

Master Thesis in Peace and Conflict Studies  
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**“SO THE KILLINGS CONTINUED”**  
Wartime Mobilisation and Post-war Violence  
in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

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*To the people of Richmond, Umbumbulu and Bhambayi,  
who have suffered the burden of violence.*

**Cry the beloved country** by Alan Paton

There is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills. These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond any singing of it. The road climbs seven miles into them, to Carisbrooke; and from there, if there is no mist, you look down on one of the fairest valleys of Africa. About you there is grass and bracken and you may hear the forlorn crying of the titihoya, one of the birds of the veld. Below you is the valley of the Umzimkulu, on its journey from the Drakensberg to the sea; and beyond and behind the river, great hill after great hill; and beyond and behind them, the mountains of Ingeli and East Griqualand (Paton 1948:2).

## **ABSTRACT**

Even though the end of war is often expected to lead to the end of political violence, empirical evidence suggests that many post-war countries experience continuous violence. This study explores the issue of post-war violence at the local level and seeks to explain why some communities experience high levels of violence while others do not. By deriving the implications from the theory on elite mobilisation in civil war, I argue that post-war violence is a function of the type of wartime mobilisation that occurs in a community. More specifically, I argue that violence is more likely in communities where local actors side with national actors in order to gain strategic advantages rather than based on their support for the national conflict dimension. This is because alliance-based mobilisation intensifies local tensions and increases the capabilities of local actors to employ violence. Using the method of structured focused comparison, the hypothesis is tested on three communities in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province. Data was collected through interviews and archive research. The main finding of the study is that alliance-based mobilisation is an important factor when accounting for the variation between the communities.

**Keywords:** post-conflict states, post-war violence, microdynamics of civil war, South Africa

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ANC	African National Congress
BDF	Bhambayi Development Forum
HRC	Human Rights Committee
IBI	Independent Board of Inquiry
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
LPC	Local Peace Committee
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
NP	National Party
UCDP	Uppsala Conflict Data Program
SDU	Self Defence Unit
SPU	Self Protection Unit
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UDF	United Democratic Front

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# I. INTRODUCTION

*“So, the killings continued, they didn’t stop.”*

*Local peacebuilding advisor, 2014*

The small rural town of Richmond in the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands is not far from the lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills in Alan Paton’s *Cry the Beloved Country*. But although the hills are grass-covered, rolling and lovely beyond singing of it, in 1997 these hills were covered with the dead, maimed and burnt. Violence had returned to Richmond, more than three years after South Africa’s celebrated democratic transition.

Paradoxically, peace is rarely the end of violence. Instead, post-war states often find themselves in a perpetual state of violence. In South Africa, tit-for-tat violence between the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), along with local conflicts and politically-related gang violence, continued years after the democratic elections in 1994, causing thousands of deaths (Guelke 2000:242). Yet, South Africa is not the only country experiencing post-war violence. In Rwanda, the post-genocide government went on a rampage and killed thousands of *genocidaires* and civilians. In East Timor, police and elements of the army battled each other years after the violent secession from Indonesia, burning down large parts of the capital (Berdal and Suhrke 2012:2). And in Iraq, the swift US military victory over Iraq’s armed forces laid the foundation for a civil war far bloodier than the invasion itself (Boyle 2014:1). But despite the bloodshed caused by violence after war, we still struggle to adequately understand the causes and dynamics of such violence.

Understanding the factors that increase the risk of post-war violence is more than just an academic puzzle. With sustained levels of violence people continue to suffer death or injury at the hands of others, hindering any development towards sustainable peace. Continuous cycles of violence endanger fragile peace agreements, destabilise the political situation, and, in extreme cases, plunge societies back into war (Autesserre 2010). In fact, one of the most common outcomes of civil war is another civil war (Collier, Hoeffler, and Söderbom 2008). Post-war violence also hampers attempts at socioeconomic development (Geneva Declaration Secretariat 2008:49). As issues of deprivation are at the centre of many civil wars, such limitations to development increase the risk for a re-escalation of tensions. Therefore, bringing rigorous scientific methods into the study of post-war violence is of both scholarly and policy importance.

In this study, post-war violence is defined as strategic violence that occurs in a state that is undergoing a transition from war to peace, and which is at least partly related to, or caused by, the war itself. Due to the differences in dynamics and the fact that most wars today are intra-state rather than inter-state, this study focuses exclusively on violence after civil wars. The existing academic literature on post-war violence can generally be divided into two theoretical perspectives; either emphasising post-war violence as a function of the conditions of the peace or the legacies of war (Berdal and Suhrke 2012:2). Explanations that focus on the conditions of peace stress the nature of the peace process, the settlement itself and associated peacebuilding reforms as the cause of violence. Legacies of the war explanations, on the other hand, accentuate how war transforms societies in a way that enables and legitimises violence in the post-war period. These explanations are valuable in terms of explaining variations in post-war violence across states, but lack the appreciation of the fact that such violence tends to cluster in certain areas. War affects communities differently, and so does post-war violence. But while this has been acknowledged by some scholars (see e.g. Steenkamp 2005; Arjona 2009), previous research has not yet examined how such differences affect the propensity for post-war violence at the local level. Without understanding the factors that increase the risk of post-war violence in a community, we cannot identify the areas that are most at risk and in need of support, nor can we know what strategies to use in order to limit the probability of violence. Consequently, the puzzle that this study seeks to understand is: *Why do some communities experience high levels of post-war violence while others do not?*

This study makes several contributions. The main contribution is that this study develops a theory that helps us to understand more specifically how post-war violence is linked to wartime dynamics. The research field on the microdynamics of civil war accentuates the importance of understanding the relations between national and local actors (see e.g. Kalyvas 2006; Autesserre 2010; Odendaal 2013; Brosché 2014). Another strand of research focuses on sub-national variations in civil war dynamics and how such variations can leave different, localised legacies (see e.g. Steenkamp 2005; Wood 2008; Arjona 2009; Deglow 2015). By combining these two research fields, I argue that post-war violence is a function of the type of wartime mobilisation that a community experiences. More specifically, when mobilisation at the local level occurs based on the formation of mutually beneficial alliances between national and local actors (alliance-based mobilisation), rather than based on shared support for the war's master cleavage (cleavage-based mobilisation), the likelihood of post-war violence increases. This is because alliance-based mobilisation intensifies local tensions and increases the capabilities of local actors to employ violence, which in turn make local

actors more likely to pursue local agendas through violence. Given the theoretical framework, we should expect that communities that experience alliance-based mobilisation, all things equal, are more likely to experience high levels of post-war violence than communities that experience cleavage-based mobilisation. This study provides a first test of the above-outlined theory.

Furthermore, by empirically testing this theory, this study sheds new light on the peace process in South Africa. South Africa's negotiated settlement is celebrated as a successful transition from war to peace and democracy and lessons from that transition guide policymakers dealing with conflict in Africa (Adebajo, Adedeji, and Landsberg 2007). By highlighting the persistence of violence in South Africa after the settlement, this study seeks to contribute to the literature on that transition and move beyond the simplified, and ultimately incorrect description of South Africa as a peaceful transition.

In order to test the theoretical framework, I conduct a structured focused comparison of three communities in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa: Richmond, Umbumbulu and Bhambayi. In order to complement the analysis of existing sources on political violence in KwaZulu-Natal, I conducted field research in the communities in 2014-2015.<sup>1</sup> 26 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 individuals with first-hand information about the violence in these communities. Interviewees were asked about the history of violence in their community and factors derived from existing theories were explored through pre-formulated questions.

The main finding is that alliance-based mobilisation is an important factor when accounting for the variations between the examined communities. In Richmond and Umbumbulu, where wartime mobilisation was predominantly alliance-based, such a strategy contributed to the high levels of post-war violence by intensifying local tensions and by providing local actors with the capability to employ violence.

The study proceeds as follows. The second chapter reviews the existing literature on post-war violence, presents a definition and makes a novel contribution by developing a theory that seeks to explain community-level variations in post-war violence. The third chapter describes the research design. In the empirical chapters, a structured focused comparison is carried out. Finally, the last chapters present the conclusions, examine alternative explanations and connect the findings to the current understanding of what drives post-war violence.

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## II. WARTIME MOBILISATION AND POST-WAR VIOLENCE

*“It cannot be assumed that when you then ascend to democracy, then everything will be wiped out. Because you are talking about people who are now enemies, who have been fighting, killing each other.”*

*Development worker, 2014*

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the study. It starts with a discussion regarding the definition of post-war violence and by reviewing previous research. Thereafter, the theoretical building blocks found in the microdynamics of civil war literature are introduced. Based on the theory of wartime mobilisation of local actors, I outline a theory proposed to explain variations in post-war violence at the community level.

### **Defining post-war violence**

Before embarking on a discussion about how we can explain variations in post-war violence across communities, it is necessary to address the difficult issue of defining post-war violence. To date, many researchers have not provided a conceptual definition of the term. While the established term in policy circles is ‘post-conflict violence’, this study uses ‘post-war violence’, in order to emphasise the difference between conflict and armed conflict (Berdal and Suhrke 2012:6).

In this study, post-war violence is defined as *strategic violence that occurs in a state that is undergoing a transition from war to peace and which is at least partly related to, or caused by, the war itself*. Several aspects of this definition require closer examination. First, ‘strategic violence’ refers to “a violent act aimed at transforming the balance of power and resources within the state” (Boyle 2014:29). Such a definition captures the range of violent activities prominent in post-war states, for example assassinations, reprisal killings, attacks by insurgents, and terrorist attacks, while excluding individual acts of revenge and purely criminal acts (ibid). Second, this definition captures the transitional nature of post-war states, sometimes referred to as a situation of “neither war nor peace” (Kurtenbach and Wulf 2012:6). Quantitative studies tend to use a fixed time-period of five or ten years to demarcate this phase (see e.g. Archer and Gartner 1976; Collier and Hoeffler 2004), whereas qualitative studies usually talk of a phase that is extraordinary in some sense, a transition from war to more “normal” conditions (Berdal and Suhrke 2012). Third, this definition captures the

implicit assumption of the term ‘post-war violence’ that there is a relation between violence in the post-war era and the war itself. Such relations can be both more explicit, such as continued conflict along previously demarcated battle lines, or more implicit expressions of violence founded in a culture of violence caused by the war.

### **Previous research**

By signing a peace agreement, belligerents implicitly acknowledge that they are unable to win the war by military means (Darby 2001:66). This does not mean that peace agreements magically put an end to violence. To the contrary, many post-war states experience violence long after the formal end of hostilities (Höglund and Söderberg-Kovacs 2010). Post-war societies are often characterised by weak state control, a volatile political landscape and large numbers of arms and ex-combatants. It is an environment ripe for violence.

There are two broader theoretical perspectives regarding the causes of post-war violence; *conditions of the peace* explanations and *legacies of the war* explanations (Berdal and Suhrke 2012:2). Those that focus on the conditions of peace focus on the nature of the peace process, the settlement itself, and associated peacebuilding reforms as a cause of violence. According to this perspective, violence is the result of national actors that seek to challenge, re-negotiate or spoil the settlement. Influential theories have focused on the negative consequences of liberalisation and competition (Paris 1997); the role of spoilers that seek to renegotiate or overturn the settlement through violence (Stedman 1997); violence as a strategy to influence a country’s political future (Grandi 2013); violence as a result of an inability of elites to enforce compliance over the terms of the peace settlement (Boyle 2014); and the difficulties of extending the provisions of the peace settlement throughout the territory of a state (Manning 2003).

Explanations that focus on the legacy of war, on the other hand, tend to emphasise how war transforms society. Such transformations of the socio-cultural, institutional and economic structures of a society both enable and legitimise violence in the post-war era. Such an assumption underlines Archer and Gartner’s large-n study on the effects of armed conflict on post-war homicide rates. They find that there were “pervasive and substantial” increases in murder rates in post-war states between 1900-1976. Their explanation is based on the assumption that war socialises societies into violent behaviour, thus lowering the threshold for violence (Archer and Gartner 1976). Steenkamp makes a similar argument, postulating that exposure to violence causes a “culture of violence”, that is, a socially permissive environment for the use of force (2005). Since then, a number of qualitative studies have outlined how

transformations of social processes leave a legacy of violence long after the war ends. For instance Wood argues that civil war polarises social identities and that this causes electoral polarisation, segregation and low trust in politics in the post-war era (2008:540). Arjona focuses on institutional transformations, suggesting that there is a link between civil war governance by rebels and the challenges communities face in the post-war period (2008). Other lines of research have focused on the role of ex-combatants in post-war violence (Themnér 2011); score-settling and revenge-killings (Krämer 2007); and the militarisation of local conflicts as a source of continuous violence (Autesserre 2010; Odendaal 2013).

The above theories highlight several important factors that can cause post-war violence. But even though some previous scholars have acknowledged that these factors may have different impacts in different communities (Steenkamp 2005; Arjona 2008), previous research has not yet provided a satisfactory theory of how such differences affect the propensity for post-war violence at the local level. Why are some communities seemingly more sensitive to post-war violence than others?

### **Post-war violence at the community level**

In this section, I make a theoretical contribution to previous research by outlining an argument that shows how different types of wartime mobilisation at the local level leave legacies that increase or decrease the risk of post-war violence. Previous studies have established that civil wars can shape societal processes profoundly at the national level. The question is whether civil wars also leave more localised legacies that are community-specific. Several recent studies have underlined the importance of disaggregated analysis in order to understand the dynamics and consequences of civil wars (Kalyvas 2006; Arjona 2008; Wood 2008; Autesserre 2010; Odendaal 2013). Civil wars can take many different forms across different localities in a state – some wars are fought in remote jungle areas, whereas others largely take place in urban slums. The implication is that local communities are “prone to live very different wars” (Arjona 2009:123). While some of the legacies of civil war are nation-wide, other legacies are directly shaped by community-specific dynamics. This means that communities across a state can be left with different legacies after the end of the war. The likelihood of this processes is particularly prevalent in so-called irregular wars, that is, wars that lack clear front lines and are characterised by guerrilla style violence (Kalyvas 2006:87–89).

I argue that wartime dynamics not only shape how societal changes come about, but also how such changes shape social dynamics in the post-war era, including the risk of post-

war violence in a certain community. The question is how civil war dynamics affect the likelihood of post-war violence at the local level.

### **Mobilisation in civil war**

Civil wars are often more complex than commonly assumed. Far from being binary conflicts between easily distinguishable actors, civil wars are often fought between irregular armed groups over multiple issues. Such an understanding of civil war dynamics, first introduced by Kalyvas, is based on the observation that what drives violence at the national level – the war’s “master cleavage” – is not necessarily the same as what drives violence at the local level (2003:476). Essentially, civil war is seen as a conglomerate of multiple, more or less overlapping, localised civil wars. The implication is that we cannot assume that local actors engage in violence for the same reason as national actors do. Instead, the violence that takes place on the ground is often a function of pre-existing local rivalries and feuds (ibid:479).

Gaining the support of local populations is essential in civil war, particularly in irregular wars. National actors need the active support of local actors to gain a foothold in a local community for recruitment and access to local knowledge, control and resources (ibid). Furthermore, national armed actors also need the passive support of local communities, for example by tolerating operations and refraining from reporting armed groups’ activities to enemy forces (Deglow 2015:7). In order to attain support, national actors can interact with local actors in various ways, stretching from accommodating local actors into national structures, to forming loose alliances with local elites. These types of interactions between national and local actors have been highlighted by a number of scholars that have studied elite mobilisation in civil war (Kalyvas 2006; Autesserre 2010; Odendaal 2013; Brosché 2014).

How can national actors gain support from local actors? The scholarly literature on the microdynamics of war suggests that local actors can be mobilised in two different ways. These two types of mobilisation differ in terms of how local actors are mobilised, by whom they are mobilised, and why they mobilise. First, *cleavage-based mobilisation* occurs when local actors are mobilised based on the war’s master cleavage, that is, a critical division in opinion, beliefs, interests and other characteristics that lead to opposition between groups. Cleavage-based mobilisation occurs through extending the war’s master cleavage to the local level, a project primarily carried out by national elites such as party officials and other agents from within national groups. Under such circumstances, local dynamics become local manifestations of the central cleavage and local actors become replicas of national actors, with actions and decisions taken at higher levels (Kalyvas 2003:481).

Second, national actors can engage in alliance formation to gain local support. *Alliance-based mobilisation* occurs when national actors form alliances with local actors. Such alliances are conceptualised by Kalyvas as “a process of convergence of interests via a transaction between supralocal and local actors (2006:383). Local elites are often in a more prominent position than national actors when it comes to mobilising local constituencies, as they can draw on factors such as reputation and cultural or traditional authority (Brosché 2014:33). Local actors seek such alliances in order to win local advantages they could not win otherwise, either in on-going local conflicts or in conflicts anticipated to come. If local actors are already involved in local conflicts, national actors can build upon such pre-existing rivalries as a way to mobilise support. This is because national actors can provide their local partners with access to arms and training – what Kalyvas calls “external muscle” (2006:383). Allying with a more powerful national group can also serve as a deterrent against other local actors. As such, joint action between national and local actors is the result of a mutually beneficial relationship rather than shared preferences. This does not mean that local communities are disinterested in national issues, just that family feuds, local disputes over land, access to resources and conflicts related to day-to-day survival are often more immediate (Odendaal 2013:9). Hence, alliance-based mobilisation occurs both around national and local issues simultaneously and is carried out by both national and local actors. The differences between these different types of mobilisation at the local level are summarised in table 1.

**Table 1. Types of wartime mobilisation at the local level**

<i>Type of wartime mobilisation</i>	<i>Cleavage-based mobilisation</i>	<i>Alliance-based mobilisation</i>
Cause of mobilisation	Local support for the war’s master cleavage	Local aspiration to gain strategic advantages
Mobilising agent	National elites	National and local elites
Arms transactions	No	Yes

Thus, this section concludes that national actors can gain local support either through cleavage-based mobilisation or through alliance-based mobilisation. In the final section, I develop an argument that illustrates how these different types of wartime mobilisation leave different legacies that are more or less likely to cause post-war violence.

### **From wartime mobilisation to post-war violence**

Civil wars transform societies in profound ways. Since such transformations are caused by wartime dynamics, we also expect such transformations to differ at the sub-state level. I argue that the type of wartime mobilisation that occurs in a community (independent variable) affects the likelihood of post-war violence (dependent variable). More specifically, I theorise that alliance-based mobilisation causes higher levels of post-war violence since such mobilisation strategies intensify local tensions (causal mechanism) and increase the capabilities of local actors to employ violence (causal mechanism). This in turn makes local actors more likely to pursue local agendas through violence.

First, alliance-based mobilisation intensifies local tensions. As has been noted by Odendaal, “local communities are never without internal tensions” (2013:25). This claim is often echoed in observations of how neighbours turn against neighbours in civil war. However, not all local tensions turn violent. National actors that employ cleavage-based mobilisation seek to extend the war’s master cleavage to the local level. As such, they have an interest in promoting national issues as the most important, while at the same time suppressing local conflicts that threaten group cohesion and local order (Arjona 2009:125). National actors that employ alliance-based mobilisation, on the other hand, deliberately encourage local tensions in order to attain support. This strategy seeks to use local actors as proxies, often covertly, in order to gain dominance in a community. Local allies are free to employ violence as they see fit as long as they provide national actors with support. Since national actors provide local actors with arms and military skills, local actors’ resolve is likely to harden. Furthermore, local actors that have the backing of powerful national allies are less likely to seek peaceful solutions to local conflicts, since the shift in the local balance of power discourages cooperation (Brosché 2014:41). What follows is an escalation of local conflicts.

Pruitt and Kim have outlined how conflicts transform during escalation. When conflicts escalate, tactics become increasingly coercive, the number of participants increases, issues proliferate, and specific issues are substituted by a more general dislike of the adversary (2004:89–91). Moreover, escalation brings about changes in groups and communities that contribute to further escalation. An important transformation is that community polarisation increases, that is, “the average group member on each side becomes increasingly hostile toward the other side” (Pruitt and Kim 2004:116). As a result of these transformations, local conflicts escalate in often irreversible ways. As observed by Odendaal, “preexisting conflicts at the local level acquire enhanced meaning and intensity when plugged into the national

conflict and its violence”, making them more disruptive and destructive than before the outbreak of the war (2013:12).

Surely, violence in itself also causes such transformations wherefore similar dynamics should occur following cleavage-based mobilisation. Local manifestations of the war’s master cleavage can cause high levels of wartime violence. The difference is that such transformations are more likely to occur around the war’s master cleavage and hence are more likely to be addressed by a national peace agreement that resonates with the cause of conflict in the community (Manning 2003:26–27). As such, when local support is cleavage-based, national settlements are more likely to be sufficient for local stability to commence (Odendaal 2013:11). National actors also have stronger incentives to quell local violence in such instances, since violence along the war’s master cleavage may be destabilising and could be interpreted as spoiling behaviour (see Stedman 1997).

Second, alliance-based mobilisation increases the capabilities of local actors to employ violence in the post-war period. As has been pointed out by Boyle, national signatories of peace agreements do not always possess the necessary internal control needed to ensure compliance from their rank and file, either by accommodating trouble-makers through rewards or by punishing defectors. When national actors lose control over their factions in the post-war period, it “can fuel the rise of splinter groups, which will bargain with each other through the use of strategic violence”, generating “regional microcosms of violent activity (2014:47). This is because when armed groups lack the ability to sanction those that use violence, the cost of using violence goes down for those that seek to challenge the new peace order. Since cleavage-based mobilisation relies on national elites to rally support, such a strategy does not require local elites to be armed to the same extent as when mobilisation is alliance-based. National actors are therefore less likely to provide local elites with weapons and military training. This is important since such transactions empower local actors to act against the will of their national counterparts. Mobilisation agents, such as party officials and rebel commanders, are also more likely to be part of the structures of the national group and can therefore be forced into compliance through the internal structures of the group, either through sanctions or rewards. This is in line with Boyle’s assertion that, as a rule, hierarchical organisations have tighter institutional and bureaucratic control over the behaviour of their members than those with diffuse, horizontal or cellular structures (ibid:80).

Alliance-based mobilisation, on the other hand, increases such enforcement difficulties, both due to wartime transactions and because it causes lower organisational cohesion. When national actors provide their local allies with weapons and military training, local actors

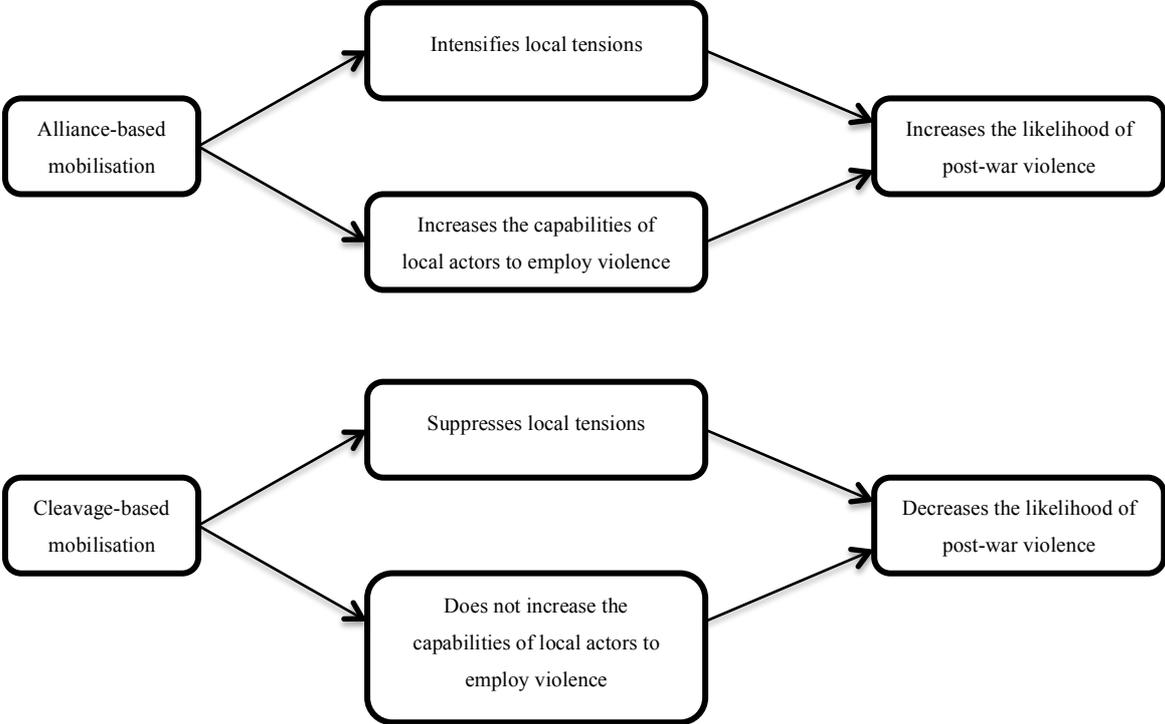
become empowered to act against the will of their national allies. Violence-enabling transactions are often irreversible; weapons handed out to civilians or local agents are hidden and military training is impossible to reverse. Local leaders that gain a reputation as violence specialists develop vested interests in violence and are unlikely to give up their wartime benefits lightly (Pruitt and Kim 2004:162). As local actors gain access to financial benefits and arms, national actors are less likely to be able to enforce compliance by offering material benefits or by punishing defectors. Alliance-based mobilisation is also more likely to result in horizontal or cellular organisations that lack the necessary mechanisms to monitor the behaviour of members and punish those who violate the terms of the settlement. Paradoxically, actors that wield low internal control may even find it hard to monitor their own demobilisation and disarmament (Boyle 2014:81–83). Such a claim is also in line with Christia’s observation that groups built on vertical coalition networks between groups and subgroups are more likely to fractionalise (2012:25).

### **In summary**

Why do some communities experience high levels of post-war violence while others do not? In sum, I argue that such a variation is the result of the type of mobilisation that occurs in a community during the civil war. The argument is that alliance-based mobilisation is more likely to cause post-war violence than cleavage-based mobilisation. This is because alliance-based mobilisation intensifies local tensions and increases the capabilities of local actors to employ violence to a larger extent than cleavage-based mobilisation does. The theory does not propose the nature of the relationship between these two causal mechanisms; at a minimum, they are not mutually exclusive. This relationship will be further discussed in the analysis. The theoretical framework is summarised in figure 1.

Based on the theoretical framework, we should expect communities that experience alliance-based mobilisation to experience higher levels of post-war violence than those communities that experience cleavage-based mobilisation. The argument does not claim to explain all the variation in post-war violence. Rather, it is seen as an important factor that is assumed to contribute to the high levels of violence experienced by some communities. The relative strength of the argument, along with alternative explanations, will be discussed in the comparative analysis.

Figure 1. Summary of theoretical framework



In the next chapter, the research design of the study will be introduced, along with the structure of the empirical analysis. The chapter also discusses the challenges and limitations of the study, before moving on to the results of the empirical field study.

### III. RESEARCH DESIGN

*“You had to make sure that nobody heard what I’m saying about Nkabinde, because you said something wrong and somebody hear you, you know saying that, you lose your life.”*

*Development worker, 2014*

In the previous chapter, it was argued that the likelihood of post-war violence in a community is a function of the type of wartime mobilisation that occurs in that community. This chapter outlines the research design used for applying this analytical framework on the empirical material. In order to do so, this study employs the structured focused comparison method (see George and Bennet 2005). The study compares three communities in South Africa and traces the process through which the *type of wartime mobilisation* (independent variable) increases the likelihood of *post-war violence* (dependent variable) by *intensifying local tensions* and *increasing the capabilities of local actors to employ violence* (causal mechanisms). The study contains elements of both theory-testing and theory-building, as it both evaluates the suggested argument and seeks to further develop such a theoretical framework. Hence, this study should be seen as a building block towards a theory that explains community-level variation in post-war violence.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, the case selection method is introduced. Second, the analytical tools that steer the analysis are presented. Third, the field research carried out in South Africa is summarized and ethical considerations are outlined.

#### **Case selection**

The starting point in any case study is to establish what the cases are cases of. The cases in this study are communities in a state that has experienced civil war. As was noted in the theory section, communities are more likely to experience “different wars” in irregular wars, wherefore the conclusions drawn in this study are most likely to apply in states that have experienced such a civil war. While the communities under study share a history of civil war, some have experienced post-war violence to a larger extent than others, thus encompassing the variation in the dependent variable this study seeks to explain.

Selecting cases is crucial for studies employing a case study design. In studies where a limited number of cases are examined, random sampling is in general inappropriate, wherefore a deliberate selection of cases based on the purpose and research question of the

study is preferable (Gerring and Seawright 2008:87–90). In order to avoid selection bias, that is, the risk that the conclusions are based on inferences that suffer from systematic error, two criteria were used to select the cases. First, cases were selected based on an observed variation on the dependent variable. Therefore, both communities with relatively high levels, and relatively low levels of post-war violence were selected. Second, cases were selected based on assumed comparability. Choosing cases that are as similar as possible except on the independent variable makes it possible to control for alternative explanations (Höglund 2011:116). As such, this study employs what is commonly referred to as a most-similar design.

This study will assess post-war violence in South Africa. Three factors guided the decision. First, within a sample of terminated irregular civil wars, South Africa constitutes a relatively classic example, with irregular forces, paramilitary groups and militarised civilians battling the powerful apartheid state and its security forces (Schuld 2013:64). We may thus expect that the dynamics at play in South Africa's civil war are relatively representative of those in other irregular civil wars. Second, South Africa's civil war was terminated through a negotiated settlement. This is important since outright military victories bring about different post-war dynamics than negotiated settlements. For example, the inability to exercise sufficient control over the entire population is often more acute following a settlement than a military victory (Odendaal 2013:24). Given that the proposed mechanisms are related to such inabilities to exercise control, it is essential that the chosen case fulfils that criterion. Third, studying South Africa is intrinsically interesting. The transition in South Africa is generally seen as a successful example of a negotiated settlement, wherefore continuous cycles of violence following the 1994 peace agreement are especially puzzling.

Based on the selection criteria of variation in the dependent variable and assumed comparability, three communities in South Africa were chosen: Richmond, Umbumbulu and Bhambayi. As all are located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, a number of regional, historical, political and socio-economic factors are kept constant. This is important since KwaZulu-Natal was particularly hard-hit by civil war violence (see Guelke 2000). Care was also taken to select communities that all experienced high levels of violence during the civil war, since this is generally assumed to be a predictor of post-war violence. The selection was made to encompass the criteria of a most-similar design; while Richmond and Umbumbulu displayed particularly high levels of post-war violence, Bhambayi saw a relatively sudden and significant reduction in violence after April 1994 (table 2). Importantly, Bhambayi did experience some post-war violence – 40 of the 44 casualties took place before October 1995 –

which suggests that tensions did exist and that such tensions had the potential to turn violent. The question is why such tensions did not lead to violence as frequently as they did in Richmond and Umbumbulu. A more in-depth assessment of the dependent variable, based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative data, is undertaken in the empirical analysis.

**Table 2. Post-war violence in Richmond, Umbumbulu and Bhambayi, May 1994-December 1998**

<i>Community</i>	<i>Number of casualties<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Qualitative assessment</i>
Richmond	103	High
Umbumbulu	75	High
Bhambayi	44	Low

**Structure of empirical analysis**

The first empirical chapter describes the civil war in South Africa. Three empirical chapters that focus on the examined communities follow. In order to carry out the structured focused comparison of the cases, a specification of the data to be obtained from each case is necessary. Unless such a specification is made, results cannot be compared and systematically analysed, decreasing the significance of the results (George and Bennet 2005:250). A number of questions have been derived from the analytical framework and will function as indicators and steer the analysis. The questions asked are of a general nature to ensure comparability, while at the same time being specific enough to capture the nuances of the communities. The answers to these questions are used to determine the value of the theoretical factors outlined in the theory section. For the sake of clarity, alternative explanations that are case-specific are examined in each case study chapter, while more general alternative explanations are highlighted in the comparative analysis.

*Post-war violence*

The levels of post-war violence will be assessed during a five-year period, which is arguably the minimal period needed for a state to escape the legacy of war. Such a time frame has been successfully employed by similar studies (see e.g. Boyle 2014). The analysis will be guided by the definition of post-war violence outlined above, exclusively focusing on strategic

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<sup>2</sup> These numbers were compiled through a review of all the Human Rights Reports published in South Africa between May 1994 and December 1998. The reports, which were published by the South African Human Rights Commission, are based on multiple sources collected from organisations and individuals involved in violence monitoring (Benini, Minnaar, and Pretorius 1998:508). Unfortunately, no data is available after December 1995.

violence. Hence, individual acts of revenge, private violence (homicide), and purely criminal acts, are excluded. This does not mean that such an assessment is without complications. Establishing the motives behind an act of violence is notoriously difficult and there is no established system for collecting data on political killings in South Africa (Bruce 2013:14). While efforts were made to compare data in order to provide an accurate account, we must keep in mind that there are certain limitations regarding the reliability of this assessment.

Since the purpose of this study is to determine the drivers of post-war violence, the following questions will be posed to each case:

- Were the levels of post-war violence in the community between 1994 and 1999 comparably high or low? Was there a significant decrease or increase in the level of violence after 1994?

#### *Type of wartime mobilisation*

The independent variable identified in the theory section is the type of wartime mobilisation experienced by a community, more specifically whether mobilisation was cleavage or alliance-based. Consequently, the following questions will be posed to each case:

- Were local actors mobilised based on their support for the war's master cleavage or based on their wish to realise strategic advantages over local rivals? Were local actors and constituencies mobilised by agents from national groups or by local elites? Were local actors provided with arms and military training in exchange for their support?

#### *Causal mechanisms*

Two causal mechanisms were identified as linking the independent and dependent variable, the first concerning the intensification of local tensions. In order to explore this mechanism, the following questions will be posed to each case:

- Did local conflicts in the community escalate during the war? Were such local conflicts left unaddressed in the community? Did such local conflicts provide a permissive environment for violence in the post-war period?

The second mechanism identified concerns the capability of local actors to employ violence. To explore this mechanism, the following questions will be posed:

- Did local actors refuse to take certain actions despite calls to do so by national actors, for example to demobilize or to disarm? Were national actors able to exercise control over local allies through internal organisational structures? Were local actors empowered by transactions in arms and military skills to act independently from national actors?

### *Alternative explanations*

In order to explore and account for alternative explanations, the following question will also be posed to each case:

- What are the main alternative explanations that account for the difference in outcome?

### **Material and sources**

The material that provides the foundation of this study was gathered through 26 in-depth semi-structured interviews carried out during field research in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa in 2014 and early 2015. The study was financed by a Minor Field Study scholarship provided by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

In-depth interviewing contains certain advantages when it comes to giving the researcher first-hand accounts of the research question posed, particularly when the purpose is to generate new theory (Brounéus 2011:131). Furthermore, in-depth interviewing in the field can help overcoming urban bias, as personal history may capture aspects that are left out of reports compiled by urban intellectuals (Kalyvas 2006:395). The method of semi-structured interviewing was used, that is, the interviews followed a pre-determined set of questions and themes, while at the same time being open enough for the respondents to develop their own reasoning and allowing for changes in terms of sequence and form (Kvale 2007:50–51). Such an interview technique has been successfully employed in similar studies, wherefore it was deemed suitable (see e.g. Themnér 2011; Brosché 2014). The interviews were of a factual nature, focusing on obtaining valid factual information about the cases rather than the interviewees' own perspectives (Kvale 2007:71). An interview guide was developed based on a thorough literature review conducted before arriving in “the field”.<sup>3</sup> A number of independent variables were identified and translated into questions that could be used as indicators. Questions were also posed that went beyond current scholarship in order to explore

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<sup>3</sup> This interview guide can be found in the Appendix.

potentially new avenues of information. The interview guide was continuously revised during the research process, as new literature was consulted or new independent variables proposed by the informants.

I interviewed 30 individuals with first-hand information about the violence in the communities under scrutiny, including former violence monitors, peacebuilding advisors, development workers, community leaders, police officers, former militants, victims of violence, community residents, local councillors and academic experts.<sup>4</sup> These interviewees<sup>5</sup> do not constitute a representative sample, but were chosen through snowball sampling, whereby one respondent introduces the researcher to the next respondent. Snowball sampling directly addresses the difficulties of fear and mistrust common in post-war societies, since the researcher is introduced to the interviewees through a trusted social network (Cohen and Arieli 2011). Interviews were recorded and transcribed<sup>6</sup> and unclear or ambiguous passages were marked and re-analysed for verification. Despite great effort to accurately capture and present the information and stories expressed by the interviewees, it is worth to remember that misunderstandings and mistakes are likely to have occurred. Such shortcomings are solely the responsibility of the author.

Interviews are referenced in-text with their full name and the year the interview took place. Anonymised interviewees are referenced as “Anonymous” and given a number. To increase the reliability of the data, triangulation was employed, both by using several independent sources, and by using different types of sources (interviews, archive material, historical narratives). Secondary data was gathered in archives, particularly at the Alan Paton Centre and Struggle Archives in Pietermaritzburg and the Diakonia Council of Churches Archives in Durban. Meetings and informal conversations with local experts provided further contextual understanding and an opportunity to discuss and revise the theoretical foundation of the study.

### *Ethical considerations*

Doing field research in post-war societies aggravates the ethical challenges of research. In order to overcome these difficulties and to adhere to the principle of “do no harm”, a number of ethical decisions were taken before, during and after doing research in the field. Such

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<sup>4</sup> A complete list of interviewees can be found in the Appendix.

<sup>5</sup> In this study, the terms ‘respondents’ and ‘interviewees’ will be used interchangeably.

<sup>6</sup> The transcribed interviews are available from the author upon request, but may be censored in order to safeguard the identity of the respondents.

ethically-informed decision-making needs to permeate all stages of an interview study in peace research (Brounéus 2011:141).

First, efforts were made to ensure the security and well-being of the interviewees. Where it was assessed that participation could pose any type of risk to the respondents, interviews were ruled out. A verbal protocol for informed consent, stressing the voluntary nature of the interview and each of the questions, along with the right of anonymity and the right to retract a statement, was presented before the start of the interviews. Hence, some of the respondents' names, occupations and locations are withheld from publication due to the protection of their identity, and those interview transcripts have been censored of all information that might disclose their identity.

Second, the emotional welfare of the informants was taken into account. Talking about sensitive topics, particularly about memories of violence, increases the risk of retraumatization (ibid:144). While such risks can never be entirely avoided, much can be prevented through emphasising the right to not answer questions and by reflective listening. In fact, a consent protocol may even fill an empowering function as it transfers the power of agency to the interviewee (Wood 2006:381), and many informants expressed their appreciation of such a power over the interviews.

Finally, active steps were taken to ensure that the conclusions of the study are communicated back to the studied areas. This is important both in order to avoid so-called knowledge extraction from developing nations and in order to not contribute to research fatigue in the studied communities (Höglund 2011:123).

## IV. THE CIVIL WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

*“There has always been faction fighting and there has always been a problem with high violence and murder rates. Apartheid was a brutalising system.”*

*Haydn Osborne, violence monitor, 2015*

In this chapter, a brief summary of the civil war in South Africa is outlined. Thereafter the case studies will be presented one by one. Each chapter starts with an introduction to the case, followed by a discussion of the dependent variable (post-war violence), and finally, the analysis of the independent variable (type of wartime mobilisation) and the causal mechanisms.

### **Conflict background**

The UCDP defines armed conflict as “a contested incompatibility that concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths in one calendar year” (Themnér and Wallensteen 2014:541). Civil war is simply an armed conflict between a government and a non-governmental party. In South Africa, such a civil war raged between 1981 and 1988 between the South African apartheid government and the ANC. In 1988, the number of battle-related deaths between these dyads fell under the threshold of 25 deaths a year, but the main incompatibility was not resolved until the signing of the Interim Constitution in 1993 and the democratic elections in April 1994 (UCDP 2015). Hence, from the elections in April 1994, South Africa was a post-conflict state.

The civil war’s most prominent incompatibility, or its master cleavage, concerned the racial oppression and segregation that was forcefully implemented by the apartheid government. While racial oppression was prevalent in South Africa already during colonisation, it became institutionalised with the advent of the National Party (NP) in 1948. By classifying South Africans according to racial categories, the majority population of Black Africans were stripped of their political and economic rights in favour of a minority of Whites. Importantly, apartheid was a system of both political repression and economic exploitation, in which Black Africans were exploited as cheap labour in the country’s rich gold and platinum mines. Opposition to apartheid was initially non-violent, but following the killing of 69 unarmed protesters in Sharpeville in 1961 the ANC launched an armed struggle to overthrow the government. Secret talks began already in 1985, eventually culminating in

the signing of the Groote Schuur Minute in 1990. In April 1994 the ANC, led by Nelson Mandela, won South Africa's first democratic and non-racial elections, ending decades of civil strife (ibid). During the conflict, an estimated 15 000 people were killed in political violence (Guelke 2000:242).

Although the South African civil war is most often described as conflict between the apartheid government and those opposed to the system, the UCDP codes another six conflicts up until 1994. Of most immediate concern to this study was the non-state conflict between the ANC and the Zulu-nationalist movement Inkatha (1989-1996), a cultural movement that eventually transformed into the IFP. In fact, this conflict caused far more battle-related deaths than the struggle to end apartheid. Essentially, the ANC and the IFP disagreed over how to deal with the apartheid government and how a free South Africa should be structured and governed. There is also strong evidence that a network of apartheid security and ex-security forces, the so-called "third-force", covertly supported the IFP. Most of the ANC-IFP violence took place in Johannesburg and in KwaZulu-Natal (UCDP 2015). Due to the prominence of these two conflicts, we may talk about two master cleavages in South Africa.

Alongside these two national conflicts, a vast number of local conflicts took place. The power vacuum caused by the retreat of the apartheid government proved fertile to the growth of a wide range of other armed actors, including white right-wing paramilitary groups, government hit squads, local warlords, and semi-criminal mafia networks. Therefore, as a number of studies have established, civil war dynamics in South Africa also saw a substantial discrepancy between the national cleavages and local dynamics, with faction fights, local power struggles and mafia wars taking place within the framework of the national civil war (see e.g. Kynoch 2005, 2013; Bonnin 2006; Krämer 2007; Mathis 2013). What ensued was largely an irregular civil war, with sabotage, terrorist attacks, hit-an-run tactics and public defiance campaigns accounting for most of the violence (Schuld 2013:64). As will be depicted in the empirics, the discrepancy between national and local dynamics and the irregular nature of the civil war are essential in order to further our understanding of the drivers of post-war violence in South Africa.

## V. RICHMOND

*“The guns, the guns, everyone has a gun in Richmond.  
Tonight, if he hates you, he can go and kill you, you know.”*

*Richmond resident, 2014*

Few South African communities have experienced violence as intense as the 70 000 inhabitants of Richmond. During the so-called Richmond war (1989-1993), hundreds of people were killed and 20 000 displaced in fighting between the ANC and the IFP (TRC 1998:294). But while the immediate post-election years remained fairly peaceful, violence resurfaced again in 1997. This chapter traces the origins of post-war violence in Richmond. It shows that alliance-based mobilisation contributed to intensifying local tensions and increased local actors' ability to employ violence, thereby contributing to the high levels of post-war violence.

### **Post-war violence**

Following the democratic elections in April 1994, violence continued to plague Richmond during the examined time period. Between May 1994 and December 1998, 103 people were killed in Richmond according to the HRC. Other sources mention similar death counts; the UCDP high estimates include 124 casualties in 1998 alone (2015); the mayor of the town, Andrew Ragavaloo, counts 120 deaths in his book (2008:291); and South African researcher Rupert Taylor claims that more than 120 deaths occurred in Richmond (2002:487). Compared to the 6817 casualties reported in KwaZulu-Natal between 1992-1997 (Guelke 2000), the levels of post-war violence in Richmond were extraordinarily high.

In brief, violence resurfaced in Richmond in April 1997 when local ANC leader Sifiso Nkabinde was expelled from the party on allegations that he was a former apartheid spy. Following his expulsion, Nkabinde joined the newly formed United Democratic Movement (UDM) and launched a local branch in Richmond, which in turn heightened tensions in the community. Following Nkabinde's assassination in early 1999, and the subsequent massacre of eleven ANC supporters, violence largely abated in Richmond (Ragavaloo 2008:268–269). The targets of violence were generally political activists and their families that were assassinated while sleeping (UCDP 2015).

How can the high levels of post-war violence in Richmond be explained? The following sections examine the type of wartime mobilisation and the two identified mechanisms.

### **Type of wartime mobilisation**

This study's theoretical argument suggests that the type of wartime mobilisation in a community is important for understanding post-war violence. The conflict in Richmond has generally been seen as a political conflict between the ANC and the IFP with the underlying assumption that local actors mobilised based on their support for these parties. Such a description disregards the fact that violent conflict was prevalent in Richmond already before the outbreak of ANC-IFP violence in early 1990. In the 1980s parts of the community were fighting each other over land boundaries and for scarce resources. According to the TRC there was a "strong element of faction fighting" predating the political conflict in Richmond (1998:293). Violence monitors also note that political unrest in Richmond probably was local in origin (Aitchison, Leeb, and Vaughn 2010:129). In the words of one local monitor:

"Even going back to my childhood in the 60s, there was faction fighting between families sometimes. And you'll find later, in the 90s, that those families that had been feuding in the 60s over some historical thing dating back to the 30s. But in the 90s, they are still on opposite sides of the conflict, you know. Lines are drawn between them, same lines over and over again" (Haydn Osborne 2015).

Two local conflicts that were repeatedly mentioned by the respondents were later politicised. First, in the mid-80s, conflict emerged over land boundaries between the area of Patheni on the one side, and the Smozemeni, Magoda and Indaleni areas on the other side. This conflict allegedly escalated into violent conflict when a local man from Smozemeni was killed and people mobilised based on family ties (Anonymous II 2014; Anonymous III 2014; Anonymous IV 2014). Second, conflict over the authority of chief<sup>7</sup> Mzwandile Majozi emerged around the end of the 1980s. Chief Majozi was appointed by the apartheid government and exercised the administrative jurisdiction over Richmond's rural areas from his seat in Indaleni (Nebandla 2005:11–12; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). Accounts of the exact cause of the conflict vary; some said he had a fall-out with Nkabinde (Andrew Ragavaloo 2014), others that opposition against him started due to his dictatorial rule (Fact File: Richmond Conflict 1998). In 1991 chief Majozi was chased out of Indaleni by Nkabinde and

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<sup>7</sup> Traditional Zulu leader.

his house torched, and he sought refuge in Patheni (Nebandla 2005:11–12; Andrew Ragavaloo 2014).

When the ANC was unbanned in 1990 and started to re-establish a foothold in Richmond, local actors sought alignment with the political parties in order to gain strategic advantages over their adversaries. Patheni, pitted against three other areas of Richmond, increasingly affiliated with the IFP. At the same time, the ANC's popularity grew in Indaleni and Magoda as Nkabinde established party structures there. While few respondents could explain exactly how the conflict became politicised, interviewees noted how the areas became increasingly aligned with the two political parties (Andrew Ragavaloo 2014; Anonymous II 2014). A local development worker summarised the history of conflict as follows:

“In the early 80s it wasn't ANC and IFP, it was the areas who were fighting each other out of communally, what can I say, misunderstanding... That's how it started. Then when it grew, the kind of violence changed into politics, because it wasn't political” (Anonymous IV 2014).

The conflict over chief Majozi's authority was also closely associated with the growing rivalry between the political parties (Ntuli 2003:47). However, whereas the Patheni-Smozemeni conflict was consistently referred to as non-political, the exact nature of the second conflict is harder to assess since opposition towards traditional authority was an essential pillar of the ANC's political agenda. Due to the animosity between Nkabinde and Majozi, Majozi and his followers joined the IFP in Patheni, and those opposed to Majozi's role approached Nkabinde and the ANC. Exactly how chief Majozi became aligned with the IFP is unclear; one interviewee speculates that the IFP convinced the chief (Anonymous II 2014). Perhaps a more likely scenario is that chief Majozi joined the party because of the close relationship between the IFP and the KwaZulu homeland government that the chiefs were part of. As one respondent notes: “[the chiefs] were forced to have their allegiance to the IFP, because that's who paid them” (Cedric Nunn 2014). The example of chief Majozi serves as an example of the complex relationship between national and local actors in the process of mobilisation.

Albeit this account suggests that local actors sought political alignment for strategic reasons rather than based on their support for the war's master cleavage, some interviewees doubted such a description. For instance, a local NGO worker argued that genuine support for

the policies of the parties caused the conflict – “for me the conflict was really more political than it would have been cultural or communal” (Lucas Ngoetjana 2014).

Another factor that, according to theory, forms part of the type of wartime mobilisation is who is responsible for mobilising local support. In Richmond, mobilising agents were primarily local elites that already enjoyed high standing in the community. A prime reason for following local leaders was said to be the preference of local people to rally around a familiar face in times of turmoil. Such leaders drew their support from factors such as traditional or cultural authority, a reputation for bravery and strength, and personal charisma. For example, Ngoetjana argued that, “when situations are volatile, people struggle to take their own decisions ... [and] when communities are not sure which way to go politically, they would rather follow a powerful figure who shows the way” (Lucas Ngoetjana 2014).

Chief Majozi played an important role in generating support for the IFP. By utilising his role as a traditional leader he could mobilise people that were more traditionally inclined. Other chiefs acted in similar ways (Cedric Nunn 2014). In May 1991 chief Majozi handpicked six IFP supporters to undergo paramilitary training. Upon completion these supporters were armed with G3 rifles (TRC 1998:294). By all accounts, Nkabinde constituted the main mobilising agent for the ANC. A number of respondents observed that people rallied around Nkabinde due to his leadership qualities and ability to protect the community from enemy attacks (Cedric Nunn 2014; Lucas Ngoetjana 2014). Nkabinde, who became an ANC member sometime in the early 90s, was in charge of setting up the Self Defence Units (SDUs) in Richmond and gained further support by distributing weapons to ANC members beyond the borders of Richmond (TRC 1998:298). Individuals selected by Nkabinde received military training by MK or the Transkei Defence force and were armed with AK47s (Taylor 2002:486). In return, Nkabinde received large quantities of arms. By 1994, Nkabinde possessed an impressive arsenal of weapons, including at least 164 AK47s, three land mines and 11 RPG missiles (Goodenough 1999:10).

Thus, in addition to the ANC-IFP struggle, local actors in Richmond also mobilised in order to gain strategic advantages in local conflicts that predate the outbreak of political violence. The fact that the same areas were involved, and opposed to one another, in the local and political conflict gives further support to such a claim. Mobilising agents were predominantly local elites that were allied to the national parties and given arms and military training in return. This does not mean that the war’s master cleavages and the national parties were irrelevant. To the contrary, local conflicts were intricately linked to these parties and were manipulated to establish political foothold in the community. Political mobilisation also

occurred based on the ANC-IFP conflict. Particularly the ANC side mobilised support through protests and other community action, whereas the IFP was more dependent on the support of the chiefs (Andrew Ragavaloo 2014).

### **Examining the mechanisms**

This study's theoretical framework suggests that alliance-based mobilisation increases the likelihood of post-war violence since it intensifies local tensions and increases the capabilities of local actors to employ violence in the post-war period. In Richmond, alliance-based mobilisation spawned continuous local tensions between local elites, tensions that eventually developed into full-scale conflict between the ANC and the UDM. This occurred despite of a number of local peace initiatives that were initiated between 1994-1996 to address the tensions in Richmond, including police investigations and internal party inquiries. However, due to the intensity of these local conflicts and the failure to address the root causes of conflict, attempts to broker peace in Richmond largely failed (Nebandla 2005:15; Houghton 2009:55).

The most immediate tensions originated in power struggles between the Richmond SDUs. These tensions were a direct consequence of the ANC's support for Nkabinde. In 1991, SDUs from different areas of Richmond became increasingly divided due to the perceived favour given to the Magoda SDU, lead by Nkabinde, in terms of access to weapons. In the ensuing power struggle Nkabinde's Magoda grouping prevailed and rival leaders were killed (TRC 1998:300–302). This conflict continued well into the post-1994 era and eventually transformed into a political conflict when Nkabinde was expelled from the ANC and joined the UDM (Houghton 2009:59; Clifford Marion 2014). When Nkabinde was expelled the Magoda SDU transferred its allegiance to the UDM and "these SDU member were to play a central role in the ensuing violence that gripped Richmond between 1997 and 1999" (Nebandla 2005:24–25). As the conflict became increasingly political, the intensity of the conflict escalated, both with regard to the weaponry used and the types of targets. Sometimes entire families were killed in single incidents of violence. "It was brutal, genuinely brutal" said a local violence monitor (Haydn Osborne 2015). From 1991 and onwards, violence also increased polarisation between the Indaleni and Magoda areas of Richmond as no-go areas were established. Community members that ventured into enemy territory were likely to be killed and most killings in Richmond after 1994 occurred in those areas (Ragavaloo 2008).

Alliance-based mobilisation also increased the complexity of conflict in Richmond. Interviewees emphasised how tensions endured between individuals, families, communities and political parties, with no clear-cut conflict lines. For example, a local development worker spoke of the complex relationship between political affiliation and family bonds as a driver of violence, in that families would engage in revenge killings of other families based on old grudges (Anonymous I 2014). A number of interviewees also expressed that local issues from the past continued to cause violence in Richmond, while only to a limited extent (Anonymous I 2014; Glenda Caine 2014; Tim Houghton 2014; Haydn Osborne 2015).

Not only did alliance-based mobilisation intensify local tensions in Richmond, it also enabled local actors to engage in violence. Local actors often engaged in violence despite calls for peace by national actors. Strong evidence suggests that national actors increasingly lost control over their local associates in Richmond. Post-1994, the IFP and its paramilitary structures were defeated and confined to isolation in Patheni. The same did not occur to similar ANC structures. Setting up local defence structures was allowed under the terms of the National Peace Accord, but in many instances such structures in Richmond acted “in total contravention of the spirit” of the accords and carried out attacks on political rivals (TRC 1998:299). Following the elections in April 1994, the ANC’s national leadership called for the SDUs to be disbanded, but this failed in Richmond where the Magoda SDU remained operative and under the command of Nkabinde (Taylor 2002:487). Instead of demobilising, Nkabinde disarmed rival SDUs in Indaleni and Smozemeni, stored their arms and continued training his own, personal army (Anonymous IV 2014). Such continuous acquisition of weapons on Nkabinde’s part occurred despite attempts by the ANC’s regional and national leadership to block further weapons dealings with Nkabinde (Taylor 2002:486–487). In the words of Ragavaloo: “Sifiso Nkabinde, in spite of being directed by the national ANC to disband the Self Defence Units, refused to do so. He then turned them into his own personal bodyguards or army” (Andrew Ragavaloo 2014).

The ANC also lacked the necessary control over Nkabinde to enforce compliance when he refused to follow the commands by the party’s national leadership. The TRC finds that, up until 1998, “the ANC consistently failed to reproach, discipline or expel Nkabinde from its ranks, and thereby encouraged a climate of impunity within which he continued to operate” (1998:306). Both government-initiated investigations and ANC inquiries into Nkabinde’s activities failed (Houghton 2009:55). The parties in Richmond, including the ANC, were described as factionalised, with local supporters under the control of local strongmen or traditional leaders rather than national elites. A local development worker reported that one of

the main difficulties for their peacebuilding efforts in Richmond was that command often came from leaders that kept out of the public (Anonymous I 2014). In April 1997 the ANC saw no other option than to expel Nkabinde, thereby losing its ability to enforce compliance by accommodating a defector through rewards, or by enforcing compliance through internal party mechanisms.

The significant arms transfers that took place during the early 1990s increased the capabilities of local actors that sought to engage in violence, particularly Nkabinde's. Through his access to arms and well-trained militants under his command, Nkabinde acquired both power and money; acquisitions that he stood to lose should he surrender his power. Nkabinde's access to heavy weaponry is well documented and his private militia gradually became involved in criminal activities (Taylor 2002:487; Anonymous IV 2014; Clifford Marion 2014). Access to heavy weaponry also made it difficult for the police and judiciary to investigate and prosecute Nkabinde and his associates. It is illuminating that 500 members of the South African Police and Army were needed to arrest Nkabinde in 1997 (Goodenough 1997).<sup>8</sup> Others have also underlined the link between access to weapons and military skills as a cause of enforcement difficulties. For example, Taylor concludes that by "having trained and armed the Richmond SDU, the ANC lost control over the actions of Nkabinde and his SDU members" (Taylor 2002:487).

### **Conclusions from within-community analysis**

Between 1994 and 1999, Richmond experienced high levels of post-war violence as a result of what were primarily local power struggles. During this time, more than one hundred people were killed, many of them unarmed civilians. The question to ask is why Richmond experienced such intense violence after 1994?

This study's theoretical framework finds empirical support in the case of Richmond. Mobilisation in Richmond occurred both because local actors sought strategic advantages against local rivals and because of the national ANC-IFP conflict. Local actors such as Nkabinde also continued to use their affiliation with national groups to increase their personal power. Local support was largely mobilised by local elites rather than national agents. While the theory stipulates that local actors voluntarily ally with national actors, the case of Richmond also underlines how where you live contributes to what side you end up on: living in an IFP dominated area made it very dangerous to align with the ANC and vice versa.

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<sup>8</sup> Nkabinde was later acquitted under mysterious circumstances and released.

Importantly, weapons and military skills were transferred to local actors by national actors such as MK and the homeland governments.

Alliance-based mobilisation has contributed to the high levels of post-war violence in Richmond through the two mechanisms outlined in the theory section. First, local tensions were intensified when local conflicts were politicised. When the local conflict between Patheni and Smozemeni, Indaleni and Magoda took on a political dynamic, violence escalated. Furthermore, local power struggles, especially within the SDUs, intensified as local strongmen acquired arms and military skills. The intensification of these conflicts during the war made them increasingly hard to solve and attempts to do so failed. Instead, these tensions continued up until 1999 and caused death and destruction in the community. Second, the capabilities of local actors were increased to the point where the national parties completely lost control over their local cadres after 1994. The Magoda SDU's arsenal of heavy weaponry and the ANC's continuous inability to accommodate Nkabinde led to a situation where the party could not enforce compliance with the peace agreement. Thus, both causal pathways suggested to link the type of wartime mobilisation to post-war violence find support in the case of Richmond. The second mechanism was strongly and frequently mentioned as a cause of post-war violence, suggesting that this mechanism carries extra weight in explaining post-war violence in Richmond.

At this stage, it is also relevant to ask whether there are any alternative explanations to the high levels of post-war violence in Richmond? Many interviewees referred to the role of ex-combatants and the easy access to weapons as a core cause of violence. Despite a nationwide disarmament process, many ex-combatants remained in Richmond and continued to be a source of violence (Clifford Marion 2014; Tim Houghton 2014). In the words of a local peace education professional, such ex-combatants only knew how "to solve conflict through violence" and became "the pawns in any power conflict" (Tim Houghton 2014). While the existence of ex-combatants does not cause violence per se, their presence seemingly exacerbated the intensity of post-war violence in Richmond. A deeper analysis of such an explanation will be conducted in the comparative analysis.

Other alternative explanations expressed by the interviewees commonly focused on issues such as poverty, marginalisation and lack of opportunity. While this probably exacerbated post-war violence in the community, such factors do not directly account for the use of violence.

## VI. UMBUMBULU

*“I think after 1994, the main thing that made violence continue here was a lot of unresolved issues. People still had some invisible wounds, people had anger in themselves because of the unresolved issues.”*

*Listen Myeza, government official, 2014*

Umbumbulu, a vast semi-rural district west of the Durban metropolitan area, has a long history of violence and has experienced both local conflicts between rivalling clans and violence between the ANC and the IFP. Fighting in the area claimed hundreds of deaths and displaced thousands up until 1994 (Mathis 2013). Following the democratic elections in 1994, violence continued to affect the area, albeit with slightly different dynamics.

This chapter traces the origin of post-war violence in Umbumbulu to the local conflicts that predated the outbreak of political violence in the area. The findings suggest that alliance-based mobilisation intensified local conflicts and, to some extent, enabled local actors to employ violence in the post-war period, thereby contributing to the high levels of post-war violence.

### **Post-war violence**

Despite the fairly peaceful conduct of the elections in Umbumbulu in April 1994, tensions remained high and violence continued well into the 2000s (HRC 1994:21). Between May 1994 and December 1998, 78 people were killed in Umbumbulu according to the HRC. Due to the geography of the area and the tendency to underreport local conflicts, the actual number of casualties in Umbumbulu was most likely higher (Mathis 2013:424). This is supported by the fact that interviewees as well as external monitors often spoke of the high levels of violence in the community. While violence initially decreased dramatically in Umbumbulu, violence continued and began to escalate again, particularly around the elections in 1996 and 1999. According to a report by two local peacebuilding advisors, violence often re-emerged around “old party conflict lines” and “between family clans” that previously fought one another (Meintjes and Nhlengetwa n.d.:1). Most of the post-war violence in Umbumbulu did not take place between easily identifiable actors; attacks occurred at night and were carried out by unknown assassins (Bab Mhlongo 2014; Myunyelwa Cele 2014).

## **Type of wartime mobilisation**

How can the particularly high levels of post-war violence in Umbumbulu be explained? To examine this question, this section traces the process of wartime mobilisation in the area in order to establish whether mobilisation in the area was cleavage or alliance-based.

Large-scale ANC-IFP fighting broke out in Umbumbulu in the early 1990s. But the origins of violent conflict in the area goes back as far as the 1950s – and possibly even to the colonial era (Anonymous VI 2014). Such local conflicts revolved around competition for land, water and jobs and were often fought between rivalling family clans (Meintjes and Nhlengetwa n.d.:1; TRC 1998:234). While some feuds had been going on for generations, a local conflict emerged in the 1980s that had a particularly strong impact on the subsequent mobilisation in the area.

In 1984 a local conflict escalated into violence between the eMbo and Makhanya clans – locally referred to as the “eMbo-Makhanya war”. The exact origins of the conflict remain unclear, but the dispute allegedly dated back to the 1950s and concerned land boundaries, local authority and access to resources. In the mid-80s it escalated when two men from the rivalling clans fought over a woman (Anonymous VI 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014; Anonymous VIII 2015). Sarah Mathis, who conducted anthropological fieldwork in Umbumbulu, offers a slightly different account. She proposes that the conflict arose out of a power struggle between Mkhandi Shoji and his brother in the Mpandwini area of the eMbo territory. When Shoji’s house was burnt down, he sought refuge with the Makhanyas, which eventually led to conflict between the eMbo and Makhanya. The conflict lasted for about two years and involved both full-scale battles, small scale fighting, and skirmishes (Mathis 2013:425). Apart from the eMbo-Makhanya war, a number of other local conflicts and feuds also took place in the area up until 1994, among others a conflict between the ethnic Zulu and Pondo communities in late 1985 (TRC 1998:234–236) and a family feud between the Shanges and Mkhizes in the early 1990s (Mathis 2013:431).

When violence between the ANC and the IFP escalated in KwaZulu-Natal around 1990, local conflicts became increasingly political. Two local peacebuilding advisors wrote that previous conflict “made the community vulnerable to further divisions”, divisions that eventually divided the area into ANC and IFP zones (Meintjes and Nhlengetwa n.d.:1). Many of the respondents recalled how local conflicts were intentionally politicised (Anonymous VI 2014; Anonymous VII 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). With the ANC-IFP conflict spreading from urban to rural areas, local leaders in Umbumbulu aligned with the political parties in order to gain strategic advantages – the Makhanyas with the IFP and the eMbo with

the ANC (McNulty 2013:48; Anonymous VII 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). “The interesting part”, said a former MK-member, “is that whereas it used to be a tribal war, it took another turn to become a political thing between the ANC and the IFP. So those people who had been fighting the tribal wars all of the sudden now identified themselves with the ANC and the IFP” (Anonymous VII 2014). Such a process of alliance formation has also been observed by Mathis. She traces the history of how the two Umbumbulu warlords Mkhandi Shoji and Sipho Mkhize became aligned to the ANC and shows that they aligned in order to further their local power while supporting the overarching political cause (Mathis 2013). In fact, only one interviewee spoke about how local actors mobilised based on their support for the ANC’s or IFP’s ideologies (Myunyelwa Cele 2014). The background of Mkhandi Shoji is a good example of the complex alliance formation that took place in the area. He gained a reputation as a strong leader in the eMbo-Makhanya war. During the late 1980s, the ANC, the IFP as well as the apartheid security police approached him and tried to convince him to join their ranks. He eventually joined the ANC and began recruiting members for the ANC from his house in Mpandwini (Mathis 2013:436–437).

The increasing politicisation of the eMbo-Makhanya war was a direct consequence of how local warlords aligned themselves politically. The interviewees suggest that local leaders such as Shoji, Mkhize and chief Makhanya affiliated themselves with the political parties in order to gain access to resources and political opportunity (Anonymous VII 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). Due to their reputation as strong leaders from previous local conflicts, their traditional authority, and their ability to distribute resources to the people, these leaders could mobilise support for the political parties. As put by a local peacebuilding advisor: “They would use resources, money, mostly livestock, whatever ... means of influence of gaining support, or gaining recognition or status” (Anonymous VI 2014). Interviewees spoke of how these leaders visited the communities in the area and labelled people according to the political divide. “They’d come and say, ‘Okay, this street is IFP, and this street is ANC’. So you’d have people saying that ‘I was never even ANC, I was never even IFP ... but we were told, we were given instructions that we were, and then they just started fighting each other’” (Anonymous VI 2014). The observation that cultural events were manipulated by local chiefs and played a “powerful role” in instigating violence, also suggests that local support was mobilised based on affiliation to local elites rather than national party policies (Meintjes and Nhlengetwa n.d.:2–4). As Mathis concludes, “the later political violence was also shaped by many of the internal factors that drove earlier faction fights, such as the mobilization of

identities into affiliation with a strong man who has legitimacy in the customary realm” (Mathis 2013:432).

The theory also stipulates that arms transactions between national and local actors are essential in order to gain the support of local elites. Interviewees agreed that with political affiliation came access to weapons and military training (Anonymous VII 2014; Bab Mhlongo 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). While the eMbo-Makhanya war was largely fought with traditional weapons such as spears and handmade guns, the national political parties introduced heavier weaponry (Anonymous VI 2014). The former commander of the Umbumbulu police station also observed such a process. He noted that the ANC continuously brought arms into the community, including 10 mm pistols, AK47s, R5 rifles and homemade firearms (Bab Mhlongo 2014). The political parties also engaged in military training of local supporters and established SDUs and SPUs, particularly in Umbumbulu’s two townships, Folweni and KwaMakhutha (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). A former MK member said that the ANC would deploy MK cadres to train people in the SDUs and that the IFP deployed armed units in Umbumbulu from other areas (Anonymous VII 2014). Another interviewee with insights into the ANC’s operations in Umbumbulu said that the ANC recruited soldiers for MK in Umbumbulu in 1992, which were subsequently trained under the Chris Hani detachment outside of the country (Myunyelwa Cele 2014).

In conclusion, the evidence suggests that local actors in Umbumbulu actively affiliated themselves with national actors to gain strategic advantages in local conflicts that date back to the early 1980s, especially the eMbo-Makhanya war. Local elites, such as Mkhadi Shoji, Siphon Mkhize and chief Makhanya, increased their status and power during that local conflict and later became the main mobilising agents in Umbumbulu as they were incorporated into national party structures. With the politicisation of local conflicts, local actors were armed by the national parties, and in some instances also provided with military training. The process of mobilisation in Umbumbulu was summarised by the founder of local peacebuilding NGO Sinani:

So when political violence came into play, all these [previous] issues were politicised. And it became a spiral of political violence in the area. And I think the political organisations actually jumped on the drum ... targeting all those areas that already had, they were divided, mainly according to boundaries, according to clan, tensions that were already there. So they rode those bandwagons, the political organisations. And then it

divided the *amakhosi*<sup>9</sup> in those areas. And it resulted with *amakhosi* fighting each other (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014).

### **Examining the mechanisms**

The theory developed in this study proposes that alliances-based mobilisation increases the likelihood of post-war violence by intensifying local tensions and by increasing the capabilities of local actors to employ violence. In Umbumbulu, alliance-based mobilisation had a particularly strong impact on increasing the intensity of local tensions. When local conflicts became politicised, escalation often followed and death rates went up. This occurred both because heavier weaponry was introduced and because the complexity of the conflict increased (Anonymous VI 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). “You had faction fights turning into political fights and the death rate went up”, a local peacebuilding advisor testified. “So the conflict just went wild” (Anonymous VI 2014).

In the immediate post-1994 period, little was done to address the historical roots of conflict in the area. An informal peace process did eventually take place, but it only started around 2001 and culminated in a large peace rally in 2007, and thus falls outside of the studied time period (Anonymous VI 2014). A local peacebuilding advisor, who was part of the later peace process, said that while the regional peace process after 1994 did well in addressing regional conflicts, it largely failed to address the underlying causes of conflict in Umbumbulu, “and hence it continued” (ibid). The former commander of the Umbumbulu police station also said that few attempts were made to address the legacy of conflict in the area and hence approached the peacebuilding NGO Sinani for help in the early 2000s (Bab Mhlongo 2014).

Due to the escalation of local conflicts and the failure to adequately deal with local tensions, previous conflicts continued to be a source of violence in the community post-1994 (Anonymous VII 2014; Bab Mhlongo 2014; Listen Myeza 2014). “There were old grudges and ... resentments that had built up over years, and you cant just overnight get rid of that”, said one local peacebuilding advisor (Anonymous VI 2014). Another peacebuilding advisor said that when the political parties announced peace, past tensions re-emerged, particularly conflicts over territorial boundaries and local power struggles between rivalling *amakhosi* (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). This indicates that the intensity of local tensions made it hard for national actors to control the situation on the ground. Although local conflicts and elites were assimilated by the larger political struggle, local identities remained largely intact and

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<sup>9</sup> Traditional Zulu leader.

resurfaced in the post-1994 era. A local MK soldier said, that “in as much as some of them [local leaders] converted to the political parties ... they still maintained and preserved the identity of being tribal men” which made them leaders that could “easily revert also to go back and fight if there is a tribal war” (Anonymous VII 2014). Such an observation is in line with Mathis’ conclusion that local warlords in Umbumbulu moved between their roles as local clan leaders and political surrogates (Mathis 2013:439).

Much of the violence that took place in Umbumbulu after 1994 has not been recorded or investigated and it is therefore difficult to trace the exact origins of the post-war violence. However, evidence from one post-1994 conflict suggests that post-war violence was related to earlier family feuds. Mathis mentions a family feud between the Shanges and Mkhizes taking place in the early 1990s in eZimwini (Mathis 2013:431). In 1998, similar tensions resurfaced in neighbouring Mpandweni following the killing of induna Shange in April that year, pitting the Shange grouping against the Mbhili, Ndimande and Mthembu grouping. To further complicate things, the Shange grouping was aligned with the IFP while their adversaries were ANC aligned (HRC 1998a:26–27). This feud caused at least seven deaths during a spiral of attacks and counterattacks and the army had to be deployed in the area to calm the situation (HRC 1998b:32). Thus, the evidence suggests alliance-based mobilisation intensified local tensions and that such conflicts contributed to post-war violence in Umbumbulu.

While alliance-based mobilisation intensified local conflicts in Umbumbulu, it remains somewhat unclear whether it also increased the capabilities of local actors to engage in violence after 1994. Such ambiguity is partly due to the quality of the data. One interviewee, however, spoke of how national, regional and local leaders struggled with controlling their supporters and how it was often unclear whether chiefs or political leaders sanctioned actions. “At some point they [the political leaders] would definitely lose control ... because the killings continued, even when the leaders were now wanting to agree, wanting to come to some solution” (Anonymous VI 2014).

A number of respondents noted that certain individuals, often warlords, were profiting from the on-going violence in Umbumbulu and therefore actively resisted, or sabotaged, attempts to implement peace (Listen Myeza 2014; Myunyelwa Cele 2014; Anonymous VIII 2015). The former commander of the Umbumbulu police station specifically put the late Mkhandi Shoji at the centre of such attempts. He said that Shoji profited from racketing and selling *muti*<sup>10</sup> (Bab Mhlongo 2014). Other leaders profited from looting houses in the

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<sup>10</sup> Traditional medicine that is believed to make the user stronger in battle.

aftermath of violence or from imposing protection fees on people they controlled (Listen Myeza 2014; Myunyelwa Cele 2014). A similar observation was made by Mathis, who found that the same leaders, particularly Shozi and Mkhize, that held political power in Umbumbulu post-1994, largely employed the same practices and processes to exercise power (Mathis 2013:438–439). The fact that local warlords continued to exercise power in the post-1994 period may indicate that their capabilities to employ violence had increased as a result of their relation to national actors. In general, however, the interviewees did not emphasise arms transactions as a factor that contributed to their power. One can only speculate as to the reason for this, but one cause might be that Umbumbulu, being a vast rural area with highly complicated power relations, already made it difficult for national actors to control local elites and that arms transactions therefore did not exacerbate such difficulties much further.

### **Conclusions from within-community analysis**

In the post-war period, Umbumbulu continued to experience high levels of violence. The question at hand is why Umbumbulu experienced such a continuation of violence after 1994?

The evidence explored above strongly suggests that mobilisation in Umbumbulu was alliance-based rather than cleavage-based. When ANC-IFP fighting intensified in KwaZulu-Natal around 1990, local elites chose to ally themselves with the national parties in order to win strategic advantages in local conflicts that predate the regional conflict. The eMbo-Makhanya war had a particularly strong influence on how local actors aligned themselves. National actors actively approached local strongmen that had acquired a reputation as fierce warriors during that conflict, as they sought to extend their political influence in the rural areas. Furthermore, such local strongmen effectively manoeuvred between their roles as traditional leaders and political affiliates, thereby mobilising support based on kinship rather than political ideology. Local communities were often simply forced into a political camp by these strongmen. Local leaders received both military training and weapons in exchange for their role in mobilising support.

Alliance-based mobilisation contributed to the high levels of post-war violence in Umbumbulu mainly through intensifying local tensions. The empirical evidence suggests that national actors actively fuelled such local tensions and that those continued to be a source of violence in the community after 1994. On the other hand, it remains uncertain whether an increase in local actors' capabilities to employ violence was a contributing factor to the high levels of violence. Thus, in the case of Umbumbulu, the first causal mechanism offers a better explanation for how the type of wartime mobilisation is linked to post-war violence.

An additional observation in Umbumbulu was that unclear territorial boundaries often contributed to disputes. Such disputes were often a direct consequence of how boundaries were drawn by the apartheid government, which favoured those traditional leaders that were aligned with the government (Anonymous VII 2014). The complex power relations in the area, built on both traditional and more modern authorities, allegedly also caused conflict in the community: “The un-clarified rules of different people in the society created violence, because you find that there is a ward councillor, there is a traditional leader, *induna*, *amakhosi*, so the rules were not clarified” (Listen Myeza 2014). Such an observation is in line with Brosché’s study on communal conflicts in Sudan, where government bias caused unclear local dispensations which increased the risk for conflict (Brosché 2014). It is plausible that alliance-based mobilisation causes further confusion regarding who is in power.

Before moving on, it is important to examine whether there are any alternative explanations to the high levels of post-war violence in Umbumbulu. Two interviewees noted how ex-combatants were a source of instability in the area, particularly in their role as hired killers (Anonymous VI 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014). One interviewee also spoke about the role of revenge killings as a contributing factor in the violence (Anonymous VI 2014). While these factors most likely contributed to the violence, neither was emphasised as clearly as the role of local conflicts as drivers of violence.

## VII. BHAMBAYI

*“At the beginning there was a lot of hostility ... between the factions.  
And then with the peace initiatives ... those factions disappeared.  
They lived peacefully side by side, without it becoming a problem.”*  
*Ela Gandhi, local peace activist, 2015*

Mahathma Gandhi originally founded the Bhambayi informal settlement in 1904 as a “model community”. It is therefore paradoxical that Bhambayi later became known as one of the most violent areas of KwaZulu-Natal. “I’m telling you”, said a local peace activist, “they were killing each other almost every day. If I get there in the morning, I will find people lying all over, dead” (Miriam Cele 2015). But while Bhambayi became infamous for violence in the early 1990s, strategic violence largely abated in the post-war era.

This chapter traces the causes of the relatively low levels of post-war violence in Bhambayi between 1994-1999. It shows that cleavage-based mobilisation paved the way for a post-war environment where local tensions de-escalated relatively quickly following the nationally negotiated settlement of 1994. Furthermore, since local actors largely lacked the capability to employ violence post-1994, national actors were able to enforce compliance with the peace settlement. Taken together, this contributed to the stability of the community.

### **Post-war violence**

Following the elections in April 1994, Bhambayi saw a relatively sudden and dramatic decrease in violence. Between May 1994 and December 1998, 44 people were killed in Bhambayi according to the HRC – compared to the 41 deaths in 1993 alone counted by the UCDP (2015). A closer look at the HRC reports also reveals that 40 of the 44 recorded deaths occurred up until October 1995 and occurred between the ANC and the IFP. Observers share the belief that violence declined in Bhambayi after April 1994. For example, a regional violence monitor noted in 1995 that “the shack settlement of Bhambayi, witnessed a dramatic decline in incidents” (de Haas 1995:301). Simpson also observed such a decline in political violence, noting that “since April 1994 ... killings in Bhambayi have reduced and have been linked to criminal activity and taxi wars” (2001:143). All interviewees largely agreed with such a description, albeit some pointed out that tensions remained high and that the strategic violence was replaced by criminal violence.

Importantly, while Bhambayi saw a clear decline in the levels of violence, post-war violence was not entirely absent and tensions still existed. This means that tensions between groups in the area had the potential to turn violent in Bhambayi. Still, whereas such tensions frequently lead to violence in Richmond and Umbumbulu, only a few people lost their lives in post-war violence in Bhambayi after 1995. The question is why?

### **Type of wartime mobilisation**

How can the general absence of post-war violence in Bhambayi, particularly after 1995, be explained? This section outlines how local actors were mobilised in the community and examines whether cleavage-based or alliance-based mobilisation takes precedence.

Bhambayi has experienced several waves of violence, starting with the Inanda riots in 1985, followed by inter-ethnic violence and intra- as well inter-party violence. But although these outbreaks of violence all had their own, unique dynamics, they all revolved around similar issues: resources scarcity and poverty, inter-ethnic rivalry, and political competition between the ANC and the IFP. Importantly, all these issues aligned with the more general conflict lines between the ANC and the IFP.

Violence first emerged in Bhambayi in 1985 when the Gandhi settlement was attacked and destroyed by “unknown supporters of the Inkatha movement” (TRC 1998:236–237). On the surface the conflict had racial undercurrents, but most observers point to the interaction between ethnic identity and political affiliation as the main explanation. For example, the then curator of the Gandhi settlement told the TRC that the violence was a result of “the rapid escalation of violent clashes between supporters of Inkatha and the UDF [ANC]” (TRC 1998:236). Two interviewees said that tensions were instigated by “undercover agents” from the apartheid government that mobilised constituencies based on “Zuluness” against the Indian community (Ela Gandhi 2015; Sharm Maharaj 2015). Tensions were further complicated by competition over scarce resources, such as land and water, between different groups in Bhambayi (Ela Gandhi 2015).

Following the Inanda riots, tensions between ethnic groups associated with competing political parties continued to simmer in Bhambayi. Newly arrived refugees from other parts of the province that were of Pondo descent were perceived to be ANC aligned, while the Zulu inhabitants of Bhambayi were seen as IFP aligned (Miriam Cele 2015; Simphiwe Myeza 2015; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). Again, such tensions were exacerbated by competition for scarce resources, including *muti* and *dagga*, locally grown marijuana (Miriam Cele 2015; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). The increasing ethnic-political polarisation and resource

competition in Bhambayi precipitated the dramatic increase of violence in the community in late 1992. Such mobilisation was primarily related to the political parties in the area. In 1992, conflict broke out between what was two competing ANC-supporting factions – the progressive “Reds” and the conservative “Greens” (TRC 1998:309; UCDP 2015). When the smaller “Green” faction became increasingly marginalised by the ANC leadership in the area, it turned to the IFP and, in the words of the TRC, “from that time, the conflict in the community was perceived as an ANC/IFP conflict” (1998:309). According to the Independent Board of Inquiry (IBI), the decision “turned the once traditional ANC stronghold into a powder-keg with clearly defined boundaries” (1993:15–16) and estimates suggest that around 200 Bhambayi residents lost their lives in the subsequent fighting (de Haas 1994:239; TRC 1998:309).

Importantly, the interviewees largely agree that local actors in Bhambayi were mobilised based on their support for the political parties in the area – in fact, none of the respondents spoke of local elites that sought to win strategic advantages in local conflicts. When summarising the underlying issues, a local peace activist noted that conflict followed an increase in union, civic and student action organised by the UDF. “Now IFP was opposed to all three of them” she said, “so they sided with the police and they would attack the students, they would attack the communities” (Ela Gandhi 2015). Other interviewees gave similar statements, hence supporting the claim that local actors mobilised based on the war’s master cleavage rather than based on strategic considerations (Sharm Maharaj 2015; Simphiwe Myeza 2015).

Not only were local actors largely supportive of the war’s master cleavage; evidence also suggests that local constituencies were predominately mobilised by agents associated with the national parties rather than by local strongmen. In her examination of the history of violence in Bhambayi, Simpson traces the tensions to the leadership of the local branches of the political parties, particularly the ANC. From her assessment, both older leaders such as local ANC leader Pat Marshall, and the leaders of the ANC Youth League, emerge as the prime mobilisers of support in Bhambayi (2001:142). The site facilitator at the Bhambayi Settlement Project also asserted that people were mobilised by agents from the ANC: “The ANC was still banned at that time ... but there was what was called the UDF ... which was mobilising within the youth in the areas everywhere” (Simphiwe Myeza 2015). On the IFP side, mobilising agents were referred to as “patriarchs” that through their endorsement of traditional culture “emerged as ‘headmen’ and political bosses of the area” (Hemson 1996:94). On the other hand, two traditional healers associated with the competing ANC

factions allegedly also stirred up support based on their provision of *muti* (Higson-Smith 2002:56; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). Exactly what the impact of their role as mobilising agents was is hard to assess, and around 1994 these traditional leaders had both been killed (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015).

Some interviewees also expressed that political affiliation was forced rather than voluntary, largely depending on what area you lived in (Sharm Maharaj 2015; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). According to a local community activist: “Many of them will join by their own will, but there are a lot of people who will join [for] security, security for you and your family” (Sharm Maharaj 2015).

The theory also suggests that arms transactions between national actors and local actors forms part of how local actors are mobilised. While local actors were provided with both arms and military training in Bhambayi, such transactions occurred downwards within the parties rather than between national and local actors that were organisationally separated. Arms and military training was provided to the local branches of the ANC and the IFP by their national structures. According to a local community activist with insights into the structure of the ANC, “there was internal training happening all over the shock, some of them by the old ANC underground people who were trained and came, they were in charge, teaching people” (Sharm Maharaj 2015). A local peacebuilding advisor agreed, testifying that local party militias were set up by the national organisations: “I think political organisations set them [up], all the townships had them. They were highly militant, both of them, very highly militant” (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015).

Thus, mobilisation in Bhambayi was largely cleavage-based, with a strong focus on the policies of the national parties rather than on local conflicts. Mobilising agents came from these same parties, albeit some mobilisation seemingly occurred because of two rivalling traditional healers. Arms and military training was provided to local actors, but such transactions took place within organisations rather than between actors.

### **Examining the mechanisms**

The theoretical framework proposes that cleavage-based mobilisation decreases the likelihood of post-war violence. This is because cleavage-based mobilisation is less likely to intensify local tensions and less likely to increase local actors’ capabilities to employ violence. In Bhambayi, the main cause of conflict was the rivalry between the ANC and the IFP, a conflict that was further intensified by poverty and competition for scarce resources. These causes of conflict were largely resolved in the early post-war era, both due to the national peace process

and due to local, inter-party peace initiatives. Interviewees noted how violence decreased following the elections and with the adoption of a new constitution (Lillian Moatle 2014; Ela Gandhi 2015). For example, the founder of a local welfare NGO, argued that violence subsided because both parties were satisfied with the election outcomes in 1994. She further argued that Bhambayi was less sensitive to post-war violence since it did not have “old fights ... coming from generation to generation” (Lillian Moatle 2014). Another interviewee, a local peace activist, noted how political tolerance increased as the regional peace process between the ANC and the IFP deepened (Ela Gandhi 2015). Such an assessment is further supported by the fact that violence between the parties in Bhambayi abated parallel to ANC-IFP violence at the regional level.

Apart from the fact that national developments had a positive impact in resolving the root causes of violence in Bhambayi, there were also local peace initiatives that sought to address local disputes. A local peace forum, the Bhambayi Development Forum (BDF) was established in 1992 and consisted of local community members that participated in peace negotiations and were responsible for both conflict resolution and development-related decision making (Simpson 2001:147; Benjamin 2005:6–7). According to the IBI, that process brought “progress in the local peace talks” and “calm to Bhambayi” (IBI 1994:23–24). Along with a number of other, informal peace initiatives, this process brought further stability to the community. While no respondents directly addressed why such peace initiatives succeeded, it is plausible that the fact that local tensions largely aligned with those of national actors made it easier to address the root causes.

Cleavage-based mobilisation also made it easier for national actors to enforce compliance with the peace settlement in Bhambayi. This was because local actors lacked the capability to employ violence. Several factors account for this. First, both state and party institutions were increasingly able to deal with local actors that employed violence (Lillian Moatle 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). For example, two local ANC strongmen that were referred to as “the real perpetrators of violence”, were arrested by the police (Lillian Moatle 2014). The BDF played a prime role in enforcing compliance through internal structures. According to a local peacebuilding advisor, violence decreased because “at that time, there were more formally organised structures in Bhambayi that were actually monitoring the violence closely” (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). The parties themselves dealt with people that were found to challenge the peace: “If you were found ... [to commit] a crime ... people were going to instil discipline, it was going to be the political parties’ structures within the community. So there was accountability somehow now” (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). Another

interviewee also referred to such internal mechanisms to enforce compliance, saying that people that put the fragile peace at risk by instigating violence were brought to “his respective community for punishment” (Lillian Moatle 2014).

Second, even though local party cadres were armed and given military training, the negative impact of such militant elements was relatively limited in Bhambayi after 1994. Interviewees largely agreed that such elements were either demobilised and disarmed, or forced to leave the community (Miriam Cele 2015; Sharm Maharaj 2015; Simphiwe Myeza 2015). Those militants that remained in the community were engaged in workshops or development initiatives to limit the negative impact of their presence in the community (Lillian Moatle 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015).

Third, some of the more powerful warlords and instigators of violence either died or left the community around 1994. According to Clifford Marion, the KwaZulu-Natal provincial head of detectives, violence subsided “a lot” following the death of a local warlord (Clifford Marion 2014). A local peacebuilding advisor also expressed such a view: “Warlords who were in the ANC and the IFP, many of them died. So new leadership came up in the area, which ... were focusing on development” (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015).

### **Conclusions from within-community analysis**

Following the democratic elections in April 1994, the levels of violence in Bhambayi declined significantly, particularly after October 1995. Even though tensions remained and other types of violence continued to affect the community, Bhambayi did not experience high levels of post-war violence. How can the relative absence of post-war violence in the community be explained?

This chapter finds that the type of wartime mobilisation that occurred in Bhambayi is important for understanding why violence subsided relatively fast. Local actors in Bhambayi were predominately mobilised around issues that were part of the war’s master cleavage such as apartheid-caused poverty and tensions between the ANC and the IFP. Furthermore, little evidence suggests that genuinely local conflicts were brought into the war’s master cleavage and respondents did not mention local conflicts as a source of mobilisation. Local support was primarily mobilised by ANC and IFP party officials, even though some interviewees spoke of forced political affiliation. Transactions of arms and military know-how also largely occurred within party structures.

Like the theoretical argument suggests, cleavage-based mobilisation made it easier to implement peace in the community, both because the structural conditions post-1994 were

more favourable and because interventions were made that reduced the impact of the causal mechanisms. First, the underlying causes of violence in the community largely resonated with that of the national and regional conflict, wherefore efforts at these levels increasingly brought peace to Bhambayi. Local peace initiatives, such as the BDF, further limited the negative effect of local tensions on violence. Second, the findings also suggest that local actors lacked the capability to challenge national actors, wherefore the political parties were able to sanction disruptive elements in a way that brought stability to the community. Thus, in the case of Bhambayi, the type of wartime mobilisation both limited the impact of local challenges to peace and enabled successful interventions at the local level.

What are the main alternative explanations for the low levels of post-war violence in Bhambayi? Many interviewees referred to the development of services as an important factor for increasing stability in the community (Miriam Cele 2015; Sharm Maharaj 2015; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). In fact, one interviewee even expressed how Bhambayi received comparatively high levels of support, since it was “such a hot spot” of violence before 1994 (Sharm Maharaj 2015). Development certainly seemed to have had a positive impact on the stability of the community, but it is hard to establish whether this was a cause or result of the relative peace of the community. Most likely, these factors interacted in a positive way and reinforced one another.

## VIII. COMPARING THE COMMUNITIES

*“I don’t see why the violence stopped. It was just God that was helping us, God’s mercy.”*

*Miriam Cele, local peace activist, 2015*

This chapter presents a structured and focused comparison of Richmond, Umbumbulu, and Bhambayi. The purpose is to deepen the understanding of the occurrence of post-war violence by drawing inferences that go beyond the case-specific analyses. First, it compares the intensity of post-war violence in the three communities. Second, the type of wartime mobilisation in the communities is compared in order to evaluate the explanatory power of the theory and to further refine the theoretical argument. Thereafter, the influence of the type of wartime mobilisation on the proposed causal mechanisms is analysed and compared. This includes an assessment of the relative importance of these mechanisms and the relationship between them. Additional observations that are related to the argument, as well as alternative explanations that account for the variation in post-war violence, are also examined. The chapter closes by critically discussing the findings in light of the chosen research design.

### **The prevalence of post-war violence**

Between 1994-1999, post-war violence occurred in all three communities. However, tensions between competing groups caused much higher levels of violence in Richmond and Umbumbulu than in Bhambayi. Since the elections in April 1994, at least 103 people were killed in inter- and intra-party violence in Richmond. Similarly, at least 75 people were killed in Umbumbulu in violence between rivalling families and clans. During the same period, 44 people were killed in Bhambayi, and only four people were killed after October 1995. By far the most violent local conflict in the examined communities was the political conflict between the ANC and the UDM in Richmond, which claimed the majority of the lives lost in Richmond.

In Richmond and Bhambayi, post-war violence primarily occurred between or within political parties, whereas violence in Umbumbulu saw a complex mixture of political violence and other local conflicts. A similarity between the three communities is that access to land and other scarce resources was frequently mentioned as a source of conflict, both before 1994 and in the post-war era. Such conflicts often concerned disputed territorial boundaries and escalated when members of loosely organised groups challenged one another during

traditional events or competed for women. Competition was exacerbated by the structural hardship imposed by apartheid and, at times, actively encouraged by the apartheid regime.

### **Why the type of wartime mobilisation matters**

The theoretical framework of this study holds that the type of wartime mobilisation in a community is an important factor for explaining the likelihood of post-war violence. The comparison reveals that the type of mobilisation has varied significantly between the three communities. Table 3 summarises the findings from the case studies. As suggested by the causal story, post-war violence was found to be more severe in the communities where mobilisation was alliance-based.

**Table 3. Summary of findings**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Chapter V Richmond</i>	<i>Chapter VI Umbumbulu</i>	<i>Chapter VII Bhambayi</i>
Type of wartime mobilisation	Alliance-based	Alliance-based	Cleavage-based
Intensified local tensions	Yes	Yes	No
Increased local capabilities	Yes	Unclear	No
Post-war violence	High	Relatively high	Relatively low

In Richmond and Umbumbulu, wartime mobilisation was alliance-based, whereas mobilisation in Bhambayi to a greater extent was related to the war's master cleavage. In Richmond, wartime mobilisation occurred both because local actors supported the cause of the national actors, primarily the ANC and the IFP, and because allying with a national actor enabled them to win strategic advantages in local conflicts. In Umbumbulu, the evidence suggests that the realisation of local advantages was the prime mobilising factor. Local conflicts between families and clans had been prevalent for decades. Such conflicts were later politicised when local leaders sought to win strategic advantages over their adversaries by allying with national actors. In Bhambayi, on the other hand, local actors strongly identified with the national political organisations. The underlying causes of conflict in the community largely resembled those at the national level, with a focus on apartheid-caused poverty and political competition. This does not mean that local causes of mobilisation were entirely absent in Bhambayi; in fact, some aspects of the violence were essentially local. Still, such local causes of mobilisation were significantly less important than local causes of

mobilisation in Richmond and Umbumbulu. An important similarity between how mobilisation occurred in Richmond and Umbumbulu was the tendency of the political parties to approach and incorporate local leaders that already had a local support base and a reputation as fierce warriors.

### **Comparing the mechanisms**

The comparison above illustrates how the type of wartime mobilisation is linked to the likelihood of post-war violence through the two causal mechanisms. In Bhambayi, where mobilisation was primarily cleavage-based, local tensions declined significantly when ANC-IFP tensions decreased at the national and regional level. Successful interventions through local conflict resolution mechanisms also had a positive impact. Furthermore, since national actors, to a large extent, were responsible for employing violence in Bhambayi, the same actors were in a better position to enforce compliance from their rank and file. This did not happen in Richmond and Umbumbulu. In Richmond, power struggles within the Richmond SDU and tensions between different areas of the community continued to be a source of violence after 1994. The fact that local actors were empowered by arms transactions also made them increasingly unruly after 1994. In the post-war period, local actors repeatedly refused to adhere to the terms of the settlement and employed violence almost with impunity. Similar dynamics were at play in Umbumbulu. There, local conflicts between feuding families and clans escalated during the early 90s and continued to be a source of violence in the community after the elections in April 1994. Furthermore, although, the available evidence does not convincingly illustrate that such violence was the result of an increase in local actors' capability to employ violence, little evidence suggest that enforcement difficulties were not present. The relative lack of evidence regarding the second mechanism in Umbumbulu may be a reflection of the shortcomings of the empirical material rather than an indication that the mechanism was not present.

What is the relationship between the two mechanisms? The empirical evidence does not suggest that either of the examined mechanisms offers a more compelling explanation for the prevalence of post-war violence than the other. In the studied communities, the mechanisms reinforced one another – while intensified local tensions served as a cause of further conflict, increased local capabilities to employ violence enabled the conflicts to turn violent. The case of Richmond is illustrative in this regard. The fact that the underlying power struggle within the SDU was not adequately addressed after 1994 meant that severe tensions remained in the community. However, such tensions could escalate into violence only because national actors

and the police were unable to discourage the use of violence. It seems reasonable to assume that violence would have been less intense if the factions, particularly Nkabinde and his supporters, would have been properly disarmed and accommodated in 1994. The changes over time in Bhambayi also support such an interpretation. In Bhambayi, tensions between the ANC and the IFP did not disappear after the elections in 1994, but continued up until October 1995. It is conceivable that this reflects the fact that the regional leadership of the parties were yet to fully commit to peace at this time. However, when the regional peace process in KwaZulu-Natal deepened through 1995-1996, the same actors increasingly started to enforce compliance among its supporters in Bhambayi, thereby contributing to a reduction in violence. The empirics also indicate that the mechanisms have an effect on each other. It seems plausible to assume that the ability to employ violence further intensifies local tensions. In Umbumbulu, attacks involving heavy weaponry often caused a spiral of violence between rivalling groups. Such violence continued despite the fact that enforcement difficulties were not pinpointed as a major concern in the area. Potentially, this might account for the fact that violence in that area was still significantly lower than in Richmond.

The above presentation suggests that the two mechanisms both have the potential to cause violence, but that the risk of post-war violence increases when both mechanisms are present. Local tensions might constitute the underlying cause of conflict while local capabilities to employ violence with impunity encourages the use of force since it lowers the cost of violence.

### **Additional observations**

The empirical examination of the three communities also revealed several additional findings that are beyond the main scope of this paper. First, post-war violence was more often locally driven than it was a result of national processes. In the studied communities, local actors such as Sifiso Nkabinde were the main instigators of violence and national groups were rarely involved. In contrast to approaches that understand post-war violence as a spoiling strategy by national actors, this observation supports Boyle's assertion that such violence can be fundamentally different from the violence that occurred during the war. Instead of being a strategy to spoil the settlement, post-war violence that is locally driven is related to local power struggles and conflicts (2014:12). It is also in line with Odendaal's claim that local dynamics contribute significantly to violence in the post-war period (2013:31).

Second, alliance-based mobilisation was more prevalent in rural areas than in urban communities. In Richmond and Umbumbulu, local conflicts became intertwined with the

national conflict, whereas this did not occur in Bhambayi. This might be because such local conflicts were often related to land boundaries – land is more valuable to rural communities than to urban populations. The importance of land disputes as a cause of conflict has been found in previous studies; between 1989-2011, three quarters of Africa’s communal conflicts included land as an important source of contestation (von Uexkull and Pettersson 2013). Another explanation may be that kinship ties are stronger in rural areas than in urban environments. In Richmond and Umbumbulu, conflicts that began between individuals often escalated when families and clans became involved, while such dynamics appeared less prominent in Bhambayi.

Third, this study corroborates Wood’s suggestion that civil war causes “a generational inversion of authority” (Wood 2008:550). This transformation refers to how armed youth supplant traditional elders and local authorities and thus undermines those social norms that normally constrain violence (Wood 2008:550). Many of the interviewees spoke of how the politicisation of local conflicts caused increased generational conflict, particularly since the youth were more inclined towards the progressive ANC than their elders. “This political violence divided families” said a local peacebuilding advisor. “People stick with their clans ... but the political violence divided them” (Interview with Nhlengetwa 2014). Over the course of the conflict, the decay of traditional authorities and the empowerment of the youth contributed to the enforcement difficulties experienced by both national and local elites. Furthermore, as families broke apart local tensions often escalated in irreversible ways.

### **Alternative explanations**

This study argues that the type of wartime mobilisation that occurs in a community is an important factor for explaining variation between the studied communities in terms of post-war violence. Yet, in order to further challenge the findings, it is necessary to examine what alternative explanations can account for the differences in outcome.

A common explanation for post-war violence is the notion that war causes a “culture of violence” – a socially permissive environment within which the use of violence becomes socially acceptable (see Archer and Gartner 1976; Steenkamp 2005). Such an explanation is frequently emphasised as cause of high homicide levels, xenophobia, and gender-based violence in South Africa (Steenkamp 2005). Indeed, respondents frequently referred to a culture of violence in explaining violence in Richmond and Umbumbulu.

This study, however, set out to scrutinize three communities that were all characterised by high levels of wartime violence. In fact, Bhambayi was often referred to as one of the most

violent communities in the province (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). Yet, violence decreased significantly in Bhambayi, whereas it continued in Richmond and Umbumbulu. This does not mean that wartime violence is insignificant for explaining post-war violence in South Africa. Indeed, the exposure to violence has had a significant effect on social interaction in these communities by increasing polarisation, promoting violent conflict resolution and militarising local authorities. However, Bhambayi also demonstrates that such a culture of violence does not necessarily cause further strategic violence. Importantly, tensions can be managed when local actors believe that the settlement reflects their reality, local conflict resolution mechanisms are established, and national actors are able to effectively enforce compliance.

A second potential alternative explanation postulates that post-war violence is the result of defeated or disappointed national actors that seek to challenge the settlement indirectly by destabilising the “harder-to-supervise local level” (Manning 2003:33). In South Africa, such elements are referred to as the “third force”. According to this interpretation, the “apparently random violence” that could not be ascribed identifiable groups, was attributed to a loose network of “security and ex-security force operatives” that acted independently and covertly, with the alleged goal to weaken the ANC’s bargaining position (Guelke 2000:244–245). This explanation dominates the TRC and HRC reports and ample evidence has been provided showing that such a “third force” was active in the country during the transition. Interviewees in all three communities also referred to this explanation frequently.

There are, however, two difficulties with such an interpretation of the variation in post-war violence in the studied communities. First, such an explanation cannot adequately account for where post-war violence occurred. Interviewees referred to how a “third force” was behind the violence in all the studied communities, but failed to explain why such a destabilisation campaign would target areas such as Richmond and Umbumbulu, communities that largely lack political importance. Second, if the aim was to weaken the ANC’s bargaining position, why did the “third force” continue to destabilise some communities after the negotiations were concluded? Some commentators and interviewees alike argue that the purpose was simply nihilist (Guelke 2000:246); however, such an explanation carries far less weight in terms of the available evidence than the argument provided by this study. A more plausible interpretation would be that covert elements targeted Richmond and Umbumbulu precisely because those communities had experienced alliance-based mobilisation. Remaining local tensions and the existence of powerful local warlords offers ample opportunity for destabilisation by external actors. As has been pointed out by Manning, remaining local

conflicts provide a comfortable excuse for those that seek the continuation of violence for their own gain (Manning 2003:33–34).

A final alternative explanation worth considering is the role of ex-combatants and the proliferation of weapons as a cause of post-war violence. As established in previous studies (see e.g. Themnér 2011), ex-combatants can play a destabilising role in post-war states. Interviewees often spoke of how ex-combatants played a destabilising role in the studied communities, particularly in Richmond (Clifford Marion 2014; Tim Houghton 2014), but also in Umbumbulu (Anonymous VI 2014; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2014), and, to some extent, in Bhambayi (Simpfiwe Myeza 2015; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). The easy access to weapons in Richmond has also been established by other observers (see Nebandla 2005). Since Richmond had comparatively higher prevalence of both arms and disgruntled ex-combatants this could potentially account for the higher levels of post-war violence there than in Umbumbulu and Bhambayi.

Yet, as has been discussed elsewhere (Brosché 2014:164), access to modern weaponry is not a direct cause of violence in itself, but rather operates as a reinforcing factor in areas where there already is armed conflict. In areas where local tensions intensify during the war, ex-combatants and easy access to arms can increase the propensity that such conflicts result in violence in the post-war period. Furthermore, the argument made in this study can potentially account for why such ex-combatants are more likely to be prevalent in some communities than others, since alliance-based mobilisation empowers actors that are more difficult to integrate into national structures in the post-war era. The more general observation from the field that SDU and SPU members were seemingly less likely to be integrated into the army than members of the official armed opposition (MK), corroborate such a claim (Sharm Maharaj 2015; Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). As Nhlengetwa noted: “They [the SDUs] were in the frontline ... ready to die for the communities. But at the end of the day when political organisations had it all, they forgot about them” (Zandile Nhlengetwa 2015). Thus, albeit only anecdotal evidence has been presented here, the theory of this study can potentially account for both the existence of disgruntled ex-combatants and for when such veterans are most likely to be implicated in violence.

### **Critical reflections**

In the previous sections, the findings from the field were examined and the implications for theory were discussed. This section revisits the choices made during the research process and critically reflects on the implications of the research design for the findings of the study.

An important aspect to consider when doing qualitative research is if, and to what extent, findings can be generalised. This study draws its conclusions from data on the civil war in South Africa. The case was selected as a typical example of an irregular civil war that was concluded by a negotiated settlement and which experienced continuous violence in the post-war period. Therefore, the findings are primarily generalizable to conflicts that resemble such a civil war. It is particularly important that the war is terminated through a peace agreement, since military victories are followed by higher levels of domestic control, control that can be used to enforce compliance and thus limit the impact of local challenges to peace. It is also important to keep in mind that the argument does not claim to explain all incidents of post-war violence, but specifically focuses on the links between wartime mobilisation and post-war violence. Hence, the contribution of the study should be thought of as an explorative attempt to disaggregate post-war violence.

The limited availability of data on post-war violence in South Africa restricts the findings to some extent (see Bruce 2013). Most likely, the lack of data reflects the difficulty of differentiating between different types of violence in post-war states in general, and in irregular wars in particular (see e.g. Schuld 2013). This difficulty was acknowledged by the HRC (1998c:16). Hence, there is a serious risk that the HRC data used in this study suffers from a range of reliability concerns, for example underreporting, coding errors and incomparability. Using this data should be seen as a second-best approach due to the lack of better statistics (Benini, Minnaar, and Pretorius 1998:508). This constitutes a limitation to the findings of the study since the variation in post-war violence cannot be reliably established. However, two aspects reduce the negative impact somewhat. First, since a single institution carried out data collection, it can still be assumed that the above-mentioned reliability problems are the same for all three communities. Second, the complementary, qualitative assessment in this study largely corroborates the variation found in the data, which limits the reliability concerns somewhat.

The critical reader might also point out that one of the master cleavages outlined in the background chapter was still active after April 1994 and that South Africa therefore did not constitute a post-war country until ANC-IFP fighting abated in 1996 (UCDP 2015). The divider was chosen since this was when the main incompatibility of the South African civil war was resolved. Available data suggests that the first elections did lead to a significant reduction of violence and that ANC-IFP violence did not continue everywhere (Guelke 2000; UCDP 2015). Thus, it was deemed to be analytically relevant to examine the full post-1994 period in order to capture the puzzle of why ANC-IFP violence continued in some areas but

not in others. In addition, two more points can be raised with regard to this objection. First, as table 4 illuminates, focusing on a different time period only alters the studied variation to some extent, particularly with regards to the levels of post-war violence in Umbumbulu. Second, most violence in the studied areas did not relate to the ANC-IFP conflict but occurred between other, or entirely new, actors, especially in Umbumbulu.

**Table 4. Post-war violence in Richmond, Umbumbulu and Bhambayi, January 1996-December 1998**

<i>Community</i>	<i>May 1994-December 1998</i>	<i>January 1996-December 1998</i>
Richmond	103	103
Umbumbulu	75	15
Bhambayi	44	4

A final critique worth consideration is whether the empirical material is reliable. Information access and quality can be a serious limitation when doing field research, particularly in sensitive and violent environments. Fear and memory loss can limit the reliability of the information provided by the respondents (Höglund 2011:120–121). Interviewees can also consciously manipulate their answers, either out of self-interest or out of a desire to confirm the researcher’s understanding. In order to avoid severe reliability problems, interview data was compared with archival data and secondary sources, so-called triangulation. The attempt to cite more than one source for each piece of information is a reflection of this effort. In order to avoid conscious manipulations the exact purpose of the study was withheld from the respondents until after the interviews. It was also clearly emphasised that the study’s aim was not to “name and shame”. Yet, despite active attempts to increase data quality, some reliability problems are likely to remain and are probably inescapable when conducting field research in post-war societies.

## IX. CONCLUSIONS

*“Yes, the violence stopped. It was no more violence.  
It was just normal killings, just normal killings everywhere.”*

*Miriam Cele, local peace activist, 2015*

Peace is rarely the end of violence. In South Africa, and in many other post-war societies, violence continues to be a serious threat to human security. Sometimes this forces countries back into war. Yet, we struggle to adequately understand the drivers of post-war violence. In particular, we lack the understanding of why such violence clusters in certain parts of a state. The purpose of this study was to offer a disaggregation of post-war violence and to answer the research question: *Why do some communities experience high levels of post-war violence while others do not?* In this chapter, the main conclusions are summarised and some implications for preventing post-war violence are discussed. Finally, this section also suggests some avenues for future research.

### **Main conclusions**

The main contribution of this study is that it offers the first theoretical account of community-level variation in post-war violence. More specifically, it provides an answer to how the type of wartime mobilisation contributes to post-war violence. The findings suggest that alliance-based mobilisation, that is, when local actors ally with national actors in order to gain strategic advantages, is an important factor for explaining the prevalence of such violence. This is because such a strategy intensifies local tensions and increases the capabilities of local actors to employ violence. A closer look at these causal mechanisms suggests that both increase the likelihood of violence individually, but that the risk increases significantly when both mechanisms are present.

A second contribution of this study is that it further questions the description of South Africa as a peaceful transition. South Africa’s negotiated settlement certainly avoided a full-scale civil war, but it did not entirely stop the violence. Not only did violence continue to wreck havoc in areas such as Richmond and Umbumbulu, it also destabilised the fragile peace established by the national peace agreement. The fact that this occurred despite the South African settlement’s specific focus on local peacebuilding through the Local Peace

Committees (LPCs) underscores how difficult peacebuilding can be at the local level (Odendaal 2013).

The argument in this study does not explain all the observed variation between the cases, nor does it seek to do so. Instead it emphasises that wartime mobilisation is an important factor in explaining post-war violence. Other factors, like nationally driven destabilisation strategies, the existence of ex-combatants and disarmament failures, most likely contribute to violence and interact with the proposed explanation.

### **Local solutions to local problems**

This study deals with the prevalence and causes of post-war violence and shows how some communities are more likely to experience such violence. What are the implications of the study's main findings for the prevention of post-war violence?

The findings of this study accentuate the importance of taking local dynamics into consideration. This study has revealed how the local context is crucial for understanding the dynamics of post-war violence in the studied communities. By identifying communities that experienced more complex wartime mobilisation, active steps can be taken to prevent violence. At a minimum, this underscores the importance of consulting local actors when attempting to implement peace in a community. When outside actors lack the appropriate understanding of local dynamics, it increases the risk that measures are taken that poorly reflect local conditions and hence are ineffective or even counterproductive (see e.g. Autesserre 2010; Odendaal 2013; Brosché 2014). Local ownership matters precisely because local actors are more likely to understand what drives violence in their area. Therefore, local actors should be included when local peace initiatives are designed.

In addition, the findings also shed some light on how post-war violence can be managed and prevented by focusing on the two causal mechanisms. In communities that experienced cleavage-based mobilisation, national actors are more likely to be able to enforce peace. But if local tensions are the source of violence, greater attention must be given to manage such tensions. As has been shown by Mitchell and Hancock, local peace initiatives during the war are rarely successful if not accompanied by a national peace process (2012). In the post-war period, on the other hand, local initiatives can be complementary to national processes and thus help to manage remaining local tensions. Local peacebuilding is by no means a simple task, particularly due to the high emotional content of local conflicts (Odendaal 2013:29) and because local settlements are more likely to be zero-sum games (Manning 2003:37). However, the findings from Bhambayi suggest that local peacebuilding can succeed when

national actors actively enforce compliance and the efforts take advantage of local knowledge, local civil society organisations and work with existing community structures. Efforts to broker peace by the South African organisation Sinani are a positive example of how the impact of remaining tensions can be managed at the local level (Khuzwayo, Meintjes, and Merk 2011).

Finally, while managing local tensions is important, interventions should also be designed to limit the capabilities of local actors to employ violence. Richmond in particular shows how the failure to disarm local troublemakers can have severe consequences. Peace-keeping missions with increased policing capacities may be one solution (see Boyle 2014:319–321), but such attempts are doomed to fail without local cooperation, particularly since local decision-makers are often not publicly visible. Therefore, building trust between local communities and law enforcement agencies is essential. Again, successful initiatives by Sinani provide a positive example. By engaging the local police commander in Umbumbulu the organisation managed to increase cooperation between the chiefs and the police, which together with the local peace process brought increased stability to the community.

### **Future research**

This study provides some insights into a number of research fields related to post-war violence. By focusing on how wartime mobilisation affects the likelihood of post-war violence, this study has provided further support for Kalyvas' understanding of civil war mobilisation. Importantly, it focuses on the implications rather than the cause of such mobilisation, thereby contributing to moving the research field in a new direction. By focusing on variations in the type of wartime mobilisation, this study also illuminates how some local actors form alliances whereas other local actors provide support for the war's master cleavage. An interesting question raised by this observation is whether the presence of local conflicts in itself prompts alliance formation or whether other factors are also important. Thus, future research should focus more on the causes of alliance-based mobilisation and its implications rather than the descriptive task of establishing its existence.

Another research field focuses on the inability of armed actors to enforce compliance within their own ranks as a source of violence (see e.g. Boyle 2014). This study supports such a claim and offers an explanation for why such enforcement difficulties arise in the first place. More research should be directed at illuminating why some groups fail to enforce compliance within their ranks.

Finally, this study contributes to the academic enterprise of disaggregating post-war violence. Although some attempts are underway to test such community-level variations through large-n studies (see Deglow 2015), the success of future research in this field is dependent on finding better ways to collect data on post-war violence. Developing tools to distinguish political violence from criminal and expressive violence is one avenue worth exploring, while creative ways, like studying the types of violent acts in the post-war period (see Schuld 2013), should also be encouraged.

### **Epilogue**

When I visited Richmond in 2014, the grass-covered and rolling hills were once again peaceful and lovely beyond singing of it. But the scars of the past are not yet healed and tensions are once again simmering under the peaceful surface. In November 2014 the municipal offices were burnt to the ground by unknown perpetrators. Few have been brought to justice for the crimes of the past. “The thing is that those people who were doing all these terrible things are still alive”, a community resident told me in August. “How does that feel to me? You see, we are still suffering this thing” (Anonymous II 2014).

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# APPENDIX

## List of interviews

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role/occupation</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Place</i>
Anonymous I	Development worker	29 July 2014	Undisclosed location
Anonymous II	Resident Richmond	4 August 2014	Undisclosed location
Anonymous III	Community leader, Richmond	9 August 2014	Undisclosed location
Anonymous IV	Development worker	3 August 2014	Undisclosed location
Anonymous V	Development worker	3 August 2014	Undisclosed location
Anonymous VI	Peacebuilding advisor	12 August 2014	Undisclosed location
Anonymous VII	Development worker; former Umkhonto we Sizwe soldier	13 August 2014	Undisclosed location
Anonymous VIII	Teacher, Umbumbulu	5 January 2015	Undisclosed location
Anonymous IX	Committee member, Gozololo Day Care Centre	5 January 2015	KwaMashu, Durban
Caine, Glenda	Director, Independent Project Trust	25 July 2014	Hillcrest, Durban
Cele, Miriam	Local peace activist; Founder, Gozololo Day Care Centre	5 January 2015	KwaMashu, Durban
Cele, Myunyelwa	Councillor, Umbumbulu, 1996-2000	15 August 2014	Nsimbin, Umbumbulu
Collins, Steve	Violence monitor, Network of Independent Monitors	29 November 2014	Johannesburg
Gandhi, Ela	Peace activist	6 January 2015	Durban
Houghton, Tim	Peace education professional	21 July 2014	Pietermaritzburg
Maharaj, Sharm	Community activist	6 January 2015	Durban
Makhanya, Skhumbuzo	Sinani Survivors of Violence	15 August 2014	Nsimbin, Umbumbulu
Marion, Clifford	Investigation unit, Richmond; Provincial Head of Detectives, KwaZulu-Natal	30 December 2014	Durban

Mhlongo, Bab	Station Commander, Umbumbulu, South African Police Services	17 August 2014	Mabeni Heights, Durban
Moatle, Lillian	Founder, Siyathuthuka	18 August, 2014	Bhambayi
Myeza, Listen	Government official, Cooperative Government & Traditional Affairs	15 August 2014	Nsimbin, Umbumbulu
Myeza, Simphiwe	Site facilitator, Bhambayi Settlement Project	7 January 2015	Bhambayi
Ngoetjana, Lucas	Programme director, KwaZulu-Natal Council of Churches	4 August 2014	Pietermaritzburg
Nhlengetwa, Zandile	Founder, Sinani Survivors of Violence	12 August 2014 and 7 January 2015	Durban
Nunn, Cedric	Photographer and documentary film maker	3 August 2014	Richmond
Osborne, Haydn	Violence monitor, Richmond	6 January 2015	Durban
Ragavaloo, Andrew	Mayor, Richmond	11 August 2014	Richmond
Sutcliffe, Michel	Violence monitor	26 July 2014	Durban
Varney, Howard	Lawyer, Legal Resource Centre	16 December 2014	Johannesburg

## Interview questions

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Questions</i>
Introduction	Could you briefly tell me in what way you have been involved in the community?
Historical overview	<p>Can you describe how the conflict in the community started?</p> <p>What was the cause of conflict in the community?</p> <p>Was the conflict political?</p> <p>Did the conflict become politicised?</p> <p>Can you describe how the conflict between the ANC and the IFP started in the community?</p> <p>What were the different political parties' respective strongholds?</p>

Post-war violence	<p>Did any political violence take place in the community after the elections in 1994?</p> <p>Did any political violence take place between the ANC and the IFP after the elections in 1994?</p> <p>Why do you think that violence continued/stopped in the community after the elections in 1994?</p> <p>Was there a lot of criminal violence in the community after 1994?</p> <p>What was the relation between criminal and political violence in the community?</p> <p>Do you think there were criminal elements that intentionally tried to destabilise the community?</p> <p>Do you think there were actors that were profiting from the violence in the community after 1994?</p>
Causes	<p>Where there actors in the community that did not want peace?</p> <p>Why did such actors not want peace?</p> <p>Do you think that local leaders felt that they stood something to loose from negotiating with the enemy?</p> <p>Do you think that personal emotions made local negotiations easier or more difficult?</p> <p>After the elections in 1994, were there efforts to resettle those that had fled the violence in the community?</p> <p>Do you think that such resettlements were a source of violence?</p> <p>During the 1990s, were there SDUs and SPUs in the community?</p> <p>What happened to such paramilitary groups after 1994?</p> <p>Were there efforts to demobilise and disarm such people after 1994?</p> <p>Do you think that politicians used former militants to instigate violence after 1994?</p> <p>Were there a lot of arms in the community after 1994?</p> <p>Do you think that the political parties in the community were able to control their supporters?</p> <p>Were supporters that used violence sanctioned in any way?</p> <p>Do you think that revenge was a driver of violence in the community?</p> <p>Do you think that the violence broke down social institutions that were used to solve conflict in the community?</p>
Prevention	<p>Was there a local peace process or local peace initiatives in the community?</p> <p>What was the outcome of that/those process/initiatives?</p> <p>Were there any specific difficulties facing those processes?</p> <p>Why do you think that local leaders managed/did not manage to make</p>

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peace?

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Ending question

Why do you think that violence continued/stopped in the community after 1994?

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