

Philosophy and Violence in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe

by

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Abstract

This essay discusses the notion of violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe through the philosophical lens of Heraclitus and Parmenides in a belief that the notion of violence in Zimbabwe cannot be interpreted and understood in isolation, independent of the wider spectrum provided for by the history of philosophy. To this end, Mukumba argues that for any research to be philosophically sound and edifying, it must not be holed up in isolationism but must tap from the universal heritage of human thought. Heraclitus, thus, provides this essay with a sound theoretical framework because of his philosophical conceptualisation of the term violence. It is also argued that while Heraclitus clearly identifies the problem associated with the notion of violence in antiquity, he offers no solution. Thus, Parmenides' intellectual awareness is suggested as a remedy to the problem of abuse of violence and through interrogating the works of pre-Socratic Greek philosophers Heraclitus and Parmenides, one can better understand the nature and character of violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

Keywords: Violence, Philosophy, Notion and Demythologisation

Introduction

It is my argument that violence is not what the contemporary Zimbabweans believe it to be. For this reason Nietzsche once remarked that “man scarcely knows the drives that constantly propel him, their number and strength, their ebb and flow, their play and counter play, and, above all, the laws governing their nourishment remain unknown to him” (Golfing, 1956: 12). Hence I believe that the people of Zimbabwe are ignorant of the true nature and meaning of the notion of violence since in our time, violence has appeared the most common unknown drive which has hungrily manipulated our every state of affairs.

Therefore, the problem I seemingly identify is that in post-colonial Zimbabwe common sense understanding has distorted the concept of violence and covered it with a lot of myth, and hence the concept needs to be intellectually cleansed and defended. And the notion of violence needs to be demystified or demythologized through the analytic lens of the philosophies of Heraclitus and Parmenides. The intention of this study is not to gather as much information about violence as is possible but to sift through and establish the nature and scope of violence from a philosophical point of view.

Thus, this research is a philosophical consideration of the concept of violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe. I will first define and explain the two notions or concepts: violence and intellectual awareness. Then I will scientifically demonstrate that in post-colonial Zimbabwe violence is misunderstood and hence abused. Because it is abused, violence has become endemic and no one is immune. Violence is evidently abused and used to harm and destroy. Confusion, destruction, and disorder have become the order of Zimbabwean society and especially fuelled by the current desire for unlimited political power, a desire for wealth and pleasure (cf. CCJP 2009, Sachikonye 2011 and Kaulemu 2011). However, the work will proceed by critically reflecting on the people's experiences of error, distortion, and abuse on the reality of violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe through the conceptual analytic frameworks of Heraclitus and Parmenides. The choice is not random; their contribution to the subject on violence and human nature is of paramount importance to this work. They provide this work with a foundation and a theoretical framework. But a historical jump from ancient Greece to contemporary Zimbabwe can easily be identified and the jump needs rational justification. The jump will be rationally justified.

Definitions of the Notions of Violence and Intellectual Awareness

A notion is a word, an idea or an understanding of something (cf. *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, 2006). Brennan (1967: 690) argues that the term "violence" comes from the Latin term *violentia*, denoting great force or excessive force or constraint. Thus, violence is power, energy or force. Brennan (1967: 690) further notes that the first two meanings, 'great force' and 'excessive force', are taken from the perspective of an agent's activity, and the third meaning, 'constraint' is taken from that of a passive principle affected adversely by the activity of the agent. Thus, violence exists not as an agent but as an agent's intention and activity. The word, 'denoting' seemingly implies that violence is something that can be physically pointed at; violence exists in the physical order. May (1972: 42), like Brennan, also views violence as largely a physical event.

In line with Brennan, Hanks (1979) defines violence as both a noun and verb. As a noun violence means that which can exist; a possible being. What it means is that violence is a relative concept. It is power or ability to become. Violence thus, exists not on its own but exists in the other. It exists in the agent as a possession.

As a verb, 'violence' can also be defined as 'intensity, conduct or treatment or illegal use of force' (Hanks, 1979). The meaning of violence as an action answers the question about the manner or mode in which violence exists. As an action violence exists in the agent and as possession, violence becomes the agent's conduct; it is the agent's intentionality, behaviour or character (cf. May, 1972: 42ff). It is the agent that gives violence form or shape, and once it has form or shape, violence becomes what the agent intends. Hence it becomes possible now to answer the most confusing questions: Can violence kill people, cut people's hands or destroy people's houses? The answer is probably no! Violence probably neither destroys nor builds, but it is the agent who does both through the use of violence. There is an old adage that says: 'Violence in the hands of a barbarian destroys but in the hands of a civilised man it builds.' Tentatively, violence can be defined as a physical force or power, possessed by an agent, who can use it to build or to destroy. This view sounds rather controversial and disconcerting, given that many people consider violence to be an evil without anything positive about it. However, the above analysis on violence is evidently the reason why I picked on Heraclitus and Parmenides as my conceptual analytic frameworks to assess violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

Awareness means having knowledge of something. It is an ability to perceive and to feel. It is the state or condition of being conscious, having knowledge or discernment of something (cf. Jonathan, 2012). Being conscious according to *The Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (2006: 294), means "noticing that something exists or is happening and realizing that it is important." The same dictionary defines consciousness as "the knowledge or understanding that something exists or is important" (Ibid). Intellectual means relating to the ability to think in an intelligent way and to understand things, especially difficult or complicated ideas and subjects (cf. Ibid). Thus, intellectual awareness may mean knowing things at the level of the intellect. It is a level higher than experience or common sense level. At intellectual awareness level beliefs on violence are rationally or critically examined, and information is transformed into knowledge (cf. Koehn, 2005).

Rational Justification of the Historical Jump

The historical jump from ancient Greece to contemporary Zimbabwe can easily be identified and the jump needs rational justification. Hence we ask: Why a jump from ancient Greek philosophy to post-colonial Zimbabwe? Why from the ancient figures, Heraclitus and Parmenides to Kaulemu and Mangena? Can Heraclitus and Parmenides teach and correct Kaulemu and Mangena? How can the teaching of the ancient age (Greece) have any influence or relevance for today? Barclay (1971: 27) critically condemns the jump and he argues thus: "No one could try to teach doctors today with Gallen and Hippocrates as their textbooks; no one could try to teach agriculture on the basis of Varro, or architecture on the basis of Vitruvius." Thus, ancient writers in other spheres are interesting; they are part of the history of their subject. But no one accepts them as authoritative for the life and living today. Why then accept ancient Greek philosophy?

In response, I may argue that externals can change while underlying principles remain the same. Take the case of buildings. There is a very great difference between the Pyramids of Egypt, the Vatican City of Rome and the Rainbow Towers of Harare. Externally, they historically look worlds apart, and yet underlying them all there are the same laws of architecture. Thus, the externals can be as different as can be; the underlying principle is the same. The philosophies of Heraclitus and Parmenides are not limited in space and time, but have transference value. Thus, the jump from ancient Greece to contemporary Zimbabwe is clearly historical but not philosophical. Philosophical principles are not space and time bound but metaphysical, that is, they hold true everywhere and at all times. Hence Ortega (cited in Bailie, 1995: 241) argues that once it began, philosophy never fundamentally changed, for it has the notion of violence as its necessary beginning, indeed, without which philosophy itself could not begin. Thus, the philosophies of change and permanence of Heraclitus and Parmenides respectively can reliably act as the well-spring of the Zimbabweans' understanding of the notion of violence.

Abuse of the Notion of Violence in Zimbabwe

That violence is misunderstood and hence abused or misused in Zimbabwe is common sense knowledge. By being misunderstood I mean that violence is taken as a negative and destructive word and by being abused or misused I mean that violence is used to cause harm or destruction. It is my submission that in Zimbabwe violence is understood as a negative concept and is used to harm and destroy.

Turning to the experiences of Zimbabweans with regard to the concept of violence, we are immediately confronted with a hard question: Can we go to the very root of the notion of violence in Zimbabwe and be free from it? The question is very important, for it reminds us that the issue of violence in Zimbabwe is not only ideal but requires further interrogation. For this reason, Regamey (1966: 45) argues: "Independently of any bad intention, violence is inevitable. It is inescapably bound up in the very nature of all human beings." The notion of violence is then an indispensable and inescapably enduring component of our human life through which we participate in Planet Earth. But it is interesting to note that in Zimbabwe, the notion of violence is not only erroneously associated with destruction but is destruction itself (cf. CCJP, 2009). Kaulemu (2010) acknowledges this fact when he argues:

The life of many Zimbabweans today, is unnecessarily characterised by fear emanating from different forms of personal, social and political violence. Domestic violence, abuse, rape, murder, car high-jacking, house robberies and organised social violence have permeated people's social lives and reached unacceptable levels. Also worrying is organised political violence...

The negative experience of the notion of violence is everywhere in Zimbabwe. Its existence has ironically dominated the history of Zimbabwe and the misuse of the notion of violence is existentially and commonly experienced at every twist and turn of Zimbabwean history. The ugly and horrible effects of the concept reported in the media, internet and books are sufficient proof of this. And these reports are visibly current and fresh in the Zimbabwean people's memories.

The abiding question is: Are these experiences, experiences of violence or its misuse? Heraclitus (cited in Stumpf, 1993) taught that the notion of violence on its own destroys itself and that it is reason that turns the destructive nature of the concept of violence into its constructive nature. Thus, the notion of violence can be termed 'the indeterminate determinable' (cf. Aristotle cited in Stumpf, 1993), meaning that violence determines nothing but itself can be used to make good or bad by the agent. It is important to note that reason controls the notion of violence and once used or misused the concept ceases to be but becomes the agent's intentionality. However, judging from these philosophical insights, it is seemingly true that in Zimbabwe the concept of violence is misunderstood and misused because people fail to separate the concept from its agent.

The concept of violence is misconstrued and distorted in Zimbabwe because scholars tend to view it as only a negative and destructive concept. The concept of violence for them is an agent that destroys (cf. CCJP 2009, Sachikonye 2011 and Kaulemu 2011). We consider this to be misleading if we go by Heraclitus' notion of violence as a neutral concept. For instance, Kaulemu (2011: 2) understands the concept as a form of evil and as something that one wishes not to experience or as something we cannot wish others to experience. Kaulemu (2011) overlooks the positive aspect of the concept of violence, especially Heraclitus' view that violence can build. In the conclusion of his book, Kaulemu (2011: 135) categorically states that the concept of violence is destructive. Hence it is clear that Kaulemu (2011) is writing about the misuse of the concept of violence in Zimbabwe because misuse of the concept of violence is an experience we do not like, the actions of which we have difficulty in justifying. And even the title of the book itself strongly suggests that violence is a negative concept in Zimbabwe for it is something we must put an end to! But we cannot put violence to an end. What we can put to an end is its misuse.

As we shall observe with Heraclitus and Parmenides the concept of violence cannot be a subject or agent but a possession. It is that which we possess and use. The notion of violence is part of our human history and it is not us who are part of the history of the notion. So, the notion of violence has no independent history, cause or form, but the agent who uses or misuses it has history, form and cause. Hence we must stop accusing the notion of violence of the wrong we ourselves have done. Thus, our experience of the notion of violence as Zimbabweans is an experience of a notion that is distorted and misconstrued. The biggest problem for Zimbabweans is not violence but the will to use it to harm.

Plato (cited in Stumpf, 1993: 59) suggests that ‘knowledge of a thing is in its origin or cause’. Hence we ask: What are the possible origins and causes of distortion, misunderstanding and hence misuse of the concept of violence in Zimbabwe. Precisely, at common sense level Heraclitus’ common-sense philosophy offers us a guide. By simply observing the natural order of things or events, meaning, how things or events are naturally determined, we can identify or characterise the misuse of the concept of violence in Zimbabwe into three historical stages, namely: a) The violence in colonial Zimbabwe, b) The violence of the early 1980s and c) Post-2000 violence. Muwati, Gambahaya and Mangena (2006) also have the same characterisation. For them, Zimbabwe is a country fraught with a history of violence starting from the armed struggle in the 1970 and proceeding through the Matabeleland atrocities in the 1980s to the present. In this paper I will start my analysis of violence in Zimbabwe from or with colonialism and the reason why I begin with colonialism is be given below.

The Notion of Violence in Colonial Zimbabwe

In this section, the colonial period in Zimbabwe covers two historical and critical episodes, colonization and resistance. However, while searching for the proximate causes and origins of the culture of error and abuse of violence, it will be unfair on our part to ignore the view that the abuse of violence in Zimbabwe pre-dates the colonial period. The people of Zimbabwe misused the concept of violence even before colonialism (cf. Kaulemu, 2010). The eruption of ethnic tensions into wars was common in Zimbabwe before the advent of colonialism, especially between the Shona and the Ndebele people. This point is corroborated by Kaulemu (2010) who argues that, “the Shona/Ndebele encounters were not always peaceful as there was a general acceptance of the use of violence as a legitimate means for solving ethnic disputes... This use of violence to settle personal problems, family disputes, and to punish women and children was not rare.” Based on what I have been stated above, it would seem that the notion of violence and its misuse is inherent in or part of human nature. What it means is that the colonial period is not the original cause of error or misunderstanding and hence misuse of violence. But the colonial period in fact contributed to the misuse of violence in Zimbabwe, hence a proximate cause (cf. Fanon, 1965, Eze, 1998, Kaulemu, 2010 and Sachikonye, 2011).

However, Sachikonye (2011: 1) is of the view that the misuse of violence goes beyond the advent of colonialism when he writes:

To trace the roots of political violence to the period 1960-63 is not to provide any excuse for its subsequent use, or its refinement under both the Smith and Mugabe regimes. It is an attempt to understand why and how violence has been a method of choice of regimes in power to maintain their grip on power.

However, as I have noted already that the aim of this paper is not to give a detailed history of the notion of violence but to subject to rational criticism the common sense beliefs on violence of the contemporary Zimbabweans. For this reason I begin my trace of abuse of violence in Zimbabwe with colonialism since it is my conviction that Zimbabweans became more conscious of the concept of violence and its misuse with the advent of colonialism. This point gains support from many scholars (cf. Ranger, 1995, Sithole, 1999, Kriger, 2003, and Sachikonye, 2011) and hence Kaulemu (2010) argues that, “organised misuse of the notion of violence intensified with the colonial invasion of Zimbabwe.”

Violence and the Colonization Process

It is my submission that colonization contributed to the cognitive distortion of the notion of violence and through the doctrine of white supremacy (the belief that European [white] people are superior to those of all other people, especially African [black] people, and should therefore dominate society) which worked to raise, instigate, drill and instil into African people a consciousness of abuse within the notion of violence, and people began to view violence as something negative because of the way it was used to alienate them. Kaulemu (2010) seems to agree with the above point when he blamed the apartheid system for serving the European minority at the expense of the African majority. The system, for Kaulemu, was established and nourished mainly by the use of a variety of forms of misuse of the notion of violence (ibid). Serequeberhan and Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998) also argue that the cognitive awareness of the abuse of the concept of violence was the very nature and essence of the first encounter between Europe and Africa. Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 228) describes how settlers and those native to the land first met, and he writes:

Their first encounter was marked by misuse of violence and their existence together – that is to say the exploitation of the native by the settler – was carried on by dint of a great array of bayonets and cannons. The settler and the native are old acquaintances. In fact ... it is the settler who has brought the native into existence and who perpetuates his existence.

With this violent encounter, the colonized are intellectually enlightened and awakened to a new notion of violence. So, the awareness of the misuse of the concept of violence is something forced upon or into the thinking of the oppressed via a rough, harsh and painful experiences. Hence Serequeberhan (cited in Eze, 1998: 241) suggests that we need to grasp the force of Fanon’s words in that the “settler and the native are old acquaintances” to imply that Europeans [white people] work to maintain and constitute the existence of the native as an inferior being. And thus, in the embodiment of inferiority, and oppressed remains in this position to uphold and endures as if by choice, the supremacy of the settler; and in this mutual relationship, one is the complement and the ground of the other in which master implies slave and slave implies master.

However, the above paragraph arguably describes how the two races coexist, a relationship founded on an error in thinking. The white race assumes the position of superiority, hence of the master, while the African people are violently suppressed and put under subordination. This is how the white race drills and instigates negative awareness of the notion of violence in the African people. The African people are put in a very difficult position of pain and suffering. The African people, by necessity, are forced to be conscious and hence think of the way out. So, the African people appeal to violence in the reactive sense.

Thus, through the misuse of violence, African people begin to know the sweetness of power, and the pain of being enslaved. Thus, while the African is angry for being enslaved in his/her own territory, at the same time he/she envies the white settler's power and thus dreams of one day becoming a master, and also wish to misuses violence to achieve this cherished dream. Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 229) observes:

When the native is confronted with the colonial order of things, he finds himself in a state of permanent tension. The settler's world spurns the native, but at the same time it is the world of which he is envious. The native never ceases to dream of putting himself in the place of the settler - not of becoming the settler but of substituting himself for the settler.

Thus, instead of provoking positive thinking, colonization triggers anger and envy in the African people thereby triggering error in thinking. By being envious, it is obvious that the native has learnt and accepted both the settler's position of power or superiority and the skills by which the settler obtains power through the misuse of violence.

However, the native becomes the European possession and this naturally provokes anger in the native as he/ she becomes aware that he/ she is treated as less human. Serequeberhan (cited in Eze, 1998: 241) puts it aptly when he observes: "But he (the native) also knows that his forefathers – those who confronted the original conquest - fought the aggressor and were defeated not because they lacked courage or wisdom but because they lacked cunning and shrewdness." Here there is no doubt that the white race has successfully managed to instil into the African people's mind that misuse of violence is equal to power. The African people, thus, see the settler's cunning and shrewdness as proper tools for those aspiring for power. Thus, in the process, African people consciously abandon their own identity, dignity and freedom and accept misuse of the notion of violence (cunning and shrewdness) as the only way to power, and the only way out of their dehumanising condition of pain and enslavement. Serequeberhan (cited in Eze, 1998: 242) supports this point when he remarks: "In this awareness, the colonized sees the coloniser as a brute with nothing to his merit save his strength. This...he envies."

The abiding question is: How is this violent dawn experienced by the colonized? In order to respond to this question Serequeberhan (cited in Eze, 1998: 238) quotes the African imaginative production of Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1959) when he argues that: "With the advent of European colonialism 'things fell apart'. The African's mode of life, his indigenous habitat of human existence, was displaced by the violence of the white settlers." The native is dehumanized by misuse of the concept of violence and he becomes a thing, a beast of burden and an object of exploitation (cf. Serequeberhan cited in Eze, 1998). The native is reduced to the position of non-entity with nothing of his own. Colonization is negative and the following are its effects: displacement, devaluation, dehumanisation, reduction to beast of burden, exploitation, and many other derogatory and deriding concepts. Unfortunately, all these will coagulate from the African people's consciousness.

Being conscious according to *The Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (2002: 294), means "noticing that something exists or is happening and realizing that it is important." The same dictionary defines consciousness as "the knowledge or understanding that something exists or is important" (ibid). What it implies is that all the previously discussed negatives now constitute and permanently characterize the African people's mind and thought system. As Tolle (cited in Chumachawazungu, 2010: 93) observes, "what you do comes from what you think." Thus, the European misuse of the notion of violence becomes the African people's way of thinking. Thus, the misuse of the notion of violence erroneously becomes a thing very close to the African people's heart; a thing which he/ she can live and die for.

The colonial system creates division between the two races and hence makes the two real enemies. In the African mentality, the concept of enemy develops and becomes very strong. The two concepts "violence" and "enemy" become identified in the mind of the African people. In the African people's mind, enemies are consciously created and violated. To this end, Kaulemu (2010) observes thus:

The colonial apartheid system was established and maintained mainly by the use of a variety of forms of misuse of violence. This is so because the system was not based on equality of the human persons, especially that of the Africans. It was also based on expropriation of basic resources needed by the Africans to survive and flourish. These resources included land, animals, access to water, minerals, and other natural resources. The colonial system itself made sure that Africans were treated as second-rate citizens. Thus they were accorded unequal citizenship through various pieces of legislation that closed access to certain facilities for education, jobs, residential areas, health care, farming opportunities, forms of leisure and social development. Thus, the colonial system made people, especially the Africans, vulnerable.

The African people are conscious of themselves being stripped naked and all their dignity and good valuables taken away from them. The African people are put in a very tight spot and are forced to dance according to the awareness instilled and forced into them, indeed a negative awareness. Again colonization drills into the African people's mentality, the following negatives: making life hard and difficult for others through unequal distribution of national resources, grabbing and looting, and creating divisions or dividing people, as well as creating enemies and treating others as inferiors. The African people unnaturally inherit these negative qualities and these become the way of living. For this reason, Kaulemu (2011: 52) deems the violence of the African people's resistance to colonization an unintended result of the search for freedom. Without thinking, the African people inherit from the white race the culture of misusing the notion of violence.

Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 229) argues: "The settler keeps alive in the native, anger which he deprives of outlet; the native is trapped in the tight links of the chains of colonialism." Thus, the native is for too long subjected to anger, and eventually anger becomes second nature. Unfortunately, this anger breeds negative awareness in the minds of the African, leading to the propensity for negative violence. Hence anger, fear and envy become the characteristic features of the African people's consciousness. Kaulemu (2010) argues:

The facing of vulnerability and insecurity was fertile ground for discontent, agitation, anger, resentment and misuse of violence. There was increase in political organization among the Africans. A lot of the anger and misuse of violence was targeted towards the colonial system, members of the colonial government and those who benefited from and those who defended the colonial system.

This evidence given by Kaulemu demonstrates that colonization triggers the desire to abuse violence. Colonization left Africans with no option except to abuse violence.

However, in his observation Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 229) also notes: "He (native) is patiently waiting until the settler is off his guard to fly at him. The native muscles are always tense. ... He is in fact ready at a moment's notice to exchange the role of the quarry for that of the hunter. The native is an oppressed person whose permanent dream is to become the persecutor." The African peoples did not intend war against the white race but is forced into it (cf. Kaulemu, 2011) and war has a twofold mission for the Africans: a way out of subordination and a way to power or superiority (being like a white man). As anger and envy increase, the chances of war also increase. This leads to the African people's resistance. The white race suffers its own error in thinking, indeed misuse of the notion of violence.

Thus, colonization managed to create and deeply instil in the Africans the profound awareness of the misuse of the concept of violence in the form of anger (*hasha*), fear (*kutya*) and envy (*godo*). And this type of mentality would become and remain the guiding principle during and even after the liberation struggles for the people of Zimbabwe. Colonization opened a rift in the mythological world view of Zimbabwe but did not heal it. The issue is on the liberation struggles! Who will be responsible for the misuse of the notion of violence in them?

Colonization, Violence and Resistance in Zimbabwe

By its very nature colonization was irrational and illogical, brutal, savage, dehumanising, and inhuman and had to be resisted. Colonization bred anger, fear and envy in the minds of the Africans, pushing them to fight back. Thus, through colonization, as we have noted, the white race prepared the African people for a revenge mission. This is typical of Hegel's dialectic process which is described as a movement from thesis to antithesis and finally to synthesis, after which the synthesis becomes a new thesis, and the process continues... (cf. Hegel cited in Stumpf, 1993: 331-332). Thus, resistance was inevitable. Kaulemu (2010) reports:

Africans and other people of goodwill resisted this colonial system. Different forms of resistance were used. But when the African political leaders saw the resistance of the colonial regimes continue to grow, they decided to resort to violent armed struggle. The more they resorted to violence, the more the colonial regimes became violent. Thus the period for the struggle for independence became the major source for developing institutions, cultures and personalities oriented towards misuse of violence. The government side perfected their strategies for surveillance, capture, interrogation, punishment, torture and execution of guerrillas and their collaborators. They developed cruel means of extracting information from the captured guerrillas and their informants. The Smith regime developed a very complex machinery of violence to fight the emerging liberation movements.

Zimbabweans resisted the colonial system by resorting to a violent armed struggle. But the white settler did not give up easily; on his side he intensified his war strategies. Thus, even during the period of resistance, the white race continued to prepare, groom and perfect the African people in skills of how to abuse the notion of violence. Resistance became a realisation process for Zimbabweans, an initiation into the real and concrete realms and spheres of abuse or misuse of the concept of violence. Cunning and shrewdness, which were learnt and inherited as ideas, were now being translated into reality. Thus, resistance for Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 142) is, "a programme of complete disorder." It is the meeting of two great forces, opposed to each other by their very nature; it is like 'violence meeting violence' in a very negative way.

Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 142) states: “The naked truth of resistance evokes for us the searing of bullets and bloodstained knives which emanate from it.” It is the turn of the native to exercise the misuse of the notion violence on the settler. The misuse of the concept of the violence of resistance, “influences individuals and modifies them fundamentally” (ibid). Thus, the misuse of the notion of violence becomes no longer an idea but a fact in the concrete and in the reality of the black Zimbabweans. Thus, through the process of resistance, the consciousness of the abuse of the notion of violence is made stronger and deeper in the black Zimbabweans.

Thus, through resistance, Zimbabweans consciously groom and form themselves into real war and fighting experts; real patriots and teachers of error in thinking. Kaulemu (2010) retorts:

The liberation movements began to provide military training to their collaborators and to villagers to protect themselves. This process of the militarisation of the Zimbabwean population, especially the youth, increased the level of violence and began to develop a culture of the misuse of violence.

However, although both Fanon (1967) and Kaulemu (2011) agree on the issue of resistance, they also differ in many significant ways. Fanon is empathetic in approach while Kaulemu (2011) is critical. Fanon (1967) sees resistance as justified, and hence a good thing, while Kaulemu (2011) is very suspicious of both colonization and resistance. Thus, Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 142) summarises the violence of resistance in the following words: “Resistance brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men and with it a new language and new humanity”. Fanon (1967) sees something positive in the wars of the liberation since it is through resistance that the African people significantly regain the lost desire or consciousness for their freedom, dignity and identity. Through resistance the black Zimbabweans repossess their definition and thus they are recreated into men and women, indeed a new humanity with the new language of war. For this reason resistance is a historic and jubilantly celebrated event, and many Zimbabweans today do not see anything wrong with wars of liberation, but see in them glory and independence (cf. Kaulemu 2011). But one wonders what type of new humanity and language this really is. As we read in Fanon (1967), through resistance Zimbabweans become true and not imaginary colonisers!

For Fanon (1967), notwithstanding his exaggerated claims, resistance is quite interesting, attractive and thought provoking because resistance forms Africans into a new people and with it we have a natural order of existence and at community level resistance restores collective identity. Thus, Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 232) argues:

The mobilisation of the masses, when it arises out of the war of liberation, introduces into man’s consciousness the ideas of common cause, of a national destiny, and of collective history. In the same way the second phase, that of the building-up of the nation, is helped on by the existence of this cement which has been mixed with blood and anger.

For Fanon (1967), the war of liberation is erroneously considered the substance or cement that unifies the Africans. As Fanon (cited in Eze, 1998: 232), further states: “Violence is in action all-inclusive and national. It follows that it is closely involved in the liquidification of regionalism and of tribalism.” Fanon (1967) believes so strongly in resistance that he declares it an absolute and indispensable tool for human dignity and existence. And even at the individual level, Fanon (1967) believes that resistance can restore dignity and a human sense of belonging. He shares his observation: “At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and in action; it makes him fearless, and restores his self-respect” (Eze, 1998: 232). Thus, resistance provokes and triggers, in the African people, a strong desire for unity and nationhood, sacrifice for the common good, freedom, identity and dignity for both the individual and the collective.

However, Fanon appears deeply emotional and hence taken in by resistance. He openly declares:

... for the colonised people this violence ... invests their characters with positive and creative qualities. The practice of violence binds them together as a whole, since each individual forms a violent link in the great chain, a part of the great organism of violence which has surged upwards in reaction to the settler’s violence in the beginning (Fanon, 1967: 73).

Thus, for Fanon war has both positive and creative qualities for the African people. But there is great need to treat Fanon with caution because his predictions in Eze (1998: 228 -229, 142-143) are cunning and confusing. He predicts that: “The colonised man will first manifest this aggressiveness which has been deposited in his bones against his own people.” Thus, by hindsight Fanon sees the after effects of the spirit of war deposited into the nature of the Africans by resistance and in Zimbabwe today there is war and exploitation of African by an African. Again, Fanon predicts: “The native, who decides to put the programme (resistance) into practice, and to become its moving force, is ready for violence at all times. From birth, it is clear to him that this narrow world, strewn with prohibitions, can only be called in question by absolute violence.” Fanon (1967) foresees that because of resistance, natives will be more than ready to misuse the notion of violence in form of war, not only in the area of politics but probably in all dimensions of human existence: gender-based, domestic, social, industrial, ecclesial or religious, and many other dimensions. Today, the misuse of the notion of violence has become the measuring principle for human survival. It seems Fanon’s (1967) predictions are true since the misuse of the concept of violence pervades nearly all human structures, systems and institutions in Zimbabwe.

For this reason Kaulemu (2011), who writes from a critical and post-colonial perspective, condemns the processes of both colonization and resistance as evil and unjustified because both processes provoke and advocate a misuse of the concept of violence in the form of destruction. Kaulemu (2010) writes:

Violence became widespread and deepened with the intensification of the war from the mid-seventies. As the government forces lost grip of law and order, use of violence to instil fear in the population became a widespread means for political campaign. This was also true of the liberation movements who were, in many ways forced to use violence as they fought the powerful colonial system which had covert help from some international quarters. Acts of violence were experienced in enforced militarized “keeps”, and other rural areas as different forces fought for control and influence. Violence permeated into the cultural fabric of the nation. Individuals, families and groups began to use violence to protect themselves.

Misuse of violence becomes a life style for the Zimbabwean people during and after the wars of liberation; it becomes a new culture! Thus, although resistance is the time for the Africans to put into praxis the skills of cunningness and shrewdness (misuse of the notion of violence) learnt and envied during colonization, for Kaulemu, resistance is an issue which is dangerous, subtle and ambivalent. That Zimbabweans resisted is very true, but with resistance, misuse of the notion of violence becomes intensified and confirmed in the people of Zimbabwe. That the method of war effectively worked and produced good results, indeed Independence, is true, but whether Zimbabweans are free or not is a hard question, because most Zimbabweans today appear unfree. They are stuck and are dangerously controlled by the spirit of colonization and resistance. In Zimbabwe there is fear, anger, envy and war right now and these are like a cancer eating Zimbabwe from within.

“In Zimbabwe resistance has redeeming qualities for societies that waged liberation struggles, and the independence so won is somehow superior to that obtained on a silver platter” (Sachikonye, 2011: xviii). Hence the misuse of the notion of violence (war) is still glorified in Zimbabwe. But resistance has become a reason why misuse of the concept of violence is a culture in Zimbabwe today. Resistance has become another form of colonization, more sophisticated and complex. Kaulemu (2010) confirms:

There are a number of ways in which the language of war, the institutions of war and personalities of war continued to be encouraged even in the early stages of political independence of the country. Thus it was generally accepted that violent war brought about independence. Thus the acceptance of the efficacy of violence even to the point of glorifying it, has been one of the reasons why the culture of violence has developed.

Sachikonye (2011: xviii), agrees, and thus he writes: “In Zimbabwe experience, while misuse of violence was a decisive instrument in the attainment of Independence, it was also a major divisive force afterwards.” Thus, misuse of the notion of violence profoundly permeates the Zimbabwe national psyche and influences national character and virtue, (cf. Kaulemu 2011).

Thus, after Independence, misuse of the concept of violence becomes a widespread phenomenon and it ceases to be the white race's responsibility but is rather the African people's responsibility. Resistance becomes a new colonization, and it seems Zimbabweans are busy everywhere colonizing each other.

Violence in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe

In post-colonial Zimbabwe, the abuse of the notion of violence has become endemic and none one is immune. In an environment where power is an object of worship that becomes a groundswell for abuse of the notion of violence, and in a situation where red tape and procedures are not properly defined, misuse of the concept rides roughshod.

Thus, in post-colonial Zimbabwe, misuse of the notion of violence in the form of destruction of human life and property is admittedly so common. The problem is no longer the white men's responsibility but the African people's responsibility as well. It is no longer the white race which is practicing cunning, deceit and shrewdness as was in colonization but the African people as well. Zimbabweans are misusing violence by dehumanising each other; putting each other under the yoke of subordination and subjugation (cf. ZHR NGO FORUM, 2006, ZESN, 2008, HRW, 2008b, CSV, 2009, Masunungure, 2009, CCJP 2009 and ILO, 2009). It seems the situation is deeply and profoundly worse than the abuse of the notion in the colonial period. This interesting drama is going on at all levels of human existence. It seems no system, institution or organization in Zimbabwe is spared of the abuse of the notion of violence as noted and confirmed by Chumachawazungu (2010: 90):

In Zimbabwe misuse of violence (power) is not only associated with politicians and national governments. The competition for it surrounds us at all times throughout our lives. It begins in the family, continues into primary school and university. It is found in the workplace and in the church. Indeed, the inter-personal, inter-communal, inter-social and inter-national wrestling, manoeuvrings, struggles, and conflicts for domination and control in the various domains and levels of human interaction, constitute politics in the wider sense of the word. Within this context, there are political struggles at the family level, religious level, gender level, communal level, business and organizational levels, national governmental level, etc.

Hence the work of philosophy in post-colonial Zimbabwe must be to look for the causes and origins of the abuse of violence during our time. However, the following is a brief critical exposition or history of the abuse or misuse of the concept of violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The analysis is divided into two historical epochs: the 1980s violence and the post-2000 violence.

The Violence of the 1980s

After independence, the abuse of the notion of violence grew intensively. The question is why? Kaulemu (2010) finds the reason or answer in the manner in which Zimbabwe got its independence. He argues that Zimbabwe got its Independence not through dialogue but through a violent war, which is glorified as the true source of freedom. Kaulemu (2010) explains:

There are a number of ways in which the language of war, the institutions of war and personalities of war continued to be encouraged... Thus it was generally accepted that violent war brought about independence. Thus, the acceptance of the efficacy of violence even to the point of glorifying it has been one of the reasons why the culture of violence has developed.

Thus, the abuse of the notion of violence and not peace becomes a significant symbol for the Zimbabwean people's life. Sachikonye (2011: xviii) agrees with this view when he remarks thus: "In the Zimbabwe experience, while the abuse of violence was a decisive instrument in the attainment of independence, it was also a major divisive force afterwards. It has remained a cancer that corrodes the country's political culture and blocks its democratic advance." Thus, soon after independence, there emerges a new culture of abuse of the concept of violence which in nature is fierce, difficult and dangerous. Instead of taming or controlling violence Zimbabweans cherish and allow the culture of abuse of violence to grow unabated Kaulemu (2010) notices and he argues:

Further, post-independence Zimbabwe has failed to establish programmes and provide time and other resources to rehabilitate victims and perpetrators of violence... This could have given the nation's chance to deal with the cruelty, hurt, anger, resentment and violent cultural practices learnt and developed during the war.

This is greatly demonstrated in the tactics and language used soon after independence. For instance, the term *gukurahundi* (a Shona word for a violent rain which takes with it all what is left of corn that has been harvested and spread on a dwala) was used to refer to the violent extermination of the Ndebele tribe by Robert Mugabe's regime between 1982 and 1987. This ferocious violence was committed by a military brigade in Matabeleland and it resulted in the loss of about 20 000 lives (cf. Sachikonye, 2011: xvii). This is a period that witnessed arguably the most intense violence since independence. No doubt, this culture of violence inherited from the colonial war of independence also led to the 2000, 2001 and 2008 political violence dubbed *jambanja* meaning violence by the masses.

As Sachikonye (2011: 1) argues, this culture of the abuse of the concept of violence is a purely refined skill, used for control and dominance. But some analysts who have revisited liberation war-type violence have cautioned: “Abuse of the concept of violence is usually unjustified. It is a breach of peace ... abuse of violence tends to dehumanise the other ...,” (Suttner, 2010). However, this sober assessment of the notion of violence as an instrument of dehumanisation is sadly absent in the discourse of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe as well as in Zimbabwe’s post-independence politics. The concept of violence becomes the only tool for material accumulation and personal self aggrandisement; an indispensable prowess for material gain and unlimited political dominance thereby creating a traumatized nation. As Sachikonye (2011: 100) remarks: “The overall picture that emerges ... is one of a severely scared society, traumatised and devastated from successive waves of abuse of the concept of violence during the period from Independence to the present.” The sad thing is that, the abuse of the concept of violence is nurtured, legitimatised and normalised by the powers that be.

The Post-2000 Violence in Zimbabwe

It is well documented (cf. Moyo, 2001, Bracking, 2005, SPT, 2007, HRW, 2008, Alexander, 2008, CCJP, 2009 and Sachikonye, 2011) that in the post-2000 period, the abuse of violence (especially political violence) reached its climax in Zimbabwe. The two books: *Graveyard Governance* by CCJP in Zimbabwe (2009) and *When a State turns on its Citizens* by Sachikonye (2011) confirm this point and contain a detail and substantial information on Zimbabwean people’s abuse of violence which this paper will heavily rely on. This violence coincided with a deepening political and social crisis (cf. Sachikonye, 2011). What is important to note is that the power of the abuse of violence cannot be underestimated in Zimbabwe. One can argue that Fromm’s discussion of the power of evil in man is a true reflection of the post-2000 scenario in Zimbabwe (1964: 13).

What follows the *Gukurahundi* atrocities are cases of horrendous violence around national elections. The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (2009: 1) observes and states thus: “Zimbabwe has never failed to hold national elections ... Whereas violations of human rights have not been uncommon in the post-independence history of the country; incidences of political violence have tended to escalate during elections period”.

Thus, the violence that surrounded the Zimbabwe elections was brutal and savagery and hence has been variously described as the epitome of ‘madness’ and ‘bad things’ by those who run the Zimbabwe state (cf. ILO, 2009: 152, OSISA, OSI and Bellevue/ NYU Programme, 2007: 3). Such brutalities and killings are a symptom of a chaotic Zimbabwe which nurtures, normalises and embraces misuse of the concept of violence as part of the norm.

“The 2008 election was the most violent in the annals of Zimbabwe’s post-independence history,” Sachikonye (2011: 45) admits. It was the most tightly fought election. The resort to systematic misuse of the concept of violence and terror became imperative in order to hijack or rig electoral process. Misuse of violence is declared a culture, that is, Zimbabwean people’s way of life.

The post-2000 political violence had a multiplier effect as all other sectors of the economy: social life (domestic) and religious institutions became violent (cf. Kaulemu 2011). For instance, cases of rape increased enormously and in spite of heavy penalties, domestic violence became a common phenomenon. There were murders associated with anger and hatred typifying life in a severely polarized state. While women wanted to assert their new found socio and economic rights, men wanted to maintain their cultural and traditional hegemony over women. This violent and domineering spirit was not only domiciled in the homes but was also present in almost all structures everywhere in Zimbabwe.

In the post-2000 period, the desire to misuse the notion of violence profoundly deepens in the people of Zimbabwe. We quote from the recent *The Sunday Mail of Zimbabwe* 05-07-2015:

If tragic events that have been taking place in the country are anything to go by, then the bane of domestic violence which experts in the family issues identified as one of the major causes of marriage break-ups has continued to tear apart the previously sacred marriage institution.

So bad is the situation that cases of people in relationships killing and maiming each other make headline reading on a weekly basis. Passion killings have become the in-thing. However, the same paper, *The Sunday Mail*, reports that ‘in the just ended half a year, several cases of passion killing of a horrific nature were reported in and around Harare’. A preview of some of the murders would even leave Hollywood horror film script-writers in awe. Thus, the Zimbabwe situation of fierce violence has proved Fromm (1964: 13) right: “Man is a wolf to his fellow man. He is vicious and destructive by nature, a killer who can only be restrained from his favourite pastime only by fear of more powerful killers.” The Zimbabwean experience of the concept of violence from Independence to the present is a difficult one, a period characterised by dark, ferocious and terrible misuse of the notion of violence (cf. Sachikonye 2011).

It is instructive to note that where abuse of the concept of violence dominates, the standard of life diminishes. Peace, joy and stability disappears leading to the cultivation of a culture of hatred which is antithetical to social and economic development. The questions to ask are: When will this new culture of the abuse of the concept of violence come to end? Who is able to bring this culture to its final end?

Of all human desires that the people of Zimbabwe hate and condemn, violence seems the first and most loathed since it appears the most common unknown drive which has hungrily manipulated every Zimbabwean state of affairs. It presents a real and existential threat to human existence. But the truth is that the people of Zimbabwe are ignorant of what the concept of violence really is. Zimbabweans must not fear, condemn or hate the concept of violence but must intellectually go deeper and look for the causes of the abuse of the notion of violence. Nietzsche (cited in Golfing, 1956: 149) observes humanity's lack of interest in the concept of violence and he asks: "Who among us is serious enough for violence? Or has enough time?" The Zimbabwe situation of misuse of the notion of violence demands that deeper reflections be carried out, indeed on the concept itself. Zimbabweans must subject their experiences of the concept of violence to rational criticism. There is no substitution to thinking!

However, it is difficult to say that Zimbabweans are either not serious with the concept of violence or are not ready to face the problem of the notion of violence intellectually. Because already some Zimbabwean philosophers and other scholars such as Ndlovu (2005), Mangena (2013), Kaulemu (2011), Sachikonye (2011) and many others have shown strong interest on the topical issue. Their contributions on the topic are substantial and enriching. But the scholars seem more inclined to or interested in describing and narrating about the notion of violence; its historical effects and proximate causes (cf. Kaulemu, 2011 and Sachikonye, 2011). But instead they are supposed to go deeper in order to discover the true nature of the notion itself. The problem demands that philosophers must intellectually search and penetrate until finally the true original meaning of the concept of violence is reached, unveiled and discovered.

For this reason, we suggest that we critically view the Zimbabwe situation of misuse of the concept of violence through Heraclitus' philosophy of the logic of violence and Parmenides' intellectual awareness. The intention is to widen-up our intellectual horizon since the concept, as we have confirmed, is evasive, difficult and subtle. Not only that but for this thesis to be philosophically edifying hence offer us a solid ground on which to proceed with the philosophy of violence hence it must not remain static and holed up in isolationism. It needs to be outgoing and truly absorb the universal heritage of human thought and bring it to use at the local level on the Zimbabwean soil. Hence Mukumba (2007: 32) declares and he argues: "No philosophical analysis can be done in isolation; more so today when the human family is striving towards a more united globe." Thus, our submission is that the concept of violence in Zimbabwe cannot be interpreted and understood in isolation, independent of the wider spectrum provided for by the history of philosophy.

Heraclitus, Parmenides and the Zimbabwean Experience Violence

Amid such fierce acts of misuse, irrational distortions and heavy misunderstandings of the concept of violence, one is tempted to ask hard questions, such as: Where are the philosophers now? Where are today's thinkers? It is quite disconcerting to realise that philosophers today have ignored and abandoned the concept of violence and condemned it to irrational distortions and misrepresentations.

My position is that there is need for today's philosophers to dig deeper in order to re-discover the original meaning of the notion of violence. I take cognizance of the fact that, in terms of its origins, the concept of violence is traceable in the history of philosophy. Grayling (1995: 339) confirms: "Its history starts with those philosophers who took nature or change as a philosophical issue and the philosophers are Heraclitus and Parmenides." The philosophers before Heraclitus and Parmenides like Thales, Pythagoras and Anaximander took the notion of violence for granted. They did not recognise it as a problem. The notion for them was a thing not warranting serious attention (cf. Grayling, 1998). These two early Greek thinkers are very important since they confront the problem of violence from a somewhat neutral and rational point of view. It is against this background that Grayling (1995: 338) strongly remarks:

To fail to appreciate these (Heraclitus and Parmenides) early thinkers' accomplishments is to neglect the first great accomplishments of reason, the breakthrough in science and civilisation as we know them today. They are the first to accomplish the rational feat of disentangling themselves from the nets of parochial concern and childlike fancy.

They are a source of illumination and we stand within the light shed by them. I begin with Heraclitus.

Heraclitus and the Zimbabwean Experience of Violence

Heraclitus (546-500 BC) is known as the philosopher of violence and this concept deeply occupied his mind (cf. Ortega cited in Bailie, 1995: 241). Heraclitus argues that all things come into being through opposition, and are in flux (cf. Stumpf, 1993: 13). Like all other philosophers, Heraclitus searches for the unifying principle of all reality and thereby concludes that the notion of violence is the ultimate principle that governs all reality. Thus, Heraclitus is the first, in the history of philosophy, to philosophize about the concept of violence and he makes interesting observations in the process (cf. Bailie, 1995 and Grayling, 1995).

In Heraclitus, we encounter a radical expression of the indubitable fact of violence in our experiential world. That things flow, proceed, progress, come and go, originate and disappear is evident. Copleston (cited in Grayling, 1946: 46) projects Heraclitus as having conceived of a genuine philosophic notion, and this notion of the one as essentially many can be clearly discerned beneath all sensual symbolism. Thus, violence is a symbol that stands for all sensual beings and keeps them all in being. Heraclitus declares thus: "All things come into being through opposition, and are in flux" (cited in Stumpf, 1993: 13). But what does Heraclitus mean when he says that 'all things come into being through the conflict of opposites'? Let us consider the following:

War is the father and king of all...It is necessary to understand that war is universal and justice is strife, and that all things take place in accordance with strife and necessity (IEGP: 92).

Heraclitus seeks to account for violence or strife by saying that it is the very essence of change itself, and thus the conflict of opposites is not a calamity but the permanent condition of all things. Heraclitus declares violence a universal principle that orders or governs all things (cf. Stumpf, 1993). Thus, violence is elevated to a universal principle, a necessity without which the world could not continue to exist. For Heraclitus, violence is change and change is violence (cf. *ibid*). Violence thus answers the fundamental and guiding question of philosophy: What is being? Krell (1991: 3) in support of Heraclitus remarks: "Violence names what constitutes the basic character of all beings, the ultimate *factum* to which we come." And Nietzsche (cited in Morgan, 1941: 60) calls violence, "the will to power" and "the primal life-force out of which all special organic and psychological functions have evolved and whose generic traits they retain." Heraclitus, therefore, wants to convince his contemporaries and seemingly the generation to come that there is no being without power or violence; there is an element of violence in all things. In other words, all things need violence for them to exist, and violence for them is an expression of the life process (cf. May, 1972: 100).

Heraclitus (cited in Stumpf 1993: 15) observes:

Humanity insofar as it perceives change/violence, knows the eternal wisdom that directs all things but by failing to understand the importance of strife in nature, humanity proves to be uncomprehending. Because we do not pay attention to the operations of eternal wisdom, we are distressed by what appear to us to be meaningless disorders in the world. We are overwhelmed by the presence of good and evil and long for peace that means the end of strife.

Though Heraclitus sounds very religious, no doubt his claims are epistemological. For him, the knowledge of violence originates in its perception, that is, the perception of violence automatically and spontaneously generates or triggers its understanding. Thus, Heraclitus makes it impossible for humanity to ignore or refuse knowledge of violence, for the knowledge of violence is in people's perceptions. What this means then is that the knowledge of violence becomes a categorical imperative; humanity has no choice except to know violence. And importantly, Heraclitus teaches that the desire for peace, which means the end of violence, is false and empty.

However, for Heraclitus, change or violence is not a haphazard movement but a product of universal reason (*logos*) (cf. Stumpf, 1993: 14). Hence, for Heraclitus, it is reason that controls violence.

Heraclitus, furthermore, appears to have seen that it is violence of the most lawless and random kind that is the most likely to conform to the mysterious ordering principle he terms the logos. Heraclitus contends thus: “What is in concert and from what differs comes the most beautiful harmony” (cf. Melchert: 1991: 15). Thus, nature orders itself. This means that from the worst disorder or destruction comes out order! So, the process of violence is not a haphazard movement but a process which is the product of universal reason (logos) (cf. Stumpf, 1993: 14). Violence has its own reason, and, following Heraclitus, Bailie (1995: 241), calls this logos, the ‘logic of violence’. This logos or logic of violence, for Heraclitus, makes it possible for violence to both create and destroy.” There is reason (logos) in violence responsible for all order. Thus, Heraclitus (cited in Melchert 1991:17) argues that violence is necessary for it produces not chaos but the opposite: in fact the divine world order (logos) is the guarantee that the balance of the forces is maintained. In violence there is order and continuity, so there is nothing to be afraid of, since reason balances or controls the negative effects of violence (cf. May 1972: 167).

But what is the role of reason or logos in violence? To this question Bailie (1995: 241) responds by remarking that: “Once in play, this *logos* turns chaotic and destructive violence into socially stable and hierarchically differentiated social systems.” Bailie (1995: 241) further expounds: “Collective violence nevertheless develops according to certain recognisable patterns, patterns that cannot be traced to any cause or any conscious intent on the part of those participating in the violence.” There is reason in violence responsible for the order in nature; hence violence is necessary, for without violence reason has nothing to work on. And Aristotle (cited in Stumpf, 1993) says that ‘nature does nothing in vain’; there is always a reason for anything. In Heraclitus I find true definition and meaning of the concept of violence. Violence is a natural concept and not a moral concept. It both destroys and builds and it is reason that turns the seemingly destructive nature of violence into constructive nature. Thus, violence is the essence of nature and human nature. Remove violence and nature ceases to be. This I judge as a true experience or common sense understanding of the notion of violence by Heraclitus. This understanding I will use to evaluate the Zimbabwean people’s understanding and use of violence.

However, the following are the principles or features of Heraclitus’ idealisation of the notion of violence:

- 1). Heraclitus in Stumpf (1993: 8) declares violence the essence of all reality; the universal principle that governs all and without which nothing exists. Violence makes all things change. This means that reality is directed by war, conflict and strife.
- 2). Heraclitus (cited in Melchert, 1991: 15) identifies that it is violence of the most lawless and random kind that brings forth high quality order or from what differs most comes the most beautiful harmony, *mvura bvongodzeki ndiyogarani* (disturbed water will soon get settled) *kana kuti panorwiwa ndopanoupfumi* (where there is conflict and disorder there is richness).

3). Heraclitus observes that violence has its own order or reason that can turn the destructive nature of violence into constructive, (cf. Bailie, 1995: 241).

4). Thus, violence can make and unmake, build and destroy at the same time, (cf. Bailie, 1995: 241). In all Copleston (cited in Grayling, 1946: 46) agrees arguing that 'Heraclitus conceived a genuine philosophic notion and this notion of reality as essentially violent can be clearly discerned beneath all the sensual symbolism'. All sensual beings are violent by nature. However, what follows is a critical analysis of violence in Zimbabwe through Heraclitus' understanding of violence.

Coming to Zimbabwe, it is not surprising to see that the awareness of the concept of violence is perfectly Heraclitan. But one big difference is that for Heraclitus, violence is the essence of nature hence it controls nature and not human beings. But for the people of Zimbabwe, the violence, we have witnessed, has surprisingly controlled human beings defying Heraclitus' logic of violence. Generally, the majority of Zimbabweans seem to believe that *rugare panopasi imhiribidi; mudzonga mukuru ndowokusiya; zvichapera ndiye mukuru* (worldly peace is through heavy abuse of the concept of violence or struggle; do your part and leave the rest for others since all will come to pass; the end is the final). Conflicts and all evils associated with abuse of violence seem to characterise the history of Zimbabwe and yet this opposes Heraclitus' notion of violence (cf. media, Sachikonye, 2011 and Kaulemu, 2011).

However, though it is true that violence controls nature, granting violence absolute control of the human world is a clear sign of error in thinking, misuse of the concept of violence therefore, wrong and illegal (cf. Hanks, 1979). Heraclitus taught us that the concept of violence governs nature and not the human world. But Zimbabweans are mistaken hence in error because it is reason that controls humans and not chaos or disorder. Zimbabweans cannot be defined by the concept of violence and cannot be controlled by it. Giving the concept of violence control is not only dangerous but dehumanising. The truth is that thinking defines humanity and reason, without fail, urges humanity to tame and control violence. May (1972: 123) confirms thus: "It is reason that reacts against the destructive efforts of violence, so that we do not lose values that are essential to our existence as human." Koehn (2005: 1) shuns misuse of the concept of violence and he argues thus: "It (violence) does not help us to understand violence. If we do not grasp violence, we cannot be free of it. Enslaved by our ignorance, we behave in ways that increase our individual and collective suffering."

I may ask a simple question: Why do Zimbabweans possess such a strong passion for misuse of the concept of violence? For what motive or whose benefit? What Heraclitus observed might be an answer to this question. Heraclitus said that from what differs most comes the most beautiful order and harmony, meaning that from worst disorder comes out perfect order. It seems Zimbabweans were deceived by nature hence misunderstood the notion of violence and now for them misuse of the concept in the form of fighting is a part of life and death alike; *kurwa ndokunogadzirisa zvose* (fighting is a solution to all problems).

This is logically a fallacy (*argumentum ad baculum*) which means appeal to force); error in thinking and abuse of the notion of violence. Thus, Sachikonye (2011: xviii) was right in his analysis of Zimbabweans when he says that violence is a problem-solving device. Zimbabweans of all classes, from the elite to the impoverished vast majority of the population, have no qualms whatsoever about misusing violence in all its forms. Some Zimbabweans seem to question why there is a human heart in human beings but seem not to question why there is a heart of beast in human beings! Heavy corruption, exploitation, killing, raping, bestiality, and many other immoral acts, seem a very normal life for many Zimbabweans (cf. Kaulem, 2011). Hence there is no order in misuse of the concept of violence but chaos.

However, elevating violence into an absolute or universal device for order and power in the human world is a fatal mistake. Here are some of its unpleasant outcomes. Firstly, Zimbabweans have now created for themselves a Zimbabwe which is narrow, hostile, ponderous and aggressive, strewn with hardships and prohibitions. Secondly, Zimbabweans are now what Fanon in Eze (1998: 142) predicted when he said, 'they are more than ready to abuse violence at any given moment and this aggressiveness which is inherently deposited in their bones is directly used to destroy each other.' Thirdly, Zimbabwe is painfully experiencing disorder at its worst at all levels of existence because of violence, and it is ceaselessly drumming the rhythm for the destruction of the Zimbabwean people's social forms and breaking up without reverse the systems of reference of the economy, the customs, values and life in general (cf. media). Fourthly, Zimbabweans have grown a habit of destroying their own history and culture, ruining their economy and annihilating their social life and anything good about their external life.

Fifthly, parents and leaders everywhere in Zimbabwe now take the abuse of violence as the only prowess that guarantees order and discipline. Many Zimbabweans now believe that *vana vasingarobwi kana kuti vasina kumboona nhamo vanokura kuva mbwende kana matera* (children or citizens who are not beaten or never experienced hardships will grow to become fools or weak). The principle sounds very true but it is an error of the mind which, in my view leads to psychological disorder. Instead of making life easy and affordable, leaders and parents take it as a norm that life must be hard and difficult. The principle is now applied everywhere. Despite the attempt by the minister of primary and secondary education in Zimbabwe (Dr. Lazarus Dokora) to sweet-talk and wean Zimbabweans off the bad habit by deeming the Zimbabweans of today more enlightened and informed, the wrong principle is still being administered in dark spaces. It is like cancer, difficult to kill. Even when no wrong is committed, wrong is presumed or created, in order to justify the infliction of pain onto the innocent subjects.

Sixthly, it is instructive to learn from Munakiri (2006) who passionately remarks that the people of Zimbabwe have suddenly been overcome by the triumph of materialism, which has caused the illness of the spirit, and has created a high and unparalleled spirit of greediness leading to grabbing and looting (cf. 2000 land reform).

There has also been fierce corruption and exploitation of both the human and the natural world. And what comes out of this erroneous principle, proved by our history now is that there is more poverty being created and wealth being destroyed. Thus, Zimbabwe *yaita sebhaskiti raTizirai rinoti uku riri kurukwa uku riri kududunurwa* (Zimbabwe is like Tizirai's basket which is done and undone at the same time). There is no progress and development but decomposition in perpetuity, continuity and contiguity!

Another misleading tenet of violence observed by Heraclitus and to which Zimbabweans continuously fall prey, is that violence can make and unmake; can give and take. Many Zimbabweans believe it is blatantly true and therefore, have blindly accepted that violence took power and submitted to them in the liberation struggles. And it seems *chakabaya chikanyokera* (the harm was done once and for all). However, misuse of violence after independence became a cancer that corrodes the country's political integrity and blocks the country's democratic advance and this is a fact (cf. Sachikonye, 2011: xviii). It became the chief obstacle to genuine progress and development and it gave birth to multiplicity, barbarism, smugness, falsity, ugliness, weakness and these sums up Zimbabwe today. A person is exploiting another person in the name of desire for power and control. And the history of Zimbabwe, from independence to today, can be evidence to this fact. Thus, expecting violence 'to make or to give' is tantamount to misuse of the notion of violence and the results are obvious: subordination, exploitation, grabbing and looting; complete destruction.

However, like Heraclitus, Zimbabweans seem to have a strong passion, desire or liking for violence? If this observation is true, then Zimbabweans must common sensually know or be taught by Heraclitus where power or violence resides and how it operates. Heraclitus was common sensually aware that violence is a relative concept; violence can build and destroy at the same time. He was also aware that it is reason that can turn the destructive nature of violence into constructive. Meaning that violence on its own destroys itself; it is nothing, Parmenides also taught. The power for its existence is in reason. This point finds support in Sartre (cited in May, 1972: 123) who argues that violence is only a desire in us to unite the different elements in the self, omitting rationality. This means that complete disorder remains an existential threat which violence and its misuse will never treat but rationality. The notion of violence has no power to give to anyone since its power is given; its power is in reason. Therefore, there is more violence in building than in destroying; more violence in granting permission than in denying it; more power in love than in hate. Though it is difficult to understand but it is reasonably true. We may possess all the physical powers the world can offer but if we do not possess the mind to monitor it, we can get destroyed eventually by the same powers (cf. Chumachawazungu, 2009). The power of the concept of violence essentially resides in thinking or mind. Zimbabweans must think!

We look at the violence in Zimbabwe through the last feature which we believe is the summary of all the tenets that Heraclitus observed. Heraclitus (cited in Bailie, 1995: 242) writes that violence has its own logic and this logic makes it possible for violence to both create and destroy.

This logic of violence is an ordering principle generated by violence or disorder itself. Thus, violence becomes the origin of both order and disorder, of construction and destruction. Heraclitus probably observed it right that nature orders itself and does not need any human assistance. It is evident that nature is orderly and no one can deny that. But Heraclitus opened a panorama box but did not make any attempt to seal it. Heraclitus opened a rift in the mythological world view but did not heal it. The issue is on human violence. Who is responsible for human violence? Heraclitus was clever and he restricted himself to what was obvious and said nothing about human violence (cf. Bailie, 1995: 243). Thus, he left the issue open, indeed open to error, misconstrue and distortion.

The rift Heraclitus opened was subject to manipulation, misunderstanding and distortion by the Sophists, Stoics, Machiavelli and Nietzsche, (cf. Bailie, 1995: 243), and apparently Zimbabweans manipulated Heraclitus's doctrine of violence and hence misused violence. If violence has its own reason this could naturally lead to it being taken as an agent, entirely by itself and self-sufficient. However, this was the common sense error; a dangerous pitfall that Zimbabweans fell into. Zimbabweans intentionally allow the notion of violence to govern the country. This is abuse of the notion of violence. Instead of taming, possessing or controlling violence, Zimbabweans are now being controlled, tamed and possessed by it. In Shona we say, *kugarwa matutundunu; kuvovora chaiko* (living in agony, unendurable pain and inhuman conditions)!

With Heraclitus' philosophy of the logic of violence we have come to know that the ultimate cause or origin of the abuse of the notion of violence in Zimbabwe is error in thinking. Therefore, Zimbabweans must develop a new culture of thinking in order to correct this historical error. For the concept by its nature exposes its subject. Jaspers (cited in Jolivet, 1961: 32) enlightens us and he argues that 'the visible is the invisible manifested. The thing which is violent is no longer hidden since it is apparent in its violence, nor is it within since it is seen in its violence'.

Reason remains the only way forward for Zimbabwe since violence provokes thinking. In the history of philosophy, one who sensed the significance of what Heraclitus did and who reacted to it with intense hostility was Parmenides for he understood the implications of the Heraclitan breakthrough better than did Heraclitus, (cf. Bailie 1995: 243). But before we discuss Parmenides' intellectual awareness we want to consider some Zimbabwean philosophers and scholars' reactions to the misuse of the concept of violence. There are so many Zimbabwean scholars and philosophers who, after having witnessed or sensed the relativity, deception and danger violence denotes they reacted. Hence it is important that we consider these reactions as an acknowledgment of Zimbabwean thinkers' contribution to the issue of misuse of the notion of violence.

Zimbabwean Thinkers and Violence in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe

Naturally, violence provokes reaction and some Zimbabweans have reacted to its misuse. Many scholars and philosophers, CCJP, (2009), Kaulemu, (2011), Sachikonye, (2011), Mangena, (2013), and many others have condemned misuse of the notion of violence and its perpetrators. However, denial, condemnation and blame are just as good as whistle-blowing; they alert people of imminent or looming danger but they cannot to be taken as solutions. As solutions they suffer serious limitations. Distortion of concepts is one limitation. For instance Gunda and Mtetwa (2013: 159), identify the true nature of Zimbabwe as essentially a post-conflict society. But after identifying the need for scholars to understand and find solutions they went on to condemn and blame the Bible and religion and consider them political resources responsible for the misuse of the notion of violence in Zimbabwe. It is good to alert people that the Bible and religion can be manipulated but condemning the Bible and religion is probably a wrong move; utter distortion of the two concepts of God and religion.

However, the simple questions that expose Gunda and Mtetwa's distortions are: what is religion or the Bible? Are our personal and selfish interests enough to constitute religion? Or are our personal interpretations of the Bible, the Bible? Hence we suggest that scholars must guard against such confusion or error in thinking. Scholars must not be misled into error by some religious people and scrupulously deceptive politicians who take their personal and selfish agendas as object of worship and consider their very parochial understanding or interpretations of the Bible as true and authentic teaching hence more meaningful and important than the Bible itself.

Even the churches and its leaders have also condemned misuse of the notion of violence in Zimbabwe. *The Zimbabwe we Want Document* (2006), notwithstanding its loopholes, it offers the church chance to correct its character of silence in the face of crises, (cf. Manyonganise in Chitando 2013: 143ff). Then soon after emerged the most controversial Easter Pastoral Letter: *God Hears the Cry of the Oppressed* (2007) by the ZCBC. The Pastoral Letter is considered by many as a true expression of the Zimbabwean people's concerns and wishes (cf. Ibid). And again the Letter condemns and it blames and hence the difference between the two documents. We have said that it is good to alert but not good to condemn as we shall argue later. The question is: why does the church identify and condemn misuse of the concept of violence in the world but fails to see its own which is very close to its nose? It is a statement of fact that churches today are committing horrible and worse acts of abuse of the notion of violence than the secular world in Zimbabwe. Media confirm that there is misuse of violence in the churches in Zimbabwe.

What do we say of the divisions, enmity, subordination, exploitation, anger, fear, envy and scandals rampant in the churches? This is clear evidence of abuse of violence. Church leaders are exposed and are found behind bars because they have committed acts of violence. Thus, the church projects, sees and condemns itself in the outside world. This is very bad! We encourage the church to get busy and clean its own dirty.

We also suggest that it is not by preaching the gospel of sin or condemnation that gives the church and its people dignity and identity but each individual's effort to strive for self-worth and self-knowledge is sufficient. Religious people must think and follow the directives of the teacher Jesus Christ who taught: Be cunning like serpents but humble like doves. Cunning, we think, stands for 'thinking'. However, condemnation is a self-justification and a cover-up strategy.

The attitude of denial and condemnation confuse us more by deepening error and distortions of the notion of violence itself. For this reason, Koehn (2005: 4) argues that "this common sense reaction makes us move farther away from ourselves thus ignorance of oneself which is the root cause of misuse of the notion violence." Koehn (2005: 5) also reminds us that "as long as we are ignorant of who we are, we will rely on a habitual strategies of denial, condemnation and fear for maintaining our sense of self and repressing the dread that threatens to overwhelm us." Hence denial and condemnation are weak and lame solutions.

The attitude of denial or condemnation can give birth to multiple reactions. Instead of helping us to have self-introspection and examine who we are, it encourages us to distort and confuse worse the concept of violence (cf. Koehn, 2005: 5). We project our violence unto each other and judge and prosecute each other. This syndrome or weakness badly affects us all. But the embarrassing questions are: who is immune from misuse of the notion of violence? And who will guard the guard? We are interested in reporting other people's violence and never our own. We condemn misuse of violence by dictators at national level but ignore the abuses which manifestly decorate our very local and grassroots setups. These are in fact tributaries that feed the national level. Our homes, villages and communities are being led by dictators and tyrants who misuse violence but confusingly we long and expect democrats to lead the nation, impossible! Thinking starts with the self!

In Zimbabwe people are punished and send to prison not only for their violence but of others. Thus, punishment and imprisonment are other forms of reaction to the problem of violence. Koehn (2005: 5) identified the reaction and it seems Zimbabweans have adopted the same reaction. In order to contain the chaos produced by misuse of violence, the Zimbabwean society has inevitably been driven to identify and isolate aggressive individuals. However, although this societal response is understandable it has its own shortcomings. There is no guarantee for intellectual and moral transformation and behaviour change. We must remember that 'a teaspoon of honey catches more flies than a bucket of vinegar'. What is most needed for the people of Zimbabwe is not punishment, restitution or imprisonment but intellectual and moral awareness which guarantee maturity, growth and transformation. Through the wisdom tradition, Koehn (2005: 6) encourages us to 'redirect some of the energy we spend punishing wrongdoers toward enabling people to discover their authentic selves'. Thus, thinkers in the wisdom tradition invite us all to unearth the reasons why we so often behave in self-destructing, frustrating and pathological ways. And the reason why we kill and destroy seemingly is that we do not think!

Kaulemu (2004: 81), soon after independence reacted to the challenges of misuse of violence of the liberation struggle and suggested a remedy and argues thus: "... at independence, our society did little to rehabilitate itself from the habits of violence prevalent during the liberation war. We have assumed that violence is a tool that we can take up, use and drop at any time. History has proved that this is not ...". Kaulemu suggests rehabilitation as a solution to the problem of violence in Zimbabwe. Thus, Zimbabwe's situation needs psychologists and counsellors. Cases of this nature that need rehabilitation are common in Zimbabwe. Sachikonye (2011: 94) mentions of cases that need rehabilitation in Buhera and such cases are common everywhere and we know them. Shakespeare once said that 'human blood does flow not on the ground but on the mind of the murderer'. And any wrong done does not kill the part of the body that commits the wrong but kills the mind or conscience. Thus, some Zimbabweans are psychological sick patients, they walk and appear with dead conscience and hence they need consolation and counselling.

Some Zimbabweans suffer psychological trauma and fear. Fear haunts the people of Zimbabwe because of the experiences of fatal and brutal misuse of the concept of violence (cf. Sachikonye, 2011). Therefore, such organisations and institutions in Zimbabwe that undertake the holy work of rehabilitating and giving homes to victims of misuse of violence deserve our encouragement and compliments. Thank you! Thus, rehabilitation, though not the goal is an initial step towards the goal. But rehabilitation is not enough because to say that all Zimbabweans need rehabilitation could be falling into the fallacy of hasty generalization. Converting the whole country into a rehabilitation centre or hospital is exaggerating the problem which is not only unnecessary but a false depiction of Zimbabwe. Generally, needed in Zimbabwe is not rehabilitation but intellectual and moral awakening or re-awakening.

Zimbabwe needs intellectual and moral awareness since error in thinking can only be corrected at these levels of consciousness. The Zimbabwean issue of violence demands the high concentrated thoughts of Parmenides. Action and mere words are not enough but intellectual awareness can bring change to Zimbabwe which is tormented by misuse of the notion of violence. We said it in chapter one that Parmenides is the first metaphysician; the first thinker in the history of thinking or philosophy. His title is 'father of metaphysics'. And the issue that made him win the title is the problem of violence. His solution to the problem is probably the best so far. Parmenides will not fail Zimbabweans!

Parmenides, Violence and the Zimbabwean Experience

As Heraclitus was careless with the notion of violence, Zimbabweans, as we have already seen, imitated and are similarly a careless replica. The Zimbabwe situation is now bad and needs the assistance of philosophy. And we have argued that no one can do the job perfectly except Parmenides. With Parmenides true philosophical reflection of the concept of violence commenced. And we hope with him, true rational and critical analysis of the concept of violence will begin in Zimbabwe. No one is taught how to think, Koehn admits and he asserts thus:

Helping others to think about themselves is itself a tricky proposition. Individuals achieve self-knowledge only by thinking. Becoming thoughtful is akin to waking up... Our waking up is the cause of our being awake. There is no additional cause of awakening. Just as we wake up through awakening, so too, we become thoughtful by thinking. Thinking turns itself on. No one else can force people to think (2009: 6).

Thus, Koehn makes no claim to teach people how to become self-aware or how to liberate themselves from the misuse of the concept of violence. But it is an enough statement to say that people must think because they can think.

As Parmenides gave Heraclitus' doctrine of the logic of violence outright condemnation because it was considered dangerous and mistaken, there is no way however, Parmenides is not going to do the same to the distorted and misconstrued common sense philosophy of the Zimbabweans. It seems Parmenides is setting out now to give to the Zimbabwe common sense philosophy a new foundation and a new look. Hence Parmenides' thinking and views may appear new, most strange and probably hard for the people to grasp. Probably because the conclusion to Parmenides' argument is so alien to Zimbabweans; most people simply cannot believe it. The conclusion to his argument is to the effect that there is no violence; there is only reason or stability (cf. Bailie 1995: 243). Many Zimbabweans will find this hard to believe because their experience forcedly tells them that there is violence. However, it is important to note that intellectual awareness cannot prevent another case of misuse of violence and atrocities in Zimbabwe. But it can help ensure that when misuse of violence explodes, truth known about reality and human bonds will not be weakened but strengthened.

To turn now to the doctrine of Parmenides on the true nature of all things or reality, his assertion is that, 'it is'; it is and without beginning (cf. Stumpf, 1993: 16). Parmenides' argument, in brief, is to the effect that: "Being is, non-being is not. Being or the One is, and change or violence is an illusion" (Composta, 1988: 58). By illusion Parmenides means not being there or nothing. This sounds probably too hard for the minds, for too long engrossed in common sense error and distortions. But we are encouraged to think hard on, 'Being is and non-being is not. Being is means a thing is identical to itself. A is identical to A. There is no way a thing can be identical to something else which is not itself. There are no two or more truths about one reality. Hence in Being or reality there is no change or violence.

Like Parmenides, Wood (2001: xv) encourages people that they should, "believe in the mind's authority over human life and its power to find better ways for people to live." Humanity loves and profoundly enjoys being wise and Mukumba (2005: 26) calls this love, an addiction that is most natural to the human person. Hence people must know that it is thinking that makes them wise and not abuse of violence. We may have big physical muscles or power but if we do not have intellectual muscles or power, we are doomed.

Therefore, they should acquire, develop and equip ourselves intellectually in order to fight a winning battle against our greatest weakness, which is the abuse or misuse of violence. For the love we have to abuse or misuse violence is itself sufficient power for us, needed for the journey.

With Parmenides, a true philosophical reflection of the concept of violence commenced. And we hope with him, true rational and critical analysis of the concept of violence will begin in Zimbabwe. We must know that violence is an empty concept because it is the human being who sustains it by giving it meaning and purpose. This is what we learnt from Heraclitus.

For Parmenides violence is not necessary for a thing to be what it is. For if a thing changes it ceases to be itself but something else; total destruction. It is no longer but that which it has become. Sextus (cited in Palmer, 2000) calls this argument of Parmenides, “the statement of a profound metaphysical truth.” This is true and genuine thinking! And to think is to get to know the truth of the thing; its true nature. Hence we must listen to Parmenides very carefully.

It is clear that as we move into the sacrosanct region of intellectual awareness, thinking becomes the central issue and the concept of violence is gradually integrated into the nature of our being hence ceases to be. There is no such a thing as violence but a violent something. More emphasis then must be given to the topic on thinking. However, it is Parmenides who is first to discover and not to invent the powers naturally invested or embedded in reason to separate and make a distinction. We are encouraged to logically separate Being from its non-being, reason from its violence. Now, this distinction is obviously not one that arises immediately to people who are naive. Hence it is not surprising to find Parmenides insisting on the radical distinction between the ‘Way of Truth and the Way of Opinion or Belief’.

Melchert (1991: 24) explains Parmenides’ radical distinction: “The Way of Truth is the way of reality which is arrived at through the courtyard of thinking ... The Way of Opinion is the way of common sense, belief and appearance. This way almost always leads to error and illusion.” Parmenides’ argument is hard to understand but the distinction he made between reason and violence is basic and classic. The two concepts differ both in nature and extent; reason is that which defines people and violence is that which makes people being there in the world, (cf. Stumpf, 1993). However, let us listen to Parmenides as he explains the difference between reason and the notion of violence.

Turning now to the doctrine of Parmenides on the nature of the world, his first assertion is that reality is “the Way of Truth” and violence is a falsity meaning to say that it contradicts the truth, and because the powers that be in Zimbabwe have embraced falsity for years, they are further away from the truth. Anyway Grayling (1998: 380) agrees with Parmenides when he argues that: “Only one story, one road, now is left – the way of truth. For Parmenides reality or the way of truth is permanent. Thus, each thing is what it is and in itself, there is no motion or change, no generation, or destruction, no imperfection, no division.

For instance, a human being is a human being and there are no two ways about it. You cannot kill a human being and claim that you have killed a dog. It is a lie, an error in thinking and close to insanity. Humanity is self-sufficient hence does not depend on anything, be it political party, religious denomination, and culture for its existence.

However, it seems Parmenides is determined to set things right by granting violence its proper position through the application of his logical distinction. Each thing has its own violence as its appearance but the thing is not its violence or appearance. Identifying or reducing a thing to its violence is error in thinking; giving that thing a wrong or false identity. For instance, this insult: *uri imbwa yomunhu* (you are human dog) is a contradiction in terms, there is no such thing as a human dog.

Reason and violence are thus separated logically by Parmenides. Thinking proper for Parmenides implicitly implies separating reason from its violence. But the question is: how did Parmenides come to such strange conclusion? However, Parmenides shows the way. It begins with something Parmenides thinks impossible to deny. "Thinking and the thought that is are the same; for you will not find thought apart from what is, in relation to which it is uttered," (IEGP: 110). Thus, Parmenides teaches that there is no way reality could be separated from reason; reason and reality is one thing. To think is to think reality and this means reality is intelligible and is knowable. Consider any thought, Parmenides argues: "You will see that it is always a thought of something – of something which is." Being and thought are one. Whatever is; is intelligible and can be known. The concept of being is just the concept of what is, as opposed to what is not, "for it is necessary to speak and to think what is; for being is, but nothing is not" (IEGP: 111).

In simple terms, Parmenides' argument is that we must think reality that is reality becomes the sole object of the intellect. And according to Parmenides to think this way is easy because the two, mind and reality, are inseparable; whatever is known is known as a thing. So no one can deny knowledge of the truth because by virtue of having the mind one knows the truth. Importantly, Parmenides teaches that thought issue in words or speech and thus he who thinks does not speak a lie but the truth. Thus, by thinking or planning to do violence Zimbabweans become liars or are in error both in mind and speech. The notion of violence is not a thing therefore cannot be an object of the intellect. Parmenides teaches that if we try to represent violence we find it impossible and to think of violence as something that is or an agent is impossibility or error in thinking. And according to Parmenides, error in thinking is the **cause** of all impossibilities and absurdities; misuse of violence.

The way of violence is nothing but confusion and Parmenides sternly discourages anyone from thinking this way. This way leads to error and illusion. What Zimbabwe is today is what the way of violence is all about. 'Everything that can go wrong has since gone wrong' is what critics say and is what Zimbabwe is now. Violence cannot possibly be known or expressed. Reason necessarily excludes violence, so there is no way reason could be identical to violence, but if this happens, the apt result is confusion.

Mixing reason with violence is like mixing oil with water, they immediately separate. Says Seidel (1969: 119) about Parmenides: “This is why Parmenides speaks of the mortals as torn two ways. They fabricate a world of confusion in which to be and not to be are thought the same and not the same, each turning back into the other.” Identifying violence with reason breeds error in thinking and error in thinking is no thinking at all but confusion; reducing humanity to the level of beast.

Hart (1959: 60) declares: “It is Parmenides, the father of metaphysics, who arrives at the third or metaphysical degree of abstraction. He is the first therefore to consider ‘being as being’ as the source of unification of all reality.” Parmenides is a real thinker and his importance for the subsequent history of Greek philosophy and especially for metaphysics – the study of being as such – cannot be overestimated. He has rightfully been called the ‘father of metaphysics’. After Parmenides every Greek philosopher has to come to terms, in one way or another, with his seminal thought: the sophists, Plato, Aristotle, and many others. Even we ourselves today cannot avoid seeking Parmenides’ help on the issue of violence. Seidel (1969: 112) informs: “The problems of the one and many (violence), sense and intellectual knowledge, all these philosophical issues are given specific direction as a result of the sharp and uncompromising logic of being which Parmenides has introduced.” Parmenides is thus the first of the Greeks to give a truly metaphysical insight into things from the view point of their being; a thing is what it is; a dog is a dog despite the fact of changes in growth. Violence does not affect the being of anything but manifests the presence of being.

With Parmenides, Zimbabweans now know what violence is; it is an illusion, deception, not a thing (nothing), appearance, belief or an opinion. Thus, Parmenides is the first to become aware of being as an ultimate answer to the problem of violence, that is, of how different beings can still have or be being despite the fact of change or violence.

Parmenides sets up the tradition and framework within which solutions would have to be worked out and the framework is: ‘Being is, and non-being is not’. No matter how far we may break way from this tradition, we still come back. Seidel (1969: 119) has this to say about Parmenides:

Even those who would attempt to break with that tradition can do so only by returning to Parmenides, and attempting to find other alternatives. And even this can be done only with the assistance of the thought framework which he introduced or the ones which were set up in order to counter his.

Parmenides’ thought about that which is still makes its presence felt today. Amid such fierce misuse of violence and confusion, Parmenides declares categorically that we must all think and must think being. Parmenides encourages all people to be positive in thinking, that is, thinking beyond violence.

People should subject their beliefs about violence to rational criticism. Thus, Seidel (1969: 119) remarks thus “rather than an *ad libitum* appendix, Parmenides is the necessary introduction. Rather than a metaphysical afterthought, he is its forethought,” meaning that in the history of thinking Parmenides is first, and we have said already that he is the father of metaphysics.

Nonetheless, Parmenides’ philosophy has difficult aspects. By denying violence Parmenides makes his philosophy empty, irrelevant and useless. Philosophy need not deny violence, but must recognise violence and integrate it into the very structures of reality. Lear (1988: 56) asserts: “... The point of philosophy is not to undermine our pre-historical beliefs, but to help us to make sense of them.” Thus, the task of philosophy is to give us deeper insight into why our ordinary belief in violence is true. Our ordinary belief in violence thus becomes a starting point for philosophical activity, which may be modified but which can never be abandoned. Violence as a natural phenomenon needs to be accepted as a starting point for our intellectual investigations. Cencini and Maninti (1985: 20) confirm: “As one keeps climbing, the previous dimensions are not rejected, but integrated into a larger and more significant horizon.” Violence cannot be rejected, but higher intellectual examinations must be carried out with the intention of providing a profound and true interpretation of it.

Hart (1959: 77) remarks:

Instead of denying the reality of violence, the intellect has rather the obligation to provide for the violence in the very structure of the being that is the subject of violence. Thus, the first degree of philosophical knowledge makes a vital contribution to the metaphysical approach.

Violence is a force not to be denied, a force worthy of philosophical evaluation. Hence, this paper takes the common sense beliefs of violence of the people of Zimbabwe as the starting point for its penetrating investigations into the true nature of violence. It is the duty of philosophy to cleanse violence of the distortions it has accumulated through history.

Some philosophers argue that ‘skill or mind is nil without will.’ This being true, Parmenides is the beginning and not the end of the Zimbabwe people’s struggle with violence. It is painful and disheartening to realise that though Parmenides identifies the true nature of violence and hence discouraging others from misusing it but himself does not even lift up a finger to solve the problem. He gives us a problem-solving device which himself never uses; he remains uncommitted. This is pretence! We have such people like Parmenides, who are intellectualgiants but moral dwarfs. Such people use their intelligence to destroy; the Machiavelli and Nietzsche of today. Common people have always suffered abuse in form of delirious speeches and ideas, empty promises, impossibilities and delusions of grandeur of our masters, and PhD holders and Professors. Thus, simple people have been exposed to cruelty of the worst order and degree.

Parmenides denies violence and his dismissal of violence as false contradicts reality in terms of experience. This is error in thinking! Though it is true that violence is non-being or illusion, the fact is that it exists. In Zimbabwe, violence is denied. By denying violence, Zimbabweans make the whole of their thinking capacity questionable. The stability of their mental status is doubted because such an act of denial according to Koehn (2005: 151) is, “a clear mark of a defective mind or false self-image”.

In order to come up with a proper definition of the concept of violence, there is need to reconcile the positions of Heraclitus and Parmenides. Ortega (cited in Bailie, 1995: 241) regards Heraclitus and Parmenides as, “the two important proto-type philosophers.” With these two, philosophy in the strictest sense commences since with them begins the real philosophical problem of ‘form and matter’, an issue which philosophy is still grappling with. The two intensively looked at the ultimate nature of all there is solely through the use of the natural light of reason. And they both quarrel heavily and intellectually over how best to deal with generative violence. The outcome of the quarrel, however, is probably the construction of a true definition of reality, that is, reality is not either/or but both violent and stable.

Heraclitus observed nature and human nature right. That violence governs nature and human nature is an indubitable fact. Violence is power, force or energy in nature and it is both constructive and destructive, it makes and unmakes (cf. Composta, 2008). But Heraclitus is very wrong in according violence a status which is not its own. Violence is not an agent, thing or subject but an object, subject to use and therefore violence is governed. Those philosophers like Wilshire (1966), who say Heraclitus’ philosophy of violence is irrational and anti-intellectual, are probably very right. Heraclitus’ philosophy of violence is a true reflection of the first level or degree of apprehension, which is simple observation (cf. Owens 1985: 43ff). At this level of experience, we cannot tell the real nature of the thing we are experiencing but this level is necessary and cannot be escaped in the process of knowing.

Making a judgment that violence exists at the first level of abstraction (experience), will be making an error and therefore distorting the concept of violence. Experience cannot tell us what it is that we are experiencing but judgment is at the level of intellection. It is the intellect that judges (cf. Owens, 1985: 45ff). Parmenides was probably right when he asserted that philosophers should try to get beyond appearances (violence) of things to their reality. Nonetheless, Heraclitus’ ‘logic of violence’ is the starting point in any philosophical investigation. Denying this fact would make thinking in Jolivet’s words, “mere vague meandering of the mind, a cloud-land of airy notions, an old-fashioned and bemusing game and an excursion into unheard-of speculative systems” (1961: 32). Thinking is not empty speculation but it is simply, “a reflection on experience itself, as presented at once in its most concrete and comprehensive form with a view to grasping all its implications and intelligible demands” (Jolivet, 1961: 32). Violence is a manifestation of real being, and it is this real being which is a problem. Thus, any metaphysics which would hasten to throw the phenomenon of violence and get rid of the visible and tangible will be poor and lame. Nietzsche (cited in Jolivet, 1961: 32) calls such metaphysicians, “utopia-mongers and star-gazers.”

Violence or the world of the senses constitutes the road to true thinking. Violence is not a problem but the manifestation of a problem. Jaspers (cited in Jolivet, 1961: 32) asserts: "Appearance is appearance of being; the visible is the invisible manifested." The thing which is violent is no longer hidden since it is apparent in its violence, nor is it within since it may be seen in its manifestation, its violence. Jolivet (1961: 33) concludes: "Actually, the violence or the phenomenon is the outward showing of being – in the proper sense of the word, its manifestation; and being is the meaning, the truth, of its violence, of the violence seen." With this understanding, however, it is vivid that the philosophy of Being of Parmenides is indispensable and unavoidable if we are serious about the problem of violence. The problem of violence must be raised and be discussed at the intellectual level.

Conclusion

In this research the notion of the abuse of violence was critically exposed through Heraclitus' philosophy of the logic of violence. It was argued that Zimbabweans are in error when they use violence to achieve the goals of staying in power. It was argued that misuse of violence contradicts reason as misuse of violence was destructive. Parmenides' notion of intellectual awareness was discovered as a solution to the issue of the abuse of violence in post-colonial Zimbabwe. As was argued, Parmenides set the tradition and framework within which solutions would have to be worked out with a framework of 'being is, and non-being is not.' However, intellectual awareness did not constitute enough authority to stop violence from being abused. Parmenides could not stop violence from being developed into ethics with the sophists Machiavelli, and finally with Nietzsche. Hence, in Zimbabwe, violence had developed into a moral issue and thus the notion of violence was no longer a problem of the mind alone, but a problem of will.

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