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The memory of violence and the violence of memory: a case study of Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe

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1 Chapter One : Introduction

The context of the research is gukurahundi. The Ndebele minority were a state target for mass murders from 1983-1987. The mass killing manifested a mentality of fear and mistrust of the government and this sentiment has percolated to successive generations (Cameron, 2017:2). This is expressed by the pessimistic attitude held by some Ndebele people towards political issues and Shona people. Remembrance specifies agency and it is important to know who it recalling the past. The way in which events such as mass killings are remembered is a crucial part of the creation and recreation of centralized political power (Bell, 2009:359). The Zimbabwean government took the stance of silence regarding gukurahundi. The justification of this choice was to secure unity amongst the population, as addressing the event was perceived as regressing from moving the nation forward. Any form of commemoration thus far has been blocked by the government. However there is a national holiday dedicated to the peace treaty signed to end the state violence. This has left those who were directly and indirectly affected to be the only ones who can access this past event in their private lives. After the massacre, the Ndebele whose homelands are predominantly in Matebeleland, the western region of the country, have continued to be marginalized. This discrimination is mostly experienced in the access to resources for development. Thus this unequal management of the state is interpreted by the Ndebele people as a demonstration that tensions still exist and the government continues to victimise them, as echoed by historic narratives. Halbwachs, states that the past is a social constitution of the concerns of the present (Coser, 1992:25).

My study is informed by the current political climate in Zimbabwe. Memory has come to the foreground. The National Peace and Reconciliation Bill was recently passed. Its mandate is to address past state led human violations such as gukurahundi. People who were directly and indirectly affected by gukurahundi feel conflicted. There is uncertainty as to whether this is a genuine opportunity for justice and reconciliation. Many remain skeptical of the government as this may be another strategy to manage the memory of gukurahundi.

1.1 The Ndebele Migration to Zimbabwe

In the nineteenth century the Ndebele nation migrated from South Africa to Zimbabwe. This pre-colonial migration is of significance because some people understand it to be the cause of

gukurahundi. The establishment of the Ndebele nation in the western region of Zimbabwe is perceived to have resulted in a historic grudge between the Shona and Ndebele ethnicities. The historic representations of the Ndebele nation in the nineteenth century offers context to some of these perceptions expressed in the study.

The early nineteenth century was marked by political instability in southern Africa. It was called the Mfecane which translates to the "crushing," (Lindgren, 2004:174). There are several reasons as to why Mzilikazi, the leader of the Ndebele group joined the migration north away from Shaka Zulu. Lindgren offers a general conclusion from comparative studies of historical texts as to why Mzilikazi is understood to have left Shaka's empire. Mzilikazi did not surrender cattle from a raid. Mzilikazi's group is illustrated as having a cruel troop of soldiers that fought and assimilated other groups such as the Sotho and Tswana on their journey north. Some authors justify this heavy hand as being attributed to the social and economic conditions of the times (Lindgren, 2002; Lindgren, 2004).

Before arriving in Zimbabwe the group split into two. Mzilikazi led one group and the other group eventually appointed his son Nkulumane as king. Two years later Mzilikazi returned and was offended by his son being appointed king. It is not clear what happened to Nkulumane however, he was expelled from the group. Some accounts state that he was executed, others state that he was exiled. This is another historic moment that paints the Ndebele as a brutal group (Lindgern, 2004:54). They eventually arrived and settled in the south western region of Zimbabwe.

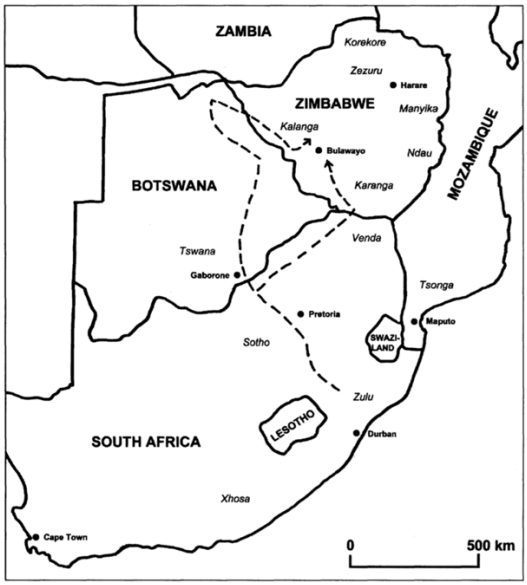


Figure 1. Migration route of Mzilikazi and the Ndebele nation (Lindgren, 2002:175)

They were known for their advanced military organisation, civil and political ideology which secured their successful nation building project within a diverse group of people (Chanaiwa, 1976:65). Historic accounts state that the Ndebele exercised violence on other groups in Zimbabwe to establish their influence. These initial years of contact with residing Shona groups are speculated to have caused the friction between the Shona and Ndebele. However, Nyere argues that during pre-colonial times violence was common place among different groups especially when asserting their dominance, even among the Shona states before the Ndebele nation came to Zimbabwe. Therefore this popular rationale of the Ndebele as an aggressive and violent group is not an adequate reason for the perception of a historic grudge that exists in history and popular memory (Nyere, 2016).

1.2 The war for Liberation

In 1957 there was a change from mobilising political consciousness to demanding majority rule through the formal establishment of the Southern Rhodesian African National Congress (Msindo, 2007:157). Msindo argues that ethnicity was initially used constructively to benefit nationalism. The desire by the national population to preserve culture and tradition constituted the ethnic identities that were acknowledged rather than the tribalism that mobilized ethnical consciousness to create disunity in later years (Msindo, 2007:269).

This political party underwent some name changes and was eventually identified as Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU). In 1963 it split and a separate political movement was established called Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union (ZANU). This break away was the result of disagreements in policies and leadership. These two liberation movements formed separate military wings. ZAPU's army was called Zimbabwe Peoples Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA). The ZANU's army was called Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) (Ngwenya, 2010:20). Animosity between the two groups indicted some form of ethnic tension. This was mostly attributed to the fact that military recruits were from different regions. ZIPRA recruited from Matebeleland and ZANLA from MaShonaland (Msindo, 2007; Sisulu, 2007).

ZIPRA and ZANLA received different military training which was another source of friction between the liberation movements. ZIPRA was trained by Russia and was known for its superior military skills. Whereas ZANLA was trained by China and focused more on politically mobilising the masses (Sisulu, 2007:45). These fundamental military strategies were one of the reasons that divided the groups (Alexander et al, 2000:147). There were also major fallouts between soldiers in military camps outside Zimbabwe. For example in Tanzania ZIPRA troops reported that they were being victimized, forced to denounce ZAPU leadership and in some cases they were killed (Alexander et al, 2000). The ethnic overtones of this tension between these movements was explicitly illustrated when competing for supporters and leadership positions (Sisulu, 2007:46). These disputes thus foregrounded Operation Gukurahundi after independence.

1.3 Gukurahundi

Tensions between the nationalist parties continued after independence in 1980. The following seven years resulted in political instability in the western region of Zimbabwe. There are key events that contributed to the government launching Operation Gukurahundi. There were desertions by ex-guerrillas from the new national army. These rogue soldiers were labelled as dissidents by the government. All criminal activities in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces were blamed on these bands of insurgent soldiers. ZAPU was held responsible for these soldiers and as a result their leadership were victimized and arrested. A special army unit called the 5th Brigade was deployed by the government to deal with the dissident emanation. However, this special military's methods were controversial because civilians bore the brunt

of their terror. Eventually a truce was signed to end the violence, but there was never any formal redress or commemorative activities that were conducted after. Instead the government prevented any commemorative activities and demands for justice related to gukurahundi.

Articles related to gukurahundi analyse the violence in terms of the political pursuits of ZAPU, Zimbabwe African Nationalist Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and South Africa. Gukurahundi was an exercise by ZANU-PF to secure total control of the state (Alexander et al, 2000:180). It had won elections and obtained 57 seats out of 100 in parliament. ZAPU and the reserved white seats had 20 seats each. The remaining 3 seats where secured by the United African National Council (Ngwenya, 2010:20). These votes reflected the ethnic and regional divisions in the country (Alexander et al, 2000:81).

Straight after independence a policy to unify the two guerrilla armies into one national security force which was called the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) was implemented. Ex-combatants were to be integrated at assembly points stationed across the country,(Sisulu, 2007:46). Some of the ex-guerrilla fighters abandoned this instruction because they were experiencing victimization similar to the military camps during the liberation war. ZIPRA soldiers particularly felt that they were given unfair punishments and there were biased promotion polices. There was also an intense atmosphere of suspicion and fear for one's life at the assembly points (Alexander et al, 2000; Sisulu, 2007). This led to troops deserting these stations and many could not return home. Thus they sought refuge in the bush participating in various activities and crimes mostly for survival. This resulted in the government identifying them as dissidents.

In 1982 whilst this dissident issue continued, ZAPU and ZIPRA officials were arrested and their property confiscated. They were accused of treason because of arms caches that were found in their possession. The government also held them responsible for the dissident problem (Alexander et al, 2000). It was not just ex-guerrillas who left the ZNA that were labelled dissidents. Common criminals were conflated into this category as well. This is because the government blamed all criminal activities in the region on dissidents. At the peak of dissident activities, it is estimated that there were no more than 400 in total (Alexander et al, 2000; Sisulu, 2007). The group of rebellious soldiers did not have any clear leadership or command structure and many deserted the group. They were described as "cruel, uncontrollable and

leaderless," (Sisulu, 2007:51). They were reported for terrorising civilians for food and petty crimes. More serious offences involved stealing livestock, rape and murder.

On the other hand their disruptive activities were exacerbated by another group of agents called Super ZAPU. This group appeared to be supporting dissidents when in fact they were South African sponsored double agents recruited from refugee camps in Botswana. This mission operated under the code name Operation Drama (Alexander et al, 2000; Sisulu, 2007). The purpose of this operation was to spread misinformation to the government, destroy infrastructure and increase tension between ZAPU and ZANU. The goal was to destabilise Zimbabwe and prolong the apartheid regime in South Africa (Sisulu, 2007:50).

The unrest in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces was declared a security problem. The government initiated Operation Gukurahundi, a term that means "the early spring rains,"(Alexander et al, 2000:191). It had a double mission to control the dissident emanation and also attack civilians in the region for political ends (Sisulu, 2007:52). A special military called the 5th Brigade was deployed. Recruits were taken from ZANLA and they were trained by North Korean instructors. They had unique communication, dress code and weapons (Alexander et al, 2000:191). The 5th Brigade was announced in 1981, even though a formal agreement had already been signed by Robert Mugabe and Kim Sung II, the North Korean president in 1980. By 1982 the state had issued curfews, road blocks and drought relief was cut off the Matabeleland and Midlands region (Alexander et al, 2000; Sisulu, 2007). The 5th Brigade were indiscriminate when attacking people. Civilians were tortured in camps, beaten, raped and killed. They were made to attend mass meetings and denounce ZAPU. Survivors testify to being a target if they could not speak Shona. The systematic rapes were understood to be an attempt to create a Shona generation and the terror was interpreted as revenge for the nineteenth century Ndebele raids (Sisulu, 2007:222).

Missionaries and doctors provided protection and took in displaced people. Some police are reported to have tipped off people who were targets for attack (Alexander et al, 2000:217). Initially the government denied allegations of the atrocities in the western region of the country. Robert Mugabe prevented information from spreading to other regions of the country as well as the international community. The British were aware of the issue but turned a blind eye in order to present Zimbabwe as a success story for transitioning into an independent state (Scarnecchia, 2011). Eventually after much civil pressure a commission of inquiry titled

Chihambakwe investigated the reported violence. However the report was never publicized. The troops were officially withdrawn in 1986 and a peace treaty signed between Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo. This agreement was titled the Unity Accord and is commemorated every year on the 22 of December. Amnesty was granted to all dissidents who surrendered and security forces that were involved (Sisulu, 2007:34). The violence left physical and psychological wounds in the people of that region. The language used by the ZANU-PF leadership left the impression that gukurahundi was ethnically motivated (Scarnecchia, 2011:101). It also created the perception that ethnicity is connected to political affiliation and the consequences of this logic is economic marginalisation. (Alexander et al, 2000:224). The fact that Ndebele history has also been minimized in national history further justifies the sense of marginal belonging to Zimbabwe (Lindgren, 2004). Silence around the event has left many victims and successive generations resentful of the government and people of Shona ethnicity.

1.4 The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission

The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) was officiated in 2018. It was established as an independent commission by the Constitution of Zimbabwe in 2013 (NPRC Handbook, 2017). Its purpose is to address issues of human rights violations experienced by the citizens of Zimbabwe to ensure a more democratic state. It was established to engage in various activities to ensure justice, foster reconciliation and promote peace in the country. However, it was discontinued soon after it had started hearings in early 2018.

The structure and functions of the NPRC are as follows. The chairperson of the commission was to be appointed by the president. They were required to have at least seven years of experience as a legal practitioner. Members of the commission needed to be nominated by the public and their interviews broadcast publicly as well. The president would then select the final members of the commission (NPRC Handbook, 2017). The NPRC would be effective for 10 years. It would engage in tasks to investigate human rights abuses, conduct hearings and mediations. It would also conduct research and would have the right to set its own regulations.

Only two hearings have been conducted in Lupane and Gwanda. Both were disrupted by protestors before they officially ended. Some of the grievances protestors expressed was the

fact that the commission is being managed by the president, who was directly implicated in the gukurahundi atrocities. There was also concerns over the poor representation of the members of the commission who conducted the hearings. Most importantly people felt uneasy about the motives of the commission.

1.5 Rationale

This research is inspired by a particular moment growing up. I remember asking a family member for assistance with history homework. As they read the paragraph I sought clarity on, I remember my history text book being flung across the room and being lectured about my ignorance and naivety for believing lies. They then continued with their personal account of the past as they remembered. I was conflicted. I had been raised to believe adults do not lie and everything you learn in school is true. My two fundamental sources of knowledge and truth were in conflict. I had many questions. I wanted to know this alternative version of the past that was not accounted for in the school curriculum. Unfortunately, my source was too frustrated by the "brain washing" that was taking place in younger generations. When the conversation ended I was most struck by the comment that they said, which was to the effect that when will they stop trying to destroy us, as if gukurahundi was not enough. I had never heard that term before and the moment remained bookmarked in my conscious. I wanted to know who "they" were, what really happened and why and how do they continue destroying us. I soon realized I was always aware of the actors in the conflict. This was clearly illustrated in the deep tension that existed between the Ndebele people and the Shona people. Ultimately, the government was regarded as the oppressor.

My position in this study is that of an individual with a Ndebele mother and a father who adopted the Shona culture. I have been told that when I learnt how to speak, I spoke a hybrid of English, Ndebele and Shona. What I do remember is being aware of disapproving frowns particularly in Ndebele spaces when I said a Shona word and being ignored when I spoke a Ndebele word in Shona spaces. I took on English as a first language as a strategy of diplomacy in my multi-cultural family and never quite developed an extensive vocabulary in Ndebele or Shona to try stay neutral. I became more aware of the resentment not just my mother's side of the family had, but Ndebele people in general seemed to have against the Shona. Yet the Shona did not seem to be as bothered by the existence of the Ndebele, besides their tongue twisting

language. My neutrality soon waned as my first name being Ndebele predestined my position. My perspective became shaped by this resentment and I took personally injustices that were expressed in private spaces. For example if you had a typical Nguni surname you would not get a job, development was said to be skewed in favour of MaShonaland over Matebeleland. Previously I had no reference point to the specific event where the offense was struck. Once it was named I sub-consciously began to fill in the details of gukurahundi and adopted the burden of the memory rightfully possessed by those who directly experienced it. This phenomena of adopting the memory of gukurahundi is present in many successive generations of the Ndebele. This puzzled me because how can people who were not present at a particular moment have a memory of it? How was it that the memory of the event could not be blatantly expressed in public without repressive consequences but is kept alive? Lastly, the resentment held by the Ndebele towards the Shona as well as the government seem to be sustained by the memory of gukurahundi.

Despite the passing of National Peace and Reconciliation Bill which is said to address issues such as gukurahundi by the new president Emmerson Mnangagwa, the historical resentment has not eased. There has been an increase of defiant behaviour from individuals and formal organisations, in protest of the marginalized treatment expressed by the Ndebele people. The fact that the government did not acknowledge gukurahundi, delegitimized any accounts of the details of the event. However to date the government has taken a formal stance to acknowledge the devastation of the event and allow victims to talk about their experiences. In this regard the question of memory has taken centre stage. Its contestations, complexities and controversial features will be navigated by the state and its society. Thus my study has been inspired by this current moment in Zimbabwe.

Memory is unreliable. It's vulnerable to change with time. Its particular configuration is unique to individuals. Yet from my experience there seems to be a shared detail of gukurahundi that weaves those who were affected in some way. This common thread is visible in private but appears invisible in public and takes the form of attitudes as well as other subverted weapons of resistance. The study is informed by my personal experience growing up and interacting with my family. It seeks to understand the dynamics of collective memory. Especially, how the memory of gukurahundi is made by witnesses and remade by the second generation? It also seeks to understand how the memory of gukurahundi is sustained in a repressive environment that has lasted for over 30 years?

1.6 Research Question

The research aims to explore how the memory of gukurahundi is made and remade across generations who did not directly experience it. This was done by asking the following questions.

a) In what ways does the second generation become aware of the memories of the first generation?
b) In what ways does the second generation remake or reject the memories shared by the first generation?
c) What are the patterns of resemblance and difference in the making and remaking of the memory of gukurahundi by the second generation?
d) Do the multiple accounts of the second generation achieve coherence and constitute a hidden transcript or do they remain fragmented and contested?

2 Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter will outline the theoretical framework within which the study is located. It will start by giving a brief discussion on the ways in which the past is reconstructed. It will then explore the ways in which narrative and silence influence the ways in which the past is recollected and received. The next sub-theme will explore the ways in which collective memory is engaged by a group and its effects on members of the group. The intergenerational transfer of memory will be briefly analyzed to show how younger generations are given access to the past. Lastly, the concept of the hidden and public transcript will be briefly described as a tool to analyze the ways in which subordinate groups interact with power.

2.1 Constructing the past

The past is interpreted and transmitted through narratives, carefully constructed to influence the manner in which they are received (Eyerman, 2012). History and memory resemble each other as they are both gateways to the past. History and memory interact with oral recollections from people to corroborate narratives and both are vulnerable to revision. Thus history and memory rely on retrospective narratives which connect the present and the past (Muller-Funk et al, 2003).

According to Olick our present environment contains elements that prompt images from our past. However we never fully perceive, store and recall every aspect of our circumstances. So our present forms patterns with the partially stored information in the past to construct a memory (Olick, 1999). Our subjectivities and external environment directly affect our recollections. Social constructs such as race or ethnicity influence how an individual interprets meaning from witnessing a particular event. When recalling that event in the past their current mood and the context of their surrounding environment will also contribute to the construction of that memory (Brockmeier, 2009:122).

Memory takes root in spaces, gestures, images and is not easily open to analysis (Boodry, 2004). It tends to be unreliable and makes mistakes. It suffers from telescoping, which is its has a tendency to jumble up the order of events (Hamilton, 2003). Factual events can be

distorted by memory. Hamilton states that rather than regard this as the error of memory it must be redeemed as a productive characteristic which reflects the emotional and political associations of the witness (Hamilton, 2003:122). Therefore narratives reflect particular attitudes, hopes and frustrations.

History is the remembered past which is constructed in such a way that distances itself from our lives (Olick, 1999; Colvin, 2003). History undergoes much stricter scrutiny to verify its claims and sources. Ron Eyerman states that," as history transformed into a discipline and a profession, its linkage with collective memory became more reflective and problematic, limited by norms of science and the rules of evidence,"*(*Eyerman, 2004:160). Authors of history are not completely free from personal subjectivity. However the narrations they document are to some extent protected from bias because they must undergo a series of protocol which verify the chosen version of the past with justifiable evidence. Within the discipline of history there are multiple versions that seek to contest or support the dominate historic narrative. Official history on the other hand, are historic accounts of the past that states promote because they align with hegemonic ideology. Those versions that undermine official history are marginalized and even silenced.

Assmann suggests several fundamental differences between memory and history. The first is that memory stresses differences and exists within a collective. It seeks to make links between individuals and groups as well as with institutions, whereas history seeks to make universal frames that exist in a singular form. It disconnects individuals from groups and institutions. Memory bridges the past, present and future. On the other hand history's objective is to separate the three. Lastly memory creates values and meanings. On the contrary history aims to suspend values and seek truth (Assmann, 2008).

Groups of people have their identity built on a common memory. This is a dynamic space that is challenged by political agendas and the technical errors of memory (Muller-Funk, 2003:219). This obsession with memory especially in contemporary times reflects the desire to reassert how individuals position their biographies in a larger historical perspective (Assmann, 2008:54). This is challenged by states that control the past to uphold their dominance. The nation state uses the discipline of history through history textbooks to transform their heterogeneous populations into a homogeneous collective (Assman, 2008:14). States will promote those that align with their ideology and omit those that undermine it.

The focus in this paper is the contestation of official history and memory in the context of gukurahundi in Zimbabwe. The reconstruction of the past by both these modes is conditioned by human subjectivity. Therefore the aim is to explore the ways in which they both pursue claims to truth and the objectives of defending a particular narrative of the past.

2.2 Narrative and Silence

A narrative is an account of an event or a person. A single event or description of a person can have multiple versions. Narrative is a performance of meaning. They serve to position individuals in temporal space and enable them to find meanings to their experiences and reflect on the future (Brockmeier, 2009). Narratives fulfil certain functions that depend on the intentions of the person communicating a particular account. A narrative can be shared to verify particular details of a person or event. It can be used to assert a particular view and reflect particular attitudes held by whoever is speaking. Latent narratives are the most influential when remembrance and forgetting are in conflict (Muller-funk et al2003). In public, gukurahundi appears to be a latent narrative. The government banning any engagement of the story of gukurahundi has resulted in three competing narratives held by the citizens: the official narrative which defends the government's narrative of a dissident emanation; the counter-narrative which is held by victims and frames the event as an ethnic cleansing. Lastly there is another narrative which has stemmed as a consequence of the official silencing of the event. This narrative denies gukurahundi ever existed and it is mostly held by younger generations.

Narratives contain circuits in which power can be circulated. Narrative works in such a way that it frames structures which include and exclude voice and silence (Eyerman, 2004:161). Narrative favours a particular way of meaning making. Narratives carry within them specific motives that reinforce the particular group ideology or attempt to, in extreme cases co-opt listeners outside the group. The diversity of narratives that exist in the collective memory offer a comprehensive account of the taken for granted details in the popular version (Hamilton, 2003). Within the group there are contestations as to which versions will be silenced and which will be recalled.

Silence may still transmit memory through gestures, images objects and bodies (Passerini, 2003:248). Individuals can decide not to audibly communicate a particular narrative, however

this does not prevent ideas and perceptions related to it from being transferred to the next person. According to Passerini, it is important to understand the context in which silence is observed. Especially when regarding what the silence is in reference to. Silence may be based on a narrative about particular person or an event (Passerini, 2003). An individual or a group can actively engage in various ways to reject a memory through silence. Some of the reasons why groups choose to intentionally erase certain memories is to deny their existence. With further inquiry it can also be a veil that conceals conflict and this demonstrates the manifestations of power within silenced narratives. Silence can also be used to reconcile an individual to a group. In such scenarios, silence functions to distance oneself from the past but the individual does not necessarily forget (Passerini, 2003).

2.3 Collective Memory

Collective memory is a system in which members of a group share a selection of experiences. Through this shared process of recollection. They remake these memories and transfer them to other members in the group. According to Hirsch and Smith it is the "product of fragmentary personal and collective experiences articulated through technology and media that shape and even transmit memory," (Hirsch and Smith, 2002:5).

The concept of a collective memory was coined by Halbwachs (Cole, 2005:2). It is also referred to as cultural memory or social remembering (Cole, 2005). Coser translated Halbwachs work and explained that memories are not the same, every individual has their own set of representations that compose a memory. Rather it is the shared interest in a specific event that members have in common that is being recalled at the same time that constitutes the idea of a shared memory. Thus our ability to recall is possible within the framework of the collective, because when interacting with each other we are able to spur each other on and share common representations and meanings (Coser, 1992). This collective mechanism creates a narrative frame where individuals can situate their individual story, which can then be transferred in narrative text or orally and transcend space and time (Eyerman, 2004:161).

When a member or a group within the collective remembers something they connect with memory through a certain system of ideas and opinions (Coser, 1992:53). This reflects that the group has a shared ideology and this reinforces their cohesion. If ideologies are fairly uniform

within the collective, modes of recollection and memorialisation can easily be agreed upon and reproduced to future generations.

Halbwachs theory however is too rigid. It does not account for the fluidity and frequent contestation of contrasting individual memories possessed by each member of the group. When individual memories are expressed against collective memories they can illustrate certain silences in the collective memory (Hamilton, 2003:121). Power and hegemony act as agents that foster conflict rather than cohesion. In this study generational gaps serve as a source of tension. The narrative is not the source of conflict between the age groups but rather the contrasting attitudes. This also challenges cohesion in the collective memory. Individuals are constantly seeking meaning from the collective framework of the group. They may revise their memory to suit it or challenge the group and even break away from it, if a compromise is not established. Therefore there are numerous forces that are constantly working on the collective memory, making it a dynamic zone of negotiation and conflict for seeking meaning.

There is currently a contestation of what narration of gukurhundi will be acceptable in public. During the Mugabe regime it was described as a moment of madness and an attempt to deal with a dissident problem (Sisulu, 2007). However, victims defend the counter-memory which defines gukurahundi as an intentional act by the ZANU-PF government to deal with political opposition which had ethnic undertones (Alexander et al, 2000). This counter-memory constitutes the collective memory of the victims of gukurahundi. They recalled what they remembered in the presence of other victims and corroborated evidence which challenged the version endorsed by the government. Hamilton states that the collective memory can be mobilized to challenge a national narrative (Hamilton, 2003:148). This has been pursued by groups such as Mthwakazi Republic Party. However, in 2017 when Robert Mugabe stepped down as president, a policy to deal with past injustices was passed. This enabled people to come forward and give testimonies of their gruesome experiences during gukurahundi. This shift in the public transcript has not only demonstrated a pursuit for truth by previously silenced communities but a desire for specific objectives to be met as well.

2.4 Intergenerational Transfer of memory

Younger generations appear to inherit the negative feelings and memories possessed by their ancestors. Hirsch explains that the structures that uphold the collective memory act as a passage in which the second generations memory "imagines where it cannot recall," (Hirsch,1996:662). The second generation is defined as the successive generations that follow after the generation that witnessed or experienced a particular event. The past cannot be relived and in principal memories of it cannot be recalled by someone who was not there. However, individuals in the second generation can construct images using their imagination and attached certain feelings to stories handed down to them. This process is known as the intergenerational transfer of memory or postmemory.

There are other methods in which individuals in the present can be given access to the past. The most obvious is through conversation where witnesses can share testimonies of their experiences. Prosthetic memory is an administered transmission of the past to an individual who was not present and it is not bound by space or time (Lurie, 1998). For example, photographs capture moments in the past and create an invisible thread that connects the past and the present. The circumstances represented in the photograph do not necessary have to be the only thing that is recalled. The image can relate to something completely different. Rather certain elements in the image become associated with a particular moment. For example, the wedding photo of a particular relative reminded a respondent of gukurhaundi. This is because the bride and groom where both murdered by the 5th Brigade.

Some modes of transfer are more subtle. Silences and behaviour can communicate perceptions held by individuals. These particular views can be informed by their past (Passerini, 2003:218). Coser explains that our families tend to communicate our initial perceptions of people and things (Coser, 1992:68). Family members may chose to remain silent about a distressing experience in their past. However, they may express certain prejudice towards people they associate with their injury. This is visibly demonstrated by the different ways in which some Ndebele parents segregate their children from other Shona children. This does not suggest that children socialized in this manner do not challenge such prejudice when they are older, however they may grow up hesitant to interact with Shona people. These are some of the ways in which tribalism has been transferred down generations. The narrative of gukurahundi is transmitted across generations fairly uniformly however, attitudes and desired forms of atonement are what alter with each generation.

2.5 Hidden Transcript and Public Transcript

The hidden and public transcript was developed by James Scott to challenge the notion that hegemonic rule reflects consent. He exposes various tools launched by subordinates in their day to day lives as an expression of resistance (Scott, 1992). Power holders define what is permissible in public through laws. Authorities further manage subordinates by enforcing their ideology to naturalize their dominate rule. This is called the public transcript. The hidden transcript consist of discourse that contradicts these public ideals. It is engaged away from surveillance by individuals who share similar experiences of domination. It exists "to the extent its practiced, articulated, enacted and disseminated," (Scott, 1990:119). It manifests in social sites where it can be freely expressed. The public transcript is the space in which the dominator and subordinate interact.

There are multiple devices used by subordinates to undermine domination. Gossip and rumour have no identifiable author. Gossip functions to demonstrate a situation in which a social norm has been broken and to tarnish the reputation of someone in authority. Whereas, rumour enables details from a particular narrative to be elaborated, distorted, and exaggerated. This often reflects anxieties and aspirations held by subordinates. Such oral transmissions are difficult to control for power holders because they are decentralized. It is a challenge to intercept transfer between people in private social sites (Scott, 1990:160). Euphemisms are used as a linguistic expression of testing the boundary of communicating the disgruntled attitude of subordinates without facing reproach from authority. Codes function in a similar way. Members of the hidden transcript develop disguised modes of communication accessible to its members only (Scott, 1990).

The pattern of repression highlights the circulatory system of the hidden transcript (Scott, 1990:126). Domination will seek to reduce these devices of resistance by subordinate groups. This is seen through policies that restrict or completely ban gatherings. Patrols may also be conducted in order to regulate subordinate activities. Language can be used to ensure transparency of subordinates in the public transcript. For example imposing certain ethnic dialects as universal languages of communication. Banning certain collective celebrations or memorialisation's that compromise the hegemonic ideology (Scott, 1992). However, the subordinate groups exercise agency within such repressive conditions. Language can easily be

re-launched as a wall of resistance. Slang and minority dialects can codify subordinate discussions. Story telling is often used as a disguised mode of narrative to protect the narrator (Warren, 1993). Sometimes particular narratives threaten the hegemonic account. Thus those who attempt to chronicle a marginalized or silenced testimony put their lives in danger and often formulate subverted means to share the story ambiguously. The shared experience of domination naturally creates cohesion within the group. However, if domination is not uniform among subordinates it may challenge their solidarity. In such scenarios members of the hidden transcript launch sanctions on members who threaten this solidarity. This is generally expressed through methods that isolate them from the group.

Domination is connected to processes of appropriation such as taxes, service or symbolic gestures. In retaliation, the hidden transcript exercises various acts of expropriation such as feigned ignorance or theft (Scott, 1990:188). Where repressive conditions appear to be weak subordinates advance their subverted activities into these areas. These activities are displayed strategically in public so as to test power on either side. If authority does not check such transgressive behaviour others may exploit and advance this boundary and the situation can escalate into an uprising. These are a form of infrapolitics exercised by subordinates, whereby they challenge the boundaries of the hidden and public transcript (Scott, 1992).

Networks of resistance are limited to family, friends and small communities that share a similar sense of domination. Authority may indulge certain degrees of non-conformity as long as it does not rupture the fabric of hegemony (Scott, 1990:294). An increase in the sense of indignation however, may rupture the boundary between the hidden and public transcript. Such moments are politically charged and create a temporary social site in which subordinates can learn from each other (Scott, 1990). Individuals who expose the hidden transcript in the public transcript to defy authority may be disciplined. However, their declaration against authority speaks on behalf of the members of the hidden transcript and thus this daring act of courage cannot be reversed from popular memory (Scott, 1990:217).

Gutmann critiques implied notions in Scott's theory. Firstly, daily forms of resistance are not always concealed. Secondly, agency does not only adapt to domination it can transform social conditions of subordinates as demonstrated by historic revolts. Also parts of the subordinate group can have the liberty to stop engaging in acts of resistance or, they can change their modes or conditions of resistance (Gutmann, 1993). In this study, Scott's theory is useful in analysing

the disguised form of communication conducted by subordinate groups. However, it does not account for shifts in the social condition of subordinates facilitated by authority, especially in the context of this study where the hidden transcript is made acceptable in public.

The literature review has attempted to layout the theory which will be used to understand the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is made and remade. The objective was to demonstrate the ways in which the past is reconstructed in the present. Narratives shared in the collective memory influence their listeners in various ways, which may affect how the memory is reproduced to other generations. The hidden and public transcript are discussed to better understand the ways in which the memory travels under repression.

3 Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Narrative Methods

This is a qualitative study. Interviews were semi-structured. This allowed the researcher to collect data that responds to the inquiry of how individuals know about and relate to gukurahundi as a silenced event that happened in the past. The semi-structured questions aimed to draw out narratives, silences and attitudes respondents felt were significant to how they inherit, maintain, change or reject the memory of gukurahundi.

According to Savin-Badin and Van Niekerk stories are used as a tool to understand human experiences as lived and told. (Savin-Badin and Van Niekerk, 2007). Therefore narratives have an interpretive function that assists in constructing meaning. For example testimony accounts of gukurahundi discredit narratives defended by the government. They testify to the brutality of the state being along ethnic lines, contrary to official historic accounts which defend the view that it was an attack on dissidents. When respondents retell the experiences of survivors they are able to connect common characteristics among victims which inform their perceptions of why they regard it as an ethnic cleansing. Secondly by constructing a rationale that states that the government is tribalist in reference to this past, respondents interpret the present experiences through this lens. Narratives are used to verify, confirm and defend truths. They are also linked to and represent identities. (Savin-Badin and Van Niekerk, 2007). This demonstrates why some respondents attach the story of gukurahundi to their ethnic identity and thus feel compelled to share it with younger generations and value it as a form of inheritance.

Narratives allow individuals to reflect on new and future meanings (Brockmeier, 2009). This was particularly important for the study because interviews were conducted during a change in presidency from Robert Mugabe to Emmerson Mnagagwa. Parts of the narrations shared by respondents for example, regarding the new political leadership creating a formal platform for the acknowledgment of gukurahundi through the NPRC, were speculative.

This method of research enables an understanding of individual lives within the historical and social context of life. There are some challenges with narrative methodology addressed by Goodson and Gill (2011) . Firstly, presumptions held by the researcher can be disrupted. For

example, gukurahundi is commonly known to have occurred in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces, however Mkhulu Khumalo explained that he was a target whilst staying in the province of Manicaland. Power dynamics between the researcher and the respondents influence particular ways in which narratives are constructed during interviews. Bizo Ncube in particular perceived his participation in the research as an act of activism to give this silenced narrative visibility to a wider audience. The researcher was also sensitive to the contradictions in the interview process such as insisting on consent before the interview, which was managed by explaining the interview process and informing the respondent that they have the right to stop the interview without any penalty (Goodson and Gill, 2011).

3.2 Data Collection

A purposive sampling technique was used to select respondents. This is because respondents with particular knowledge and qualities were relevant to the study (Etikan, 2016). Most respondents were identified through referring a relative. The research's objective was to observe and analyse the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is made, remade and maintained by individuals who were not directly confronted by the 5th Brigade soldiers. Therefore respondents were selected on the basis of knowing about someone who was directly affected by the 5th Brigade soldiers. As well as holding some narrative of what happened during gukurahundi and the motives behind it, this group comprised of three generations. Individuals who were adults during gukurahundi, they have been labelled the first generation (G1). Those who were minors have been labelled the second generation (G2). Lastly those born after gukurahundi have been categorised as the third generation (G3).

The research was conducted in Johannesburg. This condition was applied due to the sensitivity of the topic and the repressive political history of Zimbabwe. The researcher requested consent to record all interviews. Respondents involvement in the study were anonymised by giving them pseudonyms. These steps were applied in order to protect the interviewer and respondents. Eleven respondents were interviewed. Respondents who were identified by the researcher referred relatives to participate in the study. This resulted in five different families being part of the study. Not all members of each family shared the same surname but for the sake of coherently following the structure of the paper members of each family group have

been given the same surname. These have been grouped into the following families Khumalo; Mpofu; Ncube; Dube and Moyo.

FAMILY	RELATION	NAME	AGE	GENERATION	POSITION
Khumalo	Grandfather	Mkhulu	71-75	1	Talks about it with family. Resentful of government, prejudice towards the Shona
	Son	Nkosiyethu	36-40	2	Talks about it with family and neighbors. Resentful of government. Tribalist
	Granddaughter	Ntombi	21-25	3	Talks about it with family. Resentful to government and ambivalent to the Shona
Mpofu	Mother	Mandisa	61-65	1	Talks about it indirectly, resentful of government and Shona
	Son	Jacob	21-25	3	Talks about it with family and in politics lectures. Resentful of government.
Ncube	Father	Bizo	56-60	2	Talks about it with older generation in family. Resentful of government and people who know the wrong version or do not know about it
	Son	James	21-25	3	Hardly talks about it. Resentful to government and victims who have not forgiven and moved on
Dube	Cousin	Thembi	21-25	3	Hardly talks about it, Resentful to Shona people.
	Cousin	Mandla	21-25	3	Hardly talks about it. Resentful to government
Moyo	Cousin	Sam	26-30	3	Talks about it with family. Resentful to government
	Cousin	Charles	31-35	2	Talks about it with family. Resentful to government

Table 1. Profile of each family that was interviewed

3.3 Narrative Analysis

A phenomenological approach was used in the research. This means that the ways in which respondents make sense of their experiences through the stories they share is central to the study (Larkin and Thompson, 2012). Data was analysed by collecting information from interviews and organising it into themes. Halbwach's theory of the collective memory was used to understand how the memory is made and remade across generations. Scott's theory of the hidden and public transcript was used to assist in the ways in which the narrative is shared by individuals or groups in conditions of repression.

The Khumalo family were used as the core of the study to observe the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is engaged and shared. The Khumalo family was selected because it consisted of individuals from three separate generations Individual narratives from the Mpofu and Ncube families only had individuals in two separate generations. Therefore they were used to elaborate on a particular point expressed by the Khumalo's or to express contrasting information on that particular point. Individuals from the Dube and Moyo families' narratives were only included when they contribute a richer account to a relevant point under discussion. This is because individuals within these two families consisted of peers rather than the generational range that was productive for the study.

Data was in the form of stories, thus a narrative inquiry approach was used to analyse it. Narrative inquiry enabled the researcher to see ways in which the personal memory and perceptions held by respondents affect how they interact under repressive social conditions, especially over time (Clandinin, 2006:53).

3.4 My position

The intention of the research is to understand how the memory of gukurahundi travels across generations, particularly among those who did not experience it. This question is motivated by the researcher's puzzlement as to how the knowledge of such a violent event continues to exist

despite the repressive environment that has been created to silence it. The researcher was most interested in better understanding how others like herself have managed to construct a story and images and have certain feelings about gukurahundi throughout their lives without experiencing it or formally learning about it. Colaizzi states that "it is impossible to contemplate a phenomena without some degree of personal involvement and intentionality (Colaizzi, 1978: 214). Therefore it is important to be explicit about the researcher's position. The researcher has relatives who were directly affected by gukurahundi and empathises with family members who bare the psychological and physical wounds of the event. They have experienced the legacy of ethnic prejudice. Lastly as mentioned in the rationale the researcher knew very little about the details of gukurahundi. The researcher was only aware of the name and that it was a massacre of people in Matebeleland.

3.5 Family Backgrounds

The in-depth nature of the study has informed the decision to give a background of each family. This is to provide a sense of who each individual is and the relationship they have with each other. In the findings section of the paper when individuals are quoted their pseudonyms, age-range and generation will be provided to offer the reader an opportunity to refer to the Table 1 and background description of each family. This is so there is a better sense of their position for a particular argument.

Khumalo Family

This group of respondents are close and interact regularly through frequent visits and phone calls. Mkhulu and Nkosiyethu are father and son. Ntombi is Mkhulu's grand-daughter and Nkosiyethu's niece. Mkhulu and Nkosiyethu are based in Zimbabwe and visit South Africa frequently. On these trips they visit Ntombi who is based in South Africa. They identify as Ndebele and share in the counter-narrative of gukurahundi. However, they have varying attitudes towards those they perceive as perpetrators of gukurahundi. Gukurahundi is a topic that is discussed frequently amongst family members. Nkosiyethu stated that generally when things get hard, they talked about it more. Mkhulu is first generation and insisted on sharing what he knew about gukurahundi. He was based in Manicaland during gukurahundi. He was tipped off that the 5th Brigade had targeted them for killing. He fled with his wife and children

to Bulawayo a city in Matebeleland. Mkhulu also shared some stories about the discrimination his children experienced growing up in Manicaland. He states they were probably too young to remember now but in Manicaland they would come home crying because other children would chase them and throw rocks at them and call them dissidents. Nkosiyethu vaguely remembers this turbulent childhood. What he remembers was being cramped under the bed and feeling hot and bored. Both Mkhulu and Nkosiyethu express having some form of prejudice towards the Shona and do not like the government. Ntombi on the other hand does not define herself as tribalist. She does feel discriminated against because of her ethnicity and let down by the government. This family believes that gukurahundi never ended. Ethnically based discrimination continues to be exercised by the government through subtle tactics.

The Mpofu Family

Mandisa and her son Jacob live in South Africa. The rest of her family is based in Zimbabwe. Mandisa lives in South Africa for economic opportunities so she can better support her family. Jacob is a university student. In Zimbabwe they are based in Bulawayo and identify as Ndebele and share in the counter-narrative of gukurahundi. They share the memory of gukurahundi with different people to spread awareness. Mandisa was involved in the liberation war but became a teacher after independence. She remembers being unfairly arrested for an incident at her work. She was released from jail the following day but whilst in police custody she remembers seeing people who had been beaten up and collected from places like lower Gweru. She still wanders if those people were ever reconnected to their families. Her memory of this period makes her resentful of the government and she feels conflicted with her attitude towards people of Shona ethnicity. She states that she tries very hard not to express tribalist behavior. Jacob expressed that he was also resentful of the political regime in Zimbabwe. He talked about talking about gukurahundi a lot during his politics classes, the topic came up whenever Zimbabwe was discussed. Talking about gukurahundi for him is an act of protest against the government. Jacob did not express any prejudice towards Shona people.

The Ncube Family

Bizo and his son James are also based in South Africa and stay together. Bizo has been in South Africa for over 20 years and James 11 years. James considered himself to be close to his father,

but they have never talked about gukurahundi. James heard about it when he would go to his mother who is still based in Zimbabwe. His grandmother escaped a mass killing. Bizo explained that he felt gukurahundi was something you must not share with the younger generation. Bizo and James identify as Ndebele and both relate to the counter-narrative of gukurahundi but have contrasting attitudes about it. They both perceive it as something that can bring conflict. Bizo feels affected by it because relatives and his people were the target of unjustified brutality. He believes the government needs to formally acknowledge their responsibility in the event and apologize. James on the other hand does not think an apology is necessary people should forgive and move on, but the government should be held accountable for what happened. Both Bizo and James believe all ethnicities in Zimbabwe constitute one people and unity needs to be a priority in dealing with the issue of gukurahundi.

The Dube and Moyo family

The individuals in these two families will be included in the findings when their accounts offer a particularly contrasting view to those expressed. However, a general background description is given in the table.

The following chapters detail the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is engaged. Chapter 4 will present the findings and discuss the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is communicated as an act of resistance against the government. Chapter 5 shows the ways in which this mode of resistance functions and is reproduced.

4 Chapter Four: Memory and Resistance

Introduction

The official narrative describes gukurahundi as an initiative to deal with dissidents that were located in the south-western region of the country (Cameron, 2017). On the contrary the counter-narrative recognises it as an ethnic cleansing and justifies this claim according to the way they derive meaning from the details of what happened during this period. Gukurahundi is a complicated moment in Zimbabwe's past because it is not formally documented in official history. Thus this has stratified citizens into three categories which have been implicitly indicated by respondents, those who deny that it ever happened, those that support any narrative that states that is was an effort to deal with the threat of dissidents in the newly independent nation and those who support the counter narrative that states that it was to some extent an ethnic cleansing.

Gukurahundi reflects the relationship between the state and certain members of society. The ZANU-PF government which is associated with the Shona are regarded as the dominator. Those residing in Matebeleland, in particular the Ndebele are regarded as the subordinate group that are oppressed by the government in a particular way. Talking about gukurahundi in public was allegedly illegal. Therefore, respondents talking about gukurahundi is a way in which they resist domination and undermine ZANU-PF's hegemony.

4.1 The Master Narrative

The Mfecane is used as a master narrative that frames the individual and collective memory of gukurahundi. It reveals some of the enduring conceptions that influence representations in official history and collective memory. Representations of the Ndebele as well as their interaction with the Shona before independence feed into interpretations of gukurahundi which continue to be passed down generations. Mkhulu Khumalo states that oral tradition describes how the Ndebele travelled from Zululand and settled peacefully in the region. He argues that history books were authored by the British to divide and control the Shona and Ndebele.

Nkosiyethu Khumalo on the other hand, disputes any justification for gukurahundi based on a historic grudge. He believes rather the Shona were insecure of the Ndebele. Therefore, gukurahundi was an effort to suppress them. The master narrative of the Mfecane frames the origins of the Ndebele. Official Zimbabwean history and the collective memory of gukurahundi survivors draw on representations from this master narrative to construct narratives that seek to assert power over Ndebele subordinates and vis a vie power against ZANU-PF authority.

Mkhulu Khumalo asserts the authority of his narrative by stating his royal ancestry. On his paternal side his great grandmother was Mzilikazi's grand-daughter. On his maternal side his grandfather was Muntuwani Dlodlo who was Queen Lozikeyi Dlodlo's twin. As a royal descendant they had a daily ritual in which the elders would recite their past in detail. From these sessions he disputes Lobengula as an aggressive leader that forced tribute from the Shona. The Ndebele asked for permission to settle in the western region of Zimbabwe from a neighboring leader called Mambo Moyo. Evidence of this is in the Moyo totem. The real cause of the Shona and Ndebele was initiated by the British before they secured their colonial rule.

> "Being of the royal heritage family line we have elders who sit down on a daily basis and make us listen to the complete historical background …That is how the history was passed on in the old days… The area that the Matebele moved into was not occupied by the Shona, they were not in that area at all, there was a different people under their leader Mambo Moyo and the king sent people to ask for permission to reside peacefully with them and he agreed that's why one of the totems of this Mambo was Vuma Waranda which was a colloquial term of someone who agreed …They lived happily until the invasion of the British with the assistance of MaShona army. So the Shona's experienced death from the Matebele when they were pushed as initial soldiers to fight the Matabele so their bitterness that they were beaten is the bitterness that led them to seek revenge when they were now running the country…it was the British who pitted these two people against each other by divide and rule basis so that they achieve their goal of colonization…the agenda there was to create friction between the tribes…so some of those stories are said by historians who get their data from the atmosphere or wherever…We have a history that was handed down verbatim from our elders."

Mkhulu Khumalo 70-75 G1

Nkosiyethu Khumalo on the other hand justifies his narration by discrediting the official narrative of gukurahundi defended by the ZANU-PF government. He believes pre-colonial conflict between the ethnicities cannot be compared to gukurahundi. Pre-colonial conflict amongst groups was fair. This is because contesting sides were equally equipped and prepared. Whereas gukurahundi was an attack on unarmed people. So, it is an unfair judgement to say gukurahundi was the result of a per-colonial grudge.

> "it tells a story that describes the kind of people who …were fearful of being dominated by Matabele people and Matabele people in actual fact were the ones who liberated Zimbabwe from colonialism. Not by themselves but the Shona on their own wouldn't have been able to lead the war of independence… even if it wasn't for the hate of the Ndebele alone they still wouldn't have allowed that narrative to come out…You cannot compare the historical events cause then I had my spear you had your spear… we met in the middle. But this was different because one had guns, one took the others guns and …decides to have the last jab and shoot everyone else so that they dominate."

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 36-40 G2

There are three competing narratives of Zimbabwe's past which are central to the tension experienced by its society today. The first is colonial accounts of the Ndebele nation during the pre-colonial period (Lindgren, 2002). The second is ZANU-PF revisionist history which minimizes Zapu contributions to the liberation struggle and erases gukurahundi (Lindgren, 2002; Ranger, 2004). The last constitutes the counter-narrative of the two mentioned above. Colonial and ZANU-PF narratives of the past are interpreted as enduring attempts to oppress the Ndebele. Therefore, sentiments of feeling marginalized today prompt conversations about a fabricated official history and an attack on innocent Ndebele people through gukurahundi as attempts to dominate them. Nkosiyethu Khumlo echoed this logic.

> "The harder things get, [laughs] …and they are hard now, so we speak about it a lot more now, generally people speak about it a lot more now because of that."

Nkosiyethu Khumlo, 36-40 G2

The pre-colonial relationship between the Shona and Ndebele is reconstructed by oral tradition and official history. Although these forms of narrating the past are in conflict in this context, they are both engaged in Mkhulu's family collective memory. Halbwach explained that family recollections are positioned in the frameworks where society recovers its past (Coser, 1992:81). Ndebele oral tradition is used to reproduce Ndebele identity and history. However, this social process is also used to interpret the divisive agenda of the British to dominate the native people. By defending the family collective memory as truth and juxtaposing it against official history Mkhulu discredits a historic narrative of the Shona and Ndebele being enemies.

Mkhulu Khumalo's account challenges the legitimacy of official history books. Zimbabwean textbooks have continued to use colonial representations of the Ndebele as a cruel ethnic group. The Ndebele are illustrated as a group that ruthlessly dominate other ethnic groups in their proximity (Lindgren, 2002:54). This narrative is embedded in the master narrative of the Mfecane, which suggests that when the Ndebele settled in Zimbabwe, they used violence to assert their influence over the Shona. This myth has propagated the idea that the first interaction between the two ethnicities was the start of enduring tensions between them (Ngwenya, 2018:18). This reasoning is not adequate enough because politically motivated violence was a way of the times, even among Shona states before the Ndebele settled in the area (Nyere, 2016). Mkhulu Khumalo argues that the British colonialists' agenda was to divide the local people and rule them. The British forced the Ndebele and Shona to fight against each to secure their colonial rule. Then they authored a distorted official history that described friction between the two ethnicities. In so doing the British succeeded in planting distrust between these native groups that has persisted for generations.

The imagery of the irrational aggression of the Ndebele illustrates them in a manner that suggests that they are capable of waging war again in the future (Lindgren, 2002:54). This imagery supports narratives that describe them as having superior military and political institutions. This characteristic is reflected in Nkosiyethu's response. Therefore this colonial representation of an aggressive ethnic group is not completely rejected. It is referred to when engaging in narratives that interpret gukurahundi as an act to smite political opposition. Sentiments of tribalist motivated economic marginalization and marginal representation in liberation history is interpreted as strategies to manage the perceived political threat of the Ndebele.

The ZANU-PF government is dedicated to presenting Zimbabwe's past in a particular manner. Ranger criticized this preoccupation of distorting history and institutionalizing it as a weapon to control society. In 2001, the government initiated what it called the Third Chimurenga through the establishment of milita camps to teach patriotic history through various policies. This patriotic campaign simplified Zimbabwe's past and polarised Zimbabweans into revolutionaries or sell-outs (Range, 2004:232). Ranger also explains that it is selective about events that are remembered such as gukurahundi and the history of Matabeleland which are both omitted. Such tactics by the government make developing a counter-narrative challenging because this patriotic history is launched on all platforms that shape public perceptions, such as the media, political leadership and school syllabi (Ranger, 2004).

Totalitarian states pursue monopoly over truth and the past. "By controlling the past, one can legitimatize the present" (Lindgren, 2002:46). Thus they aim to educate their population with a tailored history to transform their diverse citizens into a homogenous collective (Assman, 2008:114). Countries have founding narratives which establish a master frame which is transmitted over generations and membership is confirmed through who is remembered and those who are excluded (Eyerman, 2004:162). The government justifies omitting gukurahundi from official history as an effort to foster unity. However, these strategies, including downplaying the Ndebele in national history are understood as attempts to oppress the subordinate group (Lindgren, 2002; Ranger, 2004). Controlling the past is an act to secure and legitimate ZANU-PF's one party state and dominance. Attempts to repress any opposition by mobilising the masses is a tactic that they have used even before independence through Pungwes. "Representations of the past influence people's memories of the past and shape different kinds of belonging in the present." (Lindgren, 2002:61). Therefore, official history establish their narratives from colonial narratives implicitly present the Ndebele in two ways. Firstly, as illegitimate citizens of Zimbabwe who forced their rule on local Shona groups. Secondly, as a constant political threat.

4.2 Memory as Resistance

The Khumalo family had a fairly consistent narrative of their understanding of what gukurahundi was. Relevant actors involved during this period of violence that were mentioned by all three respondents were ZANU-PF, the Shona, the Matebele and Joshua Nkomo. They

each gave contrasting views of the reasons for the atrocities. Mkhulu expressed that the British worsened the relations between the competing parties, ZANU and ZAPU. In contrast Nkosiyethu blames the Shona for feeling insecure towards the Matebele and lastly Ntombi emphasizes that it was an act by ZANU-PF to eradicate oppositional power. As a result, gukurahundi was a moment in which the roles of dominator and subordinate were assigned, and this relationship has enabled the historic tension amongst these key actors to exist today. The system that maintains this charged relationship functions through repressive laws, the most significant expressed by the Khumalo family being silencing the event. They also mentioned feeling a sense of economic marginalization in the Matebeleland region and this is understood as one of the covert strategies in which the objectives of gukurahundi continue to be executed. This is despite the fact that an official end to the violence in Matebeleland was signed by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo through the Unity Accord which is commemorated annually on the 22nd of December. However, each member of the Khumalo family expressed a sense of disenchantment to this national celebration. Thus, engaging in conversation about gukurahundi symbolically transforms into an act of resistance and undermines the ZANU-PF hegemony.

The dominator is regarded as the ZANU-PF government, whose objective is to maintain a one-party state. The establishment of this regime was secured once they got into power in 1980. ZANU-PF has managed to conflate its self as a political party with the state of Zimbabwe in such a way that it claims indisputable legitimacy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012:5). ZANU-PF obtained the majority of its support from the Shona, which is why the Shona are associated with the oppressive regime. Lastly British involvement in supporting ZANU-PF during the liberation period has also made them to be categorized as supporting the oppressive state.

> "We were born before all these parties, we knew where the political direction was going and as a sell-out to the organization on a divide and rule by the British, ZANU-PF was formed and funded by the British…ZANU-PF was now more financially viable than Zapu"

Mkhulu Khumalo 71-75 G1

ZAPU, the oppositional party and its supporters were mostly based in Matebeleland. In an attempt to suppress their influence, they were violently attacked through Operation Gukurahundi. The attacks are perceived as not only politically motivated but along ethnic lines

as well. According to Nkosiyethu Khumalo "it was a purge of Matebele people, kind of curb their influence and power, dominance, cultural dominance."

Gukurahundi is a moment in Zimbabwe's history that defined who took the roles of the oppressor and subordinate in the newly independent country. The complex political and ethnic context of the meanings derived from this event has crudely categorized the ZANU-PF government and Shona people as the oppressor and the people of Matebeleland particularly the Ndebele as the oppressed. The discourse used by ZANU-PF leadership had tribalist connotations and thus influenced moments of violence leading up to gukurahundi and as well as the event as well (Scarnecchia, 2011:101). The degree of Shona involvement in gukurahundi varies among respondents. Also, the international community is regarded as having sided with the oppressive government because of their lack of assistance during gukurahundi.

> "It's not all Shona people that are ZANU-PF or that support Mugabe at the time…as much as it was labelled as a war between Ndebele's and Shona's".

Jacob Ncube 21-25 G3

> "The world cannot say to me that they did not know, so somehow to me it seems the world decided to purposefully ignore the genocide because most probably the people affected are not important people to the world."

Bizo Mpofu 51-55 G2

The system that maintains this relationship of oppressor and oppressed operates in numerous ways that make sure details of gukurahundi are kept silent. It ensures that victims of gukurahundi are denied justice. The members of the Khumalo family touched on the fact that victims are prevented from publicly commemorating the lives that were lost during the event. The government suppresses demands for compensation and kills anyone who challenges their stance of silence. They also cannot talk about it openly. These respondents also expressed that they experienced a sense of lack of economic opportunities.

> "It was like a stick, beat someone with a stick. When you hold that stick over them all the time it keeps it alive, it keeps the violence alive because you know that you are

> marginalized, not given opportunities to just be, just exist and work…it doesn't get any better it just sets you down, resentment and bitter talk"

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 36-40 G2

The story of gukurahundi is significant in that it has symbolic power. The narrative expressed publicly reasserts the ZANU-PF government's dominance and the counter-narrative affords members of the counter narrative, to resist to varying degrees this imposed dominance. The official narrative frames gukurahundi as a purely politically motivated event. The counter-narrative detailed by the Khumalo family contains several points that challenge this official narrative. These are that gukurahundi was planned at the inception of independence and it was implemented in such a way that targeted a particular ethnicity. The number and description of victims challenges the fact that it was aimed at eradicating the dissident problem. Defending this counter-narrative is important to the respondents. This is because it is launched as a weapon to directly undermine the ZANU-PF government's legitimacy.

> "It's a pseudonym for 100% genocide. It's a name I cannot pronounce properly because it was coined phrase to fool the rest of the world it actually was a genocide…its real objective was to annihilate the whole of Matebleland"

Mkhulu Khumalo 71-75 G1

During the interview Mkhulu requested the interviewer stop referring to it as gukurahundi as this angered him, he asserted that it was a genocide. Bizo Ncube offers a more elaborate explanation as to why gukurahundi was a genocide.

> "There is a lie that has been perpetuated that says that the intention was to fight a dissident group that was emanating from the area now when you look at that, when you listen to that you see that whoever was coming to fight these people in all senses particularly the fact that it was still a new nation being built then, you would think we would be dealing with males only. It would have been males I would have understood because the males were the people who were soldiers then, the majority of the people who were former freedom fighters were male, yes there was a good number of females but the people who would have been part of this thing would have been males . So there

> you are you are trying to deal with this group this dissent group, and you are there killing babies, women, children, you understand so I easily conclude from that that it was not just a fight to deal with the dissident emanation that they have said was there but a particular people and that you eliminate them and that they are not there in the end."

Bizo Mpofu 51-55 G2

Unity Day is a symbolic day where Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo signed the Unity Accord to officially end the violence in Matebleleland. The unity served Mugabe and subdued Nkomo and for this reason people resent Joshua Nkomo. Nkosiyethu Khulmalo remarks that "Joshua Nkomo …let down the people of Matebeleland by signing off the bill. He was signing away our rights, compromising basically for the sake of peace but it wasn't a truce. His life was in danger." Unity Day asserts ZANU-PF's ideology of a one-party state, it reinforces their legitimacy through the discourse of the liberation struggle and patriotism. The counter-narrative is thus significant in that it challenges the legitimacy of the one-party state, the conditions of liberation and lastly strongly states there is no unity in Zimbabwe

> "I have never taken it seriously because no one really knows what it's about. All I know is it's a day where there is singing and performances the whole day at sport stadiums. Growing up we were told to stay indoors because you would be walking in town minding your own business then soldiers can snatch you, put you in a bus and you will be stuck at the stadium the whole day"

Ntombi Khumalo 20-25 G3

Respondents explained who they understood the victims and perpetrators of gukurahundi were according to the ways in which they interpreted the details of the violence. The ZANU-PF government and the Shona, by association are perceived as the aggressors. The people of Matebeleland, although not mentioned, those residing in Midlands especially of Ndebele ethnicity were understood as targets. Also, they articulated that the current repressive conditions they live under are a reflection on the same dominator, subordinate relationship. For this discussion the dominator and subordinate groups must be viewed according to these descriptions.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni offers the following logic used by the state of Zimbabwe to explain why this contentious relationship between the ZANU-PF government and particular social groups and political opposition will always be at tension. Zimbabwe's nationalism seeks to homogenize its population into one national identity that reflects the group that dominates' power. Gukurahundi obtains its roots from the philosophy used in the liberation war where violence was an acceptable tool to gain independence and deal with opponents. "The gun was praised for restoring order," (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012:11). Therefore ZANU-PF has continued to utilize this rational to eradicate any threats to its hegemony (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012). As a result, as long as anyone supports or represents an alternative view from that presented by the ZANU-PF government they will most likely be the target of repression.

According to respondents the victims of gukurahundi and the people of Matebeleland in general share a particular sense of domination. They find it best to express their grievances in spaces concealed from government surveillance. This general explanation of subordinate behavior in the face of oppression gives the impression that subordinates have accepted the repressive conditions they live under, which is not completely true in this case study. It is easier to find evidence of resistance by observing overt forms of retaliation in the face of powerholders. However, what is of significance in this context is the everyday mechanisms in which resistance to the ZANU-PF government is exercised. James Scott's theory of the Hidden and Public transcript is useful to study these forms of subordinate activities

"The part of self that must stay docile in the face of power is what finds expression in the hidden transcript," (Scott, 1990:114). Therefore, the objective is to find what lies behind the compliant silence of the subordinate group in the presence of ZANU-PF's domination. According to Scott there are two platforms in which subordinates express themselves in relation to powerholders. The first is the public transcript, which is the public space in which subordinates interact directly with domination and appear to conform to its rules. The second is the hidden transcript which manifests in more concealed spaces or expression. It contains any discussions and practices that undermine rules and norms enforced in the public transcript (Scott, 1990). For example, conversation on gukurahundi is banned in the public transcript and offenders will face legal consequences. Whereas in the hidden transcript talking about gukurahundi is possible because the hidden transcript exists in concealed social sites such as homes as expressed by the Khumalo family.

Indignities experienced by subordinates cultivate frustration that strengthen the hidden transcript (Scott, 1990:114). In this case study one of the fundamental ways in which the subordinate group's dignity is undermined is by silencing the event. In so doing this prevents them from appropriately mourning relatives who were killed during gukurahundi. The shutting down of efforts to seek justice and compensation are also regarded as a sore point. The ZANU-PF government uses three key strategies to maintain its legitimacy when confronted by the issue of gukurahundi. Firstly, in the official narrative they stigmatize Zapu and its supporters as dissidents or assisting dissidents. This diverts their motive to eradicate opposition and centralize their political power (Alexander et al, 1992:180). Concurrently the use of euphemisms is the second method of defense it uses. Here phrases like 'gukurahundi was a moment of madness,' (Sisulu, 2007) sanitize the magnitude of the devastation which is interpreted as a genocide by victims and negates them from taking responsibility of the event. Lastly, annual rituals such as Unity Day enable them to create a visual sense of unity among its population and reinforces their ideology.

The subordinate group engaging in conversation and other related practices about gukurahundi in the hidden transcript serve to negate and neutralize strategies of domination (Scott, 1990:83). Therefore, what subordinates remember about gukurahundi is transformed into a weapon to undermine the ZANU-PF hegemony. This counter-narrative they uphold denies that dissidents were the true reason to attack Matebeleland and Midlands provinces. There were enough state security agents to deal with the estimated 400 rouge soldiers and no need to train and deploy the 5th Brigade which consisted of about 2500-3500 soldiers loyal to Mugabe (Sisulu, 2007). Gukurahundi cannot be explained as a random moment of chaos because in 1980 when Zimbabwe gained independence, an agreement was signed with Kim II Sung the North Korean president to train a specialized army (Sisulu, 2007:75). Thus, indicating some preconceived planning on the part of the state. Lastly by using gukurahundi as a reference point to their sense of marginalization in the present, subordinates deny any claim of unity and legitimacy of the current leadership and its ideology. Engaging in this memory thus is a manifestation of resisting the oppressive Zimbabwean government and a way in which the memory travels across generations when launched through daily acts of disguised defiance.

4.3 Manifestations of Resistance

Each member of the Khumalo family stated that they spoke of gukurahundi despite the law imposed by the government. They talk about gukurahundi mostly in private spaces as a family or with other people who share the same views. There are also different ways in which they refer to the narrative of gukurahundi in public spaces in coded ways so as to evade being reprimanded by the law. The Khumalo family also indicated that there are instances in which individuals have transgressed the law and spoken up about the atrocities and faced brutal consequences from the government. Other ways in which they felt government exercised a particular form of dominance of the people of Matebeleland and more specifically Ndebele people were through imposing the Shona language in the region. The shared feeling of being dominated in an exceptional manner and expressing it through references of the counter-narrative of gukurahundi compose the hidden transcript described by the Khumalo family. These moments of collective resistance provide opportunities in which the memory is retold and shared among the different generations. The effects of these acts or resistance however, reflect several objectives which are determined by the attitude of members of this hidden transcript. Some have extremist views and hope to assert enough resistance to enable the complete splitting of the country, some hope it will force an acknowledgement and reconciliatory measures and others are indifferent.

The Mugabe regime, which lasted thirty-seven years banned any talk of gukurahundi. If a person was discovered engaging in any conversation or activities related to gukurahundi it was regarded as treason. Those who speak out about it were killed, Mkhulu Khulamo gave the example of Mahlabati Dlodlo who was thrown into a mine shaft for his vocal disapproval of the state and its brutality. Nkosiyethu Khumalo also gave the example of Owen Maseko, an artist who put up an exhibition on gukurahundi which was removed from the National Art Gallery in Bulawayo. Owen faced harsh legal consequences. The respondents explained that the constant control by the government makes people feel resentful and a sense of deep pain because they cannot freely mourn the death of loved ones killed during gukurahundi.

> "We know it as described in their history books and whatever in their stories, but I think everybody in the adult world knows exactly what it is all about and what it meant. Most of them are survivors, silent survivors. There are so many silent survivors right now who are just quiet but who are bitter inside."

Mkhulu Khumalo 71-75 G1

The Khumalo family indicated that although the public is banned from talking about it, the government does acknowledge the event in history books but with a narration which they disagree with. Whoever controls the narration of the past can legitimize conditions of the present (Lindgren, 2002:46) which Nkosiyethu Khumalo expressed as a personal frustration in the ways in which the government controls the memory of gukurahundi.

> "It's an unspoken, what do I say comradery. The facts in Matebeleland are the same, where ever you go, generally of the brutality, the senselessness of it and the motive behind it, it's not clouded, it's clear to the people of Matebeleland. The changed narrative when they talk about it, they will try to defend their actions, the story they tell does not tie in with what actually happened from my own conversations with peers and yeah other people, older people who actually saw it and experienced it."

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 36-40 G2

Along with state enforced silence on the event, there is a deliberate sense of economic marginalization and tribalism the respondents spoke of and believed was exercised by the government. One of the impacts of the years of conflict in Zimbabwe's past is a conviction that political and ethnic discrimination influenced the retarded pace of development in the Matebeleland region (Alexander et al, 1992:232). This sentiment was expressed by Ntombi. She feels the government operates through tribalist policy and exercises dominance by imposing the Shona language on the Matebeleland region.

> "It is almost like white privilege, a South African friend of mine once said to me. She told me how she had Ndebele friends who complained about the unfair tribalist system in Zimbabwe hence why they came to study here. When talking to her Shona friend and describing this sentiment, they said what disadvantage, they always make excuses, there are jobs for everyone in Zimbabwe, they are probably just lazy. This attitude expressed by Shona people angers me. Their blindness to the marginalization of the system. I hate how the government also has a biased attitude towards these very issues and pushes unity discourse and Shonalizes everything. You cannot get things done if you cannot

> speak Shona. Zimbabwe has three official languages, English, Ndebele and Shona and only two apparently count, that's Shona and English."

Ntombi Khumalo 21-25 G3

Despite the repressive environment maintained by the government people still engage in conversation about gukurahundi. The Khumalo respondents explained that they did so mostly with family members or neighbors or friends who share the same sentiments. This was done in the private confines of their homes. In public they expressed their attitude in disguised ways. Some of these are wearing the Ndebele head gear as a symbol to express their identity which they feel threatens the government, or using codes to refer to Shona people and songs with double meanings at soccer matches.

> "The football chants at home …are sourced from that whole gukurahundi out of defiance that is despite a lose translation ' as much as you tried to kill us as much as you tried to destroy us you will never succeed.' So because it kinda fits into the football it's easy to sing a song when you are at a football match but it has that extra meaning so that's how people are so that's how the majority of people deal with it."

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 35-40 G2

Other respondents elaborate on the moments in which this hidden transcript is expressed outside of the private confines of their homes. For example, Bizo Ncube explains that he talks about it whenever he hears someone tell the wrong version of what happened during gukurahundi. Mandla Dube stated that he talks about it in bars because it is perceived as drunk conversation. There are individuals or groups that straddle the boundary of the hidden transcript and public transcript. If the boundary between these social sites is ruptured it will result in the government reasserting its dominance. Nkosiyethu Khumalo offers the case of Mthwakazi an oppositional group that has existed for decades in Zimbabwe. Its leaders exercise risky activities that sometimes gets them arrested. They use creative methods however, to disguise their members from authority, although as leaders they can still be singled out. For example, anonymity is achieved through the large number of their followers.

> "The founders of Mthwakazi...have been arrested. They started, their party got infiltrated then it fell apart but has carried on and changed tactics and carried on a different way so that now one can stand up publicly. As much as one is still admonished for it but yea, basically your life is in danger for standing up and speaking about it still but if you do so in numbers its harder to kill a lot of people or silencing a larger group of people"

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 36-40 G2

Lastly during the interviews three respondents referred to particular issues in the hidden transcript in a coded manner. They relied on the position of the researcher to understand what they meant. Mandla Dube explained that he quit looking for employment in Zimbabwe and relocated to South Africa because he did not have the right barcode when he would go for job interviews. Bizo and James Ncube used phrases such as "us and them", "that group" or "that tribe" to refer to Shona and Ndebele people. When probed further on this they explained that they felt that using these ethnic names was divisive and contributed directly to the legacy of gukurahundi which created a rift between the Ndebele and Shona.

> "Why do I keep referring to these 2 groups as groups rather than mentioning the names and saying this this, it's because I am trying to be neutral, I am trying to be a person who says look there was a problem we need to get together and change the course and go forward together...but doing that does not mean the wound that I have has healed… I am neutral because of my love for my country, it's my love for my people."

Bizo Ncube 50-55 G2

Bizo's explains that he uses language when engaging in the hidden transcript to express a particular end to his deployment of resistance. Respondents expressed three main outcomes reflected in their attitudes of why they engage in the hidden transcript. Those who were most bitter such as Mkhulu and Nkosiyethu Khumalo hinted at unreconcilable differences between the Shona and Ndebele and thus sympathise with conversations about secession. Others such as Bizo Ncube and Ntombi Khumalo engage in discussions relating to applying pressure on the government so as to obtain formal acknowledgement and an apology for gukurahundi. Lastly Mandisa Mpofu and Thembi Dube expressed a sense of ambivalence because of their

sense of disenchantment in the present. These different attitudes are what threaten the cohesion and effectiveness of the hidden transcript.

> "The problem is there is so many groups that are talking to the same issue and this divides the people and then makes them look like a people with no agenda they then tend to fight on their own and destroy each other's issues before they come with any issues of substance."
>
> Bizo Ncube 51-55 G2

Respondents shared the various ways in which they felt oppressed. Silencing the event made it impossible to appropriately mourn the many lives that were lost during the atrocities. As a result respondents expressed a deep sense of pain and loss, a wound that cannot be healed under such repressive conditions. One of the most brutal results of human oppression is when protecting personal dignity becomes a mortal risk, thus supressing violent retaliation is in the interest of one's life and the lives of loved ones (Scott, 1990:37). If one attempts to express their bitterness or any other commentary related to gukurahundi in public they are most likely to be met with coercive consequences from the state. The government revising what respondents know of what happened during gukurahundi in the public transcript is also another point of frustration. Lastly economic marginalisation is understood to be the result of ethic discrimination. Calls for justice and redress were ignored during Robert Mugabe's presidency. This has created a belief in the region that they are discriminated against because of their ethnic identity and continue to be targeted through structural violence (Ngwenya, 2010:32). Being forced to speak in Shona is interpreted as a way in which their identity is threatened. These repressive conditions have enabled a hidden transcript to develop which permits people to voice their grievances away from government surveillance. However, the ways in which subordinates behave under domination is not always as predictable as James Scott implies.

According to Scott the hidden transcript is created through social sites that are concealed from the surveillance and control of the government. This may be a physical space in a private boundary such as someone's home. It can also be a concealed space in a public area. The hidden transcript requires human agents who share similar experiences of domination, particularly those who are socially marginalized (Scott, 1990). Thus people from Matebeleland and Midlands constitute the hidden transcript in Zimbabwe. Issues are discussed freely within homes or neighbourhoods. Mandla Dube expressed that he spoke about it in bars. Scott states

that taverns are a classic site for subversion because such social establishments offer a platform in which anti-hegemonic discussions can be indulged in a place hidden from authority (Scott, 1990:121). However the respondents demonstrated that they pushed the hidden transcript beyond people who share the same experience of domination. The official narration of gukurahundi conflicts with the one upheld in the hidden transcript. Also its not talked about in public. Therefore some people do not even know what gukurahundi was. In the 1980's Robert Mugabe intentionally contained information on gukurahundi and produced propaganda in regions outside of Matebeleland and Midlands, as well as the international community (Scarencchia, 2011). Thus there are moments were different version of the story of gukurahundi are shared that result in explosive conflict.

Gutmann criticizes Scott for giving the impression that societies under crushing repression experience uniform consequences for transgressing norms set by the government. This is particularly true for the stories respondents talked about of people they know who suffered negative consequences from the government for confronting it about gukurahundi in public. Mahlabati Dlodlo was killed but Owen Maseko faced legal action. Also, authority can tolerate a degree of non-conformity as long as it does not publicly undermine its hegemony (Scott, 1990:294). There is a political group called Mthwakazi mentioned by Nkosiyethu Khumalo which has existed for decades under the Mugabe regime. Its leaders have been arrested and its organization infiltrated and weakened by state agents according to Nkosiyethu's narration. This has not hindered their operation. They strategically use the number of their followers to challenge the government. This collective action offers members anonymity from powerholders and it makes it harder for the government to control their activities. Moments in which the hidden transcript is exposed in public offers a momentary social site in which subordinates can learn from each other (Scott:1990).

In other instance's the hidden transcript operates through codes in public. An example which was revealed by several respondents was at soccer matches. In these occasions the people of Matebeleland, especially the Ndebele tactfully disguise narratives related to gukurahundi through soccer chants to defy the legal silence set on the event. On another level, Dumisani Ngwenya explains that these football chants are also used as an attack on Shona people. This is because they are associated with the predominately Shona speaking 5th Brigade army that killed and terrorized their people. This happens particularly when Dynamos, a Harare team plays against Highlanders a Bulawayo team. These teams do not have players exclusive to one

specific ethnicity. “Dynamos and its Shona supporters become a proxy in which Ndebele vent their anger,” (Ngwenya, 2010:30).

Particular forms of domination create an opportunity for the production of a hidden transcript (Scott, 1990:132). Individuals based in Johannesburg either work or study. The marginal position they experienced in Zimbabwe influenced their decision to migrate to South Africa. However, their foreign status produces a particular form of subjugation that influenced their desire for transformation in Zimbabwe so that they can return home and live with their families. Those who travelled between the two countries frequently, felt that the government was more repressive than before. This has influenced their lack of faith in any transformation. Contrasting forms of domination also reflect how invested individuals are in Zimbabwe. Those in the diaspora seem to be more invested in Zimbabwe than those who live in between South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The hidden transcript also reflects its members agenda and objectives which contribute to the cohesion or tension in the group. Gutmann criticizes Scott for suggesting human agency as only adapting to oppression rather than transforming their reality into a new historic condition (Gutmann, 1993). This is a point of tension in the hidden transcript. There are extremists who push for session. Others engage in activities that undermine the ZANU-PF hegemony in order to apply pressure for public acknowledgement of the full scale of destruction and an apology. Yet some remain ambivalent in the face of these goals for various reasons. The government prevents any talk of gukurahundi to preserve unity. Yet it is clear that people still talk about gukurahundi and there is a deep rift in Zimbabwe’s population, despite this law. This policy has only created extremists who threaten the nation of Zimbabwe. However, it has also resulted in people who seek something in line with their claim to unity. This group hope for an apology and by talking about it healing and reconciliation can be the focus of government attention.

4.4 Shift in the Hidden transcript

The Khumalo family members were skeptical on the motives of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission. They were sympathetic to the fact that the government was creating a platform in which gukurahundi could be discussed in public, also, that it could be discussed beyond the formal forums established through the policy. They criticized various factors of the implementation of the commission. The distrust of the government the Khumalo

spoke about is part of the narratives produced and reproduced in the hidden transcript. The shift in regime does not seem to have shifted this sentiment. However, it has allowed conversations about gukurahundi to be discussed more openly. A similar commission was initiated, and its report was not publicized. The past seems to inform the skepticism of some respondents. There is a superficial social shift facilitated by the state and not the people. This leads them to believe that it is another way in which the government is exercising control and managing the narrative of gukurahundi.

The shift in regime in 2017 resulted in a window period in which gukurahundi could be publicly discussed. This was also largely influenced by the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission that was launched to permit the public to address any grievances of injustice and ensure healing. Mkhulu Khumalo attended two of these dialogue sessions one in Gwanda the other in Bulawayo. This has allowed people to also talk more freely about it and push for government to take responsibility for gukurahundi.

> "I followed this one deliberately just to follow what peoples experiences were. In Bulawayo particularly people were able to stand up and narrate their encounters with gukurahundi or the soldiers…a lot of people had very bitter experiences that they were able to narrate for the first time in a public meeting about gukurahundi."

Mkhulu Khumalo 70-75 G1

> "In order for change the government must first accept… nothing has changed except people now speak openly about it. Especially post-Mugabe post-2017, people are speaking more about gukurahundi, the issue is slowly gaining momentum by the day."
> .

Jacob Ncube 20-25 G3

It was a good idea in the sense that it indicates some degree that gukurahundi affected innocent lives. However, Mkhulu feels it is ill conceived because perpetrators are the ones gathering information. Nkosiyethu believes it is a farce because there is no truth, thus no reconciliation will be achieved. It was a way to gain favor with the people of Matebeleland. However, the panel was poorly represented. This is one of the reasons that made the commission to be perceived as a strategy in which the government was trying to control and manage their

legitimacy through narrative. Ntombi is concerned that it is a commission that is aimed at addressing all human rights violations in Zimbabwe, thus gukurahundi is not a top priority.

> "It's good in that they acknowledge that something happened…but then at the same time they want to subvert that into a tool to vindicate themselves from what really happened."

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 36-40 G2

There was a sense from the respondents that they were not too sure of the details of the commission. Thembi Dube, Sam Moyo and James Ncube were not aware that the commission had been launched. Charles Moyo was vaguely aware of it and his concern was that there seemed to be no indication that perpetrators were going to be persecuted. Mandla who is aware of the law, questioned the participatory efforts of the commission of which he felt challenged the genuineness of the commission.

> "Did they go around and do consultation meetings, did they go around and look for psychologists, people that can sit down and find out from families. Did they sit down with these chiefs …should we sit down slaughter a cow, make traditional beer, pray. We need people that can really guide them that have genuine intent."

Mandla Dube 21-25 G3

The National Peace and Reconciliation Commission would not be the first to address the issue of gukurahundi. In 1984 the Chihambakwe Commission of Inquiry was initiated to investigate the violence in Matebeleland and Midlands after much pressure from civil groups. The commission collected witness testimonies of the terror that was being experienced in the regions. In 1985 Mnangagwa, who was a minister at the time announced that the report that had been compiled by the commission but would not be made public (Sisulu, 2007). This past injustice was one of the reasons Mandisa Mpofu expressed as a reason why she did not trust the government. Therefore, this makes it very challenging for people to fully open up to this new commission and trust that it will genuinely follow through with its mandate for reconciliation to people whose human rights have been violated.

There is a sense of hope that was created. People were able to finally share their grievances openly. There were two main shifts in social conditions that directly reshaped the hidden transcript. Firstly, the policy immediately allowed people to talk more openly about gukurahundi. Secondly, social media was a more gradual shift in the hidden transcript in which people aired and circulated their views. Scott does not account for the changes in the modes and conditions of resistance (Gutmann, 1993:87). Technological advancements have allowed people to adapt the hidden transcript into cyber space. This offers a relative sense of anonymity and enables multiple stories to be shared almost simultaneously. It also makes it more difficult for the government to control the subordinate group. The passing of the commission into law erased the boundary which prevented people from talking about gukurahundi in the public transcript. The commission however, was criticized for its unrepresentative ethnic composition. There is no indication that perpetrators will be held into account. The motives of the commission were not clear and this was a source of frustration (Nkala, 2018). This is critical if this was an opportunity to demonstrate change and present the new presidency as legitimate and committed to democracy. The challenge is the new president Emmerson Mnangawa is directly implicated in Operation Gukurahundi. The few public hearings that were conducted ended prematurely due to protest action disputing issues such as these. When the Unity Accord was signed amnesty was granted for perpetrators of gukurahundi (Sisulu, 2007:117). Thus, this complicates the means in which justice and reconciliation would be articulated by the commission and accepted by the public.

Mugabe stepping down from presidency was a moment in which Zimbabwean citizens believed was an opportunity for a change in regime. However, this hope has slowly dimmed according to the respondents because they have come to believe nothing has truly changed. The subordinate group was not offered a genuine moment of collectively rupturing the public transcript in revolt, rather the political leadership in Zimbabwe facilitated the change. This alternative cultural shift is not discussed by Scott nor his critic Gutmann. However, one could speculate that it could have been a strategic decision to manage the political excitement of the controversial coup, a tactic for ZANU-PF to reshuffle its leadership and secure legitimacy by creating an opportunity to widen its support base. As well as manage and control the narrative of one of the many moments in which their political institution has violated the human rights of its citizens.

4.5 Conclusion

The government is regarded as the aggressor and the subordinates as the people of Matebeleland and Midlands who were the targets of gukurahundi. The public banning of conversation and activities related to gukurhaundi have not prevented people from engaging in conversations about it. Rather discussing gukurahundi is a lens in which the subordinate group makes sense of the particular sense of domination they feel they experience because of their identity. Talking about gukurahundi also serves to undermine authority. The subordinate group engages in counter-narratives which challenge the official statement on gukurahundi the government defends. This is also conditioned by the level of investment they have in Zimbabwe. The memory of gukurahundi is engaged by subordinate groups in order to make sense of the present as well as challenge the legitimacy of the current government. Thus, gukurahundi is a topic that is relevant to all generations in the subordinate group.

Conversations about it are concealed in private spaces or disguised in public. It is a topic that is discussed with family members, neighbours and affected communities. It is also discussed to educate those who do not know about it. Knowledge about people who have publicly transgressed authority by expressing their grievance of gukurahundi serve as reference points of the extent in which the government will keep it hidden. However, subordinates have developed methods to evade domination. They disguise themselves in numbers and engage in coded conversations about gukurahundi. Through this they have advanced their acts of resistance from just talking about gukurahundi to expressing desired outcomes from their disguised activities.

Finally, there are two social shifts that have affected the ways in which the hidden transcript previously functioned. The first is the virtual space that has been created by social media. This has allowed people a platform to share their stories about gurkurahundi to larger audiences in a fairly anonymous environment. The NPRC has provided an opportunity in which gukurahundi can now be addressed by the government. However, the lack of accountability with previous commissions as well as the ways in which the NPRC was conducted fueled subordinates' suspicions. This indicates that shifts in the social conditions of subordinates seem to be more acceptable when created by them. On the other hand, when the government facilitates the change there is some relief from the hidden transcript as it does not need to operate covertly anymore. However, it may not totally comply with the government.

5 Chapter Five: Collective Memory

Introduction

The narratives shared in the collective memory of respondents is directly connected to the master narrative. This master narrative shapes interpretations and representations held within the collective memory of gukurahundi. This chapter will discuss how memory as a mode of resistance functions and is reproduced within the concealed social site of family. It will identify moments in which gukurahundi is discussed and the motivation for talking about such a violent past. It will explore moments which respondents perceive as appropriate for talking about gukurahundi with family members. It will also discuss the ways in which generations that did not have a first-hand account of what happened during gukurahundi have inherited a memory of the event. Lastly, it will identify challenges experienced by respondents when sharing what they know with other generations.

5.1 Collective Memory of Gukurahundi

As indicated in the previous chapter people have never stopped talking about gukurahundi, despite the thirty-seven years of repression under Robert Mugabe's regime. The counter-narrative has endured for so long because it is expressed in the safe confines of the hidden transcript. Members of the Khumalo family spoke about how they openly discussed it amongst each other, especially during difficult times.

> "Yes, we talk about it in our family we want them not to forget what happened to their people."

Mkhulu Khumalo 71-75 G1

> "Nowadays we do speak of it more, but mainly at home… Yes the harder things get [laughs] …they are hard now so we speak about it a lot more now."

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 36-40 G2

> "Mostly at home with family …we talk about it when there is economic and political hardship, which is basically all the time.."

Ntombi Khumalo 21-25 G3

The Khumalo family expressed that talking about gukurahundi resulted in a shared sense of resentment and pain. As a result because of the common attitude about gukurahundi solidarity is forged. The issue is in the contrasting world views that are influenced by interpretations of gukurahundi as an ethnic cleansing. Mkhulu emphasized that he is even more bitter today than before and justice needs to be a priority. The bitterness he feels is shared by his family and brings unity. Nkosiyethu and Ntombi also expressed that gukurahundi is an issue that binds the family together. However, they identified some issues that challenge the solidarity of the family collective memory.

> "It's a bottom line, it's a floor that we all walk on if that makes sense. Yes it binds more than it conflicts because some say ah forget about it, it was in the past but that very person who is saying that, is still also, because they are from Matebeleland are still suffering from trauma but some people do abandon who they are just for the sake of surviving and selling out basically just to be comfortable, get a job, get a house kind of thing."

Nkosiyethu Khumlo 36-40 G2

> "Gukurahundi has made my family tribalist to varying degrees and suspicious of the government…The injustice of gukurahundi brings my family together, but sometimes I disagree with the tribalist stereotypes."

Ntombi 21-25 G3

The Mpofu family predominantly talked about gukurahundi through socializing structures in the family. Mandisa tells her children about it from the position of a mother cautioning her children about life. Jacob expressed that he spoke about it because of African oral tradition. It is his duty to listen and pass it on to younger generations.

> "I tell my kids they should not bring a Shona woman in the house. I tell …what those people did to us… I have told them the stories and said no I guess we should not carry on with the hate but it's there…when we go for interviews in Zimbabwe and the kids

> go for interviews in Zimbabwe and they are segregated on tribal lines it reminds me of that and I tell them…"

Mandisa Mpofu 61-65 G1

> "Oral history that has been passed down generations like from our grandfathers and grandmothers till our parents and now its weighing on us...being in the African culture you know people that are from older generations from you pass down that knowledge that they know, and what I do is spread it with people that are in my generation and younger than me."

Jacob Mpofu 21-25 G3

Mandisa and Jacob expressed resentment towards the government. However, Jacob did not express a prejudice towards people of Shona ethnicity.. She elaborated on individuals perceived as selling out to the conditions created by the family. Mandisa Mpofu explained that people who marry people of Shona ethnicity may keep silent for the sake of peace but there are instances where they may erupt and express their bitterness.

> "The family members I know whose married across the lines who doesn't defend the government who is pained but has peace in his home pretends his not but there are times you hear him lashing out."

Mandisa Mpofu 61-65 G1

In the Ncube family on the other hand, there are some inconsistences to how the story is shared. Bizo states that gukurahundi is something they talk about frequently as a family. However, his son James states that it was hardly discussed growing up. In fact his mother and grandmother were the ones who told him about it and not his father.

> "We talk about it when we meet as family we no longer stay together we stay very far from each other but each time we meet the conversation crops up one way of the other."

Bizo Ncube 56-60 G2

> "The only time I have talked about it is when my mum was telling me about a story and the time when my grandmother was telling me about it must be roughly the times I talked about it."

James Ncube 21-25 G3

Bizo and James expressed similar bitterness towards gukurahundi, however they had contrasting feelings in the present. Bizo explained that he feels a sense of pain because his people were killed brutally. This pain cannot be healed until certain steps have been taken by the government. Whereas James on the other side believes that it should be up to victims to forgive and move on.

Mandla Dube and Charles Moyo expressed that gukurahundi was not something that was discussed in their families so often. Mandla's family did not want to talk about gukurahundi, for him it is something he wants to forget. Whereas, for Charles Moyo there were more pressing issues in the present his family was more concerned about. Charles also highlights identity affects how often the collective memory is engaged. Also the different responses to the event are what threaten the cohesion of the family collective memory.

> "We talk about it in closed doors …but I make sure it's the most minimum conversation I will have…it's one thing I always try to forget about…in the house growing up we didn't want to talk about it a lot and we still don't."

Mandla Dube 21-25 G3

> "Hardly talk about it like if we do it's just a once off topic they have got other things to worry about…there is now bigger problems to worry about… like food and like income I feel like that's what most of the country is worried about at the moment its now at a more individual level than a bigger scale..
>
> On my maternal side my grandfather was from Swaziland so for him it was there but it wasn't as involved …so there is not too many stories to draw from whereas from my paternal side were people were affected directly… It's actually not the different versions but it's the reaction to it which actually has pushed people to say this is bad, bad and its actually to a point where you don't like someone because of their ethnicity so it's actually strained relations."

Charles Moyo 31-35 G2

The social site of family plays a key role in that it has complex structures which sustain various memories through teaching or providing examples (Coser, 1992:56). This can be achieved both verbally and through silences. The Khumalo, Mpofu and Ncube families expressed that they spoke about gukurahundi with members of their families. The framework of remembrance within a family is such that facts serve as landmarks. For example, facts such as relatives being killed by the 5th Brigade are discussed. Engaging on a platform that contains several reflections at the same time gives the sense that the past is being relived (Coser, 1992:61). In this way the events from the past are kept alive in the family.

There are some exceptions to this seemingly organic unity that is formed in families through collective remembering. The first is demonstrated by the Ncube family. Bizo stated that he talked about gukurahundi with other family members, yet he had never talked about it with his son James. Towards the end of the interview it is clear that Bizo does not discuss gukurahundi with younger generations because he believes it is a source of conflict. This will be discussed later in section 5.3. Another scenario that demonstrates selective silences is Mandla Dube's family. Mandla explained that gukurahundi is a very limited topic in his family and in fact he would rather just forget about it. Mandla explained that his father was a sell-out and assisted the government during Operation Gukurahundi. He stated that he had a love and hate relationship with his father. Passerini argues that silence can be used for good. Especially in situations where solidarity is being pursued. Silence functions not necessarily to forget but to create distance from the past event (Passerini, 2003, 247).

Charles Moyo offered alternative reasons that affected the collective memory of gukurahundi in his family. The first was that, on his maternal side he felt that they spoke less about gukurahundi because there were more important issues in the present that affected their survival. What is interesting is that this directly contradicts the Khumalo family's reasons for talking about gukurahundi. Nkosiyethu and Ntombi Khumalo made a link between the economic and political challenges in the present and gukurahundi. In this way these topics were connected in their family's collective memory. External factors can prompt the reconstruction of the past (Olick, 1999). In this way people form patterns in the present and make a connection with an image or information from the past. The Khumalo family made this connection but the Moyo family does not link suffering in the present to gukurahundi. However, Charles Moyo also highlights the fact that his maternal side was hardly affected and thus they hardly had stories to draw from and discuss. This could explain why they did not make the link between

gukurahundi and challenging living standards in the present. They may not have enough information about the past to find similarities between the two different time periods.

The Khumalo, Mpofu and Ncube families all felt bitter about the actual event. Individuals in each of these families explained that they had relatives who were murdered during gukurahundi and the government prevented any form of public commemoration. These families frame gukurahundi as an attack on innocent civilians. The collective memory of the family creates a narrative frame that unifies the group over time and space (Eyerman, 2004:161). The solidarity of the family around this issue is threatened by the contrasting attitudes in the present. Tribalism was a common attitude that was mentioned by the Khumalo; Mpofu and Moyo. Charles Moyo explained that it is peoples responses to the event that brings conflict on his paternal side rather that problems related to different narrations of gukurahundi. Ethnic prejudices have been fostered in families because of gukurahundi. Forgetting the event, not fully supporting tribalist behaviour or marrying someone who is Shona create tension in the family. Part of the perceptions held in the collective memory of gukurahundi is the suspicion of the government and people of Shona ethnicity (Cameron, 2017).

Solutions to the injustice is another point of tension that undermines the cohesion of the family created by the collective memory of gukurahundi. Bizo and James Ncube had contrasting ideas of how healing could be pursued. Bizo framed it as an structural issue that needed to be addressed by the government. Whereas James felt that individuals needed to forgive and then move on. As previously mentioned above this will be discussed in depth in section 5.3.

Each of the families expressed how often and why they spoke about gukurahundi. Talking about it is influenced by the socializing structures embedded in the social site of family. This structure also influenced the reservations some individuals expressed about talking about it. For the most past the pain of losing family members during the event united the family. However conflicting attitudes and behaviour that challenged the general prejudice towards the Shona challenged the cohesion of the family. In this way the collective memory of gukurahundi reproduces a fairly consistent narrative of the event. However, contrasting attitudes and behaviours in the present make a space of contestation.

5.2 Intergenerational Transfer of the memory

The past can also be communicated through words or silences. The structures within the collective memory mentioned above, allow individuals to imagine events without any personal recollection (Hirsch, 1996:662). The second and third generation reflected on the ways in which they reconstructed narratives they have heard in the past using their imagination. The second generation engages in this process in a unique way because they were alive during gukurahundi however too young to fully comprehend what was going on. They stitch their life stories to narratives about gukurahundi and then frame them in within the historic event. Nkosiyethu Khumalo only understood his childhood experiences now that he is older. He makes sense of them through other narratives he has heard growing up. Bizo Ncube was in high school when gukurahundi began. He was made aware of the event by his aunt of whom he explains lived it and breathed it. He was not only aware of what happened to his aunt and her family but her tears enabled him to empathize with the magnitude of her pain. In this way the story is communicated through words and body language.

> "As a kid I knew there was war, but it was more of liberation war, which is what everyone spoke about at the time but after independence … I would be lying if I said as a kid I understood what was going on but its only later I knew I understand …I actually do… I have heard other stories and what they went through you tend to end up owning those stories the visualisations of what they were going through too and they are very lucid they are very vivid as much as it's my own imagination forming its own pictures of the stories they are telling"

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 36-40 G2

> "Yes I have from the stories that my aunty and her family related the tears in my aunt her face and then the imagination … that is the memory that is there…People were explaining what had happened to them disruption in schooling the deaths …those are the things that are so in my mind the vivid pictures that I see."

Bizo Ncube 56-60 G2

When these stories are shared, respondents commented that their imagination fills in other details that were not explicitly spoken about. This was something that gave individuals born after gukurahundi the ability to possess some sort of memory about gukurahundi. Survivors may not talk about their experiences but their lives are transformed to represent the story of

gukurahundi. Sam Moyo explained that he knew an uncle who was affected. Sam tried to imagine his uncle's experiences during gukurahundi. On the other hand, silence and being separated from interacting with the Shona is another way in which perceptions about gukurahundi manifested. With time Mandla Dube was able to make sense of these silences and being segregated from children who were Shona were the consequences of gukurahundi.

> "I know of one uncle of mine who he watched all this happening in his village when he was at the age of four or five. So imagine at that age how that would affect you it would affect you defiantly for the rest of your life and that would leave a scar in your brain that can never be erased…In the fact that he will drink a lot trying to eliminate that memory you understand"

Sam Moyo 26-30 G3

> "There were some houses that we never used to go to because the families don't like our tribe and as a kid you start asking yourself questions and the more you ask of these things and the more you grow up that's when you hear I don't like this people because they killed our people and try and find out what do you mean our people that's when you find out…people were slaughtered it was man slaughter and we wish to know about it ourselves but I can't bear to understand …when anybody explains those things first hand."

Mandla Dube 21-25 G3

Objects can also act as a reference point for a specific memory. The Khumalo family referred to a portrait of a young couple. Mkhulu brought them up in the interview to explain whom he knows who was affected by gukurahundi. Nkosiyethu talks about being reminded about gukurahundi whenever he sees the picture of the couple hanging in Mkhulu's house. Ntombi was not aware of whom the couple were till on separate occasions Mkhulu and Nkosiyethu told her they were close family that were murdered during gukurahundi. The photograph serves as a reminder of the governments brutality in the 1980's.

> "I have a brother who was murdered with his wife…They gang raped his wife repeatedly after that they shot her several times in the stomach and heart then they went to the husband and shot him several times."

Mkhulu Khumalo 70-75 G1

> "There are of people who died, those who we know who are family, they are still up on the wall the cupboard and wall so walking past that picture reminds me."

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 35-40 G2

> "I know of a photograph of my grand uncle and grand aunt at my grandfather's house. One day my grandfather was complaining about the government and that's when he pointed to the picture and said they killed his brother…in a bout of frustration my uncle explained that the couple in the photo had been murdered during gukurahundi."

Ntombi Khumalo 20-25 G3

Stories, images and behaviours serve as a medium in which memories are shared (Hirsch, 2002:262). The memory of gukurahundi is transferred verbally and non-verbally. This occurs with family members through conversation about or related to gukurahundi. In other instances younger generations are socialized to disassociate with people of Shona ethnicity. Although memory is unreliable and is vulnerable to human subjectivities. Objects and conversations can assist in recollections of the past.

Memory functions in a fluid manner. It is vulnerable to being reshaped by a variety of factors both within the subject or by the subjects' surrounding environment. The older Nkosiyethu Khumalo becomes so too does his understanding of what gukurahundi involved. Narrative enables individuals to locate themselves in temporal space and interpret meaning from their experiences (Brockmeire,2009). Rearranging the meanings and details he holds of gukurahundi is a way in which he reflects on his political and emotional associations (Hamiliton, 2003:122). The political instability in his younger years pre-independence and post-independence were not separate periods of violence. However, the older he became he realized the objectives of each of the periods of violence were different, thus his indifference when he was younger is transformed to resentment now that he is older. Memories can also be inherited. Therefore Nkosiyethu not only uses his personal experiences as a source of information to construct his knowledge about gukurahundi, he also personalizes other people's accounts and grafts them into his own memory of gukurahundi. Bizo Ncube also describes how his aunt would share information about gukurahundi through stories and also transfer sentiments of the event through her emotions. His aunt's tears enabled him to empathise with the magnitude of her pain. What is interesting is his awareness of his own imagination was storing the narrative but also associating it with images and feelings.

A similar process is experienced by the third generation. The intergenerational transfer of memory allows them to "imagine where it cannot recall," (Hirsch, 1996:662). However, Mandla Dube demonstrates more explicitly that the intergenerational transfer of memory does not inevitably transfer of images and sentiments directly to the recipient. Rather the recipient has the capacity to filter how they process the information and exercise agency in how they choose to understand what they hear and perceive. Mandla Dube recalls being raised experiencing an unexplained disapproval for interacting with children who were Shona. When he was older he was able to understand the resentment his family harboured was influenced by gukurahundi. Mandla explained that he does like to process the atrocities that took place during gukurahundi, contrary to what other respondents expressed.

Objects in our surroundings environment can function as gateways to the past (Lurie, 1998) . This is known as prosthetic memory. A photograph in the Khumalo family acts as a passage that transcends time. It gives access to a past that has not been experienced by younger generations but offers an opportunity to create memories about a past represented in the image (Hamiliton, 2003:138). The image in the portrait does not depict anything to do with gukurahundi. The fact that the couple were killed during gukurahundi symbolically represents the brutality of the government then and now. One is only given access to this interpretation through having access to this particular family's collective memory. Families have unique memories which they commemorate and secrets that are only shared among their members. This reproduces history and sets the attitude of the family collective memory (Coser, 1992:56). This is true of the Khumalo family. Only their members of the family know what the portrait symbolizes. The portrait becomes a medium through which the story of gukurahundi is narrated. The death of these relatives creates an attitude of pain and resentment towards the government.

Individuals who were not present to remember or too young to comprehend th gukurahundi are able to reconstruct the event using their imaginations. This is possible through stitching their personal life stories with narratives about gukurahundi. They are also given access to the past through objects such as photographs. Reimagining what happened during gukurahundi allows younger generations to possess a remade memory of the event. This is not always true as some individuals can choose not to reimagine the details of the event.

5.3 Tension between the generations

The most significant challenge in the remaking of the memory of gukurahundi is the generation gap, according to all three respondents from the Khumalo family. Mkhulu felt that those younger than him were sometimes too emotional and did not think rationally about the consequences of their activities that challenge the government. They needed guidance. Nkosiyethu on the other hand felt that one had to be critical of the age of the person they shared the story of gukurahundi with because it is complex. It is important for him that a historical context is given of events that led up to the gukurahundi to foreground the story. Ntombi expressed that the hate harboured by family members was burdensome. Gukurahundi resulted in her family demonising Shona people. She disagrees with the tribalist stereotypes of Shona people some of her relatives hold. This is because she has built relationships with many individuals who are Shona of whom she does not believe fit those particular representations. This is a challenge because the Shona are associated with the repressive ZANU-PF government as mentioned previously.

> "Zimbabwe has a big tribal rift between its main people because of the deed the Shona did in the name of gukurahundi…they created irreparable animosity."

Mkhulu Khumalo 71-75 G1

> "It's made me a tribalist, straight up, no illusions there now… as much as I am an open minded person, the event of what transpired definitely made me to be something I don't think I would otherwise be."

Nkosiyethu Khumalo 35-40 G2

Mandisa Mpofu is concerned about reproducing prejudice towards the Shona when sharing stories about gukurahundi. Mandisa's son Jacob is critical of who is labelled a perpetrator of gukurahundi. As he became older he began to challenge some of the generalisations that have been made about gukurahundi.

> "I think our children are now inheriting the hatred they don't understand that and we give them stories and they have never heard a formal story being given out…I will always be bitter I try and really trying as a Christian to let by gones be by gones but it's not easy not when people are arrogantly proud of what they did."

Mandisa Mpofu 60-65 G1

> "Firstly being a member of a minority background like being Ndebele when people speak about gukurahundi the first thing is that it angers, as any normal human being, growing up and coming to realise that it's not all Shona people that are ZANU-PF, or that supported Mugabe at that time, or that were responsible for gukurahundi."

Jacob Mpofu 21-25 G3

Bizo and his father also contest whether the story of gukurahundi must be shared with younger generations. Bizo priorities the preservation of the story. Whereas James is concerned about the ways in which informing younger generations about gukurahundi could affect relationships in the family and Zimbabwean society.

> "If we rub off history we then end up not knowing who we are …so my opinion is its fine the young generation looks at it differently they think that it should be ignored most probably rubbed off the surface… they are the people who are going to remain with the scars . What do I mean by scars they are the ones who will once in a while be reminded of their grandmas and grandpas their cousins their brothers whose heads were cut off during that time …they will be asked by their children about all these stories."

Bizo Ncube 56-60 G2

> "Yes as much as it should be talked about … people need to be careful in the sense that the story being told is it going to help us move forward and be a people or is it going to divide us because there could be a young guy who doesn't know anything about it he grows up innocent life he loves his friends who are of the other tribe, he loves everyone and now you tell him that story he may not be strong enough to be like ok that's what happened…he might now retaliate or feel like there is a need for him to get back and revenge.."

James Ncube 21-25 G3

Bizo Ncube articulates the generation gap as a source of conflict when discussing gukurahundi. He identifies that contrasting ages within the family result in different understandings and solutions to the issue of gukurahundi. This indicates why he has not discussed gukurahundi with his son James. James, on the other hand feels that adults tend to undermine the younger generations capability to engage in narratives about gukurahundi. He therefore feels he cannot comment or critic what happened and as a result he performs his responses when talking to his mother and grandmother about gukurahundi.

> "I think with the younger generations it brings conflict because I think generally we have not managed to get to an understanding… most probably what is different is the generation gap, what can I say we have the same idea but the idea coming from different generations…I think it's important that we share these stories with them and also accept their understanding of how the solution should be. We don't have to agree, we need to talk about it…conversation is a must it should not stop."

Bizo Ncube 56-60 G2

> "They always feel you don't know nothing shut your mouth…I think it brought unity only because of the fact that they told the story I didn't really bring my opinion…they would be like you don't understand this thing was like this so it brought unity in the sense that I acted like I see what happened there and I just agreed …it would be better if could actually work together…
>
> I feel like it's not really forgiveness that they have done but what they may have done is that they have just bottled it up pushed it inside…I always feel we can't wait for that apology forever."

James Ncube 21-25 G3

Charles Moyo on the other hand identifies tensions rooted in attitudes and in the narrative that exist across generations. Thus he actively tries to preserve relationships and the story of gukurahundi by bridging the misunderstandings across the generations. He also identifies key differences between the second generation, which he is a part of and the younger generation in this case generation three.

> "Sometimes my aunt or someone will rant on something, something out of anger but …the younger generations they wouldn't understand it. So, I have actually explained it to them and said no actually this is what happened and it's like this and the whole gukurahundi thing resentment...So just to explain some of the dynamics behind some references …almost like a bridging position, where with the older generation they are reacting and the younger one it's kind of like they are not quite sure and you are like let me break this down..
>
> It's a topic that isn't as strong with my generation…I feel like they understand it a bit better so it's not as blind spotted as the younger generation where they are like this person is attacking me…Information helps them handle the rants or someone's anger rather than someone who is clueless."

Charles Moyo 31-35 G2

Respondents expressed that there were tensions specifically across each generations. Particularly when the bitter attitude was not mirrored. The past is narrated through stories which structure their telling and influence their reception (Eyerman, 2004:162). This means that there is some level of expectation from narrators of how listeners should respond. A challenge with gukurahundi is the contrasting attitudes that have been produced through the sharing of the story. These varying attitudes influence individual positions on the issue, and this threatens solidarity within different collective memories of gukurahundi. Feelings are tested when there is no mutual position on the matter. Then members feel inclined to perform their agreement to preserve unity but in reality, their lack of mutuality affects whether they talk about it or not.

More generally Individuals from G1 and G2 in the Khumalo, Mpofu and Ncube family all expressed that the issue of gukurahundi was challenging to engage with younger generations.

In the Khumalo family solidarity is threatened by Ntombi who has built good relationships with the Shona. The hidden transcript identifies the Shona as perpetrators of gukurahundi and aggressors in the present. Therefore, forging relationships with them is regarded as weakening the social action against domination. The collective memory has two functions which are social production and social action (Olick, 1999:336). The reproduction of the narrative simultaneously reproduces ethnic prejudices which were expressed by the older generation.

The ethnic prejudice held by the older generation is rejected by the younger generations. They are more willing to build relationships with Shona individuals but hold onto the counter-narrative of gukurahundi.

Bitter respondents such as Mandisa Mpofu expressed an internal conflict about sharing what they know. Retelling the individual stories of torture, murder and rape especially when victims of such acts are relatives transfers these bitter feelings in the process as well. There was a sense of being aware of the destructive attitudes that are induced when talking about gukurahundi. Mandisa stated that the greatest challenge is following her Christian beliefs whilst harbouring such resentment. Jacob Mpofu her son, shares in the memory of gukurahundi this is because when members of a group recollect a particular event at the same time it constitutes as a shared memory (Coser, 1992). However, he is critical of the general sentiment of suspicion towards the Shona (Cameron, 2017), like Ntombi Khumalo. Halbwachs states that we cannot think of the past without locating it within a system of ideas especially those held by our family (Coser, 1992:53). Jacob demonstrated that he interrogated this system of ideas associated with gukurahundi and it influenced his world view in the present which rejects the ethnic prejudice mentioned by Ntombi Khumalo.

Similarly Bizo and James Ncube highlighted the same debate of perpetuating tribalism when sharing in the memory of gukurahundi. Bizo's concerned with preserving the memory of gukurahundi is because he perceives it as part of a history that affects his heritage and this urges him to retell the story of gukurahundi. Failing to share the memory is to withhold younger generations inheritance. Eyerman states that "memory is central to individual and collective identity as it gives them a cognitive map, so they can orient who they are, why they are and where they are going,"(Eyerman, 2004:161). James on the other hand, is weary that younger generations may inherit the affected generations helplessness and humiliation from gukurahundi and seek revenge (Volkan, 2001). Thus, he prioritizes preserving relationships over sharing stories about gukurahundi. What is interesting is that his father, Bizo believes in sharing the story yet he never spoke to James about it. Bizo later explains that the generation gap is a source of conflict when discussing gukurahundi. He states that different generations have the same ideas, but different solutions. He realized later in the interview that it was important for the diversity in opinions to be acceptable because future generations will need to know what happened during gukurahundi. James on the other hand believes in an alternative solution. He believes that those affected must forgive and move on rather than wait for an apology. He is aware of how his opinion would anger family members, so he performs his

agreement to preserve solidarity in the family. In this way he supports Halbwachs argument that individuals will align what they know with the group (Coser, 1992). However, this is not an inevitable process James uses his agency to mirror his family's attitude, but he did not talk about gukurahundi with anyone else other than his mother and garandmother.

Charles Moyo, who is in G2, positions himself in between this generational divide. One of the legacies of gukurahundi was in fact the ethnic tension that exists between the Shona and Ndebele people. This however, has not prevented inter-ethnic relationships from being established. There are many marriages between the Shona and Ndebele. These are sometimes challenged by the memory of this violent past and ethnic prejudices held by family members. Charles Moyo's immediate family is mixed. His father remarried a Shona woman. He described instances in which members of the extended family would randomly lash out at his siblings, nephews or nieces. Charles would then use this as an opportunity to explain to them that they must not take it personally. Particular relatives were just bitter about gukurahundi. Charles felt as though his role in the family was to be a bridge between particular members of his family who were resentful and bitter and those who did not particularly understand why. He believes that the difference between G2 and G3 is that G2 is informed about gukurahundi therefore they know how to handle tribalist comments and behaviour from the older generation. The younger generation would be better equipped to handle such family conflict by being informed about what happened. In this way Charles illustrates the compromises that need to be made to secure the memory of gukurahundi and solidarity in the family.

5.4 Conclusion

Respondents explained that they spoke about gukurahundi with their families to varying degrees. The shared narrative and sense of bitterness united them (Coser, 1992). The counter narrative of gukurahundi does not seem to undergo much modification. Rather it is the attitudes that vary in each family and across generations. These attitudes determine the position held by individuals in the matter which can undermine the cohesion of the group. These contrasting attitudes affect how often the story of gukurahundi is shared.

Individuals in G2 and G3 were made aware of the first generations experiences through interacting with survivors of gukurahundi. They adopt the memories shared by the victims (Hirsch, 1996). Throughout their lives they constantly process consciously and sub-

consciously relevant stories, images and behaviour from their family members and build a personal mental archive. However not all individuals desire to reimagine the details of what happened during gukurahundi. This partially affects how they relate to the event which in turn affects how they retell what they know about it.

The generation gap is regarded as being a source of tension amongst respondents. The Collective memory of gukurahundi reproduces its counter-narrative and ethnic prejudice. The expectation to support stereotypical representations of the Shona fosters suspicious attitudes towards them. However, some individuals in the younger generation reject perpetuating prejudices against the Shona. This failure to fully relate with the attitudes of the older generation threatens the solidarity of the family. Individuals have to decide what to prioritize more between preserving relations in the family and expressing their personal attitudes and position on the issue. This directly affects the ways in which the story reproduces tensions between the Ndebele and Shona. This tension reinforces the link that interprets repressive experiences in the present to gukurahundi and this in turn maintains gukurahundi as a relevant issue in the hidden transcript.

6 Chapter Six: Conclusion

The report has explored how the memory of gukurahundi is made and remade across generations in conditions of repression. It observed the ways in which individuals from different generations became aware of the memories of the affected generation. The study found the patterns of resemblance and difference in the making and remaking of the memory of gukurahundi and determined in what ways this inherited memory is rejected. It was important to evaluate whether the different accounts achieved coherence and constituted a hidden transcript rather than remain fragmented and contested. This was critical to analyze how the repressive environment influenced the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is reproduced, modified or rejected by individuals.

The focus of the research was to explore the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is transmitted in an oppressive environment. The theoretical framework used to analyze these phenomena was the hidden transcript and public transcript by James Scott. The second theory was the collective memory by Maurice Halbwachs. The first theory offers insight into the methods used by subordinate groups to evade domination (Scott, 1990). It was productive in showing the disguised strategies applied by the people of Matebeleland when referring to gukurahundi. This revealed that gukurahundi is not just a memory that victims strive to preserve, it is a weapon used to undermine and resist the legitimacy of the ZANU-PF government. The latter theory is useful in understanding how this mode of resistance is produced and reproduced. The study revealed that the counter-narrative remains fairly consistent across generations. However, the present rather than the past is what is contested. The work modifies these theories and offers insight into this puzzle of memory.

The study was conducted from a phenomenological perspective. It focused on the ways in which respondents constructed meaning from the stories they told (Larkin and Thompson, 2012). The phenomena studied in this report were the ways in which the memory of a violent event is transmitted to different generations especially in conditions where people cannot publicly talk about it. Gukurahundi was used as a case study because it matched these specified conditions. The respondents referred to gukurahundi to make sense of the particular feeling of subjugation they experienced under the rule of the ZANU-PF government. A purposive sampling method was used to select respondents. Respondents had to be in Johannesburg and have some knowledge about gukurahundi, as well as know someone who was confronted by

the 5th Brigade soldiers. Five families participated in the research individuals were categorized into different generations so as to better understand how and when the memory of gukurahundi is transferred. The Khumalo family was central to the study because its members consisted of three individuals in different generations. Their narratives were elaborated on and contrasted with individuals in the other family groups. The researcher is a female Zimbabwean student. She is part Ndebele and relates to the context of the study.

The repressive political history of Zimbabwe informed special ethical considerations. Gukurahundi is a sensitive topic. Therefore, respondents were anonymized by assigned pseudonyms. Respondents gave consent to participate and to be recorded. Interviews were limited to respondents in Johannesburg. This limited the study in the following ways. The research population comprised of Zimbabwean migrants. Some of whom are in South Africa illegally. They expressed how they were in South Africa to seek employment opportunities because they felt ethnically discriminated. In South Africa, they assimilated more easily because of their Nguni ancestry and thus had better opportunities. Confessing to being Zimbabwean thus was regarded as a risk of being discriminated for their nationality. Therefore some people who would have been key respondents would not participate. I was unable to follow up on all the suggested people who had influenced a particular respondents knowledge on gukurahundi. This was because many of them were not in South Africa. Lastly, the sense of subjugation varied in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The Mfecane serves as a master narrative in which narratives of gukurahundi are derived because it is referred to as the genesis of the Ndebele nation. There are three competing narratives that represent the Ndebele people in ways that influence the logic of why gukurahundi happened. The first interpretation of gukurahundi is that is was a historic grudge (Nyere, 2016). The second is the view that interprets gukurahundi as an attempt to deal with political opposition, by weakening their leadership and support (Ngwenya, 2018). Lastly, the counter-narrative contained in oral tradition acknowledges the military prowess of the ethnic group however, it discredits some of the representations and claims made by the colonial and ZANU-PF governments. The past is used to secure control in the present (Lindgren, 2002). In this way, the people of Matebeleland believe that the reproduction of these misrepresentations of their identity and history has encouraged relentless efforts to oppress and marginalize them. Thus gukurahundi is connected to conversations about identity and belonging in Zimbabwe.

The ZANU-PF government and people of Shona ethnicity are regarded as the dominators and the people of Matebleleland, especially the Ndebele as the subordinates. The government is regarded as exercising repressive policies by silencing gukurahundi. Therefore conversations about it are disguised in public and serve to challenge the mechanisms in which domination attempts to naturalize itself (Scott, 1990). Resistance is launched in the hidden transcript through coded expressions of frustration and gukurahundi is an issue that is linked to this form of social action. However, Scott does not account for changes in the social conditions of subordinates as well as changes in their methods of resistance (Gutmann, 1993). Recently social media has carved a new space in which the hidden transcript is practiced. Also, the NPRC has shifted the public transcript. This has legitimated previously banned dialogue about gukurahundi to be expressed. However, members of the subordinate group are rejecting the managed forum and are uncompromising in their demands. The memory of gukurahundi was reproduced and maintained because it is understood as legitimate evidence to challenge the ZANU-PF government. This past is merely a platform to contest issues being experienced in the present. It is the sense of marginalization in the region that fosters the manifestation of the hidden transcript. The hidden transcript, however, is a contested space. This is because personal investment in Zimbabwe varies. Some desire a session from Zimbabwe. Others demand an apology from the government and varying forms of atonement. Whilst others express a sense of ambivalence about the current situation in Zimbabwe. Therefore conversations about Zimbabwe's future are associated with gukurahundi. This is because this violent event is used as a reference in which individuals imagine a better future and offers individuals an opportunity to articulate what this future should resemble.

Memory as a weapon of resistance in this case study is made and remade through verbal and non-verbal forms of communication in private spaces such as the family. Socializing structures within the institution of family influenced why and how often gukurahundi was discussed among family members (Hirsch, 1996). Hearing about the event reproduced bitter attitudes which united the family. However, contrasting attitudes and prejudice towards the Shona challenge the cohesion of the group. Individuals are given access to the past through testimonies by survivors and photographs. They are able to construct images and feelings using their imagination when narratives about gukurahundi are shared with them (Hirsch, 1996). In this way they remake their own memory of gukurahundi. However, not all individuals desire to reimagine what happened during gukurahundi. This and several other personal reasons can

limit the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is remade and shared with individuals across other generations. The generation gap was identified as a hindrance to the reproduction of the memory of gukurahundi. The younger generation did not fully mirror the attitudes and behaviors expressed by the older generation. This revealed that individuals need to either prioritize preserving the memory of gukurahundi by sharing it with other generations, or exercise caution and possibly limit talking about it to preserve relationships.

The focus of this study was to explore the ways in which the memory of gukurahundi is made and remade across different generations in repressive conditions. This violent event is interpreted as being associated with the people of Matebeleland's identity and history. Although the government systematically prohibited public activities and discussions about it, people continued to do so in disguised modes to undermine the ZANU-PF government. The shift in social conditions, however, has clearly demonstrated that the past is merely a fraction of the grievances that are expressed in the hidden transcript. The NPRC has extended the boundary of the hidden transcript to the public transcript. However, members of the hidden transcript are using this new territory to make demands to improve their lives and not completely cooperating with the government's leadership and facilitation of addressing gukurahundi.

It is the particular sense of suffering experienced by individuals in the present which enables them to draw parallels with the past. This suffering is experienced trans-generationally and it has persisted for years. This means that the hidden transcript is accessible to multiple generations at the same time. Once individuals are part of the network of resistance they become aware of the methods of subversion, the memory of gukurahundi being one. The impacts of the shift in the public transcript are difficult to determine at the moment.

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