens be established on their land so that they could benefit from fencing, tanks and pumps. This no one could object to because they feared victimisation. Many people now see getting into active politics as a way of enhancing their economic and social status.

In 2011 a white farmer came to the area with a programme to educate and assist people to farm soya bean which he would then buy from them at harvest, he gave those who participated farming inputs needed and agricultural officers to educate people on every stage of development of the seed. However the participants had to find an area in which demonstrations are carried out and they would work on that demonstration plot until harvest, then at the end the owner of the plot would get 80% of the produce and the rest would share 20% from the demonstration plot. The ZANU-PF ward Chairperson's plot was chosen for the demonstration and people cited that they could not disagree with that decision because even the farmer himself feared that if ZANU-PF wanted his project to fail they could bar people from participating or alternatively sent him packing from the area, so he sought refuge in the ward chairperson's plot. The ward chairperson's wife then went on to win the agricultural showcase held for the whole ward, and people argued that how could she not win all prices on offer when they had "worked for her on the demo."

The instrumentalisation of the economy seems powerful; ZANU-PF seemed to be getting things done they are mobilising people, through economic patronage. In this sense the economic crisis is creating power for ZANU-PF at the time it was making activity and work worthless. ZANU-PF has had a rural bias in development since independence in which they sought to reward rural people for supporting them during the liberation war (Muzondidya

2009). During the economic crisis of 2000 the distribution of resources could have been a way of silencing people's criticism of their failure. It has been easier for ZANU-PF to distribute resources at local levels, than controlling the economy at national level because, they did not carter for people's every day needs, distribution was done periodically. It was a way of controlling people's political intentions and to make them anticipate for more. The language of economic freedom and empowerment which was being used by ZANU-PF and the ordinary people implies that the economy was a tool in the hands of politics, be it ZANU-PF, imperialism or local strongmen. The fact that ZANU-PF and MDC accusing each other of the economic crisis, shows that economic crisis is politics, it became a political tool used by political parties in their project of mobilising people to support them. ZANU-PF was instrumentalising the economy and the reason why no one else is able to instrumentalise it, could be that they have manipulated the system of distribution to suit and reward their followers, as in the case of partisan food distribution and public service employment. If for everyone the economy is under and people work the whole life and the pension is worthless paper, the economy is impersonal except for ZANU-PF, it is something they can use to create patronage.

Since it is also the economy that rendered ZANU-PF's claim on legitimacy tenuous, its employment as a political technique is significant to understanding the circumstances under which rural people come to make political choices in Bindura South. The choices they make are based on survival they are life choices. ZANU-PF through making themselves visible in rural areas and control people's lives, while pushing other political parties away had the leverage to use distribution to their advantage because no one else could counter their manipulations of the people.

CHAPTER 4

The Politics of visibility and subjection

One of the instruments used by ZANU-PF to control people's actions and the political landscape in Bindura South has been its strong visibility and also making visible of forms 'dissent' through strategies like spying in almost all areas from villages, wards, districts and the province. ZANU-PF used political technologies as well as state technologies that targeted "governing customs and mapped essentialised identities to political affiliation" (Moore 2005:197). They used the youths, army, war veterans and the Central Intelligence Organisation and local government structures to run their campaign. ZANU-PF War Veterans and army officers who co-ordinated the June 27 ZANU-PF campaign targeted relations between subjects, territory and their mutual relationships, targeting this assemblage oriented mobilising practices. Using the grassroots ZANU-PF structures to mobilise people to vote for Mugabe, they began with the local party branches composed of about four villages each in each ward. As this chapter will show, spying became an important tactic used by ZANU-PF to control people's political action. The youth and other ZANU-PF supporters were used as spies against their neighbours and relatives during a process in which political power transformed political action of those who were put under this surveillance. In Discipline and Punish Foucault explains the panopticon as a way in which power is applied in the form of a gaze.

> He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and knows it, assumes responsibility for the constrains of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles, he becomes the principle of his own subjection (1979 [1975]:202-3).

The gaze is a mechanism, "that acts as sorting device" and "those subjected to the gaze become subject to power" and "those who escape the gaze also, presumably, escape the

effects of power" (Agrawal 2005:165). It is however not the case, as Agrawal (2005) argues "that visibility in asymmetric political relationships necessarily produces subjects who make themselves in ways desired by the gaze of power." In this research I elaborate on the specific mechanisms implicated in the making of subjects that conduct themselves in a way desirable to ZANU-PF's political expectations and the ways in which specific individuals try to escape the gaze and other forms of political subjection. In this case it is not only individuals that are affected by the 'gaze,' political parties themselves are made visible and invisible in the same process. ZANU-PF as a political party becomes more visible in the rural areas and the MDC becomes invisible and this becomes crucial to the process of political practice in which subjects make themselves. In his discussions about different technologies that shape humans, Foucault argues, that there are "technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination [leading to] an objectivizing of the subject; and technologies of the self which permit individuals to effect…a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and ways of being, so as to transform themselves…" (1988:18). In an attempt to trace how subjects make themselves I was attentive to the specific institutional and political arrangements that shape practice and subjectivity over time and space. This was specifically evident in a number of ways during the funerals of both MDC and ZANU-PF ward members that I attended and I described at the beginning of this chapter, they show how people are affected by the ZANU-PF gaze and conduct themselves as such.

In June 2012 a ZANU-PF member who was born and spent most of her childhood in ward 16 in Bindura South died in Harare where she was living and earning a living. As is the norm in most cases families prefer that the dead be buried in their rural home. The deceased ZANU-PF member was not active in Bindura district but however lived in Harare where she was active. She was a member of the ZANU-PF Mbare youth popularly known as

Chipangano, known for terrorising people in Harare. The funeral procession was accompanied by a popular musical group called Mbare Chimurenga Choir, popular for composing pro-ZANU-PF jingles aired on Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) Television and radio stations. Most people in the rural area were not aware of the fact that the deceased was active in politics, she had been away for quite so long she came back sporadically, usually on weekends so most people did not know about her private or public life in Harare. But the popular choir's presence was a 'pleasant' surprise for many who had seen them on TV or heard their jingles on radio.

Just like any funeral people came from around the villages to mourn the loss of a member of society. People from the political divide MDC and ZANU-PF attended the funeral. As proceedings went on, people were caught by surprise to see the leader of the musical group shouting at and chasing away the ward councillor who is a member of the MDC from the funeral calling it a 'ZANU-PF funeral,' a statement which shocked many people. A funeral is generally treated as a moment of sorrow where everyone is allowed to give a send-off to the deceased regardless of any differences they previously had. In Shona there is a saying that, 'wafawanaka' (the dead is good), meaning they should be remembered for the good deeds not the bad. I later established that these 'witch hunts' by Harare based ZANU-PF youth activists were instigated by local ZANU-PF youths who used this occasion to show their disapproval of the presence of the MDC officials and supporters at the funeral. Most people at the funeral came wearing ZANU-PF shirts, T-shirts, bandanas, caps, wrap-over and dukes distributed during the election campaign periods. People could 'openly' talk about their 'support' for ZANU-PF and even make announcements about impending rallies and ZANU-PF organisational meetings.

The mood at the funeral shifted and became tense as people began to censor their own ways of speaking and acting lest they fall victim to verbal abuse by ZANU-PF members. Even the

graveside speeches were filled with political rhetoric. The visiting leader of the Mbare Chimurenga Choir warned people in her speech, she said:

> You people of Bindura South are sell-outs, next time we will deal with you. Do not fool yourselves by thinking that because there is an inclusive government, ZANU-PF does not have power. ZANU-PF is ruling the inclusive government so if you vote for the MDC puppets, you will suffer the *consequences*…

She burst into song and dance, singing a song VaMugabe Murimusoja (Mugabe you are a soldier). Some people sang along and joined the dancing, some who were not familiar with the song in probable fear of being left out, simply raised clenched fists, showing 'support' and solidarity for ZANU-PF and the song. After the funeral most people did not stay behind for the food except for close relatives and close neighbours. People attributed this to fear of being victimised. The village head for deceased's village, said most people felt like they were in bondage at the funeral, "we are used to our freedom, to say and do things our own way, but when you have to be commanded and insulted, you cannot wait to leave."

In July 2012 an MDC ward executive member died of stroke at a hospital in Harare, he had collapsed three days earlier at his rural home and was rushed to hospital where he passed away. He was one of the few men and women who had stood up to ZANU-PF rule in 2008, for which he had been brutally assaulted by the ZANU-PF youth militia during the run up to the presidential election run-off. The funeral drew a large number of people due to various reasons, including the MDC Mashonaland Central provincial executive members. In the company of relatives, friends some of whom were ZANU-PF activists we set out to the funeral. When we arrived at the deceased's homestead, we were met by three men who greeted us and we stood aside to chat with them. I did not know two of the men, but from the conversation I learnt that they were active members of ZANU-PF. I only knew the ZANU-PF ward Chairperson- Comrade Mangezvo. They were very much concerned that

since the MDC had total control of the funeral they might use it as a campaign platform. They were worried about this particularly because since the violent election run-off of June 2008, the MDC had been invisible in the ward, and ZANU-PF ward committee had an interest in maintaining that invisibility. The ZANU-PF ward Chairperson had decided not to attend a ZANU-PF district meeting in Nyava so that he could monitor the situation at the funeral. They were worried that this could turn out to be high profile anti-ZANU-PF rally and could give the MDC the platform to campaign. The presence of ZANU-PF officials at the MDC funeral and the fact that they were not chased away gave a contrasting picture to what happened at the funeral of a ZANU-PF activist described above, where MDC activists were openly chased away. This tells a story of uneven power relations and visibility between ZANU-PF and the MDC. It follows that ZANU-PF can be everywhere they wish without facing any barrier, whereas the MDC can be visible in social situations where ZANU-PF allows them to be in the area.

People showed solidarity and remorse for the bereaved family, and a loss to the society. Unlike the situation at the ZANU-PF funeral people did not come to this particular funeral wearing MDC regalia. The only MDC material present was the MDC logo on the trucks which came from the MDC provincial headquarters in Bindura town. But this did not take away the fact that the deceased was a politician, an MDC ward executive member, and that made a lot of difference. The presence of MDC vehicles and provincial executive members was highly noticed and drew murmurs from people, although people pretended not to notice. People including myself avoided talking about them, but we looked at them differently as if asking whether it is really true that these vehicles with an MDC logo were in this ward at this period and time. I could tell something was different from the way people looked at vehicles with the MDC symbol. And people didn't know what to expect, or what they would do, they waited for instruction and it was evident most people had come to see how the

MDC ward and provincial structures would handle the funeral. It had been a long time since the MDC had a public gathering so there were a lot of speculations about how this funeral would go. Drawing from the ZANU-PF activists' concerns about the funeral they expected this to be a platform where the MDC would be campaigning in different ways from songs to speeches.

We went in and gave our condolences and headed straight for the graveyard where other men were busy digging the grave. Moments later the deceased man's family 'play-relation' (Sahwira) announced that some men should go and collect some more stones for the burial. Some men heeded the call and left, after about 20 minutes they came back packed in an MDC labelled vehicle, to the surprise of most people. One of the men said, *'Ndavaudza kuti ngoro yenyu ichatirovesa iyi'*. (I told them that your vehicle means trouble we will be beaten). However people concurred that it's not a problem for those who were seen in the MDC truck because this was a funeral and people have to help each other, so there will not be any fuss about it. People in this instance would have preferred to have used a different vehicle without an MDC symbol, but the reason why the MDC provincial executive brought this truck was for the purpose of assisting during the funeral. Since only a few people have trucks in the area they might not have been willing to have them used at this funeral as this could have been interpreted as being sympathetic to the MDC. One of the men refused to be ferried from the funeral by the MDC truck, saying *"kwedu hatifambe nedzaka*dai idzi, *dzikakuya kwedu tinotandanisa"*. (In our area we don't accept these vehicles with MDC symbols; if they come we will chase them away). People seemed very uncomfortable with the MDC truck around them, people never said much about it in public except for a few whispers from those who had gone to carry the stones. One of them said *"ndatozoona kuti* zuvarabuda ndavakoka ikoko." (I saw that the sun had arisen [zuvarabuda] when I reached the vehicle) Zuvarabuda (sun rise) refers to the MDC open palm symbol, which resembles

the rising sun in the morning. These statements show that people were trying as much as possible to disassociate themselves from the MDC. Even though it was difficult to tell if most people were ZANU-PF supporters, this could have been strategic in the sense that people knew that they were being watched by the presence of ZANU-PF youth and ZANU-PF ward committee members. In their everyday political conversations people used euphemism to refer to the MDC, for instance, MDC is referred to as chinja (change). Due to the gaze people are subjected to they made it a point to avoid mentioning the name of MDC directly for fear of being misquoted.

Graveside eulogies were given by community leaders, and close family members of the deceased. The homage was paid at the homestead instead of the graveside, as soon as this was announced, one of the ZANU-PF members whom I had met at the funeral whispered to his colleagues whom I was sitting with, to go with him so that we can hear the speeches. The speeches which they targeted were those of MDC officials, especially the councillor and the provincial leaders. Most of the local leaders and relatives' speeches were about their personal relations with the deceased and there was no mention of his political involvement with the MDC. It was only when the MDC councillor for the ward took the stage that as expected most of his speech was aligned to the political side of the deceased's life. The Councillor did not start by chanting his party's slogan, as people expected. He began by singing a religious song, *"zvishoma nezvishoma zvishomanana"*(slow, slow and very slowly) surprisingly no one helped him in the singing, even the church members, people seemed not to know how to respond to him, people were uncomfortable, until one of the youths wearing an MDC T-shirt stood up to assist him. This did not however deter him from going on:

> The man who lies in state here was my close ally, we knew each other first from the Roman Catholic Church and there is a certain game which we used to play called

> *"chinja" (change; MDC slogan). This game makes some people who are here sad,* and even other big and powerful men in Harare are having nightmares because of this game. This man was brutally beaten in 2008 because of this game and sustained *injuries that I believe caused his death, "kafiramberi." I am surprised that all of the* speakers here did not talk about that brutal beating this man suffered.

Then he went into campaigning for the forthcoming elections expected to be held in the following year, 2013. This was probably the only chance that he got to campaign since the violence of 2008 has not allowed people to attend MDC rallies, so at a funeral no one will be accused of listening. He went on to say:

> What I am encouraging you to do fathers and mothers who are here is that you should finish off what you started, what this man was beaten for in 2008, the job (voting for MDC) that made me a councillor and you also voted for an MDC MP, now we need a Senator, you have already finished the job, so do not let anyone take *away what is in your hands, next year. If you let it go this man will ask you; "What was I beaten for?"*

He ended the speech by chanting the MDC slogan *"chinja maitiro"* and some men chanted with open palms. From where I was sitting I saw the ZANU-PF members looking all over for those who were chanting the MDC slogan, but most of the people remained silent and looked down. Looking down was a sign that people did not want to respond to the slogan or to send a wrong signal to ZANU-PF youth who could be watching that they are responding to the slogan. I remembered the previous day statement from the village head that *"nguva iye yakwana"* (that time has arrived). The time he referred to was election campaign time, where people were expected to carefully choose their political affiliation. The reminder was based on the violence of 2008 where those who defied ZANU-PF were dealt with violently. The atmosphere at the funeral was sombre; it resembled a European funeral and not a Shona funeral (Bourdillon 1982), people were unusually composed and there was little action except for loud mourning by women who would have arrived from time to time.

During a funeral among the Shona the 'Sahwira' (play-relation), and other relatives and friends imitate the deceased lifestyle (Bourdillon 1982) if the deceased was a football player

they would wear his football kit and make a plastic ball and play. I have witnessed funerals for deceased soldiers where sahwiras wear the deceased's military uniform and engage in mock 'battles.' This was 'allowed' regardless of the fact that it is an offence for civilians to wear military uniform under any circumstances. This is done as a celebration of his life and to lighten the hearts of the survivors. But at this funeral no one could imitate the life of the deceased because he was an MDC activist, could people act the beating he suffered from ZANU-PF militias in 2008 or chant MDC slogans? If they did would this be taken as a funeral and culturally acceptable behaviour or it would be interpreted politically and such people would be blacklisted by ZANU-PF youths and face possible victimisation? This would be interpreted as showing support for the MDC. "If you do that and claim that you were only doing a cultural practice, they will ask you where you saw those acts, it would mean you were attending MDC rallies, everything will be taken in a wrong way, no one wants that," said one of the Sahwiras I spoke to after the funeral. Theorists of silence such as Brockmeier, (2002) and Olick, (1998) argue that silence does not mean people are not aware of an issue but it can be conformity to power by subordinated groups whose ideology is not accepted. Power they argue, plays a role in what is remembered collectively or what is silenced.

It is important to understand the importance of the politicisation of funerals not only in Zimbabwe but around the world, especially under conditions of power struggles. Funerals become a space or a platform to mobilise people to support a political or a social cause. For instance the funerals of Malcom X and Martin Luther King Jnr as discussed by Manezhe (2007) became symbols of the struggle against racism and discrimination against blacks and the poor around the world. In Zimbabwe Kriger (1995) notes that ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo used the funeral of General Alfred Nikita Mangena as a platform to castigate the Mugabe led government for reneging from the promises of the liberation war and killing

innocent people through Gukurahundi. In apartheid South Africa in the mid 1980s the government declared states of emergencies and banned any form of gathering except in the church and at funerals (Manezhe 2007). In this regard funerals became vehicles used by liberation movements for championing the cause for freedom. Political funerals of any nature usually produce aggressive and militant speeches aimed at inciting rage and mutiny or persuade people to see the political situation differently. In most instances no comfort is offered to the bereaved family of the deceased nor would any of the speakers provide a message of reconciliation. Funerals are therefore an important site for political visibility and mobilisation in modern politics.

Manezhe (2007) argued that in South Africa victims of political violence are used as an investment for the struggle for liberation. He further asserted that the ANC and its alliance could have gained more support through people killed than by willing affiliation. Chris Hani's funeral provided an opportunity of the anti-apartheid movements to "focus on their struggle for freedom" by making crucial political demands to the South African government such as demanding free and fair elections within a few weeks. During Hani's funeral Nelson Mandela the then ANC president in 1992, attacked the apartheid South African government as 'illegitimate, unrepresentative, corrupt and unfit to govern" (Manezhe 2007:85).

The level of politicisation of funerals is a reflection of the political situation of the time. By taking over and arranging the funeral of their members both the MDC and ZANU-PF's aim was to mobilise and solicit the support of the people from all corners of the ward and district, and that in a way politicised the funerals. The fact that the MDC welcomed everyone at their member's funeral showed either their ability to peace and reconciliation or their relative powerlessness in the district and the inclusive government. They could also have used this opportunity to reach out to ZANU-PF supporters or to the 'neutrals'. ZANU-PF's handling of the funeral of their member by kicking away MDC members and

supporters showed the party's aggressive and militant nature and their unwillingness to reconcile. This could have been their way of showing ZANU-PF's ability to use violence and coercion as a mobilisation technique.

Opposition media censorship

After the burial of the MDC member Comrade Tito appeared holding an opposition newsletter printed and edited by Lawyers for Human rights, called the Legal Mirror, I could not immediately know why he had the paper, only later did I learn that he had 'confiscated' it from one young man who was an MDC youth activist. I use the term confiscation here because the paper was distributed secretly and Comrade Tito had to threaten the guy to give it to him. They were saying that "this young man is distributing these papers he does not know that if the 'boys' come he will be in trouble". By the 'boys' I later learnt that they were referring to the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) operatives who they also referred to as the "intelligence." Comrade Tito told me that the intelligence had instructed them to bring a copy of the paper as proof of the guy's activities with the MDC and its allies, when I separated with them they were planning to call the ward ZANU-PF chairman to inform him that they had managed to get the copy.

The Legal Mirror was one of the ways in which the opposition tried to maintain its presence and visibility in the area since the violent elections of 27 June 2008. Looking at the way one of the guys was reading the Mirror, I could tell that he was struggling to understand the legal language that told the stories used by the lawyers, definitely the lawyers were writing to a highly literate audience, which I don't think these guys and most of the people in the rural district belonged to. One of them did not even read it he just looked at it and said "This is what the MDC is now saying". What was in the mirror was not new to anyone who knows Zimbabwean politics. The heading screamed, "*How the army. Police, Attorney General's*

Office and prisons aided ZANU-*PF in 2008"*. Allegations which at this time are neither surprising nor 'revealing.' I realised that what was at stake was not what the Legal Mirror writes about, but the fact that it was being circulated in the ward. This shows attempts by local ZANU-PF structures to silence any alternative political views from the area. In order to make their gaze effective, ZANU-PF activists had an interest in controlling the space for information dissemination by ensuring that all information circulating in the area was exclusively pro-ZANU-PF.

ZANU-PF has been in a war against the media since 2000. They have closed down an independent newspaper the Daily News in 2003, refused to accredit foreign journalist to work in the country. They have attempted to shut down 'pirate' radio stations like the Voice of America's Studio 7 for Zimbabwe which operates from Washington D C. In 2003 the Standard newspaper editors and reporters were arrested and tortured for writing about an attempted military coup. In 2008 the ZANU-PF government mulled engaging in an Operation madish pasi which sought to remove satellite dishes from people's houses in the backdrop of reports about election violence on International news agencies. Richters et al (2010), discuses space in the form of popular culture, media, and public space. Popular culture is understood as "culture that is widely disseminated, and widely viewed or heard and read" (Davis 1992:1411) and that constitutes, "an important locus of public debate and of individual and community agency" with "important implications for the public spaces and social fabric and a society" (Dolby 2006:34). ZANU-PF violence and suppression plays a role in the construction and reconstruction of communities and audiences, and has implications for the concept of public space, inclusion and exclusion, what can be spoken and what not, what is kept secret and what made public.

Social situations like these two funerals are important in understanding social and political relations that exist in a particular society. These social situations are according to Gluckman

(1958:2), “a large part of the raw material of the anthropologist.” Gluckman further states that:

> All events that involve or affect human beings are socialised, from the falling of rain and earthquakes to birth and death, eating and defecation. If the mortuary ceremonies are performed for a man that man is socially dead; initiation makes a *youth socially a man, whatever his physical age… Where an event is studied as part* of the field of sociology, it is therefore convenient to speak of it as a social situation. A social situation is thus the behaviour on some occasion of members of a community as, analysed and compared with their behaviour on other occasions, so that the analysis reveals the underlying system of relationships between the social structure and community, the parts of social structure, the physical environment, and *the physiological life of the community’s members (1958:10).*

The fact that ZANU-PF and MDC loyalists could co-operate, and ‘unite’ at a funeral regardless of their differences shows that they form together a community with specific modes of behaviour to one another shaped by their culture. In shona there is proverb which says, Afirwa haatariswe kumeso “the bereaved is not left alone,” it is in this regard that the community come together to mourn the dead. It also shows that it is only their political opinions that differ but they remain the same community. However it would be possible to describe the different motives and interests which brought various people to the funeral. The MDC members definitely came to mourn and pay tribute to their member; it was the sense of loss that brought them together. For ZANU-PF members based on their side talks, stares and gazes, used the event to spy on members of the community who would show sympathy to the MDC, this could be seen through, chanting MDC slogans or wearing of MDC regalia. This was evident in the confiscation of the Legal Mirror from an MDC youth activist at the funeral. For ZANU-PF as reflected by the events at their member’s funeral the occasion becomes a platform for them to show people their power in the ward, district and in government. They can decide who attends the funeral, who can be buried where and when, and control people’s autonomy to freedom of speech and expression. Other members of the

community were driven by their relations to the deceased and his family and business and social relations. However for the village head it was a sense of duty to attend the funeral and speak on behalf of his people.

From hobby to work: the transformation of youth service to ZANU-PF

> Violence is hard work it is labour (Hoffman 2011:34).

Hoffman (2011) conceptualises violence as literal work, and the labour of war as labour. He argues that "the language of labour, employment, gain, compensation, reward, security-the language of postmodern work- was very much the language of militia fighters…" (ibid:34). Writing of the conflict in Guinea-Bissau Henrik Vigh (2006) cited in Hoffman (2011) argues that war was something that one does, rather than an activity one especially undertakes against one another. Hoffman (2011) notes that Sierra Leone rebels threatened to go back to the bush if post war disarmament programmes fail to offer fighters a realistic income. Hoffman (2011:39) quotes commander C.O Death at the Bo, Sierra Leone disarmament centre in November 2001 saying, "The mind needs to be engaged [through regular employment] because when the mind is idle, anything can happen!" Hoffman argues that this was a threat to once again begin the paying labours of producing violence. It is through these labours of producing violence that I seek to understand the transformation of youth service to ZANU-PF in Bindura South.

Jones (2010a) has argued that because of the disintegration of the economy the people in Zimbabwe fell into "a peculiar kind of paralysis" one in which personal and national development has come to a standstill and the youth are faced with a profound uncertainty about the future. The political and economic breakdown argues Jones (2005) has led to a simultaneous demonization and exploitation of the youth: they are called "unpatriotic" at the same time they are recruited to do the dirty work of politics. Moments of seemingly

unresolved crisis and obstruction has led the youth to resort to political work in service for ZANU-PF in order to access economic resources to enhance their livelihoods. Matereke (2011) argued that the youth were promised war veteran status. Marx (1887) has shown that the economic base influences the superstructure of ideas that obtains among people in a society. In as much as rural people began to see the MDC as their new liberator from ZANU-PF oppression some of the youth saw ZANU-PF as a source of power and economic prosperity. Thus some of the youths decided to transform their relationship with ZANU-PF from a mere 'hobby' to 'work' because it allowed them to access economic resources easily. Their aim is to earn money, to get hands on other people's objects (Marx 1887), to accumulate useful things like farming machines, pumps and tanks, and maximisation of utility in conditions of scarcity. The youth's appeals to working for ZANU-PF are as much the responses of economic powerlessness and the resulting fears of social powerlessness.

Even though the Zimbabwean economy had disintegrated and come to a standstill (Jones 2010a), material acquisition and improvement of one's status remained a property for most people. The ethics of capitalism where one is valued based on the value of their labour and production in society or in the family has meant that unemployment is a crisis for personal life and for broader forms of connection and community. One's sense of belonging in a family or community depends on ability to amass wealth, even marriage and reproduction depends on a stable job and income (White 2001). But almost globally the sense of crisis pervading the contemporary moment in post-colonial Zimbabwe has affected the spirit of the family, sense of belonging in the community, as the overwhelmed domain of moral life and cultured personhood.

Since 2000 ZANU-PF has embarked on a massive militarisation programme that has taken various forms. The National Services programme has seen the militarisation of the youth (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007, Chitiyo 2009, Lindgren 2003, LeBas 2006). After the 2005

electoral win, Mugabe appointed what ZANU-PF dubbed a 'War Cabinet' with former army personnel being posted to foreign missions, and promoted to head government departments and parastatal organisations (Matereke 2011). In the wake of MDC victory in 2008 elections, the Joint Operations Command (JOC) the highest organ of security comprising the armed forces, police and central intelligence, assumed the role of military Junta backing Mugabe, and taking over the June 27 presidential election run-off campaign (Chitiyo 2009, Matereke 2011). The war veterans and the youth have been employed to keep suburbs, villages and farm areas under surveillance through the creation of bases (Fontein 2006b). Surveillance is "an act of observing, sometimes taking place in a subtle or covert ways that would enable the observer to predict control and render powerless the observed subject, by employing the gaze to gain power" (Matereke 2011:217). In this case in 2008 the JOC gave the youth and war veterans' power to organise ZANU-PF's rural campaign.

One of the Youth 'co-ordinators' Comrade George lives in Chikowore area in Mupandira in Bindura South. He told me that he co-ordinates youth activities and programmes in Mupandira, Nyava, Denda and Shumba areas. I first spoke to his grandmother who told me that his job is to observe and spy on people in the area, "he walks around with a book writing down bad things people say about President Mugabe and ZANU-PF". When I spoke to him he said that he was selected for the post during the 'June 27' run-off campaign and for one to be selected, "you needed to show that you are ZANU-PF at heart, not only through going to rallies by force but you had to be there always and do anything you are asked to do." In 2008 ZANU-PF needed people who were less civic in their orientation (Le Bas 2006) and they show willingness to use violence and property destruction as a means to mobilise support for ZANU-PF. They are the militant ones, people who can get things done, who can follow orders without question- youths obviously unemployed, "the jambanja type." The use of the term jambanja is an important sign of how these youths and ZANU-PF

is viewed by the people. Jambanja is a term used to refer to the farm invasions by war veterans and others in 2000; it is associated with the willingness to destroy and break things, a potentially uncontrollable violence. Comrade George spoke about his rise as follows:

> Some people were scared of beating people during the campaigns but some of us did, and now see where it got me. I am happily employed and some youths envy me. Only five youths were selected for the job. My aim is to use this opportunity to rise and probably become a Member of Parliament.

Such state incentives have pushed other youths in the district to turn to ZANU-PF as a means for survival, and just like war veterans the youths acted like Mugabe and ZANU-PF's eyes and ears (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2007). They organized and convened ZANU-PF party meetings, and just like during the liberation struggle they spy on who would support ZANU-PF in villages (Lan 1985, Kriger 1992 and Schmidt 1997), and who are sell-outs. They would patrol the villages, the business center, and traditional beer drinking gatherings, private ceremonies, churches and funerals in order to get information about goings on in their areas and report to the party's district committee and to the Central Intelligence Organization. By using the youths as spies, ZANU-PF hoped to create forms of subjections among the people based on fear and intimidation and by doing so people would subject themselves to forms of behavior that are deemed necessary.

Lan (1985) argues that during the liberation struggle power was transferred from the colonial chiefs to the mhondoro chiefs of the past, and eventually to the guerrillas in the process of legitimising the liberation war and guerrilla coercion. Here however, I argue that during the 2008 presidential election run-off campaign traditional and political power was transferred from institutions of the state to war veterans and eventually to the youth militia. The youths take concern with everything happening in their areas. They poke their nose into everyone's business; they try to understand how people are living, their means of income, daily activities, even visitors who come and go. They also keep records of who attends

ZANU-PF and MDC meetings. They are always present at funerals, they become members of the school development committee, village committees, and they stress the importance of living 'muvanhu' in the people.

The youths have also become environmental guardians; they would associate with anyone who symbolises power in the wards as they seek recognition, status and power. One late afternoon I was we taking a walk with two of the youths, when a middle aged man appeared driving oxen the man was not from the Mumurwi area. As he approached Cde Tito told us to reduce our pace so that we can see who the man was, warning that "we might leave cattle rustlers passing by." We stood by the road as the man approached, I expected Tito and Aaron to confront and question the man but to my surprise they just stood by and watched him closely. He passed us by a few meters then he stopped took out his police authority to move the beast from one area to another. He said that he just got frightened by the way the men looked at him. Cde Tito and his colleague checked the police clearance and let him go. They had become the guardians of the environment at times working with the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) to arrest and fine people who cut trees for commercial and even domestic purposes in prohibited areas. For most of the youth in Bindura South ZANU-PF activism used to be an election time hobby but since 2008 it has become 'work,' an everyday duty. Working for ZANU-PF has become a platform through which youths can be politically and socially recognised and ZANU-PF aspiring parliamentarians have used this to their advantage by using the youth as a parallel government in the area.

The youth here worked together with, masabhuku, (village heads) to keep an eye on the people's activities reminding them constantly that they are being watched. Around 19:30 hours on a July evening in 2012, a neighbour came to our house to give us a message from the village head. The message was that everyone was wanted to attend the village meeting at

the usual place, a large open space used as grazing land in the middle of the village close to the village head's residence. Everyone who was 17 years and above was to attend, the purpose was that the village wanted to know how many people are living in the village because some people were not coming to ZANU-PF meetings. A list would be compiled and against every name the village head had to write whether the person belongs to ZANU-PF or the MDC, because "nguva iya yavakukwana, anenge asina kunyorwa hameno hake kana tozofamba" (that period [of elections] is close, and anyone who is not in the register will be in trouble when we (ZANU-PF) come). Early morning the Village head's messenger came around informing people to come to the meeting place, the reason was different he said "to receive vegetable seed," there was no mention of the register, so I decided to go and see for myself. There were few people who attended the meeting but the names of everyone in the village was written down by the ZANU-PF youth secretary including those that were not present.

The use of traditional leadership as ZANU-PF's campaign strategy brings my attention to what Moore (2005) termed the sabhuku predicament. Sabhuku means ('keeper of the book') which is commonly used to refer to the village head. Moore (2005:172) argued that in the past, "kudzikira bango ("planting a peg") marked the formal recognition of a community as an independent village, the granting of a tax-register (book) would nowadays be regarded as a concrete proof of his being headman (sabhuku)". The sabhuku's authority is mapped to territory and social relations; he collects tax, rent from his subjects and pays them to the rural district council. Collecting tax is a sign of his authority and he also has the power to chase people from his territory as well as to give land to outsiders who then become his subjects. The Sabhuku is also used by ZANU-PF to mobilise people for them. A ZANU-PF political commissar summed up the village head's predicament during a rally in 2008:

> Everyone should come and vote during the run-off. Sabhuku you have the register and you know how many people live in your village, on 27 June it will be headman *and his people in the queue 'Sabhuku nevanhu vake.' If your people do not come you* will be in trouble. We want to know the headmen who are influencing their people to vote for the MDC.

So the Sabhuku has the power to force everyone, political discipline and ZANU-PF imposed force on the people. A sabhuku's power (simba) became subordinate to this repressive force (Moore 2005). As a result people became subject to ZANU-PF political discipline. In this version headmen did not chose to refuse; they became folded into the same apparatus deployed to discipline people. Other people told me that they understood that masabhuku were being forced to mobilise people to vote for ZANU-PF. The village is an important structure in Zimbabwe's politics. It is the core unit in rural areas because it brings individual households together into one administrative structure. A village constitutes at least 15 households and a grazing land for livestock. Villages are composed of family clans even though many families have incorporated outsiders into their villages. A village is administered by a village head and his deputy, in most cases brothers or close relatives. It has a secretary and a messenger. Four villages would constitute a political party branch or cell. The villages are then divided into wards, for political administration. Village heads work closely with traditional and government authorities on administrative issues and receive an allowance from the state. ZANU-PF works with the villages in mobilising people and reward village heads with incentives for mobilising people to vote for them.

One elder told me that during the height of the 2008 presidential election run-off campaign the then Provincial governor addressing a ZANU-PF rally in Manhenga, rebuffed the Chief for the way people had voted in the March harmonised election, blaming him for failing to 'control' his people. The old men spoke out of shame on how a politician undermined the authority of the Chief, "we have never seen or heard anything like that before, that a chief can be dressed down like that in public." He said the Governor pointed to the Chief with his

fist, ZANU-PF's symbol and said, "Chief Musana naMasembura murimbwa" (Chief Musana and Chief Masembura you are dogs). Musana and Masembura are the two chieftainships under which Bindura South falls. Such a scorching attack on traditional authority shows ZANU-PF's desire to use these structures to control the political will of people, improvement of this assemblage rather than isolated domination oriented ZANU-PF's ruling and mobilising practices.

The shift from 'hobby' to 'work' has been made possible by the fact that after the March 2008 harmonised election loss to the MDC, ZANU-PF district and provincial leadership moved swiftly to re-establish control over the district by setting up militia bases which were used as a spring board for a reign of terror in the rural areas. Various incentives were made available for the youths who showed the most commitment to this mobilization project. Some youths were given jobs in the ZANU-PF district offices on government payroll, as youth co-ordinators in the ministry of Youth, indigenisation and empowerment; they are paid salaries by the state which are equivalent to civil servants salaries. Lindgren (2003) noted that in Matabeleland the ZANU-PF government appeased discontented youth by encouraging them to commit violence towards the political opposition, and rewarding them with plots of land from the farms they occupy.

The army recruitment methods

The ZNA has a recruitment history which was largely drawn from two liberation struggle armed wings ZANLA and ZIPRA at independence. Alexander (1998) traces the beginning of the client-patron relationship in the army to the period of the making of the ZNA in the early 1980s, when former ZIPRA liberation war veterans deserted the army because they were being abused and ill treated by the ZANLA forces loyal to Mugabe. This integration exercise included those perceived to be patriotic to ZANU-PF in the top echelon. The ZNA

at its inception was largely viewed as a professional force considering that it absorbed within its ranks former Rhodesian forces and recruited on the bases of qualifications rather than political loyalty under Colonel Lionel Dyke and the British Milirtary Advisory Team (BMAT) (Young 1997). The 1990s saw the "death" of the professionalization of the army, even the (BMAT) left the country due to political reasons, as the army became more politicised and heavily partisan. Tungamirai (1995) argued that it is difficult to have an army that is apolitical considering that the current political leadership of the country and the military commanders worked closely during the liberation struggle. He argued that the army could become apolitical when the current generation of military leaders and political commanders has passed on. In the post 2000 we see the politicisation of the army and political allegiance both in serving members of the army and recruitment exercise. So the way in which the army recruited is in post-2000 is not a new phenomenon but it follows that the 'vanguard of the party guided the gun' (Mazarire 2011). The youth who perpetrated violence are celebrated in ZANU-PF by being employed in the army and that enhances their actions to commit violence in search for recognition, hence there is a genealogy of unprofessionalism in the army recruitment.

In July 2011 I attended a Zimbabwe National Army recruitment exercise which is done annually in all districts of the country. The army argue that they wish to afford equal recruitment opportunities to every young man and woman in any district to join the army, so as part of that mission they go around the districts and recruit a certain number of boys and girls aged between eighteen years and twenty-four years old for training as soldiers. A day before the recruitment exercise most young men and women went and slept over in Bindura town so that they would not arrive late the following day. I followed on the day of the recruitment exercise. I was actually surprised to see multitudes of young men and women, aspiring to be soldiers. I wondered how they were going to 'screen' such a large number of

people in two days. Most of the boys and girls I spoke to told me that this was the only opportunity to get employed especially if one does not have enough Ordinary level passes to enrol in tertiary institutions. Some were holders of University degrees from various disciplines and because they had difficulties getting employed in their fields of specialisation they turned to the army since the army has within its structures many disciplines such as social work, engineers, medical practitioners, teachers, artisans among others. However this also shows government and private sector's inability to create employment for the young generation in the country.

I listened carefully to the selection procedures, first they wanted those who were of the right age group of 18-24 years, anyone who was older than that had to leave unless they were holders of a diploma or degree which can be useful in the army and they would have to be under the age of thirty years. A small number of those who did not meet these criteria left. Then they said anyone whose National Identification card number district code is not Bindura should leave; only those recognised as Bindura district residents are legible for this recruitment. They however encouraged others to go to their districts since the recruitment is done by district. This however was disadvantageous because some people had permanently relocated to Bindura district and some were even born in the district but the registrar general's office retains their parents' district of origin on their National Identity card. A number of people left after this announcement. Then came a shocking announcement to me and many of those who were there. It was announced that they wanted those who were dependants of war veterans, serving members of the security forces and they demanded proof to that effect. They turned away scores of young people who do not have relatives who are either war veterans or who have serve in the security forces. However some had letters issued to them by ZANU-PF district offices in Bindura, stating that they are active members of the youth league in the various branches in the district, these letters had the

ZANU-PF official district stamps and these were allowed to remain for the rest of the selection procedures.

Those whom I spoke to after being turned away from the army recruitment showed their disappointment with the whole process arguing that it is discriminatory, they argued that this is why they turn to the MDC because ZANU-PF is rejecting them and only use them to get votes. Parents who had accompanied their children to the recruitment disapproved of this method arguing that it is not only the war veterans and the serving members of the security forces who fought in the liberation struggle. People argued that they supported the liberation war at any cost that is why some of the brutalities of the war were absorbed by the liberation war; they were the costs of freedom. But economic challenges and political crisis which heightened in the year 2000 changed the structures of time and of the future that has been there in the first decade and a half after independence. People could not plan for the future because they lived in a 'punctuated time' (Guyer 2007) and they did not have an illusion of a life cycle. This seemed like a permanent condition to most of them, it is not a phase into accumulation, and they live from 'hand to mouth.' Independence was supposed to give them the capacity to project the future from the present, through providing them with work and economic empowerment opportunities and democracy.

At the army recruitment in 2012 'trauma of loss' of assumptive world and the dynamics of remembrance of liberation war suffering by rural people, meddled moment and milieu, representing a time and place when, as some people said, "we all struggled together" (takashingirira tese) during the liberation struggle. Kushingirira carries the "connotation of perseverance through adversity, of courageous suffering, enduring hardship for a just cause" (Moore 2005:6). People argued that no one has the right to enjoy the fruits of independence at the expense of others. They said this referring to ZANU-PF and the War Veterans who exalt their war experiences at the expense of the masses who offered them material and

moral support during the war. People's narratives speak of the 'trauma', not of the liberation war but what was at war that never in the end was (Oleyede, 2009). Even thirty two years after independence people in Bindura South still conjure the syllable of kushingirira to explain the poverty, violence and social suffering they continue to endure under ZANU-PF rule.

The youth's enthusiasm with serving ZANU-PF has much to do with how ZANU-PF has rewarded those who have been loyal to them. Graduates of the NYS have been employed in the civil service. Of the uniformed forces the army recruited many of the National Youth Service (NYS) graduates, the Zimbabwe Prison Service (ZPS) also did but they did not recruit many because they gave priority to their officers' children, spouses and immediate relatives. The Air Force of Zimbabwe and police stuck to their traditional recruitment practices where educational qualifications took precedence over anything else so they did not give importance to the NYS certificate. Anyhow NYS graduates who had educational qualifications that met recruitment criteria in any of these organisations were given preferences. Due to an increased number of high school graduates tertiary institutions especially teachers' colleges technical colleges and agricultural colleges gave priority to NYS graduates and this increased the number of school leavers who wanted to enrol into the NYS. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2007) noted that this Youth Militia were derogatively termed the Green Bombers because of their greenish military-style uniforms. They erected road blocks where they harassed people; asking them to produce ZANU-PF party cards as their travel and life passports in Zimbabwe. In ward 16 of Bindura South I know of six young men and two young women who were employed in the security forces while one of the girls is a nurse through the NYS and through being members of ZANU-PF youths, above those who are Youth co-ordinators like Comrade George. There is a sense in which the youths could even organise themselves to serve ZANU-PF without being forced to do so even outside of

ZANU-PF politicking without having links to people in authority. Their hope being that at the end they would be recognised and also enjoy greater benefits of their service to the party.

The establishment of the militia bases in 2008 readily fed into the National Youth Service training programme and incorporated mobilising tactics of the liberation struggle and at the same time ZANU-PF have used the economic crisis in the country and the desire by the youths to improve their economic and social status to their advantage by using the youths as agents of violence and surveillance in their attempt to regain political control of the country. ZANU-PF has mobilised the youths, its war veterans, and traditional leaders such as chiefs and village heads to mobilise people to support ZANU-PF and to intimidate them into silence. In Bindura South, the youth militia through the youth league branches, and the village heads through their traditional authority, were involved in the process of continuous collection of information about people in the villages, organising and subjecting them to ZANU-PF authority and demands. This form of governance then becomes intimately thread in people's everyday lives.

Effects of ZANU-PF mobilisation techniques on social cohesion

It is important to understand that for some youths joining ZANU-PF has not been about serving ZANU-PF only it has also fed into social relations that are embedded with jealous, greed and enmity between relatives and neighbours. Gelfand (1973) in his analysis of the shona people had argued that the rich ethical code of the shona culture embedded in the concept of brotherhood, love of a good family life with close support for its members and good neighbourliness stands in sharp contrast to the individualism of the West. However Cheater (1986) states that colonialism industrialisation and capitalism promoted individualism and a nuclear family which would suit industrial capital society. As people

became more individualised feuds, jealousy, witchcraft accusations among relatives and neighbours also increased (Mittlebeeler 1976). ZANU-PF politics become embedded in social relations that are constituted by poverty, greed, and animosity towards each other. To contextualise this argument I tell a story about, Magumbo, to show how ZANU-PF politics is used to deprive people of government assistance which has nothing to do with political allegiance.

Magumbo's story

Magumbo let a metal tin tied to a rope plunge into a deep well to draw water, most people in Mumurwi rely on water from wells, and open springs, as there is no tap water. Recently many households have resorted to digging wells migodhi at their homes for easy access to water rather than walking distances to community boreholes, some of which are dysfunctional or to draw water from neighbours' wells. Magumbo uses the well to water her vegetable garden which is fenced with barbed wire and a wall of grass thatching to divert the attention of cattle and goats, which destroy gardens in the dry season when they are not herded. Gardens, mostly vegetable for household consumption provides subsistence for most households. People can afford meat occasionally, buying meat from butcheries is expensive, and a kilogramme of beef costs US$4. To substitute for buying meat most people keep chicken, but they reserve it for special occasions and visitors, their everyday relish is vegetables of different kinds. Magumbo is married but does not have children of her own; she lives with her aunt her husband's sister's daughter. Her husband Rugare did not work until recently when he got a 'piece' job to reopen a water channel from Lion's Head dam to the three farms a few kilometres away. The family survived on Magumbo's allowance paid to her by the government as pension for her late husband from a previous marriage.

Because she earns that small government allowance, she said some people have been jealous of her they call her a 'civil servant' as government employees are referred to in Zimbabwe. Even her own relatives have not spared her either, she told me how her aunty (maiguru) told the ZANU-PF ward Chair that her husband Rugare was an MDC supporter. When the Chair told her that it implies that even "your daughter (Magumbo) is also an MDC supporter" not wanting to pinpoint her directly she 'protected' her arguing that, "no one of our family supports MDC, it's only the husband." Magumbo said that these statements are meant to blacklist her so that she does not receive anything from the government because everything comes under and is distributed by ZANU-PF selected committees.

> *Recently when we went to the ward centre to collect……the ward chair frowned when he called out my name, he said, "who is Magumbo," he looks at you as if yo*u are some kind of dirt. He even shouts and scolds old people, calling them all sorts of names; he does not even respect people. He sees himself as important and what can we do? They have power these people they can make your life miserable.

She also narrated how people in her village nearly refused to allow her niece to receive Basic Education Assistance (BEAM) a funding programme by the government which pays school fees for orphans and disadvantaged children all over the country, "they argued that she was not an orphan some even claimed to know her father." She told me that they don't even know her father, relatives have tried to look for him but in vain, her mother died four years ago, leaving her in the care of her uncle Rugare and Magumbo. Magumbo had to pay all the money that she owed the school from grade four, it amounted to US$120. It was only after some elders intervened and told the school committee the real situation about her that the committee agreed to enlist her on the BEAM programme.

Sitting outside on a Wednesday morning basking in the morning sun to shake off the June cold, three women arrived, our relatives and neighbours greeted us and my mother asked them where they were going and they said they were going to a ZANU-PF branch meeting.

Most of us were surprised because word of the meeting had not reached us. I hinted I was following as soon as possible. My young brother and my sister's son (muzukuru) grumbled at the idea of going to the rally, they gave reasons. "just go with others, it won't kill you do you think you are still young, are you not the youth," mother rebuked them, "who will know that we are not there, there will be a lot of people" my brother replied, "these are the people who will sell you out those whom you trust you think other people enjoy leaving their work and spend the whole day at a rally."

Mbuya VaKuda had suffered a stroke two months ago, so she could not go to these rallies or do any work although she could walk with a limp her right side was still numb. At inght we were discussing about the political situation in the area, her daughter told her that Cde Chair of the ward had asked about her condition having heard that she was not well. MbuyaVakuda seemed delighted at the news that the Chair knows that she is not well, at least no one would trouble her family because people would just know that if you have a sick person at home you have to be close by in case of an emergence arising from the condition.

> *We don't even want to get those inputs; people will kill us for* those inputs. With the way some people want to be beneficiaries on everything they will bewitch us if we benefit. So we would rather let them laugh or mock us for not getting anything, but we have to register our names for the inputs because not doing so can be interpreted as defiance, that is why we go to rallies and have our names on the lists even if we do not expect to benefit from anything.

But you recently benefited from the vegetable seed, I asked her, she laughed that off, "we always get consolation by getting a handful of vegetable seed that we can easily buy from the shops, you grow it today two weeks later it's finished."

Youths as well as elderly members of society have used their association with ZANU-PF power to further personal vendettas; in terms of accumulation of wealth Kriger (1992) has

called these generational differences. When youths and other people act outside ZANU-PF politicking they are responding to their own everyday experiences and relations which in some instances have nothing to do with ZANU-PF, but in which ZANU-PF becomes an instrument to achieve certain individual goals and settle scores against each other. Such has become the norm politics mingled with sour social relations has worked to the advantage of ZANU-PF in maintaining their political control of the rural areas.

Spirited Political Articulations

This section examines the experiences of emotional distress of the villagers in Bindura South constituency. Adding to the discrimination that most of them face in accessing resources channelled through government and ZANU-PF party structures, villagers face multiple barriers to better life. Through an analysis of the idioms that villagers use to communicate their distress, this section intends to bring attention to the emotional burden encompassed in people's endeavours to overcome poverty, particularly within contexts of lack of social protection and a gradual erosion of human rights. The church becomes an important institution in the lives of the people because it offers a space in which the political is transferred into the spiritual realm and therefore offering a covert way of talking about politics.

The existing political environment which gives ZANU-PF structures power to organise people's everyday lives place villagers in a structurally weaker position in society, creating conditions which perpetuate abusive relations between the ZANU-PF local leadership and other villagers. A contributing factor to people's vulnerability is the lack of enforcement of the law by the police force which is complicit with ZANU-PF intimidation and violence. I propose an understanding of people's emotional distress that attends to the broader unequal relations that people are subjected to in society. Listening to the voices and idioms that

villagers use to communicate their distress enables an understanding of their experiences of social exclusion and personal uprootedness. It also makes visible agency people display in dealing with their own distress, which manifests in ways of interpreting and coping with their experiences.

In trying to understand the idioms I begin with the church as space for expression of feelings. I arrived late when the Church service was near the end. I navigated through the hilly area to an open space where the church is held. Unlike other churches where only the pastor gives the sermon and no one else speaks, things are different with independent apostolic churches, anyone who is a member can preach, and say anything, so they offer a good space for ethnography. When I arrived people were standing and singing as the 'leader' prayed for the last person, before it was time for the 'Spirit'. The time for the spirit is the time that people get to talk about their dreams and visions for interpretation by prophets and the prophets would then give messages of prophecy from the Holy Spirit to different members of the church.

A particular woman stood up and narrated her dreams from the past week. The last of her dreams was interesting to me, she said she had dreamt about a political meeting at the ward centre, which she referred to as zvematongerwo enyika (to mean political matters) and "people were told to go into a house and the house collapsed as if it was destroyed with all the people inside it." So I waited for the Man of God to interpret, but he only said "Uuh this is a big issue and it's difficult to talk about it" and he proceeded to another person. Even though the prophet did not interpret the dream what interested me analytically is the ability that people have to talk about political issues in this kind of space. The church generally is outside the surveillance of the youth, interestingly some of the youths like Comrade Tito are members of these independent churches, and they also need the prayers from the prophets to help them in their interests to rise politically. What interested me is how people talk about

politics and even metaphors of ZANU-PF violence as depicted in the woman's dream and the youth do not make a fuss about it as they would elsewhere. As Comrade Tito told me "everyone has come to respect the Holy Spirit, God decides on our future, scorning his word is blasphemy, I also have dreams which gets interpreted in church and it helps me." The church he argued helps them to understand the political landscape through prophecy."

By encouraging testimonies spiritual churches offer their members a place to talk about what happened. As members of a cohesive group, church members share a framework and language in which they understand each other. This demonstrates that memories are not only a personal static record but are also connected with one's active membership in a social group. The group determines what can be recalled and how (Tankik 2007). According to Kirmayer (1996:193) cited in Tankik (2007), "memories are most alive and accessible if they 'fit the cultural templates and have a receptive audience.' " This is what happens in spiritual churches, membership in such churches might provide individuals with the opportunity to periodically escape the silencing in society. However, even in these churches, people cannot tell everything, as they are aware of the gaze. Tankik (2007:7) argues that whereas people remain silent about "their war experiences in everyday life the churches offer their members the public space to express their suffering." In these churches feelings of trust and solidarity are restored, and they use this to 'escape' the ZANU-PF gaze. The church in this instance becomes an enclave, to show how political talk is couched in different language.

Conclusion

This research has shown that rural people in Zimbabwe are not politically conservative and inimical to political change. They are however caught up in complex political moments that suppress their political views. Their political actions have been absorbed by ZANU-PF's mobilisation techniques which seek to control the rural political space in order to maintain their hold on political power in Zimbabwe. These ZANU-PF mobilisation techniques need to be considered if we are to understand the complexities of the political subjectivities of contemporary rural Zimbabwe. Figuring the techniques with which ZANU-PF sought to maintain and legitimise their politics in the arena of the changing contemporary social circumstance is crucial to understanding the conditions under which the various rural actors attempt to actively participate in the political process and the slight possibilities that exist for political action.

This research has figured the relationship between power and legitimacy through the four mobilisation techniques used discussed in this thesis. Power Arendt (1970:33) writes "corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together." In this regard power is given in terms of legitimacy. Schartzberg (1993) discusses legitimacy in contemporary politics in relation to democracy. Regardless of the form of government or the number of political parties present in the government, the substance of democracy argues Schartzberg, will not emerge unless some degree of legitimacy is present. The formation of the inclusive government in Zimbabwe in 2009 (Raftopoulous et al 2009; Machakanja, 2010; Rwafa 2009), did not legitimise ZANU-PF's hold on power. Zimbabwe situation presents interesting paradoxes which can easily be characterized as 'change without change' or 'transition without transition' because despite

the signing of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) state sponsored youth violence, surveillance, and economic patronage continued to rear its ugly head. Hence the talk of a post conflict Zimbabwe at this moment is too soon considering the events on the ground that reflects little or no change on the part of the ruling regime (Bamu, 2009). The credibility and legitimacy of transitional justice mechanisms are often measured by the extent to which victims and survivors oppose or support them, and the degree to which they are able to participate in and benefit from them (Scanlon, 2008). Schartzberg argues that for legitimacy to be present the right of all marginalised citizens to speak their mind, express their desires, and give voice to their hopes will have to be respected and protected. If the articulate voice of the citizenry continues to be repressed, as in the case of contemporary Zimbabwe, then nothing would have been achieved.

It is clear from the circumstances discussed in this research that the conditions for rural people to try and change or influence their political landscape are extremely difficult. With ZANU-PF using its political muscle to control the rural landscape, coupled with opposition parties beliefs that rural people are too conservative to embrace political change, rural areas have become a no go area for advocates of democracy and human rights activists who have confined themselves to the comforts of urban areas. Adrienne Le Bas (2006) has noted that political violence in rural areas is sporadically reported and is drawn largely from testimonies from victims by Human rights NGOs based in urban centres. These victim testimonies are taken only at these urban offices and incidents are reported only if and when the victim is able to travel to these offices. There is implicit fear by human rights and opposition party activists to penetrate rural areas and this has given ZANU-PF the reason to subjugate rural people.

The main argument of this research is that the relationship between ZANU-PF and the rural people of Bindura South is not one that is unidirectional and one that cannot be explained in terms of political complicity-which views rural people as willingly conniving with ZANU-PF to block political change. The form of complicity between rural people and ZANU-PF in Bindura South is uncomfortably created through ZANU-PF forms of subjugation. This relationship which dates back to the liberation struggle, when ZANU guerrillas sought popular support from the peasants to wage an armed struggle against colonial rule, has continued amid contestations and contradictions. This friction emerged from the liberation war itself, in two ways. The first is that the guerrilla methods of mobilizing support which included killing of 'sell-outs,' witches and forced donations of food were very unpopular with the people in the district. The second is that the guerrilla legitimacy to wage the war from the district was based on 'composite ideology' between the guerrillas and the peasants to dislodge the colonial government and assert majority rule. The failure by the post colonial government to ensure the achievement of the economic empowerment for the majority of the blacks put their legitimacy to continue ruling the country in serious question and doubt. I have explained this disgruntlement through Kauffman's 'loss of assumptive world' to understand the reasons for peasant support of the liberation war and the subsequent switch of allegiance to the MDC that happened in 2008 elections.

The research is about the challenge to ZANU-PF's hold on power not only by the MDC but also by the peasants who assisted ZANU-PF as a guerrilla movement to come to power in 1980. In light of this challenge ZANU-PF sought to mobilize rural people by using history, especially the history of the liberation struggle to consolidate power. The understanding by ZANU-PF elites being that since the war was fought in the rural areas and many people lost their relatives, the war would be a source of emotional appeal to the people and provide legitimacy to ZANU-PF's consolidation of power. The use of history to appeal to the

people's sense of emotion was successful for ZANU-PF for more than a decade and a half after independence; ZANU-PF was elected into office because of the liberation credentials. But it is important to note that ZANU-PF had created a form of nationalist history that celebrated its war achievements at the expense of other nationalist political movements such as ZAPU, and even those that came earlier before the armed struggle began. This form of 'patriotic history' even obscured peasants' role in the liberation struggle and thus ZANU-PF created a 'war vet' nation, which made the liberation war about those who 'fired the bullets.' This version of history began to be contested in academic historiography but rural peasants questioned it based on how the distribution of the economic resources in post colonial Zimbabwe was implemented. The ZANU-PF government rewarded war veterans with demobilization grants after independence and an additional war victim's compensation fund in 1997. The land reform priority was given to the war veterans to take up the most fertile and well developed farms. Employment in the public sector and security forces favored dependants of war veterans. This was a total deviation from the ethos of the liberation struggle and people did not accept it.

Upon realizing the failure of the liberation history to safeguard their hold on power ZANU-PF resorted to violence as an effective way of imposing legitimacy. Since 2000 groups of war veterans, the country's armed forces, and youth militias created bases in the mode of the liberation war bases to deal violently with perceived opposition officials and supporters in the country. In 2008, youths in Bindura South were forced to camp in these bases to beat MDC supporters. The creation of the militia bases and the MDC election victory in 2008 shows that the legitimacy of ZANU-PF had come under serious question from rural people, the MDC now stood as their new liberator from poverty and disease. Violence did not work either for ZANU-PF because despite Mugabe 'winning' the presidential election run-off in

June 2008, ZANU-PF ceded to a power sharing deal with the two MDC parties, therefore they failed to consolidate power even after a violent campaign.

In what could be seen as an attempt to appease its supporters for remaining resolute and loyal ZANU-PF began a plethora of interventions aimed at rewarding patronage in rural areas through distributing food and farming implements. I discussed this form of political action and mobilization of economic resources by ZANU-PF through what I termed the politics of distribution. My main intention here was to understand what made this politics of distribution possible. This study findings show that the worthlessness of money and the unavailability of goods and commodities on the formal market made access virtually impossible to many rural people. Since this became the main form people could access vital resources for their survival distribution lured most youths to join ZANU-PF and become party spies, in order to be rewarded and improve their social and economic conditions. This form of mobilization actually worked in favour of ZANU-PF since some youth took it upon themselves to be ZANU-PF's eyes and ears. The youths used political participation as a project of improving their circumstances. Young people are engaged in a process of accumulation as ZANU-PF embarked in a project of mobilization which included distribution of scarce economic commodities in rural areas.

ZANU-PF through violence, surveillance and working with traditional leaders made the opposition and any other alternative forms of politics invisible in Bindura South. People were subjected to constant surveillance by the youth and therefore they had to conform to ZANU-PF's acceptable forms of political action. These forms of action were visible at the funerals of the ZANU-PF member as well as that of the MDC member. People could show overt support for ZANU-PF at both funerals, but could not show support to the MDC even at the funeral of the MDC member. More interesting about this historical moment in Zimbabwean politics is that the youths who turned to ZANU-PF politics were not faced with

the banality of politics, the figuring off politics in terms of position or procedure. They created their own politics they worked for ZANU-PF without having connections with the people in authority and people listened to them and their ideas. Because they controlled local politics upon which aspiring Parliamentary candidates depended on, these youths find themselves being recognized by ZANU-PF office holders at district and provincial levels. The politics they engage in is more to do with survival than with the consolidation of ZANU-PF rule.

Nordstrom and Robben (1995) have argued that violence and harmony have to be understood together through their expression in the everyday if we are to take the issue of human construction in earnest. They argue that a too narrow conceptualisation of violence prevents us from realising that what is at stake is not simply destruction but also reconstruction, not just death but also survival. There is an interaction between the four techniques of mobilisation used by ZANU-PF and rural lives. Rural people cannot refuse these techniques because they are about survival, in the sense that they give them a form of livelihood through access to work and scarce resources, and that going along with them saves them from potential bodily harm through youth militia violence during election time as was the case during the 2008 presidential election run-off campaign. In my own experience as a young person in Bindura South has been to be seen as ZANU-PF sympathiser as much as possible, even though I am critical about the way ZANU-PF operates in the area. Being identified as an MDC supporter makes life difficult even for one's relatives who can possibly suffer from threats of violence or violence itself; this is how people get by in their everyday life. There has been an interesting relationship between the rural space and politics in Africa and Zimbabwe in particular. Politicians in this context count their victory and that it is only possible in the villages and this is a site where power is located.

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