Understanding the Impact of Green Violence on Ndali Village, Zimbabwe.

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Philosophy Degree

Development Studies

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Acknowledgments

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Abstract

The rise in poaching of wildlife such as the rhino and elephant in the Greater Limpopo Transboundary Park (GLTP) has led state actors to implement strict security measures to eradicate the 'problem of poachers.' A solution to that problem has been to adopt violent measures that coerce local communities around protected areas to conform to the regulations drafted by park authorities in the name of conservation. This research investigates the different forms of violence that are produced on communities around the Gonarezhou National Park which forms part of the GLTP. The research explored how conservation practices carried out by the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust impacts the lives of people around Ndali Village. The study uses the concept of green violence to highlight the violent nature of the conservation practices of protected areas. Secondly, the study uses political ecology approach to examine the relationship between villagers and the GNP in relation to the new arrangement of the management of the park and its impact on access to natural resource use. The results of the study were based on in-depth interviews carried out with a select group of participants and insights gained through informal conversations with villagers and participant observation. The findings of the study reveal that there is a sense of loss from most of the respondents particularly when it comes to the issue of accessing grazing resources and the redrawing of park boundaries that takes away parts of their communal land. The study also illustrates that in relation to accessing natural resources from the park, the villagers' use of wildlife for subsistence is not permitted and leads to prosecution when caught by park authorities. This has had a negative impact on the people of Ndali because subsistence hunting has been an important part of their lives. The restriction from hunting has seen members of the Ndali Village rely on agriculture and livestock rearing which is not improving their wellbeing because of the constant droughts in the area. The study presents evidence that while green violence may not result in direct physical violence, it takes different forms and poses risks for the people in Ndali Village who are dependent on GNP for subsistence and exposes them to indirect violence. This study contributes to debates on the impact of green violence on communities by presenting stories of how the violence manifests together with colonial dispossession.

Table of Contents

Acronyms

CITES	Convention of International Trade of Endangered Species
FZS	Frankfurt Zoological Society
GNP	Gonarezhou National Park
GLTP	Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park
GCT	Gonarezhou Conservation Trust
KNP	Kruger National Park
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
PA	Protected Area
SEL	South Eastern Lowveld
TFCA	Transfrontier Conservation Area
VIDCOS	Village Development Committee
ZIMPARKS	Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview of the problem.

Biodiversity and wildlife conservation are increasingly portrayed as a "war," where states are taking moral stances against poaching (Duffy, 2000; Lunstrum, 2016). Discourses that advocate for a militarised approach to conservation do not acknowledge the multifaceted complexities of the socio-economic and historical drivers of poaching. Historically coercive conservation practices have been prevalent in the creation of national parks in the southern African region (see Duffy, 2000) and East African region (Brockington & Igoe, 2006).To this day, states are still dominating control over resources, and with an increase in rhino and elephant poaching in southern Africa more violent tactics and use of force have been employed by state actors and international organisations (Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2014; Peluso, 1993). People living at the edges of protected areas carry the burden of these conservation practices, and the consequences of this range from dislocation of livelihoods, land dispossession and restriction of movement (Anderson et al, 2013). According to Lunstrum (2014), there is a growing trend in the southern African region of treating protected areas as sites of national security risks resulting in states adopting more violent approaches to control the problem of armed poaching, she has coined the practice as the 'militarization of conservation'. The employment of military equipment for conservation purposes over the years has intensified and conservationists and non-governmental organizations have been on the forefront in advocating for military practices to curb poaching and, in the process, this has seen a resurgence of 'fines and fences' approach to conservation (Brockington & Igoe, 2006, Hutton et. al, 2008).

Gonarezhou is an entry point because it forms part of the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park where use of violence has been a dominant strategy of conservation due to an increase in poaching in the Kruger National Park. The study explores if the violence experienced by communities around Kruger extends to other parts of the GLTP such as the GNP. Historically, there has been an obsession by conservation biologists with pristine wilderness, and most conservation strategies have been characterised by attempts to reserve places for nature by separating humans and wildlife species (Grove, 1995; Mackenzie, 1988; Adams, 2003).

In addition, communities that live at the edges of national parks are excluded in constitutional laws that regard nature and this has negatively impacted their lives (Songorwa et al., 2000; Duffy, 2000).

The sole expectation of conservation is the urgency of separating nature and culture as well as separation of the environment and the people that live off it. Some scholars have referred to this as the "fines and fences" or "fortress" approach to conservation (Minwary, 2009; Wilfred, 2010). The proponents of this approach argue that strict protection measures are required to ensure success in biodiversity conservation as it is a moral imperative.

The increase in poaching of elephants and rhino in Southern Africa has seen state actors moving away from fortress conservation to a more extreme measure of deploying military strategies to control poaching. GNP has the second largest population of elephants in Zimbabwe after the Hwange National Park and the state has implemented measures to curb the problems posed by poaching . Scholars such as Duffy(2000), Ramutsindela and Büscher (2014) and Lunstrum (2016) have heavily criticized this approach to conservation arguing that this strategy has considerable consequences for people as they are left to bear the impact as it does not consider socio-cultural factors (West et al., 2006). This study is located in political ecology and will discuss ways in which green violence is produced in the Ndali Village.

1.2 Background

The GNP in Zimbabwe is a site where military practices characterise biodiversity conservation as a means to control the problem of poaching in the GLTP. Communities around the GNP do not have access to the park, and this has led to tensions between park management and the Ndali Village. After Zimbabwe's National Parks and Wildlife Management (ZIMPARKS) failure to control poaching activities in the park, the Government of Zimbabwe temporally gave a 10-year contract to the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FSZ) to manage the park and help eradicate poachers in the area which led to the formation of the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust (GCT). During a press conference on 18th October 2017, one of the Trust's board members reported that they were aiming at reducing the rampant cases of poaching which were threatening the wildlife population in the country's second-largest national park (The Chronicle, 2017). The board member further asserted that the primary goal was to uplift the standards of the park and upgrade the conservation area to a level where there was a high degree

of confidence that all animal species were 'safe.' To ensure animal safety, an electric fence was erected around the park and additional game rangers were trained.

However, members of the Ndali Village had reservations about this development as some argued that they were never consulted and that the fence restricted access to natural resources for community members. On the other hand, some community members welcomed this initiative arguing that it guaranteed safety for their livestock from wildlife predators (The Chronicle, 2017). The current efforts by the park to protect wildlife appear not to adequately consider the social conflicts that lie beneath the surface of conservation issues around the GNP, nor do they create the necessary conditions for the productive transformation of the root causes of poaching.

To understand the current crisis in the protected areas in Southern Africa, it is essential to look at the history that created a wilderness imaginary devoid of humans, which resulted in people being evicted (Wolmer, 2007). While colonial and post-colonial era evictions have been intrinsically linked to pristine wilderness imaginaries, independent states such as South Africa and Zimbabwe have evicted and restricted people's access to natural resources from parks on the premises that the projects the governments are promoting will benefit locals (Neumann, 1998). The research is concerned with the violence that is perpetuated by this method of biodiversity conservation by focusing on the lived experiences of people in Ndali Village.

1.3 Research problem statement

Conservation policies frequently lead to the displacement of people from areas designated to protect endangered species. Such rules are hard for conservation experts to guard morally or politically (Agarwal and Redford, 2009). There is great concern amongst political ecologists on issues around poaching and trafficking which has prompted urgency of implementing tactics that will address the issue. One of the responses to tackle poaching has been to incorporate military practices as part of conservation. This approach to conservation has far-reaching consequences (Duffy, 2019; Lunstrum, 2014; Ramutsindela and Büscher, 2016). Thus, a critical engagement with this approach to conservation is needed. According to Duffy (2019), it is important that researchers identify and reflect on the challenges posed by violent approaches to conservation for people living next to national parks. Hence, it is important to consider whether these anti-poaching methods imposed on communities do not infringe on

people's human rights. The departing point would be to look at how poaching is defined by the parks and communities and examining different ways in which local communities experience green violence. This study seeks to understand the different ways the people of Ndali experience living next to GNP. The study will look at how different forms of violence are produced in the Ndali Village and the impact on their lives.

1.4 Significance of the study

Literature on the effects of 'green militarisation' show that violence is reproduced many times around protected areas (Büscher and Ramutsindela, 2015; Mushonga, 2018; Lunstrum, 2014; Duffy, 2019; Marijnen and Verweijen, 2016; Marijnen, 2017). These studies give various cases which share examples of violent dispossessions, policing coercive practices, enforcement of boundaries of protected areas and the marginalisation of communities on the fringes of national parks. This has been referred to as 'green violence' (Ramutsindela and Büscher, 2016), 'the deployment of violent instruments and tactics towards the protection of nature and various ideas and aspirations related to nature conservation' and Lunstrum (2014) refers to it as green militarisation. This study seeks to add to current debates on the impact of green violence by focusing on the village of Ndali so that state actors can implement policies of conservation that are less detrimental to the lives of the people. Hence, as we try to counter the problem of green violence, it is crucial that realities of conservation-based violence practices are carefully represented, and the voice of local people heard and understood. This study is significant in its endeavour to contribute to policy implementation and scholarship. It contributes to the ongoing debates around human rights in wildlife protected areas and adds towards a framework for developing policies that considers the wellbeing of people. In regard to scholarship, this study will broaden evidence of green violence and the impact it has on the people residing in the Ndali Village.

1.5 Research questions.

The research seeks to explore villagers' experiences on the new Gonarezhou National Park management's conservation policies. The main question this research aims to study is, what are the lived experiences of people in Ndali Village concerning conservation practices implemented by Gonarezhou National Park management?

The sub-questions that follow are:

1. How do people of Ndali view the fencing of the Gonarezhou National Park?
2. What do the people around Ndali say about the new management of the National Park?
3. What is the nature of relations between people in the Ndali community and the Gonarezhou National Park?
4. What forms of violence have been experienced by local people as a result of conservation practices by the GNP?

1.5.1 Research aim and objectives

The main aim of this study is to understand the impact of green violence on the lives of the Ndali villagers. This will be captured through the experiences shared with the researcher. The objectives of this study are to examine how people of Ndali view the fencing of the national park. Secondly, to investigate the nature of violence that is experienced by the Ndali villagers as a result of conservation practices by the GNP. Thirdly, to understand the nature of relations between the Ndali Village and the GNP, and finally, to explore how the people of Ndali view the new management of the park.

1.6 Methodology

The next section will discuss the methods that were employed to conduct fieldwork and analysis for this study. The research used qualitative research design approach to answer the research questions. The study focused on the experiences and views of the villagers in Ndali with regards to green violence in the context of Gonarezhou National Park in Zimbabwe.

1.6.1 Research design

The context of fieldwork and the form of research questions play a vital role in determining the methodological orientation of any research. The nature of the research questions and the fieldwork context should also play an important role in informing the choice of research methods that are going to be employed (Silverman, 2005). Qualitative research design approach was used to capture lived experiences of conservation-based violence by people in Ndali Village. Qualitative methods are used when the goal of the research is to understand the world by interpreting the perceptions, actions, and meanings of its respondents (Brockington & Sullivan, 2003). The understanding is created through the interaction of the researcher and the community in question in such a way that the researcher must not be objective but rather be part of everyday lives by participating and empathising with the researched. Thus, this study employed a qualitative inquiry of phenomenological approach.

A phenomenological study focuses on describing what all participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon . The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence (Cresswell,2013).Phenomenology enables the researcher to explore a phenomenon with a group of individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. Thus, a heterogeneous group is identified that may vary in size from 3 to 4 individuals to 10 to 15 (Cresswell, 2013). Ndali Village was selected as the research site because it is located next to GNP boundary fence; and easy access to some of the villagers through a colleague. This made it easy for me to navigate the area with the assistance of the host family. The rationale of selecting the site will be discussed in detail later.

Selected members of Ndali Village were asked about their experiences with the national park in order to understand the impact of green violence. The study used qualitative data collection methods of participant observation, insights gained from informal conversations and in depth-interviews. This provided data for analysis. The data obtained was in the form of quotations that were extracted from interviews and descriptions from the observations made by the researcher.

1.6.2 Data collection

Participant Observation

To get a grasp of the Ndali villagers' experiences and understandings of conservation, the study used a qualitative method of participant observation. The justification of using this approach was that it allowed the researcher to experience living within the community and culture and

experiencing the everyday-lived realities of living next to a National Park. Conducting interviews alone would not have provided the richness my research required. I lived with the community from 5 May 2019 to 8th July 2019 and completely immersed myself in the lives of the villagers of Ndali to get an in-depth understanding of their experiences with the conservation practices of GNP. The study does acknowledge that a few months in the field was a short time to have a clearer picture, but in-depth interviews with a select group of participants provided insights on how villagers in Ndali access natural resources and the impact of GNP fencing on the village.

Participant observation involves a process of observing, analysing and describing activities the researcher is engaged with. Schensul & LeCompte (1999) define participant observation as a process of learning through the involvement and exposure of day to day routine activities of respondents in a research setting. Similarly, Genzuk (1993), argues that the researcher's experience of becoming a full participant depends partially on the type of nature that is being observed. Thus, the extent to which one can participate is a broad spectrum in which it is possible to engage in "doing" and sometimes only watch what others do. In my case, I participated in cattle herding, fetching water at the borehole, cutting poles for cattle pens and attending village gatherings. Crang and Cook (2007) assert that a short period of observation can produce valuable understandings to contribute to the analysis. Although I spent a short period in Ndali, I gained insights and understanding of the villagers' experiences with conservation practices of the GNP.

In Depth Interviewing

Along with participant observation, the study employed a qualitative tool of in-depth interviews. The chief of the area helped me secure interviews with some of the community members. Interviewing is an important part of qualitative data collection (Crang & Cook, 2007). Interviews enabled the researcher to gain understandings of the experiences and meanings by the respondents. Conversations with respondents allowed me to construct understandings of the meanings they give to the erection of a fence around the park as well as the social relations and perceptions around its new management. This type of information could not have been extracted or comprehensible had I not had meaningful interaction with the villagers. As discussed earlier, the time I spent in the village was not sufficient to get insights on the lived experiences of the Ndali villagers, therefore it was imperative that I used the stories

of the villagers to ensure the richness of my data. Semi-structured or in-depth interviewing is often used in qualitative research because it is a more flexible method of data collection than predetermined questionnaires (Frey and Fontana, 2000). To ensure that no important points are left out, I had a checklist of critical topics that would enable respondents to answer the research questions.

1.6.3 Respondent selection

The research made use of the purposive sampling method, which Bryman (2012) argues allows the researcher to select respondents that have the required information which will aid in answering the research question. Therefore, respondents are selected because they are informative, or they have the required characteristics. Given this statement, the research question was concerned with respondents that lived in Ndali Village. The following characteristics guided me in the selection of the respondents for the study. Firstly, the respondent must have been born in the Village or at least have been staying there for more than ten years. Secondly, all the respondents must have knowledge about the history of the National Park. Lastly, potential respondents in Ndali were expected to be drawn from respondents that were in the 10km radius of the GNP boundaries. This was decided at the beginning of the research process as the best strategy to get insights on the experiences of green violence on the Ndali Village. According to Dolores and Tongco (2007), to find knowledgeable and reliable respondents, one must know about the culture of the respondents and asking help from the community being studied will be useful. For instance , my relationship with one of the community leaders in Ndali enabled me to get respondents who had the desired characteristics discussed above.

The justification of using purposive sampling method was that the time spent in the field was relatively short and using other methods of selecting respondents would have taken more time. Before the field data collection, my ideal sample-size was estimated at 10 to 15 interviews but ended up using interview data of twelve respondents this was due to a number of factors which included time constraints and the sufficiency of information collected. This was a significant number of respondents as it enabled the researcher to identify potential trends. It was important that I had deep conversations with the respondents as this enabled me to identify the different forms of violence that people experienced in Ndali.

The challenges of using the purposive method are that the researcher exercises judgment on the respondent's competency and reliability (Bryman, 2012). This is a concern particularly in regard to key respondents on whom much of the data quality rest. It was critical for this study to be certain of the knowledge of the respondents and as discussed, the community leader helped me to identify respondents who were knowledgeable about the Ndali village.

Through data presentation, the respondents will be referred to by their assigned codes: N standing for Ndali. Since they were twelve participants, the codes N1-N12 will be used to protect their identity. Participants were aged between 26 to 70, and of those, three were community leaders; two were unemployed; three were elderly people who were born and raised in the village and the last three respondents were cattle herders. Only one woman was a respondent in the study because of the society's structure where women remove themselves from male gatherings .

1.6.4 Data analysis

The data gathered in the research was analysed using Thematic Analysis. This is a method used to analyse and describe themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79). It explores the understanding of an issue or the signification of an idea as relayed by participants. Thematic analysis provides a structure of how themes are organised and allows flexibility in the analysis of data, which enables interpreting of the research topic. (Braun & Clarke, 2006).To identify themes codes were applied to new paragraphs of the transcript, the already coded text was reviewed to make sure that the idea of the themes matched. This was achieved by writing memos on the exact definitions of the codes and helped distinguish them from each other and this allowed to push forward the process of analytical thinking. In the end the whole data was reviewed several times by repeatedly splitting and combining different themes with the help of NVIVO a software for qualitative data. Thematic analysis also served well for bringing up the different meanings held by respondents. Thus, the use of thematic analysis allowed me to capture and organize the data into patterns that provided meaning and answers to the research question.

1.6.5 Research limitations

The study had a number of limitations. First is the limitation of choosing depth over breadth which is a major feature in qualitative research. In-depth meanings generated from qualitative methods cannot be generalised to a larger population because of the smaller sample that was used, thus, the sample was not representative of the larger population. Secondly, the Village of Ndali is patriarchal so it was a challenge to have conversations with women. Most women were not forthcoming in expressing their opinions. Each time when their husbands were present during interview sessions, they could not fully communicate and would give their husbands the platform to answer topics that were related to them as women. I overcame this by going to public spaces where both men and women interacted.

Language was a limitation in this research. Being a Shona man studying a mostly Shangani community had its data collection restrictions. Some villagers were not comfortable speaking Shona even if they could and insisted that I learn to speak Shangani before I interviewed them. Therefore, to overcome the language barrier I learnt how to greet, approach and express gratitude. This enabled me to build rapport with the respondents and breaking the ethnicity barrier. I worked with a Shangani man whom I was living with and he helped with translations into Shona and English. Thus, translation solved the problem of language. However, the research does acknowledge that there was a risk that translation from Shangani to Shona or English would lose meaning of experiences being shared.

Qualitative research is interested in understanding rather than generalising findings to a larger group (Cresswell, 2013). By using a small sample, I managed to gain an in-depth insight of the impact of green violence on the lives of the people residing in Ndali village. The strength of a qualitative approach is that one can be able to gather rich lived experience data in the form of text, something which a quantitative approach cannot do.

1.6.6 Positionality

The relationship between the researcher and the researched should be managed carefully so that any perceptions and biases of the researcher must not be projected onto the community they are studying (Newton and Parfitt, 2011). Being an outsider in Ndali immediately put me as the researcher in a position of power and scepticism. Villages around the GNP has been over

researched and there is this perception by the local people that educated outsiders are more intelligent and more knowledgeable, and the consequence is that it tips the power dynamic towards the researcher. Not all villagers were welcoming because of my Shona ethnicity. However, I overcame this by building trust and relationships with the local participants to create a viable environment for data collection (Newton & Parfitt, 2011)**.** To reduce this division between myself as the researcher and the locals, I was staying with one of the families in the village and tried to adopt as much of the local lifestyles as possible. In the case of Ndali, this included fetching water from the borehole, fetching wood for fuel, learning some of the Shangani greetings, dressing appropriately and being approachable to anyone who wanted to have conversations with me.

1.6.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues were adhered to during data collection. Prior to my research I received a research ethics approval letter from my department, to carry out field work. When I arrived at the site, I requested permission from the local police and the chief to conduct research in the village, and both parties were briefed on the research objectives. Informing the police was important as Ndali villagers have reservations when it comes to strangers living amongst them. I was informed that previously three men were convicted for poaching and these men were in the village for two weeks scouting the boundary area. The police wanted assurance that I was not an informant of some poaching syndicate. I gave them my ethics and letter of introduction from my institution. Respondents were also informed about the study before they participated. I also gave all respondents a platform to ask questions or issues they needed clarity on and informed them that this research was only for academic purposes and that no incentives will be given. Verbal consent was given as the most respondents were not comfortable to sign anything. I also asked for consent to interact with children whom I went cattle herding with from their parents ,whom I was also staying with.It should be noted that my interaction with these children was part of my observations and informal conversations I had with them.

To ensure privacy, the names of respondents were not required for the process . I created codes that identified each respondent. Because of the sensitive nature of the research, interview transcripts will not be shared to protect participants' confidentiality.

The topic of the research and the methods that were employed did not put any participants at risk or any form of harm (Punch, 2014). The biggest concern I had was to ensure that people's participation did not impinge on their daily activities and responsibilities. Respondents were alerted three days before their interview, and a suitable time agreed upon. The interviews were conducted at the participants' homesteads or fields to any inconvenience. Also, to prevent any exploitation of the respondents, the data collection process was made as transparent and participatory as possible.

1.7 The research site overview

Locating Ndali Village and the Gonarezhou National Park

The research was interested in locating villages bordering GNP, and Ndali is one of these villages. It was a rational choice because I knew some of the community leaders in the area, so it made it easy for me to look for a family to stay with and navigate the ways of the Shangani people in the Village.

Ndali Village consists of five Village Development Committees (VIDCOS) namely Tinhongeni, Chitsanzeni, Chitete, Machinzu and Sasekani. VIDCOS were established by the post-colonial government to transform traditional jurisdictions and as an attempt to reorient the political identities of rural communities away from local forms of authority to a modern national state (Wolmer, 2003). The five communities in Ndali are located on different ends of the park and during the research, I interacted with four of the VIDCOs. The village has a police station; clinic; one primary school and two secondary schools.

Ndali consists of descendants of Shangaan migrants who moved up from the south during the 19th century. The Shangaan people in Zimbabwe form a small minority of the national population and their territory isolated from the rest of the country. Ndali villagers engage in livestock, subsistence and cash crop farming. Sorghum and maize are the main commercial and subsistence. Ndali is a dry area and at the time the research was conducted, there was an ongoing drought. Because of water shortage, residents rely on few boreholes installed by different NGOs.

Grazing is a major challenge and residents have to go farther afield to graze cattle, and I experienced this in my second week in the field. Community leadership is hierarchical. The chief oversees the day to day running of the community with the help of the councillor and the police staff.

Figure 1. A homestead in Ndali village

To understand the context in which the Ndali community exists it is important to introduce the reader to GNP. GNP is Zimbabwe's second-largest protected area and covers 5,023km. It is an integral part of one of the largest conservation areas in the world, the Greater Limpopo Transfrontier Park (Wolmer, 2007). The GLTP connects protected areas of South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe and covers about 35000 square kilometres. Gonarezhou means

‘place of elephants’ in Zimbabwe’s Shona language. The population of elephants in the park is estimated at around 10,000 (Gonarezhou Trust, 2018). However, GNP is the least visited in the country resulting in poor revenue collection, and this has forced the Zimbabwe National Parks (ZimParks) to partner in joint ventures with different NGOs such as the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FSZ).

In 2007, ZimParks invited the Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) to support GNP. FZS supported the development of a 10-year General Management Plan through a consultative stakeholder process which did not involve community members. This was after failed attempts by the government to control poaching activities in the park. For this reason, the FZS serves as a blueprint for all management activities. The introduction of rhinos was one of the main objectives of the Gonarezhou Conservation Project but had human resources challenges. “Exploring options to finance staff salaries and based on the trust between FZS and the Zimbabwean wildlife management authority, the idea of the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust (GCT) was born” (Gonarezhou Conservation Trust, 2018). The GCT is a local registered Trust in Zimbabwe with a mandate to assume management responsibility of the GNP

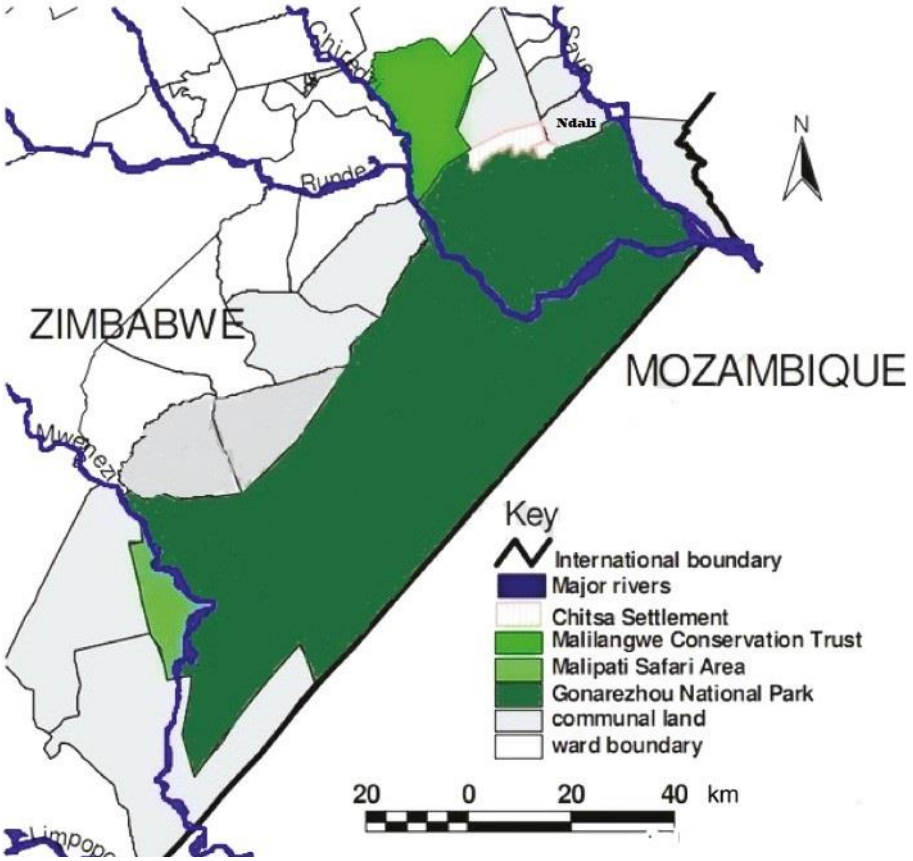

Figure 2 Source: Map of Gonarezhou National Park and Ndali

1. 8 Thesis outline

Chapter 1 has introduced the study problem, the aims and objectives that the study seeks to achieve. Below is a summary of the thesis chapters.

Chapter 2 focuses on the concepts that this study engaged with , that are framed within political ecology and green violence . It shows how some scholars have framed conservation-based violence and discusses emerging debates around green violence and illustrates how this study engages with these discussions. Firstly, it will situate the discussions on violence and conservation in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe and shows how violence in Zimbabwe's protected areas is related to the problem of land ownership and poaching. Secondly, it will show how economic and political issues inform the use of violence in conservation practise. Thirdly, it illustrates that the implementation of violence in conservation is part of a broader national initiative to control poaching in protected areas. It is against these discussions that the rest of the study seeks its scholarship contribution by showing different forms of violence produced around protected areas and the impact it has on people.

Chapter 3 presents the empirical findings of the study and the narratives shared by the people of Ndali Village as well as the researcher's experiences in the field. Through themes, the chapter shows that the people of Ndali have different experiences of living next to GNP. There is a sense of loss from most respondents particularly when it comes to the issue of accessing resources and the redrawing of boundaries that takes away parts of their communal land. The study reveals that in regard to accessing natural resources from the park, the villagers' use of wildlife for subsistence is not permitted and leads to prosecution when caught by park authorities. This has had a negative impact on the people of Ndali because subsistence hunting has been an important part of their lives. This restriction to hunting has seen members of the Ndali Village rely on agriculture which is not improving their wellbeing because of the constant droughts in the area. It is through these experiences that the research discusses how violence is produced in different forms in Ndali.

Chapter 4 discusses the themes that emerged from the study by elaborating and discussing them in relation to the research problem and objectives, and within the context of existing literature, critically engaging with debates that have been raised in the study. The chapter discusses the different forms of violence produced in Ndali Village and the effect it has on people. It discusses the different forms of green violence as developed by Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) and draws on a framework for understanding conservation-based violence in protected areas as theorised by Mushonga (2018). The chapter ends by presenting the broader thesis argument.

Chapter 2: Conceptual overview and literature review.

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one has introduced the study problem and the aims and objectives that the study seeks to achieve. This chapter locates the study in political ecology by focusing on current debates around the use of violence in protected areas. The first part of this chapter is going to discuss the concepts that this study engaged with and show how scholars have framed conservation and violence in protected areas. Second, the chapter will locate the discussions on violence and conservation in colonial and post-colonial Zimbabwe's South East-Lowveld and show how violence in this region is related to land ownership. Third, it will show how economic and political issues inform the use of violence in conservation practise. Fourth, it will illustrate that the implementation of violence in conservation is part of a broader national initiative to control poaching in protected areas. Given this, the Chapter seeks to illustrate how violence has been framed in conservation practises in Protected Areas.

2.2 Political ecology

Political ecologists assert that the creation of protected areas is a form of enclosure. The establishment of protected areas has separated use of natural resources and ownership from local communities by giving absolute powers to the states. To understand the relationship of nature and society, this study employs the concept of political ecology. The study used the concept based on key tenets of political ecology. Two assumptions underpin the practice of political ecology (Bryant & Sinead, 1997). The first assumption highlights the uneven distribution of benefits and costs concerning environmental change and concludes that societies are not affected the same way within a broader context of environmental change but instead, it is the socio-economic and political differences that account for uneven distribution of cost and benefits. Hence, this uneven distribution inevitably re-inscribes or escalates the existing social and economic inequalities. In light of this, political ecology as a concept is embedded in the political economy as changes in the environment affect the political and economic arenas (Bryant & Bailey,1997). Second, the unequal distribution of costs and benefits has extreme effects on the shift of power that now exists within society. This

approach is useful for this study as it will unpack how some institutional changes result in exposure of people to impoverishment, as is the case of Ndali.

In addition, the social construction of nature is also a facet of political ecology which helps scholars analyse conservation. This study focuses on the way violence has become the dominant conservation strategy in protected areas and the impact this has had on the Ndali community. To understand this dynamic, the engagement with historical processes is important in the creation of a sound model of conservation practise that considers the lives of people living next to protected areas. Hence, the research is located within a political ecology approach and analytical framework. The different definitions of political ecology draw our attention to the fact that conservation must be understood in the context of broader social, economic and political relationships that underpins it. The political ecology framework challenges those who seek to depoliticize nature conservation (Peluso & Watts, 2001; Robbins, 2004).

The study acknowledges the pitfalls of using the political ecology approach. Political ecology as a working concept has been critiqued for privileging politics and power relations, completely disregarding ecological factors that might influence change in the environment (Vayda & Walters, 1999). Political ecologists have explored linkages to resource scarcity as a factor in conflict. However, it is at the interface of scarcity as a result of state appropriation or elite capture of key resources at the expense of other groups that may be living within or in proximity to these resources (Robbins, 2004). Overall, the political ecology approach situates such violence in the broader political economy – in other words the prevailing economic, social and political context with which violence takes form.

2.3 Conceptualising green violence and how it is legitimised in protected areas.

Literature on green violence have solely focused on the physical, material violence that is frequently associated with militarized conservation in Southern Africa, such as land dispossession, forced evictions and shoot to kill orders that normally targets poachers (Neumann 2004; Duffy 2014; Lunstrum 2016). Recently, there have been a significant shift from physical and material violence towards discursive and social forms of green violence (Büscher and Ramutsindela 2016). Such work has begun to emphasize the relationship between conservation and indirect, structural forms of violence.

Green violence is located in political ecology and enables us to identify different forms of violence produced in PAs. Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) define green violence as "the deployment of violent instruments and tactics towards the protection of nature and various ideas and aspirations related to nature conservation" .This form of violence is prevalent in Southern Africa where the employment of heavy military tools and technologies has long been connected with colonial and post-colonial efforts in the protection of wildlife. They develop the concept of green violence to discuss issues on broader conservation-based violence. Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) use the case of the GLTP and activities of the Peace Parks Foundation by drawing our attention to three forms of green violence, namely, material, social and discursive, which, they argue, best describe the strategies employed by Peace Parks to pursue their objectives and aspirations of conservation. According to Anderson et al. (2012) Peace Parks are supposed to address the socio-economic interests of local people and be spaces of regional integration. However, in developing green violence, Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) argue that the agenda of the Peace Parks is in contradiction on what it was created for, particularly due to the presence of violence in Peace Parks areas. Building on broadening the notion of green violence, the study thus, interrogates the nuances of green violence in Ndali Village.

The concept of green violence' offers a different take on Lunstrum's (2014) development of green militarization, which she described as 'the use of military and paramilitary personnel, training, technologies, and partnerships in the pursuit of conservation efforts. Green violence denotes material and non-material aspects of violence and the way violence takes the social and linguistic forms (Ramutsindela & Büscher, 2015).This concept recognizes that green violence consists of different forms, but the prominent violent practices in protected areas are social, material and discursive. For it to achieve environmental goals social violence is employed to socially control people's behaviour towards nature. Thus, social violence relates to effects that social orders (local, national or global) bring to bear on people, for example, " through institutions that protect some and expose others to the brutal vectors of economic and political power, but also through images and practices that do violence to the moral order" (Büscher and Ramutsindela, 2015). Material violence mirrors Lunstrum (2016) green militarisation and emphasise on the use of warfare techniques. Discursive violence entails how media depicts conservation, demonizing people who threaten the status quo of sustainable conservation methods. The justification of employing green violence in this study is that it will

help in showcasing the impact of conservation objectives and aspirations of the GNP authorities on the lives of people in Ndali Village.

To understand the different forms of violence that is produced in protected areas , this study also adopted a framework that was developed by Mushonga (2018). In her thesis Mushonga argues that green violence as a concept need to be expanded to unpack the different textures to which violence in protected areas takes form. She further argues that the adoption of warfare techniques as a means of conservation expands the different forms of violence that is experienced by local people from direct-physical violence to other textures of social, symbolic, occupational, economic and cultural violence. Mushonga's (2018) argues that conservation-based violence is first a structural issue before it translates into green violence. Policies and institutions that govern protected areas can be construed as "invisible forms of violence with significant implications for hidden and slow-paced economic, social and cultural disadvantages" (Mushonga, 2018). The use of military tools to enforce policies that manage resources shows us that the state and conservation agents become the apparatus of direct violence through their anti-poaching initiatives.

Biodiversity conservation, both in theory and in practice presents challenges for ecologists. Ecologists have argued whether or not the preservation of natural resources for conservation purposes is a viable strategy, particularly in the developing world, where most communities that live around the national park rely on the natural resources being preserved (Hill,1991). The major push for these conservation strategies has been the 'environmental crisis' narrative which has justified highly protectionist policies that limit human presence and has influenced the international community to prioritize biodiversity protection, in turn disproportionally affecting the locals (Anderson & Grove, 1987; Wolmer, 2007; Leach & Mearns, 1996). In the developing world, the role of the environment provides a screen with which European identities and narratives are projected and adapted (Wolmer, 2007). The long-dominant conservation approach narrative in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Global South has been to reserve vast land spaces for nature by separating humans and wildlife (Hutton, Adams & Murombedzi, 2005). To achieve this, states have adopted coercive tools in order to control the locals.

The state and non-state actors' use of violence to achieve conservation goals have been critiqued by scholars like (Anderson, 2004; Lunstrum, 2015). Recently, literature on biodiversity conservation has been addressing what Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) term 'green violence. As discussed earlier, green violence is '*the deployment of violent instruments*

and tactics towards the protection of nature.' Their work predominantly focused on the violence exercised by the state and conservation agents on the people living next to protected areas. Thus, there is a growing body of literature in this respect that addresses the effects of employing military tactics, weaponry and park authorities to monitor protected areas against 'intrusion' by communities close to PAs who extract natural resources and wildlife which has been called by various scholars as 'green militarisation' or 'green security' (Duffy 2014; Lunstrum, 2014; Duffy et al., 2015; Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2016; Kelly & Ybarra, 2016). The increase in poaching in Sub-Saharan Africa has heightened green grabbing which is defined as the expropriation of land and resources for environmental ends (Fairhead, Leache & Scoones, 2012). resulting in conservationists and state agents exercising violence and drafting punitive laws for the locals 'illegally' extracting natural resources. This practice is driven by narratives of an imaginative pristine wilderness that often originates from Eurocentric views of nature. Therefore, communities living on the fringes of national parks have often been portrayed as sites of insecurity by the state and NGOs (Büscher, 2016; Lunstrum, 2017) and need regulating.

Debates about the relationship between state and conservation practices show conflicts between dominant notions of nature's protection and locals' possibilities of making a living (Neumann, 1998; Rocheleau, 2015). As some scholars have posited for the case of Africa, ''violence against people is latent in the practice of state-directed wildlife conservation" (Neumann, 2001; Büscher & Ramutsindela, 2015). This form of violence is evident in physical violence against local populations, as well as in restrictions to resource access and control, as seen in most protected areas in Southern and East Africa (Brockington, 2002; Büscher, 2012). This study is concerned with the tactics of the state and conservation practices that regard communities living at the edge of PAs as intruders, restricting their access to natural resources such as land and water and often resulting in their criminalization. What all this literature has in common is the physical violence that the state imposes on people. However, for the scope of this study, I will use various levels of violence found in the work developed by Ramutsindela and Büscher (2015), who asserted that violence can be categorised into material, social and discursive.

Firstly, strategies around conservation have been characterised by attempts to reserve places for nature by separating humans and species (Grove, 1995; Mackenzie, 1988; Adams, 2003). With an increase in poaching of elephants and rhino in the past few years, states have been working closely with various international organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations to tackle the 'problem' and the solution has been the return to protectionist

conservation policies, which Hutton et al (2005) refer to as ‘back to the barriers’. Zimbabwe’s Natural Resources Act of 1944 is an example of the fortress approach law driven by the narrative that people living around protected areas were a threat to biodiversity conservation. Hence it was imperative to protect nature from overexploitation by human activity and to maintain a pristine wilderness (Alexander & McGregor, 2000). The “fortress” approach model is grounded by assumptions that people over-utilize natural resources and that there need to be regulation to monitor people’s activities (Hutton, Adams & Murombedzi, 2011). The global conservation discourse does not regard people living in and around national parks as nature (Songorwa et al., 2000). Thus, the primary expectation of conservation is the ideation of separating nature and culture (Minwary, 2009; Wilfred, 2010). This protectionist approach consists of command-and-control type activities and subtle restriction to accessing natural resources. Some of these are still seen today in the communities that live close to PAs.

Secondly, to understand how violence is produced and legitimized in protected areas it is essential to look at colonial conservation practices that legitimized the use of violence to monitor resources. During the colonial era in Sub-Saharan Africa, there was a tremendous interest in sport hunting while subsistence hunting was regarded as poaching, and this gave birth to the idea of nature reserves (Wolmer, 2007; Colchester, 1994). Conservationists established these nature reserves in response to the challenges they faced in managing the natural resources particularly human activities that involved the extraction of natural resources. This idea of nature reserves resulted in safari hunting areas classified as protected wilderness. The negative impact on communities who live at the fringes of the national park has been well documented by (Tavuyanago, 2016; Anecke & Masubele, 2016; Mombeshora & Lebel, 2009; Wilkie et al., 2006). Research highlights how communities close to boundaries of protected areas are disproportionally affected by these conservation practices and this generates resentment towards the park's management. Consequently, the people no longer have any interest in protecting wildlife and often have retaliated by having a negative attitude towards conservation (Colchester, 1991). Destruction of crops, depredation of livestock, and attack of local people by animals are some of the costs borne by communities living close to these protected areas (Neumann, 2004). Thus, for the colonial state, the use of violence was the only way that would control the communities around these areas.

In Zimbabwe, coercive and military interventions started to emerge after its independence in 1980. There was an increase in poaching in the Zambezi valley by suspected armed Zambian armed poachers. To tackle this issue, the new government deployed the army in these areas as

this was seen as a national security threat on Zimbabwean's boarders and this led to the militarisation of elephant and animal conservation (Duffy, 2000). During this period, more rangers were trained and assigned to kill 'poachers,' with the support of the army and police. However, the implementation of military tactics to control poaching saw many innocent local people suspected of being poachers killed (Mushonga, 2018). Thus, the conservation model adopted by the Zimbabwean government treated local people's traditional rights of use and access as encroachment and poaching (Wolmer, 2000). The ZimParks officials argued that the rangers were instructed not to shoot poachers but rather to identify. The literature on the close relationship between violence and the production of protected areas has shown that conservation operates as a powerful mechanism for asserting state power (Brockington, 2002; Lunstrum, 2014; Massé & Lunstrum, 2016). I argue that this shows the complexities and contentions of the category poaching. How does one identify a poacher? What does a poacher look like? All these questions can only be answered based on the definition of poaching used. According to Duffy (2000), in the 1990s more people were killed compared to rhinos. Thus, the killing of people for conservation in the 1990s mirrors the conservation regime of colonial times that valued the well-being of animals over people. The next section provides a historical overview on conservation policies in colonial and post - colonial Zimbabwe.

2.4 The history of conservation policies in Zimbabwe.

To understand the current conservation policies in the Southern African region as discussed above, Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) argue that it is important to look at the genealogy of violence during colonialism. When GNP was established, it became a militarised space in which the colonial government clashed with the liberation fighters who were living in villages surrounding GNP (Wolmer, 2007). To win people's support, the liberation fighters were against colonial notions of conservation and used it to recruit people to the nationalist cause. However, after independence, the commitment of maintaining the pristine wilderness vision was retained and communities around the GNP resented the government. My research acknowledges that GNP has been a site of large-scale commercial poaching of elephants and rhinos because of its turbulent history and in response to the crisis, the state has embarked on a joint venture with the FSZ to manage it.

At the onset of colonialism, the colonial state introduced laws and systems that managed land and natural resource use (Chimhowu & Hulme, 2006). Conservation policies in the colonial

era were political and characterized by the politics of oppression, race and power. These policies persist today in Zimbabwe and explain how the state and conservation agents tackle conservation issues. The conservation regime in Zimbabwe is inextricably linked to land tenure and use rights (Rihoy, 1998). The colonial government introduced the system of land tenure which was a dual system. Thus, there was one system for the settlers and the other system for the Africans. My research will focus on the land tenure system of what the colonial state framed 'National Land.'

According to Wolmer (2007), 'National Land' was land reserved for establishing national parks and protected areas. Communities around these areas including the Ndali villagers, resented the conservation practices of the state as they perceived that the state valued animals over humans. To make way for these new developments, local communities living close to the parks were forcibly removed from these sites and relocated to areas that were not viable for agriculture (Tavuyanago, 2016; Mombeshora, 2009). It is at this juncture that wildlife in colonial Zimbabwe was regarded as the state property. Local communities living next to national parks relied on the natural resources for food before it was criminalised by new laws. On the other hand, trophy hunting was permitted in protected areas. This tenure system is a clear indication that the wildlife was reserved for the gaze of the colonial masters, whereas the African people's traditional way of living was demonized and criminalised. This ties in with Wolmer (2003) who argues that the Eurocentric view on the African land harmed the African people. For Africans, the land inside the protected areas was a hub where they can interact with wildlife and vegetation to sustain their livelihoods, whereas for the West, it was an obsession of a pristine environment that needed to be protected from the activities of humans.

The land that GNP covers historically belonged to the Shangaan people. To pave the path for the creation of the GNP and to meet conservation purposes, the colonial government took the land that Shangaan people occupied and forcibly relocated them to 'Native Reserves,' and the Chitsa[1] communities were victims (Murombedzi, 2003). According to (Mombeshora and Le Bel, 2009) during the period of the 1890s up until the creation of GNP in 1934, the area that belonged to the Chitsa people was a fragment of the controlled hunting area. The Chitsa people in the past had been hunting wild animals for food but at the advent of colonialism, the hunting of wild animals for food or sport was illegalized unless one had a permit (Mombeshora and Le Bel 2009). Wolmer (2007) asserted that the move to establish the Victoria Publicity

[1] Ndali community falls under the Chitsa clan. Chitsa people in this context refers to the Ndali Village.

Association strongly advocated a game reserve in the area by the colonial government on the basis that it was going to bring development in the province (Wolmer 2007).

Gonarezhou Game Reserve was officially declared a Game Reserve in 1934 and there were some reservations from the white farmers who believed having wildlife close to their ranches was going to spread the tsetse fly and affect their cattle (Mombeshora Le Bel, 2009; Murombedzi, 2003 & Scoones et al., 2012). It was not only the cattle ranchers that resisted the establishment of the game reserve but also smallholder farmers who feared that they were going to be displaced from the areas that were marked to be part of the reserve. The clashes between the local communities around Gonarezhou and the ZimParks still transpire today, with pre-colonial and colonial land claims designated for national parks being reasserted in many areas (Murombedzi, 2003). Notably, the creation of the game reserves came with a cost. A significant number of Africans were forcibly removed from these areas and relocated to locations that were not arable and overcrowded. For instance, in their research, Murombedzi and Le Bel (2009) claimed that the creation of the Gonarezhou Game Reserve saw 1500 families being displaced and were relocated to a native reserve that was overcrowded. Undoubtedly, one can argue that nature conservation during this period diminished or restricted access to natural resources for the local communities around the reserves.

Years later, there was a problem of tsetse flies in the SEL of Zimbabwe, and this saw the deproclamation of the Gonarezhou Game Reserve (Mombeshora and Le Bel 2009; Wolmer, 2007). In 1956 the Chitsa land that was not part of the game reserve was incorporated in Gonarezhou and this redrawing of the boundaries escalated disputes between the chiefs and the responsible authorities (Murombedzi, 2003; Mombeshora & Le Bel, 2009). To avoid the Chitsa community encroaching into the new boundaries, the authorities erected a veterinary fence that separated Chitsa land known as Seven Jack in colonial times and the Gonarezhou Game Reserve. There was an outbreak of the tsetse fly in the Seven Jack area in 1962 and this saw the Chitsa people being displaced to make way for controlling the outbreak and were resettled in Sangwe Communal Land (Mombeshora & Le Bel, 2009; Wolmer, 2007). The Chitsa people were promised that once the tsetse problem solved, they were to return to their land. The colonial government that time installed some boreholes, and they loaned the area the Chitsa were occupying to a cattle farmer for grazing purposes (Wolmer, 2003).

Consequently, a fence was put up in 1974 over their land. In the 1970s, the liberation war struggle in Zimbabwe was at its peak and Gonarezhou was a warzone and to avoid the locals

supporting the guerrillas the Chitsa people who were relocated to the Sangwe Communal Area were put in protected villages. It is in 1975 when the Gonarezhou was officially declared a national park and the land that the Chitsa were promised to return to was incorporated into the park (Mombeshora & Le Bel 2009).

From this history of events between GNP and the Chitsa community (Ndali Village) shows how there are entangled issues for the current relations between the two parties. As Mandudzo (2019) argued, the history of the GNP and the people of Ndali is a reflection on how conservation policies in the colonial era disregarded the community knowledge around nature conservation. This history shades light on the current conservation debates in the GLTP, while most communities around GLTP 's rights of access has been violated , the Ndali case might suggest that the community members are not invested in the current conservation approaches but rather their issue is around land use and ownership.

Furthermore, conservation policies in Zimbabwe were dominated by the ideology of preserving megafauna and their associated habitat – whether for sport hunting or conversely driven by the conservationist alarmism narrative of strict protection (Mombeshora, 2009).When Zimbabwe got its independence in 1980, there was an increase in poaching of the rhino and elephant species (Hill, 1991). People located in the *'Native Reserves'* who had been restricted from hunting for their livelihoods saw hunting as a rebellion against the colonial rule and a celebration of having power back (Wolmer & Ashley, 2003). Deracialising, the process of governing natural resource and land use, was the first effort that was made by the new Zimbabwean government. Although there were some issues around the colonial farms, the state embarked on a slow process of resettling the people (Chimhowu & Hulme, 2006). This included the amalgamation of district councils and rural councils which its sole purpose was to democratize the local government procedures. This gave birth to Village Development Committees[2] and Ward Development Committees[3], (Matzke & Nabane, 1996).

In light of this, Zimbabwe implemented different strategies on conservation, and one of these was the Zimbabwe Conservation Strategy (Milinaric,1994). This strategy outlined the country's environmental problems and was to follow a more sustainable approach to elephant conservation (Hill, 1991). Following this strategy, the state amended the Parks and Wildlife act of 1975 to adjust the provisions of the access and use rights to communal lands and private.

[2] From here on VIDCOs
[3] From here on WADCOs

Thus, the use of natural resources became deracialised (Rihoy & Maguranyanga, 2007). However, post-independence Zimbabwe failed to do away with colonial legacies because natural resource use is still being racialized to meet conservation goals.

GNP has been a site where the state clashes with the locals when it comes to conservation efforts. To understand the current strategies of conservation in the GNP ,it is essential to look at the background history of how it was managed. As discussed earlier in colonial Zimbabwe, the park was heavily militarized because the colonial state believed that the communities around GNP were helping the guerrillas[i] to infiltrate the park. The guerrillas were believed to be getting funding support that came from illegal poaching of the elephants in this area, thus the genesis of the use of violence to achieve conservation goals in the area emerged. Fast forward into independence, this colonial ideation persists. For example, in 1980, after independence coercive and military interventions started to emerge increasingly. There was an increase in poaching in the Zambezi valley and the Zambian armed poachers were believed to have been the culprits. To tackle this issue, the new government deployed the army in these areas as this was seen as a national security threat on Zimbabwean's boarders and this led to the implementation of military equipment to control the crisis (Duffy, 2000). During this period, more rangers were trained and assigned to kill 'poachers,' and the army and police supported the rangers.

This violence posed by conservation has been critiqued by scholars like (Lunstrum, 2016; Duffy, 2004; Neuman; 2004).This historical review is important for this study in that it shows us that conservation-based violence in Zimbabwe's protected areas is underpinned by different ideologies over the use of land and natural resources that is shaped by a history of colonialism on one hand and, the use of land for subsistence and development on the other. Thus, it is necessary to interrogate how violence is produced around protected areas within the history of land and formation of national parks in Zimbabwe. The next section delves into global debates around the use of violence for conservation purposes and the impact it has on communities living adjacent to protected areas.

2.5 Current debates about the discursive imagery of conservation that renders legitimate use of violence.

The legitimate use of violence in protected areas stems from a poaching crisis that has been well covered in the media. However, to understand the current narratives on the urgency of controlling poaching in the GTLP area, it is of paramount importance to also look at the debates that surround the definitions of the contentious word poaching. According to Duffy (2014), it is imperative to critically challenge how poaching is defined because such definitions inform strategies to implement for controlling it. Poaching has been defined as the hunting of animals without the state's permission or by the private owner. These activities are generally referred to as illegal hunting or poaching, but recently a more accurate description has been extra-legal hunting: hunting which materializes outside the confines of legal frameworks (Duffy, 2014). The use of this terminology 'extra-legal hunting' dismisses the connotations of the words 'illegal' and 'poaching' which normally criminalizes the activity. Although the historically informed understandings of poaching still recur, scholars like Neumann (2004) in his article on '*The Moral and Discursive Geographies of the war for Biodiversity'* managed to critically engage with different meanings that are attached to poaching and the consequences of such definitions, for instance, he argues that the definition of poaching rests upon the notion that poor people and their use of resources is detrimental to the survival of wildlife and this has led to conservationist to view the poor people as the enemy.

Furthermore, poaching has been produced as a category by various processes of criminalization, which overlaps with different push factors as to why people poach and these factors include subsistence, financial gain and resistance to wildlife protection laws, even as a military strategy (Duffy,2014). To understand the genesis of the war on conservation Duffy (2014) further argues that the departing point will be to focus on the historical production of the category poacher. This will enable conservationists and ecologists to expose the instead rendered invisible assumptions that advocates for a coercive approach towards conservation. This concurs with Neumann (2004) who asserts that the use of military tactics is a significant feature in attempts to conserve nature in Sub-Saharan Africa and the communities that surround these protected areas becomes sites of violence against the locals in defence of wildlife and over time this has become a norm. This also ties in with Büscher and Ramutsindela (2014) who argue that the genealogy of violence in PAs is an outcome of historical processes that carved out conservation policies for the PAs.

During the colonial era, the state criminalised and demonised hunting with traps and snares practiced by the communities around PAs. To enforce compliance, the colonial government drafted laws that systematically infringed the rights of the communities around these areas, a

majority of whom were poor. Wolmer (2000) argues that these laws produced a hegemonic aspect of property ownership which had the best interest of capital and the elite. The elite would enjoy sports hunting as discussed earlier and would profit from the labour of the people who were not permitted to hunt for subsistence. The discourse then was that local communities did not care about conservation, and the use of snares was seen as barbaric and unsporting. Connotations of poachers compared to hunters is intertwined in racial stereotypes of the day (Duffy, 2014). Anderson et al (2013), concluded that the notion of nature above people had normalised the use of violence on the communities living at the edges of these PAs. These nuances on biodiversity conservation have simplified the different categories of poaching. Subsistence hunting involves use of snares and traps to catch small game normally referred to 'hunting for the pot' while commercial poaching involves use of sophisticated military equipment targeting profitable species like the rhino and elephants (Adams, 2004). However, Duffy (2014) concludes that the line between commercial poaching and subsistence poaching has become blurry and that it is essential to rethink what the term poaching entails. In light of this I argue that the term 'poaching' is a form of discursive violence that is exclusionary in nature and its use in conservation laws should be critically examined.

Neumann (2004) argues that narratives and discourses of natural resources at risk and those perceived to be responsible for poaching are intensified by media and this has heightened commercial poaching in Sub-Saharan Africa particularly the KNP (Büscher, 2016b; Lunstrum, 2017). The media has managed to make the 'poaching crisis' in Sub-Saharan region visible to the international community and this has made international organisations and states to respond. Consequently, poaching has become an issue of national security and individuals responsible for the crisis have been negatively portrayed on social media (Duffy, 2014; 2016; Lunstrum, 2014). Drawing from Duffy (2014)'s definition of 'extra-legal hunters' the current representations of poachers have been demonised and regards the perpetrators not only as enemies of biodiversity conservation but violent criminals who pose a great security risk for the nation states. These representations have resulted in states adopting militarised approaches to conservation which have seen communities living under constant surveillance and use of violence to control the problem of poachers (Duffy, 2014; Duffy et al, 2015; Lunstrum, 2014; Lunstrum, 2015; Massé & Lunstrum, 2016; Verweijen & Marijnen, 2016). Inadvertently, most Sub-Saharan states and civil societies support this (Büscher, 2016; Lunstrum, 2017).

The discursive imagery of conservation renders local communities living next to protected areas invisible and in some instances, they are portrayed as a threat or enemies of biodiversity

conservation. This portrayal by the media undermines the realities and histories with which each community exist in (Hübschle, 2016b; Peterson et al., 2017). In fact, if local people are depicted as a threat, it blurs the distinction between the park and people. Scholars argue that conservation and anti-poaching must pay for themselves (Brockington & Duffy, 2010; Igoe & Brockington, 2007; McClanahan & Wall, 2016). Like the scientific forests described by Scott (1998) or the discursive representations of wilderness safari landscapes (Igoe, 2017, Wolmer 2004), a repetitive narrative about anti-poaching and poaching is globally accepted and legitimized by outsiders, no matter how untrue it is (Büscher, 2016a, 2017; Büscher & Igoe, 2013).

Therefore, to understand how violence is produced in protected areas it is important to look at how some of the terms are defined. Use of violence has been advocated by conservationist to curb the problem of poaching in the GLTP. It is imperative to unpack the different meanings attached to poaching and how the imagery produced by media impacts the lives of the communities around the national parks. This form of discursive violence has seen most people being restricted access to natural resources in the name of conservation.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the various debates on the topic of green violence. It has outlined dominant conservation approaches in the southern Africa region and their impact on the lives of communities around protected areas. Literature shows that violent or coercive approaches to conservation have been dominant in the region because of the increase of rhino and elephant poaching. However, to understand this trend literature shows that the genealogy of violence in the protected areas is a result of colonialism. The chapter also discussed conservation policies in the colonial and postcolonial period in Zimbabwe to situate how they manifest green violence on communities surrounding GNP. To understand the current conservation policies in the GNP, the chapter looked at the historical background of the formation of the park and its relationship with the community. The next chapter presents findings from empirical engagement.

Chapter 3: Experiences of green violence in Ndali Village.

3.1 Introduction.

This chapter presents the empirical findings of the study. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and participant observation. Through a thematic analysis, this chapter shows that people of Ndali Village have varied experiences of living next to GNP. There is a sense of loss from most of the respondents particularly when it comes to accessing resources and redrawing of boundaries that takes away parts of their communal land. The study shows that in relation to accessing natural resources from the park, villagers' use of wildlife for subsistence is not permitted and leads to prosecution when caught by park authorities. This has had a negative impact on the people of Ndali because subsistence hunting has been an important part of their lives. This hunting restriction has seen members of the Ndali Village rely on agriculture and rearing livestock which is not improving their well-being because of the constant droughts in the area. The community leader 's narrative of the establishment of the GNP and the village also reflects how land is central to the community. Grazing areas that are frequently used by the villagers have since been integrated into the national park, resulting in people having to go further afield to graze their livestock. The fact that villagers are not consulted on issues that affect their lives has resulted in hostilities and resentment towards park management.

This chapter will present the narratives and experiences of the Ndali villagers. The first part will look at the history of the relationship between Ndali villagers and the park. Secondly, it will look at the narratives of Ndali villagers' experiences of accessing grazing resources. Thirdly it will present meanings that Ndali villagers attach to the erection of the electric fence and their views on benefits they are getting from the park. Finally, the Chapter will present meanings that Ndali villagers attach to poaching and hunting. These themes will be presented using the green violence lens that was presented in chapter two.

3.2 The history of the relationship between Gonarezhou National Park and Ndali Village.

I spent many days trying to get an audience with the community leader then finally met him after following negotiations with local authorities. The meeting was crucial because it helped

me obtain the history of the establishment of the GNP as well as the history of the Chitsa community. Communities around GNP are governed through chiefs and headmen. In the Ndali area, there are two chiefs namely Chief Chitsa (currently the son is at the helm of authority due to the Chief's illness) and Chief Tsovani. To protect the community leader's identity, he will be referred to as N1. N1[4] reported that people under his purview of authority came into Zimbabwe from Mozambique and settled in areas around the Save - Runde[5] Rivers previously occupied by the Bushmen. He claimed that in the pre-colonial times, there was a communal land-use system that allowed community members to be members if they accepted governance by traditional authorities. During this period, people had mastered how to live with wildlife, making it easy to co-exist. When I asked N1 to tell me a bit about the history of Ndali Village, he said:

> "*Ndali is named after my great grand father's name, my surname is Ndali, but I am of the Chitsa clan. People address the chief by their clan's name, so I am also chief Ndali. My grandfather told me that we migrated from Mozambique into this area over the Save river area that one close to Chipinge District. I am the first son of Chief Ndali and the heir to the throne. My father has been ill for a long time now, and he cannot run the day-to-day activities or reside in meetings, so I am filling in for him. This whole area is under two chiefs, Chitsa and Tsovani. It has always been like this for a while. In this Ward, we have Tinhongeni, Chitsanzeni, Chitete, Machinzu and Sasekani and I am the mediator between these communities and the local government. I work very closely with the councillor. We did not have a problem of land in the past, all communities around the National Park used to benefit from our communal lands and our cattle had enough pastures. I remember when I was growing up, we would go with my father to hunt game meat we call it 'kuhlota'*[6] *in our culture, it is a way of initiating boys to become men, so hunting was part of it. Things have since changed then, but we have lived alongside with wildlife for a long time."*[7]

N1 was aware of the challenges that his people have been facing at the onset of colonialism regarding land ownership. In the colonial era, the ancestral land that the Chitsa people occupied was declared a hunting area by the colonial government. People lost access and control of the natural resources they had benefited previously from; hunting by African people became demonised by the Rhodesian government at that time. The chief indicated that anyone who was caught with animal skins or hunting in the area was penalised, one could only hunt if they had a special permit from the authorities:

[4] Chitsa is a clan name, and all chiefs are addressed by their clan. The community leader I interviewed is from the Chitsa clan but is recognised by the locals as chief Ndali.
[5] Save and Runde are major rivers in Zimbabwe.
[6] Kuhlota is a Shangaan word for cultural hunting and involves snaring small game meat.
[7] Interview with the chief.

> "Our *people lost a lot during colonialism. When the government decided to declare the area, my people were occupying a hunting area, it posed significant challenges for our people. We could no longer go hunting as we used to in the past nor access firewood and straws, we use to make mates. My father told me that at some point if anyone was caught with animal skin in their possession, they were penalised and could face jail time. We had people in our community who would work for these white men and help control hunting. They would go and kill sacred animals; we do not kill in our culture. For the white man, they did hunt for fun, and I have seen some of the pictures they would take after a kill. My father was in one of them. In my culture there are individual animals that we do not kill like the lion, it is our ancestors, now when they kill these animals, they are distorting our culture, this makes our ancestors mad, no wonder why we have droughts. Our community lost control over the natural resources they had benefited from for years and we had to live by the white man's rules else we would face jail time. Hunting did provide meat for my people and it was a cultural thing. This was all taken away by the colonial government when they decided to put a price on 'kuhlota' something that was freely given for us by our ancestors to utilise."*[8]

N1 added that 'valungu' [9] always valued wild animals over the people and this harmed his people. Gonarezhou Nature Reserve was established in the 1930s to 'preserve' wildlife and a more significant part of the Shangaan land was integrated into the national park which saw some families being relocated in the Matibi[10] area. In the 1960s, the boundary of the GNP was redrawn and again, the Chitsa people were relocated to an area called Seven Jacks and the then Rhodesian government erected veterinary poles so that the people would not interfere in the grand plans of conserving nature. This area has been contested by his people since independence. When asked how the new boundary was redrawn the chief reported:

> "So, *after they declared that area in now Save River Conservancy a hunting area, some of my people were forcibly moved to Matibi to make way for the new national park. My people depend on agricultural produce to sustain their families. Matibi is a dry area and maize crops do not flourish and this is the land my people were supposed to live off. As time went by, the boundary of the Gonarezhou was redrawn and as I recall, my father told me that this was in the 1950s or 60s, I am not sure about the timeline and most of our land was incorporated into the national park. My people were relocated to an area called Seven Jack, the government that time erected a fence to restrict us from accessing resources on the Chivonja hills*[11] *side and this is the fence I recognize as the official boundary and why we are having tension with the ZANU government. Chivonja is a sacred hill for my people so them fencing it off cut our cultural beliefs. There was an issue with tsetse flies and the white men's cattle and our cattle were dying, so to control this, the government relocated my people to this area we presently occupy, Ndali. The government had promised us that we will go back to Seven Jack as soon as the area was free of tsetse flies, but it was given to a cattle rancher and again fearing that we will occupy the area, they erected a fence there too. "When Gonarezhou was*

[8] Interview excerpt with the Chief
[9] The Chief uses this term often when he is referring to the colonial masters. It's a connotation for oppressor according to him.
[10] Matibi is a very dry area in the North of the park and the land is not arable.
[11] Chivonja Hills is a scared place for the Chitsa people. Hats where they communicate with their ancestors

finally made a park, we lost all our land and the promises that the government made were null."[12]

N1 added that as the war between the Rhodesian army and ZANU guerrillas intensified in the 1970s, some of his people who were resettled in the Matibi area were relocated into Keeps[13]. There were numerous relocations and every time it happened; a new fence would be erected. The chief emphasized that the only boundary he recognized was the one used to control tsetse flies.

3.3 Restricted access to grazing resources.

Ndali is a dry area and during the time the research was conducted, there was an ongoing drought, which according to the villagers, had been in its third year. Droughts have made it impossible for the villagers to feed their livestock and also carry out income generating activities like fishing, mat making and grass cutting. The availability of grazing areas is crucial for people living around Ndali as livestock rearing remains a viable livelihood activity, which requires large tracts of grazing land. In this section, I highlight the consequences of green violence by capturing the concerns of the members of the Ndali Village, as well as the experiences of the researcher and cattle herders in the area.

According to the respondents, their main concern with the boundary fence was the restrictions placed on available grazing area for their livestock. No one is permitted to walk close to the boundary fence as they will be suspected to be poachers by game rangers. If their cattle go beyond the boundary fence, the herders are not permitted in the park and can be prosecuted. The respondents added that if cattle strayed into the park, they had to wait for the game rangers to report to Chipinda, retrieve and transport them to another site 60km away at the owners' cost. A concerned villager relayed that that they do not intentionally break the laws but it's circumstances that often lead to clashes with the national park authorities. An elderly man reported that members of the Ndali Village are forced to look for their livestock beyond the

[12] Interview with the Chief

[13] Keeps are protected villages where people were put in during the liberation war struggle in Zimbabwe. It was not a voluntary process people but coercive and the village was surrounded by a high fence (Marxey, 1977)

park boundaries and it was not practical for him to travel long distances to collect his livestock. N12 who is an elder in the village shared his ordeal when his cattle went in the park:

> "*We have had droughts for a few years now. The grazing lands are low, and we are forced sometimes to walk our cattle close to the boundary fence because there are still some pastures that the cattle can feed .It happened to me that this day, I was with the cattle just a bit afield from Chitsanzeni, and there is an area where cattle could easily go inside the park because the elephants damaged the fence. Some of my cattle went into the park, and that's the worst nightmare a cattle owner can have. You have lot of questions you see, is my cattle going to be killed by predators or will the park rangers take them to Chipinda? Either way it's not good. That day I tried getting into the park but was met by game rangers who informed me that I was out of bounds, so I needed to head back before they arrest me. I asked them what will happen to my cattle and they said they will look for them and send them to Chipinda which is far. How and where am I going to get money to transport the cattle back to my compound? It took me two months to raise funds so that I go collect them. This national park doesn't care about us."* (Respondent- N12)[14]

The respondent felt that if they were given access to graze their cattle like they did in the past, he will not have to worry about clashing with the game rangers. This sentiment was also shared by N11 who stays a bit farther from the park boundary, and was worried that each year the cattle numbers are dwindling because of the drought and wanted the GNP to allow them to access some of the areas in the park to graze their cattle:

> "*You see a lot has happened since this new company arrived. It is actually worse than the park that was run by the government. Like I said earlier, our numbers of cattle are dwindling every year because we don't have enough water or pastures where our cows can feed. This restriction has forced us to travel long distances in order to feed the cattle. Some go as far as the Save river to graze their cattle and its quite a distance. The cattle are our only source of wealth so if they die, what am I going to leave my children?*" (Respondent – N11)

The "new company" that the respondent was referring to is the Frankfurt Zoological Society. The respondent indicated that the new company had worsened their living conditions compared to when the park was run by the government. The issue of grazing areas for the cattle is of great concern for most of the respondents and this concurred with the experience I had with the cattle herders[15]. There are no grazing areas close by because the ones they utilised in the past have been integrated in the park, resulting in people walking long distances to look for pastures. The unintended consequences created by this is borne by the younger children who feel that they have been robbed of their childhood. Instead of going to

[14] Interview conducted with N12 in June 2019
[15] See the section on researcher's experiences with the herd boys

school and playing with their peers, they spend the whole day herding cattle. One of the cattle herders reported:

> "*I dropped out of school when I was 14 because no one was going to look after the cattle. I am the only boy in our family and my father has not been feeling okay for such a long time. I am left with no choice but to herd the cattle, girls cannot do this kind of job. It was easy when I used to take the cattle close to that boundary fence because after school, I would quickly take the cattle, but now because I have to travel long distances it has become impossible for me to concentrate on school and work. Already we have lost 6 cattle because of the drought and I cannot afford to let my father's cattle die because that is all we have."* (Respondent- N4)[16]

The severity of how restricted access to grazing resources poses challenges for the villagers is highlighted by N9 who indicated that the drought in the area and the park's policy on the 'illegal' cutting of grass has made their lives difficult. N9 relayed how his cattle fed on the grass of his thatched roof because of inadequate pastures for them. For the respondent, if he still had access to the park's grasslands, he would have gone and cut off the grass to fix the roof, but now he has to purchase this grass which is expensive:

> "One *day when we were at a workshop with my brother and family, we came home and witnessed the cattle feeding on the sides of our roof, and eventually the roof collapsed. We were all devastated because I knew in that moment that I would need money to buy thatch grass and it is expensive. Now, where do I get the money to buy it? If the park authorities would allow us to cut the grass inside the park like what we used to in the past, life would be easier for all of us*" (Respondent -N9)[17]

To understand the challenges of accessing grazing resources, I accompanied local herders on a grazing trip. The following is my experience.

It's 3 am and the deafening sound of the milling machine makes it difficult to sleep. The air is calm; one would think that the mill is next to my room. Such is the life of living close to the business centre[18]. This is the only mill in the area and people travel the long distance so that their maize is processed into mealie meal, the main source of starch here. There is an electricity crisis in Zimbabwe and in Ndali, the situation is dire. The previous night I accompanied Tino[19] to leave the maize at the mill, so that we will have mealie meal in the morning. The owners of the mill take turns to sleep at the mill so that as soon the power is back, they process all the maize that in the queue. This need getting used to [I think to myself], at this time at 3.30 am I

[16] Interview conducted with N3, June 2019
[17] Interview carried out with N9 in June 2019.
[18] The place I lived as referred to in Chapter 2.
[19] Tino is the eldest son of the family I was staying with.

need to get ready because the boys are picking me up at 5.00 am to walk the cattle where they will be grazed.

At 5 am there is a knock on the door, and as I open the door, I see three young boys Mpho, Tendai and Alex[20] . They inform me that they were instructed by the chief to come pick me up so that we go with the cattle as discussed, the previous day. I was not anticipating going with the young boys, and at the back of my mind all I could think was how are we going to walk in the dark with these young boys, what if we meet predators on our way there because it was still dark, are they not supposed to be at school? Because the youngest of them was twelve years old, these were the questions I asked myself as I was packing lunch because we were going to spend the whole day herding cattle.

We leave the house, then proceed to take the first group of cattle at Alex's uncle. Alex informs me he is staying with his uncle because his father is not feeling well, so he has to take his cattle and his family's cattle to graze. The number of cattle is around twenty-two, the ones I could count because it was dark. From Alex's place, we proceed to Mpho and Tendai's house where we also collect their cattle. Mpho and Tendai are cousins and to stay with their uncle because their parents passed away. Mpho states that after five years of doing this, he hopes that he can get five cattle so that he can build his own home. He dropped out of school when he was 11years old: "I *had to leave school because, with my father sick, no one was going to look after the cattle, and that is the only thing that we have*''. (Respondent N5)[21]

Once we gathered all the cattle, we begin our journey north of the Save River[22]; the sun is already risen. We walk a distance of about two kilometres and there is no shelter in sight just vast open dry land. The young boys tell me that life used to be comfortable when they still had access to graze their cattle nearby the boundary fence of Gonarezhou. Currently it has become perilous because no one is permitted to walk close to the boundary fence. So now they have to take the cattle to the riverbank where they can graze. On our way to the river, we pass three dry riverbeds, showing the extent of the drought in the area.

[20] Not their real names. I use pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants
[21] Interview with one of the cattle herders N5. Names not disclosed to protect their identity
[22] The Save River flows from Zimbabwe's south-eastern region into Mozambique.

Fig 3: Cattle passing through a dry riverbed reflecting the severity of drought in the area.

We finally get to the river at around 11 am. It took us six hours to get there and by this time, I am fatigued. The young boys then cross the cattle over the other side of the river where there are greener pastures. I started having informal conversations with the boys trying to capture their experiences as herd boys. Mpho still has love for school and wishes that when he gets money, he will resume his studies, but his main goal is to migrate to South Africa, send money back home and built his homestead. All the young boys relayed that given the opportunity, they would want to go back to school. It is almost 2pm and we now looking for logs to build a temporary shelter for the boys. On our way, Mpho mentioned that this routine of walking the cattle to the river every day is tiresome and they needed to build a temporary shelter just uphill the riverbanks. We looked for sturdy logs that can accommodate all the cattle. There is a lot of cattle pens and temporary shelters along the riverbank and its mostly children between the age of eleven to sixteen residing there.

Figure 4 The cattle crossing the river for pasture

It’s almost four o’clock in the afternoon, and the heat is at its peak. I observe that some women walk long distances to do their laundry at the river. There is washed linen on the river rocks and on trees across the riverbanks. The women sit and wait for it to dry, then head home. There is fear of leaving the area after sunset because the wild animals such as leopards and the hyenas start roaming. Everyone is aware of this prominent danger. No one has been attacked by the predators while herding the cattle, but some incidents have been reported where the leopard has attacked cattle and goats in people’s compounds. This revelation by the young boys puts me on edge because I was afraid about what would happen to us if we encountered these animals. At around 5pm, the cattle start coming back from the other side of the river. It is Mpho’s task to double-check if all the cattle are accounted for.

The last of the cattle came about at around 6pm and it starts getting dark. We start our journey back home, no one is talking as everyone is tired, just a few conversations here and there but everyone wants to get home. Tendai says he just wants to get home, eat his meal and sleep then get ready for the next day. This is the life these young boys are used to. It's always the same

routine every day of the week. We get home around 9 pm and all I could think of was how was this normal?

The issue of accessing grazing area was of great concern across all interviews. The time and distance the herd boys have to endure to keep the cattle alive has taken a toll on their lives. Their experiences illustrate different forms of violence. Although this is not direct physical violence, restricted access to grazing land is violence as it dislocates people's lives. This form of violence will be discussed in detail in Chapter four.

Most of the cases reported above illustrate an overall production of violence on the people of Ndali that is characterised by emotional abuse. However, it cannot be concluded that all cattle herders in Ndali have similar experiences. During my stay in the village and spending time with cattle herders, I observed that their experiences varied. Although I observed that there was no physical violence or any game ranger presence each time, we walked close to boundary fence, the impact of not being able to access grazing resources was evident. The experiences of villagers and herders over grazing illustrate that GNP's conservation policies which restrict access to grazing resources disproportionally disadvantages people and exposes them to different forms of violence that will be discussed in Chapter four.

3.4 Anticipated benefits from the park by the Ndali Villagers: The lived reality.

Ndali villagers have different experiences on the benefits of the GNP for their communities. Their responses were varied and influenced by their proximity to the national park and their social rank. Respondents N7, N8, N1 and N6 all had similar experiences on how the park has benefited the community at large, whereas the rest of the respondents had a different perspective. When asked if there are any projects that the park has invested in to benefit the community N6 stated that:

> " *The park has different projects that are empowering single women and widows, like they gave these women opportunities to cut the grass so that they can sell it and earn a living. It's something that's so thoughtful of them because in this community, single women have no one to look after them, so this is good. A lot has been promised by the park and in my opinion, they are working towards that goal. They also facilitate the sharing of funds, the Rufusha*[23] *fund. They also initiate projects where they are training*

[23] A fund reserved for community each time an elephant or animal is killed.

> *women and youth to be self-sufficient which is something that is very useful given the economic situation of our country. For the past few years, the national park has managed to donate resources in form of education in our primary schools. Since 2016, the park has been bringing our kids into the game park to experience its wildlife and habitats, and to learn about the park's specific conservation issues which are good because they are the next generation that can protect our heritage. You see, despite growing up next to this park, I never had the opportunity to see an elephant except those that you come across when they are trespassing the boundary. So, I think these projects are useful."* (Respondent – N6)[24]

According to the youth development officer, the park creates empowerment opportunities for women as part of fulfilment of their promises. The officer added that GNP has been donating resources to local schools, a claim refuted by N11 who indicated that:

> "*When the government was still running the park, there has never been any development in our community. Most developments in this community were as a result of the American NGOs. The only people helping us a lot are those from Malilangwe conservancy*[25]*, we benefit a bit from them especially at the police camp. Let's say if the water pump is broken, the Malilangwe people repair it. Malilangwe is better than Gonarezhou. Most of the schools that were built here were through the generosity of the NGOs and the only school that the government built was the primary school which cannot accommodate all of our children because there aren't enough buildings. I would say most developments that you see in this community have been mostly done by youth who left for South Africa who when they come back, they build brick houses, shops and put-up solar panels. You would think with the money the park is getting they will be able to at least do something in the community."*

The N12 vehemently denied that the GNP was indeed doing projects that developed the community. He was not the only respondent who felt that way. When asked the same question, respondent N11 stated:

> *"No, the national park has never really made efforts to try help communities in times of drought, that I do understand because you know the government didn't have the resources and means to help people. But the Malilangwe Conservancy Trust tries by all means to feed our community. Like they bring porridge and beans to the local primary schools, it's a food program that is helping a lot in our community*."[26]

[24] Interview conducted in June 2019
[25] It's a private owned conservancy a few kilometres away from Ndali
[26] Interview conducted with N12

Figure 5. School pupils learning under a tree because of shortage of classrooms.

Some respondents highlighted that the park created employment opportunities, but others disagreed. When asked if there was any employment creation from the park, N1 indicated:

"*The park has created more jobs for the people which is something that should be celebrated because in the past this was not happening. In 2017, the park created more jobs for the community, something the government failed to do in the past years."*

During informal conversations with villagers, they confirmed that most women and youth were employed by the park. The respondents were happy that they were paid in foreign currency as this gave them financial freedom to send their kids to school and buy groceries for their families. When asked about the benefits they got from the park, N3 responded:

> "They *hired over 80 rangers just last year. Something that has not been done when the park was being run by the government. So, I think the park is doing a great job in creating these opportunities for us. We get paid in foreign currency and this has given me financial freedom, now I am able to look after my family and save also."*[27]

[27] Interview with N3

Although the above respondents claimed that job creation was a major benefit, it was important to explore what types of jobs were created by the park. A majority of the respondents reported that game ranger's jobs were created because the rangers that were previously employed by the government were not well-equipped to deal with poachers. However, my informal conversations revealed that these positions were likely to be taken by people who had strong political ties with the government or relatives of people in high positions in the community. N12 has not been employed for almost four years and indicated that it has been difficult for him to get a job and thought that with the new venture of the government and the NGO, his situation was going to change but it did not.

> "When *the park management was changed, our village would have workshops with the park authorities and there were promises of job creation, but this has not come to life. The only jobs available is that of being a game ranger. It is a very good job as it pays in foreign currency which is a great advantage but to get the post one has to have strong political ties with either the government or anyone with high standing in society. I have not been employed for the past 4 years and taking care of my family is very challenging. This has worsened now considering that there is an ongoing drought, I do not have an income to buy maize for maizemeal or even send my elder son to school. I really had hopes that I will get employed by the park. My only hope of getting a proper job is when I relocate to South Africa, that's where most of our young men go to help look after the families left home."*

Similar N6 also reported that:

> "everyone *knows, if you really want to make some money you have to enrol as a game ranger. I think that's the only job being provided by the park; you know to protect their 'animals' from us so they would pay us dollars. I wish they could just create more jobs for the community like they always promise when they come to have these workshops on how conservation helps develop our community. Our youth wouldn't see the need to go to South Africa to look for jobs if the park tried."* (Respondent – N6)[28]

Migrating to South Africa has become a coping mechanism for most youth because of the unbearable realities of poverty in the villages. Most youths dropped out of school because there are no job prospects. For most respondents who participated in the study, their primary concern was that staying close to a big national park would result in community developments initiated by the park, but the only developments thus far have been the erection of the fence. Since 2012, the park created game ranger posts which most respondents claimed are for those who have ties with park and other political authorities.

The findings also reveal that game ranger posts were the only occupation available. Through interviews with the respondents and the insights I got from a number of villagers while in the

[28] Interview conducted with N6 in June 2016.

field, it seemed that training to become a game ranger was not only challenging but risky too. I interviewed two game rangers, and this is how they related their training experience and their job in general*:*

> *"I have to say that this was very intensive, I felt like I was being trained to be a soldier, we are taught how to use guns. The training was very thorough, and we were taught all different scenarios on how to deal with poachers because if you encounter a poacher in the park, you have to be ready to act because you don't know if they can spare your life or not. Like for instance a few months back our colleague was found dead in the park he was shot in the head, I am sure he hesitated to kill the poachers because, it's not easy taking someone's life. I am not saying we are all about killing poachers, but poachers are ready to kill. Our duty as game rangers is to be alert all the time about our surroundings so we normally scout through areas where we know most poachers use it to get access into the park and we work very closely with the police".*
> (Respondent -N9)[29]

Both respondents felt that the training was very intense, and it is apparent from the interviews that poaching was serious in some parts of the park and it was necessary that all game rangers are adequately trained for the job. From the informal conversations with some of the villagers, game rangers were expected to finish a training course similar to that of the military which involves learning how to shoot and to use military equipment. Notably N10 was grateful for the park creating these jobs and justified that the money he was getting befits their duties and denied the claims that he got the job through nepotism. When asked how he got the job he reported:

> *"They did send out an announcement that the park was looking for able-bodied men to help the park in protecting our resources. I know most people think that I got this job because of connections, but it is not true. Most youths were given this opportunity but turned it down because the training was just not for everyone. You have to be a very strong and of sound emotional mind for you to be able to carry out the duties. All these stories that we are getting these jobs because of people we know is just not true."*
> (Respondent- N10)[30]

I observed that getting a job to work in the park was not for the love of conserving nature but rather circumstances forced people to take up these jobs because there are no other avenues where people can earn a living. When asked why most people would work for the park as a game ranger*:*

> *"They promised to create jobs for us, but this did not happen. So, when they presented this job opportunity to me, I was very happy, because I knew if I pass the training, I was*

[29] Interview conducted in June 2019. N9 has been a game ranger for 2 years by the time the interview was conducted.
[30] Interview carried out with N10 in June 2019. N10 has been working with the GNP as a game ranger for 6 years.

> *going to be able to take care of my family and this was the only job that is paying in USD currency, which is a bargain for me because you know in Zimbabwe if you have forex you are better off because all the supermarkets are all about foreign currency these days. Honestly, if there were other job opportunities, I would have taken those up but there is none. Every time I live for work, I constantly pray that I come back home alive because I recently just got married and my wife is pregnant. No one really tells you what you are walking into, not only do we encounter poachers but in some instances, we are also prone to attacks by wild animals. It is really tough for me".* (Respondent- N9)[31]

The above cases demonstrate the different experiences the Ndali village has with the park pertaining benefits they derive from it. Through informal conservations and interviews, it became clear that the villagers of Ndali are resentful towards the GNP's inability to improve their living standards and create jobs. The villagers expected the park to provide jobs for them and engage the village in projects that will enable them look after their families. Conversations with game rangers also illustrated that they sign up for the post not for the love of nature, but rather their living circumstances. The intense training of game rangers which mirrors that of military training is violent in nature. Rangers are trained how to use military equipment such as guns and trained to shoot and kill poachers. Overall, most respondents felt that they could not sign up for the post because of its intense training. This is a reflection on how different forms of violence culminates beyond conservation practices and will be discussed in detail in chapter four.

3.5 'Nature above people': Meanings attached to fencing off GNP .

Ndali Village as discussed in chapter two, is made up of five communities. Three of these live adjacent to the park and are separated by an electric fence. The majority of the respondents reported that the national park values the well-being of animals than people. This view by the respondents was informed by elephant incursions into agricultural fields, a problem perceived to be increasing given the ongoing drought. Although there an electric fence, wildlife still trespasses the boundaries destroying people's crops and attacking them, creating antagonistic attitudes towards the park. The boundary fence in question was re-erected in 2008 and the respondents indicated that the park extended the boundary into their communal lands where their livestock used to graze. When N12 was asked about his thoughts on the boundary fence he stated that:

[31] Interview conducted with N9 June 2019

"*They tell us that they put up the fence to protect our crops and livestock, but their animals still destroy them, how is this fair? We do not get any compensation for our loss, but they say the fence will solve the problem. The park did extend the boundary fence into our communal land, because they told us that was approved by the government. At least they should also allow us access to some entry points in the park because when our crops are destroyed that means our lives will be affected, at least I could go and fish in the park, then sell the fish."* (Respondent – N12)[32]

Figure 6: The electric fence that separates Ndali communities and Gonarezhou National Park

The problem the respondent was referring to above was that of wildlife destroying their crops. N12 felt the park never had their best interests at heart. However, there was some sense of relief for some respondents. In the past, the fence that separates the national park and the village was ill-maintained hence elephants would trespass the boundary and roam around the community damaging crops and also posing great danger to the lives of people of Ndali. When asked about their views on the erection of the electric fence and how it might affect their lives N11 had this to say:

[32] Interview conducted in June 2019

> "This *fence by the park is helping some of the villagers from wild animals. In the past we have had incidences where our crops were destroyed by elephants and when we ask the park to help control their animals nothing was done. The park did not have enough resources back then, but now with this new park we have a new fence that is electrified, and the problems of animals trespassing have been a few. Elephants do still trespass the boundary fence but these days the damage caused is bearable as compared to the past."* (Respondent – N11)[33]

Some respondents felt that the fence was erected to restrict human beings from interfering with what was in the park and this has reduced the role nature plays in their lives. The other respondent alluded that he only recognised the colonial government's tsetse fly control boundary which they were promised would be opened once the situation was contained. However, because of the liberation struggle, they never returned to that site and over the years the fencing deteriorated. In 2008, the national park redrew the boundary by re-erecting the fence that was for tsetse control and the villagers of Ndali were not happy because it extended about 10km into their communal lands:

> "*We always fighting with the government about the new boundary they put up. I do not recognise this boundary. During colonialism that area was tsetse infested and the government fenced off the park to control the disease and promised my people that they will get back to the site once the situation was controlled. However, we never returned because we were forced to stay in Keeps that time. Now the current government comes and re-erect that fence and forgetting that it was our land before. That fence has caused many problems for us, our people can't go and worship their ancestors because some white man told them it's not their property. It gets me mad every time*." (Respondent – N12).[34]

The issue of land was a major concern for the most respondents. This was not about the park trying to protect animals, but it is also an issue of robbing people of their land. N6 who lives 1km from the fence, argued that his parents used to farm beyond where the boundary was put up and this has forced them to farm on their grandfather's piece of land. For N6 the issue was land use. When asked how he felt about the fence he responded:

> "*The park authorities are making lives of people difficult. Their animals have security, but what about us? Don't we matter? Why do they put the lives of animals over us, my great grandfather died on this land and the same land they claim we can't trespass? So where must my children build their homes. The government and this new park do not care about what happens to our lives as long as there is money that someone in the leadership is getting then it's all good for them. I do care about our elephants being protected but our lives should matter, we mustn't be controlled by animals."* (Respondent- N6)

[33] Interview conducted in the field in June 2019.
[34] Interview with N12, June 2019

Although there was resentment over the boundary fence, some villagers welcomed this development and said for once they can sleep peacefully without worrying about encounters with elephants. Respondents who live a bit farther from the park boundary reported that ever since the fence was put up, they have less problems with animals in their fields. N8 stated that:

> "I *know that people who are staying close to the boundary fence still have problems with animals destroying their crops. But here in Tinhongeni, things have been better this new fence was a blessing because we don't have to worry about waking up to an empty field. Now even when I am going to the field I am at ease. In the past, people used to get attacked by elephants and trust me you do not want to see a body that has been attacked by an elephant it's not a good sight to see. Now that the park has redone the fence, I feel a bit saf*e."

Elephants pose great risks for the Ndali community. Although the fence is electrified, most respondents argued that elephants still damage the fence and trespass into people's fields and that it is dangerous to walk close by the fence. This concurs with my experience, when I went to visit the boundary fence. The fence is 2 km from the place I was staying and what separates the fence, and the houses is a thick bush which if one is not careful, can encounter wild animals. It takes a long time for the park authorities to respond or address incidences involving stray wildlife, so villagers are always on alert. One day we walked through the bush and were accompanied by an elderly man who knows how to avoid elephants, something he has been doing for most of his life.

N8 and N4 also shared the same sentiments about how the fence was not saving its purpose but worsening their living conditions. N8 stated that:

> "I *know the fence was put with good intentions, but it is not helping at all. The elephants are still seen roaming around in the villages and our fields. This puts our lives at risks. It's not only elephants, that we are worried about but also the hyenas and leopards. Other day when we were sleeping, a leopard did attack one of our goats in the pen and my family was shocked for a while. What if my wife was outside that time, or what if I was out, who knows what would have happened? And what really disappoints me if you report this to the park, nothing is done, but kill their animals they do react instantly. This fence is not serving its purpose. It was just a way of cutting us off from the park*." (Respondent- N8)[35]

Most of the villagers I interacted with during my stay in the village had a similar experience with elephants. It was evident from the informal conversations I had with villagers that the park authorities took time to respond and control trespassing animals. I recall on the third day in the field, some villagers warned others that there was elephant in the fields, and it took considerable time before the game rangers arrived in the village to control the situation.

[35] Interview conducted with N8, June 2019

N4 also had the same sentiments:

> *"I do not think fences ever worked to restrict animals from trespassing into our community. I think the fence was just made for us human beings not to take stuff from the park and this story they tell us of trying to protect us I do not believe it. A few years back a pregnant woman was killed by an elephant in her field and the park never assisted in the funeral financially .All they did was teach people how to protect themselves when they encounter animals, how is that helpful*?" (Respondent – N4)[36]

Overall, the majority of respondents and the villagers I interacted with felt that the security tools adopted by the park were aimed at protecting wildlife at the detriment of their lives. The experiences above demonstrate that the electric fence is a symbol of violence and a constant reminder of the imminent dangers of trespassing and the encounters they might have with wild animals or the game rangers. The respondents illustrated their feelings of helplessness when the animals destroy their crops. All of these factors highlight the different forms of violence produced on the Ndali community and will be discussed in more detail in chapter four.

3.6 Different understandings of hunting and the contentious word 'poaching'.

Poaching[37] is understood differently amongst the respondents who participated in the study. Poaching is a major issue in the GNP. It was important to explore how my respondents defined or understood poaching. Several members of Chitsanzeni VIDCO, had a different understanding of poaching as compared to respondents who were from the other three VIDCOS (Tinhongeni, Chitete and Machinzu). When asked what they understood by the term poaching three of the respondents from Tinhongeni[38] reported:

> "*You mean 'vukhamba'[39]?[laughs]. When growing up we were constantly told by our parents not to loiter around the boundary fence because when the game rangers or soldiers saw us, they would think we wanted to steal from the park. I think poaching is killing and stealing 'matino'[40]. People still cut the boundary fence to graze their cattle*

[36] Interview conducted with N4, June 2019
[37] Poaching in this section will be defined as "illegal expropriation of natural resources from the GNP this can involve killing of elephants and rhino or just illegally trespassing the boundary to access resources.
[38] Tinhongeni is a small village that is 1km away from the boundary fence
[39] vukhamba is a slang name used to refer to the act of doing illegal activities in xichangana language.
[40] Matino is an elephant tusk in xichangana, and all the respondents indicated the importance of not killing the elephants.

and most of them are always clashing with game rangers and this normally leads to arrests." (Respondent- N5)[41]

The respondent understood poaching as killing and stealing from the national park. This notion of stealing from the national park was also similar from respondents who stayed in Chitete[42] N10 and N12 stated that:

> "*Normally me and my friends when we are joking around, we understand poaching as taking things [animals] from the park illegally. It is illegal because the park says so. I used to access Gonarezhou through this fence that was cut a while ago to cut grass for my house. When I was in the park I almost got shot at because they [game rangers] thought that I was a poacher. The game rangers know that we need some of the poles and grass from the park to build or reinforce our houses, they must not act like we do not stay in the same village. They always do what the white man tells them.* (Respondent – N10)[43]

The 'taking' of natural resources from the national park, according to the respondent, was a serious offence, as one could risk being shot. The fence the respondent is referring to is the one that most villagers in the past used to access the park. The respondents were associating poaching and stealing, and the risks of meeting park officers. N12 also had similar understandings of poaching, he indicated that:

> "*Poaching is the killing of big animals, elephants, and rhinos that live inside the park. These are the only animals I know that the government protect. You know we have a large population of elephants here, so usually there are incidences where people from Mozambique or Harare kill and steal these animals for their horns. It's not only animals for these people you see [park officials], now even getting firewood or fishing in the park or when we kill animals outside the park boundaries, they [the park officials] would still call it poaching. So, the park is their property now, it is their land and we do not have a say in that".* (Respondent- N12)[44]

All three respondents knew the consequences of trespassing the boundary fence. They are aware of the illegality of expropriating natural resources from the park. The other respondents had a different view on poaching and their answer was informed by the knowledge they attained from the park officials. When I asked N1 what they understood by poaching, their response was more technical compared to the rest of the respondents:

> "In *this community, my people have been aware of a serious issue that has been ongoing in our Gonarezhou. Poachers normally come from Mozambique, they are highly trained to kill these big animals like the elephant and the rhino. It is the killing of animals that are deemed as precious by our government. So, anyone seen killing*

[41] Interview with N5, June 2019.
[42] Chitete one of the villages that make up the Ndali community, it's in the south-western corner of the park.
[43] Interview conducted with N10 in May 2019.
[44] Interview with N12 carried out in May 2019

> *these animals in the park is arrested on grounds that they are poaching"*. (Respondent N1)[45]

The chief's definition is about killing animals regarded as facing extinction and does not involve the stealing aspect of it as compared to other respondents. He emphasized that only the animals that are killed inside the park can make one a poacher. Furthermore, N3 elaborated on what the chief had indicated by stating that:

> "*Any forms of illegal expropriation of natural resources in the park is poaching. We have cases where some villagers are caught by rangers in the park grazing their cattle and sometimes cutting trees for poles. When they are brought to us there is always the paranoia that they are either informants of poachers or poachers themselves. So, the killing of any animal in or outside the park is poaching and when one is caught, they are penalised*." (Respondent- N3)[46]

N1 and N3 indicated that poaching involved the illegal killing of animals. However, N1 referred to only the animals that are inside the park, whereas N3 referred to the killing of animals inside and outside the park. These different meanings of poaching in this community prompted me to ask if there was a severe problem of poaching in the area. N2 reported that:

> "*At the station, there is a number of poaching incidences that are reported every month. We work hand in hand with the National Park to control this. Gonarezhou has the largest population of elephants in Zimbabwe or even Africa. Ever since the national park became part of the Limpopo Transfrontier park, efforts have been made by the government and other stakeholders to control poaching and as a government employee, I have to ensure that everyone in the community is playing their part. In the past, it has been challenging to control poaching because government does not have enough resources to train people to deal with this challenge. However, now we are hands-on because poaching is a reality in this area and Mozambicans are always the problems in most cases."* (Respondent- N2)[47]

Mozambicans are believed to be involved in poaching in the Ndali area. The respondent was aware that Gonarezhou formed part of the GLTP and for him, his duties were to uphold the government's policy towards breaking wildlife laws. N6 and N1 are community leaders and they also felt that there was serious concern on poaching. When asked how frequent poaching was in the area, N6 who has been in the village over a year now reported:

> "*I attend workshops with the committee that oversees the day-to-day activities of the Gonarezhou. Frequently, we do discuss issues around poaching. Poaching from what I have heard and witnessed is quite frequent in this southern part of Gonarezhou and it is believed that the perpetrators are from Mozambique, they move with sophisticated cars and guns. That is why every time a new face enters the village claiming to do any sort of community work or research , the police are always on the lookout, because those*

[45] Interview carried out in June 2019 with a community leader.
[46] Interview conducted in June 2019 with N3 who is involved in community leadership
[47] Interview conducted in June 2019 with N2 who is in the law enforcement.

are the same people who will scout the area and then next time when they are back, they kill our elephants. I would say there is poaching in the area."(Respondent- N6)[48]

The chief also confirmed that there were incidences where poachers were found with elephant tusks, guns and leopard skins in their possession. He believed that poaching is rampant in his area because of its remote from the location, and blamed government for not supplying enough resources for the police to do their job in helping the community and the park in general. The chief reported that the police had one vehicle which is used by the high-ranking officer while the rest of the officers uses bicycles:

> "*In the past year, they were four men who were caught with 'amatino'*[49]*, guns and leopard skins in their car. There was a tip off by a local man who reported that there was a vehicle parked close to the boundary fence for a long time. You see the boundary fence, particularly the one in Chitsanzeni is remote, no one goes there, it is quiet. I think the poachers target those spots because they can go easily unrecognised. If only the police had enough vehicles to so their job, I think it would have made life easy also for game rangers to catch the poachers. With a bicycle where can they catch thieves? The government should do something about this, this is the only police in the area, and they must pour lot of money here to improve the service".*

In interviews game rangers indicated that indeed there was a problem of poaching in the GNP. When asked about their experience in their line of duty N8 reported that:

> *"When I got this job as a ranger, my wife was so relieved because now we could afford to send our kids to school. Like I am the king now[laughs], because I now get paid in forex. But what they do not know it's tough; every night we do our patrols in the park its stressful because you don't know what you will come across. These poachers are highly skilled, and they will not hesitate to shoot, so we also have to be prepared. We lost one of our colleagues to poachers; he was shot in the head and found lying naked in the park. This shows you that poaching is a serious issue the park is trying to deal with and control*." (Respondent – N8)[50]

The ranger expressed that his line of duty was risky and that poachers always roam around the park looking for areas where they can quickly kill elephants. The other ranger also had a similar experience but a different context:

> *"Ever since the park merged with the Frankfurt, the primary mission has been to control poaching. It's a warzone in the park during the day and even worse at night. I remember this other time when we encountered poachers for the first time, I was just coming from the training and I will never forget this experience. The poachers had already poisoned two elephants and harvested theirs tusks, so we followed the trail. They started shooting at us, but we conquered them, two were shot dead and the other one injured. To think that these were Zimbabwean men who did this baffle me, people are hungry out there, so I guess this was their way out. Poaching is an issue, a very big*

[48] Interview conducted in May 2016 with N6
[49] Matino is a Xichangani name for the tusk of an elephant
[50] Interview

one and I think the 'new park' and the government should train more rangers." (Respondent- N11)

Although the community leaders and the game rangers felt that poaching was an issue in the area, a number of respondents had a different outlook on this question. Their response was influenced by the meanings they attached to poaching and hunting. When asked about poaching in their area N12 who lives a few kilometres away from boundary fence reported that:

> *"Poaching? [pauses] in this area? No there is no poaching here, it all depends where exactly you are located from the park boundaries. I know for a fact that we have a lot of poaching incidences close to the Mahenye[51]/ Mozambique. If I go 'kunovhima' [52] I am a poacher, you see I do like to provide for my family. My father taught me how to hunt and we do catch rabbits using snares and if I am lucky if I go just past that old boundary fence, I will catch kudus or deer. It's part of my culture, that's how I was raised. These days if I am caught do you know I can be prosecuted the same as one who killed an elephant. There is no poaching here, the 'new park' is using this term to rob us of our gifts the ancestor gave us."* (Respondent- N12)

This sentiment was similar to that of respondent N11 when asked about poaching in the area he stated:

> "This *issue of poaching has been on the agenda of this new park since they started managing the park. They tell us if I see a snake in my compound, I mustn't kill it, I must call them to come handle the situation. Where must I get money for airtime to call? , in my culture a snake in your yard can be a sign that someone is bewitching you , so I will kill it .The same as I will kill a deer or kudu when I come across them in the forest .It's part of our life we hunt these animals for food. Meat is expensive you know that. Now I am a poacher because I am 'illegally' hunting for survival, whereas the white man pays huge amounts of money to kill our sacred animals like the lion. It's not fair. They want us to believe that there is a poaching problem but there isn't, them fencing off the park was just to restrict us from accessing resources we have relied on for years. I do not think that is poaching*." (Respondent- N11)

These two respondents felt that the park only fenced off the boundary fence to restrict them from accessing the resources they had relied on for years. The respondents illustrated that they were exposed to physical violence by the game guards and in some instances, they would raid homes of suspected 'illegal hunters. However, I observed that some respondents were not afraid of the game rangers as they kept on hunting bushmeat for sale. Responded N7 felt that the issue of poaching has been exaggerated by the park officials and one time he was arrested because

[51] This is a village that's in the northern part of Gonarezhou
[52] Shona for hunting

they accused him of killing an elephant. However, he was confused as to why they would say he was trying to poach when he never harvested the elephant tusk nor the carcass:

> "*I was arrested a few years ago because of this poaching thing. It was a very serious offense, so I was told. But personally, I just feel I was arrested for looking out for my crops. Every year we have the same problem with the park management to control their animals, but they just do not care, at the end of the day our crops are destroyed, and we have to scrap for survival because you know the situation in our country is very difficult. So, I was told by this other friend of mine that the chemical was going to scare away wild animals. Unfortunately, the elephant died, but I did not harvest any tusks, I just did it for my family. Well for the park officials this was poaching and at some point, they even thought that I was working with experienced poachers but that was not the case. Ever since then I am aware that poaching is the killing of any wild animals in this area that covers Gonarezhou, and the government will make sure that they protect them because that's all they care about."* (Respondent – N7)[53]

Furthermore, the chief although he was aware of elephants being killed in the park, he also stated that for him animals in the park are the property of the state, but for the animals that are outside the boundaries of the park they are entitled to kill them as it is their right to benefit from these resources and they have been doing this for a long time. When I probed the chief to explain what he meant by only the killing of animals in the park and not outside he indicated that:

> "I *believe that our animals need to be protected specially the elephants. So, it is unacceptable for community members to hunt them, even in the past our elders instructed us to protect certain species, so one wouldn't just hunt a lion or leopard without special permission from the chief because it was regarded as a medium with our ancestors. In this, all hunters were regulated by our traditional rules and were expected to respect the traditional regulations that existed in the community he operated in. During colonialism all this changed, and we needed permits to hunt, or we would get arrested. It seems like this 'new park' has made it a point that anyone seen hunting these animals will be arrested if they don't have a permit. I am with my people on this one, we cannot be prosecuted for practising our culture."* (Respondent- N1)[54]

This sentiment by the chief was shared by some villagers and respondents I interacted with. Hunting is a cultural practise and in the past all hunters had to abide by the rules set by traditional authorities. Some respondents pointed out that poaching is viewed as the killing of big game, yet others understood this term as stealing natural resources from the park. The above experiences outlined the discursive violent nature attached to the term poaching which dehumanises hunting for subsistence, that has resulted in arrests of innocent people in the

[53] Interview conducted with N7 in June 2019.
[54] Interview with N1 conducted in June 2019

Ndali village. However, it can be concluded that villagers of Ndali are aware of the implications of hunting small game, they know it's illegal to hunt but because they have been practising bushmeat hunting in the past, they are justified to continue with the practise. The nuances of how discursive violence is produced under the premises of curbing anti-poaching measures will be discussed in detail in chapter four.

3.7 Conclusion

The narratives shared by respondents from Ndali Village shows us how different forms of violence are produced. This chapter has presented the conservation practices of the GNP that prevent Ndali villagers from accessing grazing resources. Restricting Ndali villagers from accessing resources exposes them to different forms of indirect violence , which has a negative impact on people's lives. Secondly , the chapter also illustrates that a majority of Ndali villagers are not benefiting from the park and in times of drought they have been forced to find alternative ways to earn a living. These activities range from illegal hunting to sell bushmeat, trespassing park boundaries to harvest grass and timber. Through my interactions with a number of villagers and interviews I had with respondents; the game ranger post was one of the vacancies that the park offered. It is evident from the interviews that the training to become a game ranger is intense and the job itself exposes the workers to indirect violence and direct violence in some instances. The next chapter is going to discuss and analyse the empirical findings using a green violence lens and literature discussed in chapter 2. This will aid in situating the research in the broader academic scholarship.

Chapter 4: 'Nature above people': Outcomes of the violence of conservation

> **"***The amount of land in Africa that's set aside for animals is tiny, maybe 3% of Africa, and before Peace Parks dwindle, it could only go one way as population grow. And yet, what is Africa? Africa is its animals…and that's the beauty of Africa- that's what makes it different from the rest of the world and to lose those animals would be catastrophic ,so the wonderful thing about peace parks is trying to increase the amount of land for the animals, and by increasing the amount of land for the animals that will help human beings ."*
>
> *(Sir Richard Branson, Ambassador for Peace Parks)*[55]

4.1 Introduction

Initially, my research aimed to explore if militarization of conservation extended from the Kruger National Park into other parts of the GLTFCA, such as the GNP. After spending some time in the village there was no substantial evidence of militarisation. Therefore, my research explored how different forms of violence manifested in the area as a result of practices implemented by the GNP authorities. As discussed in chapter two, to understand the impact of conservation practices adopted by GNP on the lives of people in Ndali, I used the concept of political ecology approach to examine the relationship between villagers and the park around GNP in relation to the new management and its impact. Thus, political ecology enabled the research to examine who has gained and who has lost from the new arrangements around the park. Secondly, I used green violence as developed by Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016) to focus on how people gain or lose due to the violent nature of conservation around GNP. Thus, green violence is anchored in a broader political ecology frame. Chapter two discussed the different approaches to conservation and how these practices impact lives of communities living around national parks. In the light of such debates that were presented in chapter two and the narratives of Ndali villagers in chapter three, this section will discuss and illustrate how green violence, has impacted Ndali Village. The chapter will be centred on discussion around the production of different forms of violence in Ndali Village using a green violence lens. The section will focus on the three facets of green violence as developed by Büscher and

[55] This is an excerpt from Anderson et al People living at the edge. This direct quote inspired me to carry out my research to explore the place of people in nature conservation.

Ramutsindela (2016), namely material, discursive and social forms violence. In addition, these facets will be expanded using a framework developed by Mushonga (2018), to deepen our thinking on how violence is produced around protected areas using structural, symbolic and economic violence.

4.2 How material green violence is reproduced in Ndali Village.

During my stay in Ndali, most villagers I interacted with were not happy with the new management's conservation practices. This resentment towards the park goes back to colonial times when the Ndali land was integrated into the national park when GNP was formed. The redrawing of the boundary fence has seen most villagers' lives dislocated as they are forced to travel long distances looking for grazing lands and resources. This highlights some of the challenges they face as a result of conservation practices adopted by the park. I observed that restricted access to resources had a ripple effect on the social fabric of the Ndali village as young boys drop out of school to herd cattle and most families are left with no means to earn a living. These misfortunes stem from attitudes of parks towards humans. Government's actions on human settlements in parks have been influenced by the international community that advocates for nature above the needs of people. In Ndali, the park authorities take time to respond to calls of animals trespassing into the local's fields, but quick to respond when there is suspected poaching in the area. This, during my stay showcased that elephants had to be protected at all costs.

In this study, the people in Ndali Village do not have influence on issues related to determining the access and use of resources in the park and if they do access it, they are accused of encroaching and poaching by game rangers. This is in line with Wolmer (2000)'s argument that some conservation regulations in southern Africa treats communities living next to national parks 's traditional rights of use and access as encroachment and poaching. Furthermore, the findings that there are conflicts regarding access and use of the land concurs with arguments made by (Neumann 1992; Neumann 1997, Mombeshora, 2009) on the resistances of local people against conservation strategies adopted by the park authorities. The chief's account indicates that the creation of the park from the onset was coupled with violent displacements and restricted use of the land. The respondents' major concern was about their ancestral land that was integrated into the park prior to its establishment and has been documented quite extensively by Mombeshora and Le Bel (2009), in their study where they argued that ownership

of land was one of the main reasons why the Ndali Village and the GNP had clashes. This displays trait of green violence as developed by Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016).

As discussed in Chapter two, green violence highlights the material and non-material facets of violence and its social and linguistic forms. According to Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016), green violence can only be comprehended by a clear acknowledgment of the broader socio-economic, and political contexts within which it is carried out. My findings demonstrate that green violence does not only render violence visible but also highlights the direct and indirect material effects it has on nature and people living in conservation spaces. For instance, the militarisation of some parts of the GLTP (including the Gonarezhou National Park) has affected people of Ndali's access to resources in the park because of the anti-poaching initiatives by governments of Zimbabwe, South Africa and Mozambique.

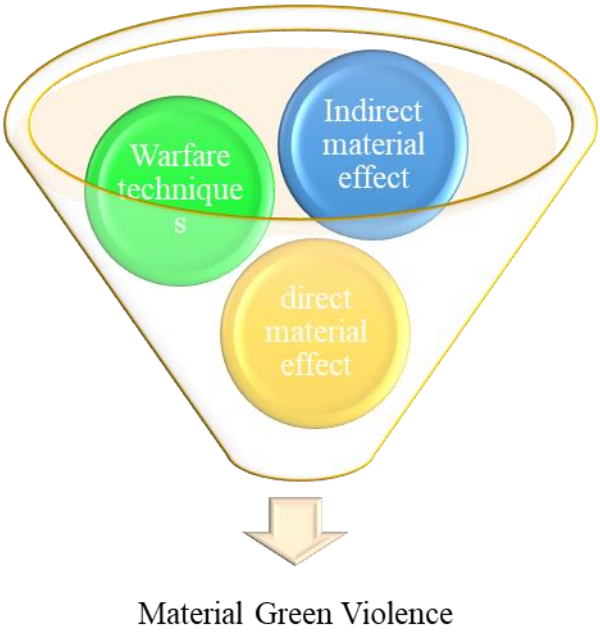

Figure 7: Researcher's illustration of how 'material green violence" manifests

The respondents' experiences illustrate different textures with which violence takes form. For example, the indirect material effect of violence is denoted by land ownership, and this has triggered the Ndali villagers to overtly express their disgruntlement by illegally procuring natural resources in parks land. Although this does not evidently show direct militarised tactics on conservation, the indirect material effects restrict people's access and use of natural

resources. To answer the research question raised in Chapter Two, on what the people of Ndali say about the new management of the GNP, it can be argued that the land claims (Mombeshora and Le Bel 2009) and the subsequent misunderstandings over the park boundary, represent situations that ignite some of the key underlying factors which inform people's relations over the park's management. This is in line with studies that indicate park boundaries disputes and claims of land is based on how the boundaries of the parks kept being redrawn without the community's knowledge or consultation (Anderson et al, 2013; Wolmer, 2007; Mandudzo, 2018). This also concurs with Tavuyanago (2016), who concluded that circumstances resulting in resource access and use conflicts is grounded in the social relations and local histories, as well as being connected to wider economic and power relations. Notably, the use of political ecology's multi-scale approach was useful to unpack this. The fact that access and use is determined by the park authorities and the government, reflects the different nuances of indirect violence.

I adopt a typology of conservation-based violence as developed by Mushonga (2018), to expand the scope of green violence. Mushonga argues that the conceptualisation of militarised conservation or green violence, should be expanded to show the different textures violence takes on the ground. According to Mushonga (2018), social structures that embody conservation laws, practices and policies managing resource access, presents the most invisible type of violence, which she terms structural violence. It is this form of invisible violence which Büscher and Ramutsindela denote as the 'indirect material effects violence'. Based on experiences of local people presented in Chapter three, resource access regulations and policies are the genesis of all facets of violence in Ndali. These conservation practices come with restrictive conditions aimed at controlling how they access resources such as grazing land. In light of this, I argue that the existing forms of violence in the Ndali communities around the GNP are a by-product of the structures that perpetuate violence.

Some laws implemented by the Zimbabwean government formed an intentional structural barrier to restrict local people's access and use of resources under the premises that humans pose a threat to the ecosystems and do not know the benefits of nature (Anderson et al, 2013). For example, the Natural Resources Act of 1944 which was a key policy driven by the narrative of conservationist alarmism which purported protecting nature from the degradation of human activity and maintaining the wilderness (Duffy, 2000), and the 1975 Wildlife Act that states that the picking of plants, hunting of wild animals and selling of any wildlife is prohibited, and that park authorities are required to do all things necessary to ensure the security of the park.

This protectionist approach uses violent and coercive tools to ensure compliance by locals, restricting them access to natural resources. Respondents' experience sheds light on how structural barriers imposed by GNP management are accompanied by deprivation and dislocation of livelihoods. Instead of alleviating poverty in communities around the protected areas, these practices exacerbate it. In my opinion this showcases the complexities of 'material green violence'. In Ndali, respondents felt that the erection of the fence by the state affected their way of life and made it difficult to sustain their families. In my view, unlike physical harm on locals that is well documented by (Masse & Lunstrum, 2016; Duffy, 2000; Neumann, 1998; Neumann, 2004), I argue that being unable to sustain one's life because of structures that impose barriers on people's development is counterproductive to the development project and denotes traits of 'indirect material effects'.

Lastly, the study acknowledges that green violence is not as nuanced in Ndali compared to other areas surrounding the GLTP. As observed from the respondent's experiences, extreme violent conservation tactics such as shoot-to-kill (Duffy, 2000), shoot-on-sight (Lunstrum, 2016, Marijnen & Verweijen, 2016) are not applicable for, or supported in conservation practices that regulate resource and access use in the Ndali Village. GNP's game rangers and law enforcement are not provided adequate resources such as guns nor do they get military support from national army as the studies above concluded. Thus, while the studies on conservation-based violence are useful in conceptualizing the different forms of violence in nature, they do not acknowledge that these forms of violence are context based. The following section delves into the other forms of violence produced in the Ndali area.

4.3 The political ecology of conservation-based violence and the production of different forms of social and discursive green violence.

Most villagers in Ndali believe they should be getting substantial benefits from the park in form of job creation and compensation when wildlife destroys their agricultural produce. However, in this study most respondents indicated that they were not getting any substantial benefits from the GNP. The only occupation or available positions were that of game rangers and those who participated in the interviews indicated they feared for their lives every time they were on duty and given an opportunity, would change their occupation. They received intense training which involved use of military equipment like guns and how to respond to poaching activities. In my

opinion, the rangers in this community are not taking the job because they are passionate about conserving nature, but rather as a source of income. Therefore, the notion that game rangers take up the job because they are passionate about nature and willing to risk their lives to control poaching does not match with their experiences in their line of duty. This concurs with Duffy (2019) who also challenges us to gain a better comprehension of rangers' experiences particularly when it comes to militarisation of conservation.

Furthermore, game rangers' experiences show traits of what Mushonga (2018) developed as occupational violence. According to Mushonga (2018), efforts to control poaching in protected areas poses risks for game rangers as there are no initiatives in place from the government to ensure their safety, given the inadequate resources. Based on the experiences of these game rangers, their training turned out to be coercive and intense, which I argue, exposes them to occupational violence.

Secondly, there is evidence of tensions between the villagers and the park's management over benefits and this has caused some of them to access natural resources illegally, which is antagonistic to the park's goals. This concurs with Büscher (2009)'s assertion that the creation of protected areas does not often deliver benefits for the local community because of the neoliberal framework they operate in. These promises he argues, are habitually brought up as a means to convince local communities to participate in conservation activities that are behind conservation goals of the government or different actors. In this study, respondents reported that failure of the GNP to deliver on their promises made them resentful towards the park. Thus, this finding establishes that villagers of Ndali believe that the goals and missions of the GNP management gives more precedence to wildlife instead of alleviating people's standards of living. Therefore, denying local people access to resources that enhance their financial status and livelihoods exposes them to 'social green violence.

According to Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016), social green violence relates to effects that social orders (local, national or global) bring to bear on people, for example, "through institutions that protect some and expose others to the brutal vectors of economic and political power, but also through images and practices that do violence to the moral order". It is an issue of abuse of social power in pursuit of protecting nature and ideologies linked to nature conservation. In this study, the state and the FZS are the main institutions responsible for conservation in the GNP and narratives around conservation follows a top-down approach. Villagers were aware that it was trespassing the boundary fence or 'poaching' which they

construed as hunting, was a crime. The idea that killing of small game is poaching comes from the park authorities and reflects continuities of the colonial regime that restricted people from hunting for subsistence unless they had a permit (Wolmer, 2000). The discourses around which conservation is carried out in the GNP is a reflection on how colonial legacies still live-in relation to managing natural resources. However, the theme of 'poaching' in my findings was warranting and needed discussion.

The respondents were aware of what poaching was based on the park's definitions. Violence is a multi- layered concept and the different meanings attached to poaching is a reflection on how discourses around poaching are understood in conservation debates. One could argue that this is a form of social green violence because people's understanding of poaching was influenced by how the state and the NGO defined it, albeit the locals' understanding of poaching as the killing of small game. This presents complexities when it comes to conservation goals by the park. The respondents know the consequences of poaching but feel entitled to hunt as they have been doing this for years. This social green violence is also cemented by policies adopted by the state to ensure the protection of wildlife resources. Thus, social green violence is a product of structural violence.

The legality and illegality of extracting natural resources in the national park becomes blurred when using the same tools used by colonial states. This concurs with (Brockington, 2002; Neumann,1998; Carruthers,1995) who argue that the category of poacher emerged from laws and protectionist models of conservation which prohibited African traditional ways of hunting for food and certain resource use practices. The respondents in the study were resentful towards the park's policy on hunting. The policies around hunting in Zimbabwe today reflect the continuities of colonial legacies that prohibit local people to hunt but favours sport hunting.

This practice sheds light on the categorisation of the poacher, who in the colonial times was portrayed as 'black', 'barbaric', 'native' (Carruthers, 1995; Neumann, 2004). The respondents' definition of poaching was based on a notion that they are 'stealing' from the park, when translated into the local language, poaching is stealing. So not only are the 'poachers' black but also the current rhetoric is that they are taking what is not theirs and this has led to the media portraying the poachers as inhumane killers of wildlife (Lunstrum, 2017; Neumann, 2004). The villagers although aware of the consequences of hunting, fear that their culture is slowly eroding and exhibits traits of 'cultural violence. This is in line with Mushonga (2018) who defines cultural violence as the deprivation and restricted use of cultural and traditional

practices of people through regulations. In Ndali, most of the respondents argued that hunting is and will always be a cultural practice and felt robbed of their culture.

Consequently, this also confirms Duffy (2000)'s argument that conservationists in the developing world are remote and unaccountable to local communities and that they demonise sustainable use of resources without fully understanding cultural consequences. Thus, natural resources in the protected areas are treated as if it exists in a vacuum. From a political ecology perspective, I argue that how we understand nature has far-reaching political significance. Undoubtedly, this is the same with conservation where the creation of national parks entails the government or NGOs drafting regulations on who can benefit from nature, where, how and when they can do so. My line of argument concurs with (Peet and Watts 2004; Neumann 2004c) who also argue that the creation of protected areas in the form of national parks which involves the exclusion of people, reflects conceptual dilemmas between nature and human society influenced by Eurocentric ideologies. Therefore, the impact this has on local people has to be contextual.

Furthermore, Duffy (2000) stated that poachers could not be viewed in the same light because different factors force people into poaching. Although this may be true, I acknowledge that there are blurred lines. The term poaching was understood differently by the majority of the respondents. According to Duffy (2000), poaching has been defined as 'any extractive use of wildlife that is regarded as illegal by the state. In Ndali, villagers are aware of this definition; however, it is evident that the policies that support anti-poaching in Zimbabwe revolve around definitions of what the states and NGOs consider to be legitimate and legal utilization of natural resources, which in turn clashes with the local community's understanding.

In addition, it was important to investigate who my respondents' thought was behind poaching in the area. The majority of the respondents reported that poachers were Mozambicans, and the media has reinforced this view for the past few years. The role of the media in barraging the community with negative images of the poacher gained empathy from the state and NGOs resulting in the implementation of this violent conservation practise. This finding ties in with Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016)'s discursive green violence. Discursive green violence entails discourses of othering the perpetrators through social media such that it is engrained in local communities to view poachers as agents who are disrupting the conservation of nature. Although respondents acknowledged they did not consider killing of small animals as poaching, in my opinion, conservation discourses have demonised the activity and instilled fear

of conviction. This is the reason why locals of Ndali have reservations about poaching. This is also in line with Lunstrum (2016), who argues that the discursive portrayal of the poacher and wildlife at risk has shaped conservation and anti-poaching policies. Lunstrum (2017), demonstrates how public participation on social media with regards to poaching updates in the Kruger National Park advocates and may even authorise violent, heavy-handed, and lethal anti-poaching practices. Anti-poaching work is similarly made visible. Marijnen and Verweijen (2016) use the term "militarization by consumption" to explain how the discursive production of conservation-based violence represents armed park guards in the Virunga National Park as heroes.

4.4 Meanings attached to the boundary fence: A form of symbolic violence.

Studies have shown that communities around protected areas are barely consulted on their opinions over fences that restrict their movement (Chaminuka, 2010; Mombeshora and Le Bel, 2009). My research aimed at exploring the experiences of Ndali villagers living close to the boundary fence put up by the GNP management. Some villagers felt the fence helped reduce the damage caused by animals particularly elephants and provided a sense of security from predators which in the past posed threats to human lives. Others on the other hand, perceived the fence as reducing their grazing area, and this resulted in cattle straying into the park boundaries which has caused disputes with the park management. This situation is similar to that described in Gandiwa et al (2011) who claimed that the cattle in the GNP area were encroaching into the fenced-off area because there was no grazing area for them. During my fieldwork, grazing land was the dominant theme and locals were forced to go through steep ravines in search of grazing areas. In my view, the people of Ndali's experience with the fence is influenced by aspects that affect their day to day lives other than those on the protection of the wildlife corridor reserved for conservation.

My findings demonstrate that respondents were dissatisfied with the location of the boundary. The chief's account on the establishment of the GNP and his village is a clear illustration that his people's discontentment is partially related to the relocations that happened in the colonial era when GNP was created. I argue that the situation in Ndali is not about violent conservation practices but rather the issue of land tenure. This concurs with studies done in the area which show the ongoing disputes between the GNP and the Ndali community over land ownership (Mombeshora & Le Bel, 2009; Mandudzo, 2013). The reason why the colonial government put

up the veterinary fence which the chief does not recognize, was to control tsetse flies. But after the tsetse fly crisis in 1975, Gonarezhou was officially declared a national park and this saw the Ndali's land integrated into the park, forcing the villagers to scrounge for new grazing land. This is in line with Mombeshora (2003)'s argument that the demarcation of park boundaries drastically reduced rangelands for African people living next to national parks. This line of argument is against the one made by (Wolmer, 2000) that veterinary fences put up in the GNP for the past decade were a response to the eradication of diseases carried by wildlife like the tsetse fly.

Furthermore, my results show that dissatisfaction with the location of the park boundary was influenced by lack of extracting resources that would generate income. Some respondents revealed that they used to get reeds from the river to make mats which had a lucrative market in Mozambique, while others depended on fishing. The erection of the new fence affected their chance of earning an income. Focus on displacement has been well documented, but as argued earlier, this is usually the physical displacement of people. In this study, I concur with the 'invisible displacement' that was argued by (Brockington & Wilke, 2009). According to (Brockington & Wilke, 2009) displacement can be economical and they define as the implementation of restrictions that poses challenges for local communities around national parks to earn a living. Therefore, I argue that this invisible displacement translates to what Mushonga (2018) termed economic violence, which she defined as the continual denial of people's access to resources that jeopardies their financial status and economic freedom.

Although the Ndali villagers are allowed to live next to the park, they are not permitted to graze livestock, fish or collect reeds for mat making. The respondents perceived that the fence was put up to restrict their movement. I argue that this is a turning point in conservation debate because focus has been on evictions and relocations. This is also in line with Brockington and Igoe's (2006) review of eviction for conservation that suggests the prevalence of economic displacement is significant than evictions and, in most cases, local communities do not get any form of incentives to balance this. Thus, in Ndali, the other issue was that of economic rather than physical displacement. Although I established earlier on that there is no substantial militarization of conservation in the GNP, the boundary fence is symbolic of the power of the state and the NGO in protecting wildlife. This is symbolic violence. The fence acts as a reminder for the community that the park is private property and anyone who trespasses will be met by the heavy hand of the law. The study by Mushonga (2018) argued that violence in the protected areas comes in many forms and tools employed by the state to control 'poaching'

serve as a “symbolic reminder of the importance of heeding to structural barriers but have subconscious emotional and psychological effects on people living adjacent to protected areas”. This is true for the local villagers of Ndali who felt that the state values the lives of animals over their lives.

In light of this, political ecology was beneficial in that it addresses the relationship between the natural and social and unpacks how they are connected. It emphasizes that we cannot understand the needs of nature based on material things, but rather it is influenced and is a by-product of political outcomes. In the case of Ndali, GNP is part of the GLTP, and conservation policies adopted fulfil the mission of the GLTP and intentionally ignores the needs of the people. Thus, restricted access and use of resources become the norm and shows the relationship between the political and the social. This concurs with Adams and Hutton (2007) who asserted that the notions around nature are created in inherently political ways. In my opinion, to ensure that the boundary/veterinary fences in national parks do not disproportionally affect local communities, careful planning is needed to ensure that they benefit from biodiversity conservation rather than be coerced by invisible forces to conform. Although my results have shown that the majority of the respondents did not like the location of the boundary fence, they did acknowledge its positive role in their lives. If the GNP authorities were proactive in working with the community, a good relationship can be built and ensure that conservation goals of the national park will be met.

4.5 Conclusion

My study has shown how green violence is produced in Ndali Village by presenting stories of how the violence manifests together with colonial dispossession. The research adds to current debates on the consequences of conservation-based violence on the lives of people that live close to protected areas. Ndali villagers have been restricted access and use of resources they rely on for survival from the fenced area. Insights from interactions with people in Ndali Village and interviews showed that few people benefit from the park. I assert that the conservation practices of the GNP management still employ the fortress-based conservation, which sees that the locals do not disrupt the mission of the state and different actors. Thus, wildlife is given precedence compared to human life. I also argue that colonial legacies remain active in the management of the GNP and prohibit people from hunting for subsistence. In general, employing political ecology as a conceptual framework enabled me to establish that the state and the NGO running the GNP do not have the interest of people at heart and the Ndali villagers bear all the costs.

The study also shows that the relationship between the GNP and the community is not convivial, hence the resentment of people towards conservation goals set by the park. Furthermore, I assert that benefits promised by authorities managing the protected area remain questionable. For instance, how can the Ndali community sustain their lives when they are not violently denied access to resources? When one thinks of the presupposed benefits of living next to a national park, it will be the job creation aspect. However, in the Ndali community, the only jobs reportedly available were those of game rangers, in line with the park's mission of controlling poaching in the area. Not everyone gets to be a game ranger, and this brings the next argument that for conservation goals to be met in protected areas that include the GNP, policymakers should not think that people in the community are a homogenous group but rather heterogeneous. Interview respondents indicated that they were forced to take up the game ranger positions because they were the only available options. Local people differ in terms of what they do to make ends meet.

All these practices by the GNP are evident of how the state polices use of natural resources which manifests in violence. While this is not physical violence, it can be symbolic, cultural, structural, economic, occupational, material and social. The study revealed that the practice and implementation of laws to access or extract natural resources in the GNP have

disproportionally affected the locals. Some lost their livestock, while others missed out on education opportunities. As discussed earlier, the study aimed to explore if green militarisation extended to other parts of the GLTP as documented in the literature. However, there was no evidence of substantial militarisation but the ripple effects that exposed local people to 'violence'. Building from Mushonga (2018) and Büscher and Ramutsindela (2016)'s 'green violence', the study established that the ripple effects of militarized conservation in the GLTP has exposed people in the Ndali who depended on the GNP for resources to material, symbolic and social green violence. This combination of violence has further exposed them to nuanced social and economic forms of violence as they cannot sustain their livelihoods. I align this with Brockington (2016), who argues that people living on the edge of protected areas are subjected to different forms of displacement which can be violent and at times, economic and social. Although my study did not delve much into green militarisation, it argues that any use of violent means and stringent policies regarding resource use, disproportionally affects local people who have depended on these for a long time and less on the so-called 'poaching crisis' because as reflected in Ndali, only a few incidents of poaching were reported by the respondents. The main issue is not about biodiversity conservation as my findings have revealed, but rather restrictions of access and use of resources; lack of job creation; land tenure; and land use. This has been a significant issue in the South Eastern Lowveld of Zimbabwe for some time. If the GNP is to be fenced off as it is currently, it should implement incentives to ensure that locals have grazing areas for their cattle and create community projects as this might change their perceptions on biodiversity conservation.

In conclusion, the experiences of the people towards the GNP are rooted in a violent history of displacement; dislocation; and evictions. The study indicates that pre-existing historical configurations influence long-term evolution of conservation and development. History is influential in shaping current conservation practices in Zimbabwe's South-Eastern Lowveld. In particular, colonial history is important because of its establishment of boundaries that gave rights of access to others and depriving some. Thus, the interaction of the people and the park should be understood historically.

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Appendices.

The appendix section includes (A) a fact sheet of the Gonarezhou Conservation Project as seen on their website, (B) a sample of an interview transcript conducted with the chief, and (C)some images taken by Tichayana Konono while in the field.

(A).

GONAREZHOU CONSERVATION PROJECT

FRANKFURT ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) and the Zimbabwe Ministry of Environment and Tourism signed a memorandum of understanding in 2010, valid for a 10-year period. This agreement enabled FZS to enter into a partnership with the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZPWMA) for the conservation and development of Gonarezhou National Park. Work on the ground had already started in 2007 through an earlier MoU that FZS had signed with ZPWMA.

Some key achievements of this partnership to date include, amongst others:

- ***Review of the Gonarezhou Park Management Plan*** which serves as a roadmap for the activities of the Gonarezhou Conservation Project (GCP), and provides the blueprint for the envisaged Park infrastructure and tourism development. The Plan emphasises that the wilderness character of the Park is one of it's most important features to be retained in the future, and this factor needs to be taken into consideration when planning and implementing any new development or management activity.
- ***Increased law enforcement coverage and effectiveness*** through regular monthly supply of ranger patrol rations, operational fuel and field equipment. Rangers have also participated in anti-poaching and bush skills training courses, and received training in the use of GPS units. Availability of a project aircraft has also greatly increased the capacity for detection of illegal activities and support to ranger units in the field.
- ***Infrastructure maintenance and improvements*** e.g. renovation of the vehicle workshops and staff housing, overhaul of water provisioning equipment, and renovations of the tourism camping facilities.

  A 37 km electrified fence line was recently completed in the northwest section of the Park in order to minimise human-wildlife conflict, and to halt the escalating number of cattle herds that were entering into the Park for grazing.
- ***Comprehensive aerial survey*** of the number of large mammals in the Park and surrounding areas in 2009, inclusive of border areas in Mozambique
- ***Provision and maintenance of equipment*** crucial for effective park management such as vehicles, tractors, earth-moving equipment, radios, fire-fighting and office equipment
- ***Increased ecological knowledge*** through provision of equipment, resources and/or support for studies into elephant movements, river health monitoring, disease prevalence, large carnivore status and vegetation mapping.

FRANKFURT ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Frankfurt Zoological Society (FZS) was established in 1858 and is an internationally operating conservation organisation based in Frankfurt/Main. The Society's main focus lies in eastern Africa, where our long-serving president, Professor Dr. Bernhard Grzimek invested much time and effort.

The Society is an independent, non-profit organisation. Our projects are financed through membership fees, private donations and bequests as well as from investment returns from the "Help for Threatened Wildlife" Foundation. Financial support also comes from third-party funds such as other foundations and charitable trusts.

Our work is committed to conserving biological diversity. FZS is therefore faced with one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century: the preservation of the world's natural environments. FZS is momentarily involved in 60 conservation projects in 25 countries.

(B). An extract of one of the interview transcripts.

Researcher: You mentioned earlier that things were better when the government was running things, what did you mean?

Respondent: Ok, so like in 2014 we used to cross over into the park to look for straws to make mats with, because you know in Mozambique there is a huge market for straw mats, so we would carefully walk in the park avoiding areas where we know elephants were and we would get these from the river. You know it was not only the straws but also some women especially my mum's sister she would also fish and then dry the fish for sale. These were good years I think because you know how our economy is, so if you can find something to do it will be better. So, the old park never had problems with us only when people killed animals because you know it's not allowed.

Researcher: ok I see. So, with the new management what has changed?

Respondent: I am sure you have seen for yourself or people have already told you what they did to us. They closed off the area we used to access the park with an electric fence. So now we are not allowed to get in because if we do, we will be trespassing this has made our lives a bit stressful because I have no other way of making income, hence I started my own cooking business. At least for me I do not suffer a great loss, but for most people in this community that was a slap in the face, and you know in this drought most cattle are dying, and people are looking for alternative areas to feed their cattle.

Researcher. What was the park's reason for putting up the electric fence?

Respondent: Its always about controlling poaching with these people. We do not poach animals; I think they just put up the fence so that we will not trespass. But it is their animals that always trespasses and when we complain about how much they are destroying our crops and endangering our lives, nothing is done. If an elephant was to be killed today the news spreads fast quickly compared to when a person gets attacked by wild animals. This fence has caused a lot of problems especially for people that are in other wards because their livestock has no pastures where they can feed, the only area where the cattle go is far and like in some instances, the cattle start feeding on the thatch grass of the houses and this has posed great challenges particularly replacing the roofs because the park does not allow us to collect that now.

(C). Images of the researcher with local cattle herders

This image shows how malnourished the cattle are as a result of lack of sufficient grazing areas

Women at the Save Riverbank doing their laundry