



RE/MEMBERING ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE

POLITICS, LEGACY, PHILOSOPHY, LIFE AND DEATH

Foreword by Molefi Kete Asante

Edited by: Collen Sabao, Richard Runyararo Mahomva & Lawrence Mhandara

Re/membering

Robert Gabriel Mugabe

Politics, Legacy, Philosophy, Life and Death

Collen Sabao, Richard Runyararo Mahomva & Lawrence Mhandara (Eds)



Published by LAN Readers (Zimbabwe), 2021
an imprint of Leaders for Africa Network, Zimbabwe

Copyright © Collen Sabao, Richard Runyararo Mahomva & Lawrence Mhandara, 2021

All rights reserved
The moral right of the authors has been asserted

ISBN: 978-1-77925-603-4

Typeset by Pofela Ndzozi in 12 Adobe Garamond Pro
Cover Design: palmer imagination
Printed and Bound in Zimbabwe

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.



This page is intentionally left blank

Contents

Acknowledgments Richard Runyararo Mahomva	vii
Foreword Molefi Kete Asante	ix
Re/membering Robert Gabriel Mugabe: Politics, Legacy, Philosophy, Life and Death Collen Sabao, Richard Runyararo Mahomva & Lawrence Mhandara	xi
The Philosophical Immortalisation of Robert Mugabe in the Post-colonial Quest for Decolonisation Richard Runyararo Mahomva	1
Conflicting Images of Mugabe and of Zimbabwe under Mugabe in Twenty-first Century Literary Imaginaries Tendai O Chikara, Nhlanhla Landa & Sindiso Zhou	23
Fictionalising Activism, Voicing Contested Terrains and Survival Strategies under Mugabe's (Mis-)Rule Nelson Mlambo and Jairos Kangira	45
Shifting Diplomatic Ideological Stance-taking? Comparative Appraisal Discourse Linguistic Analyses of Mugabe's first (1980) and last (2013) Inauguration Speeches Collen Sabao, Emaculate Mvundura & Oiva Sikwaya Nauyoma	76
'One of the Finest English Speakers Zimbabwe Has Ever Had': Impact of Robert Gabriel Mugabe's Exoglossic Language Policy on the Development of Zimbabwe Isaac Mhute, Ernest Jakaza & Hugh Mangeya	105
The Musical side of Robert Mugabe Richard Muranda, Wonder Maguraushe & Weston Chimbudzi	128

The Land Question and the Legacy of Robert Mugabe: Thinking Zimbabwe's Agrarian Reform Beyond Mugabe Chipo Chirimuuta & Magret Jongore	158
Robert Mugabe: A Victim and hero of the Anti-colonial Constructions and Deconstructions of Power in Zimbabwe Obert Moses Mpofu	177
The First Republic and Marxism-Leninism Glamour: A Public Policy Perspective Lenin Tinashe Chisaira	193
Asserting African Agency on the Zimbabwe Political Question: Mugabe's Philosophy and Tsvangirai's Diplomatic Failures in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Lawrence Mhandara	209
The Fall of Robert Mugabe: From Land Reform to Operation Restore Legacy Avoird Masiraha	234
Mugabe and Intra-political 'fights': An Evaluation of Political 'Factional' news in Zimbabwean Print Media Ernest Jakaza, Isaac Mhute, Hugh Mangeya	252
Social Media Narrations and the Dialogue on Mugabe's legacy during the Zimbabwe "Coups" Hugh Mangeya, Isaac Mhute & Ernest Jakaza	273
Death of a tyrant? From liberation fighter to deposed leader? Frames of Robert Mugabe's death in selected Zimbabwean and British media Collen Sabao, Moses Magadza & Tendai O. Chikara	298
Notes on Contributors	326

Acknowledgments

Richard Runyararo Mahomva

Executive Coordinator, Leaders for Africa Network.

While his role in the liberation struggle and post-independent Zimbabwe has been subjected to various neoliberal disfigurements, the editors and the publisher of this book exalt Robert Mugabe for being an elaborate example of Africa's decolonisation agenda. As such, we are grateful for his life which has been set as an example for future African generations to rediscover the perennial endeavour for the continent's political and economic independence. Through Mugabe as an African liberation philosophical figurehead and a symbol of decolonisation memory retention, this book found life. As a subject of national introspection, Mugabe leaves readers of Zimbabwean politics empowered to learn the best and unlearn the worst nationalist generation's political footprints.

Again, we are grateful for Mugabe's unique contributions to the paternity of our national and continental anti-colonial aspirations. Therefore, this book proffers a philosophical locus for lessons to be drawn from Mugabe's successes and faults as the founding father of modern-day Zimbabwe. We are also grateful that through Robert Gabriel Mugabe, the land reform agenda offered an emotive turning point for Zimbabwe and the rest of Africa to unmask the hegemonic colonial anecdotes and African liberation anti-narratives. As such, this book presents an in-depth interrogation and articulation of the post land reform hostile binaries inspired by the life and times of former Zimbabwean President Robert Gabriel Mugabe. Over the years, hostile neoliberal propaganda has dissuaded our people from celebrating the hallmark redemptive strides of the nationalist generation. As a timely response, the submissions in this book are a significant step towards the re-articulation of the decolonisation agenda in its most contemporary sense. The publication of this book would have not been a worthy exercise without Mugabe's confrontational statesmanship against pro-Western capital scholars and think tanks' continued pursuit to defend colonial economic domination interests in Zimbabwe.

We also unreservedly appreciate the soldiering attitude of each contributor to meet deadlines and editorial strains which culminated in the publication of this piece. We also extend our highest gratitude to all reviewers for giving surgical analyses to each chapter and in the process giving the book a sterling intellectual grounding. Without mentioning all our pillars of support, special thanks also go out to Vongai Nyawo-Viriri, Terence Mashingaidze, Artwell Nhemachena and Charity Manyeruke for investing so much confidence in our research journey from the beginning right up to the end. Such generous support from renowned scholars is very motivating. In the same vein, we are grateful to Professor Molefi Kete Asante for reading our draft manuscript and writing the foreword for this publication.

We are also grateful for the counsel we received from Dr Obert Mpofu of ZANU PF; as well as his chapter submission which reflects on his direct involvement with Robert Mugabe as the then President of Zimbabwe and the former First Secretary of the ruling ZANU PF. Dr Mpofu's interest in the writing of this book also demonstrated the Second Republic administration's keenness for frank nation-building conversations among Zimbabwean intellectuals and the citizenry at large. Therefore, this book is an outgrowth of the liberties which our academics continue to enjoy in the post-Mugabe era under President Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa.

We see this collection of interlocked perspectives on the political person of Zimbabwe's former Head of State as a good start to discussing African politics from an African perspective. This publication is an organic precedent assigning progressive intellectuals to record the political and philosophical path of African leaders from a neo-colonial unfiltered standpoint. This exercise of memory (re)construction must be pivoted on the sincere will to interrogate the continuities and discontinuities of the African liberation question. The key objective of this route should establish a candid African perspective on what African leadership embodies in a hostile Global-North discursively determined environment.

FOREWORD

Molefi Kete Asante

Professor and Chair, Department of Africology and African American Studies, Temple University. 30 March 2021, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Although I am a son of Africa through my ancestral connections to the Yoruba and Ta-Seti, I am indeed a product of an intense association with contemporary African politics and social relationships by virtue of meeting Robert Mugabe forty years ago when he had returned to Harare. However, before being introduced to Mugabe by my former doctoral student, Naomi Nhiwatiwa, I had been deeply involved as a leader in the local chapters of liberation organisations in New York State. I had friends in all of the Southern African liberation movements like ZANU, ANC, PAC, ZAPU, Frelimo, and regularly communicated with the highly mobile activists in Namibia.

My entrance into the world of Robert Mugabe came as I was the first African American to be a Fulbright Professor at the Zimbabwe Institute of Mass Communication (ZIMCO) where I would head the Diploma Program for Journalists. When I met Robert Mugabe the first time I was quite impressed by his visionary plans for the country he loved so much. He was a patriot, surely as much as other first leaders of nations were patriots. He had suffered at the hands of the previous regime the most brutal and horrible racist rants, attacks, assaults, and separations and exiles that one could imagine, and surely the white regime understood that it had to abuse Africans to “keep them in place.” Fortunately, Robert Mugabe, like many of his compatriots, would not stay in place and could not be subdued or bribed by a system accustomed to abusing African people simply because of our complexion and historical dismemberment.

Zimbabwe is a nation rich in history and culture, long before the coming of the whites to steal land from the indigenous people, and the resonance of that history was taught to the men and women who fought for the liberation of the country. I trained them in communication, wrote speeches for my supervisors, Dr. Davison Mashizha Sadza, head of the media trust, and Dr.

Ezekiel Makunike, head of ZIMCO, honouring the mhondoros, especially Chaminuka, and the revered Nehanda, in all of her manifestations. In early 1981, I joined Sekai Hove Holland and Freedom Nyamubaya and others to establish a professional media sector. In as much as White domination was present in other sectors, we occupied the media space as we established local news stringers from places like Mudzi where Freedom was already a hero for commanding an army that fought the Rhodesians to a standstill. Mugabe in those innocent days of the Year of Reconciliation appreciated what we were doing at the Zimbabwe Institute for Mass Communication.

It is clear to me that I could do these things and perform these activities out of my activist orientation as a participant in the Civil Rights and Black Power movements of the 1960s. However, it all became possible because I firmly believed in the possibility of a Zimbabwe with wings that would preserve and secure its aspirations upon a limitless horizon. Yet no one, neither Robert Mugabe himself nor Dr. Nathan Shamuyarira, the Minister of Information who had not yet become the Foreign Minister, to whom our offices reported to, could anticipate the recalcitrant nature of the plinth of white supremacy and its numerous attendants throughout the country.

It is now a cliché to say that Robert Mugabe was a complex person. All of us are complex, some perhaps more contradicted than others, but we all have contradictions, cultural cleavages, informational gaps and ethical challenges. Mugabe was such a man, and so are we. This does not mean that we cannot evaluate his policies, examine his motives, or dispute his philosophical and ontological construction, but what I have found in the work of these authors is a reservoir of goodwill without hagiography, as it is predicated on keen attention to the norms of rational memory preservation for the benefit of future readers. This good work should be credited to the editors of the volume who have championed science and decency, love of truth and revelations about inadequacies, and achievements that have sustained the nation. The readers will understand that Robert Mugabe as a Zimbabwean political figure was not a perfect man; neither was he the devil that he was painted to be by the Western media. That is not to say that he was not eccentric in some ways, but rather to try to understand the circumstances of his paranoia at being surrounded by international forces seeking to bring down one's country.

My experience with Mugabe was during the early years of the regime when he was knighted by the British Queen Elizabeth, called a genius by many in the West, and lauded for his decency because he allowed the white farmers whose ancestors had invaded the land and stole ancestral territory from the indigenous people to remain until, according to the Lancaster House Agreement, the United Kingdom and the United States would provide money for the Zimbabweans to purchase the land from the white farmers. After waiting twenty years Mugabe was being pressured by thousands of ex-combatants for land that they had fought to regain; so, he acquiesced to appease his people and to do the right thing by redistributing the lands held by the white farmers. None of this was easy, and the violence that marked the aftermath of contested policies brought international attention to internal stages of instability under Mugabe's rule. It is true that Gukurahundi happened during Mugabe's reign and that its ethnic character may very well have been part of the imperial design to bring about disintegration and instability in the country, yet in the end, it served to smear his government with ethnic purging discredits. Nevertheless, it is the Unity Accord brokered between Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo brought Gukurahundi to an end. Both Mugabe and Nkomo deserve credit for this statesmanship.

My son, Molefi Khumalo (MK), was born in Zimbabwe, the first American to be delivered at the Mbuya Nehanda Hospital, and like me, he has an affection for the country that allows both praise and criticism of the policies carried out under the Mugabe government. A few days ago, I was relating to MK an experience with Mugabe in December 1980, about ten months after he had won the election when he said to me that he was seeking someone who could translate telegrams from Bulgarian into English. I remarked to my son that it was at that moment that I understood the difference between a guerilla leader and a leader of a nation. How one deals with diplomacy must be taught, polished, and practised in a different way than one would deal with comrades in a guerilla war. Yet when Mugabe pulled off his 2013 election victory he had baffled the United Kingdom's pundits, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the M16 agents.

During the most unstable times inside the country and with the punishing embargoes from without the country, Mugabe must have felt like a person captured by the most inhospitable political climate. Some of the troubles

indeed had to be credited to him, but it is also true that there were organised intentions to bring Zimbabwe to a standstill because of Mugabe's stubborn refusal to follow orders of the Western establishment. Robert Mugabe was politically aware of the robbery and thuggery that had preceded Zimbabwean independence. He did not want to see a white regime with its racist tones persecuting people because they were black. As a result, he could be accused of licensing assaults in his name on opposition leaders whom he feared would allow the nation to fall into the hands of the same whites who had stolen the country in the 1890s.

This is a complex book, like its subject and certainly, it will be followed by many other books as more people begin to reflect on what it meant for the inheritors of the Second Chimurenga to experience the rise and fall of the founding father of the nation.

Re/membering Robert Gabriel Mugabe: Politics, Legacy, Philosophy, Life and Death

Collen Sabao, Richard Runyararo Mahomva & Lawrence Mhandara

Mention of the name of Robert Gabriel Mugabe in Zimbabwe, Africa and beyond evokes a plethora of often highly conflicting images, sensations and evaluations. A leader of the Republic of Zimbabwe for 37 years, Mugabe has, in life and death, been a subject of many highly incongruous descriptions and classifications. Often celebrated as a fearless and peerless “African nationalist, orator, liberator, reformist, decolonialist, pan-Africanist among other praises on the one hand and vilified as a despot, murderer, election thief, gross human rights violator among other colourful indictments on the other, Mugabe remains in death as he was in life, an enigma” (Sabao, Mvundura & Nauyoma, 2021 p. 77). In African custom the saying goes that “a dead person becomes a good person” akin to “never speak ill of the dead.” So it has been with Mugabe, a man of many shades. As aptly explicated by Winter “to some, he was an evil dictator who should have ended his days in jail for crimes against humanity. To others, he was a revolutionary hero who fought racial oppression and stood up to Western imperialism and neo-colonialism”. To this end, this book offers a pivoted consolidation of the intermingling memories on Mugabe with a clear intention of locating his legacy in the cause of Africa’s liberation aspirations.

This publication serves as an alternative to the narrow pro-Western capital imaginations of Mugabe which were born out of purely Western colonial vendettas for Zimbabwe’s land reform programme. Zimbabwe’s post-independence economic indigenisation policies internationalised Mugabe’s villain construction as a lawless African despot with no respect for property rights. As a response, this book assesses Robert Mugabe’s leadership milestones and inadequacies within the context of the African liberation agenda including the ideations of Black empowerment championed in the Mugabe era. Beyond the inflated neo-liberal representation of Robert Gabriel Mugabe, this collection draws inspiration from Homi Bhabha (1993)’s concept of re-membering defined as an approach to join together

dismembered past(s) by the colonised in making sense of their history and reclaiming the future. It has also been argued that re-membering creates an alternative for the dominant imperialist memory:

The imperialist dominant memory, its technological and ideological infrastructure, imposes itself as the major source of authentic memory. This explains the hegemonic biases of post-colonial historiography which is characterised by the conflicting perennial binary identities of the coloniser and the colonised (Mahomva & Zinyama 2021 p.1).

Therefore, in re-membering Mugabe, the essays in this book seek to reclaim the former President of Zimbabwe as a sovereign subject whose legacy, philosophy and political ontology has suffered colonial dismembering. Here, re-membering as a philosophical intervention to re-articulate Robert Mugabe's history serves as a way of indirectly confronting the ancestries of imperialist hegemony which continue to influence how Africans should view themselves and their societies' interaction with politics and issues of economic livelihood.

As such this book offers a purely liberation grounded appraisal of who Robert Mugabe was; his successes and shortcomings as envisaged and prescribed by the founding aims of Africa's liberation project. Robert Mugabe as a product of Africa's on-going anti-colonial struggle must be understood as a symbol of the existing philosophical and ontological contrasts between the imperialist Global North and the liberation assertive mission of the Global South. Beyond some of his flaws discussed in this book, Africa and Zimbabwe remain indebted to Mugabe for his role as a consistent agitator against colonialism. As such, here we submit that Mugabe the politician left a history and a legacy that is deep-rooted in the anti-colonial path.

Robert Gabriel Mugabe (21 February 1924 – 6 September 2019) was Zimbabwe's head of state for almost four decades. First as the prime minister (1980 – 1987) and later executive president (1987 – 2017). He was eventually succeeded by his former vice president, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, whom he had fired in November 2017 following pronounced power wrangles within ZANU PF. It is believed that Mugabe was, up to the time of his death, a bitter man because of what he considered as a serious

betrayal by his former trusted confidantes. In some quotas, the transition from Mugabe to Mnangagwa remains considered a major step towards the restoration of the liberation legacy (Mpofu, 2020). Over the years, numerous scholars have been seeking to comprehend him as both a man and a “psychological phenomenon” (Alao, 2012; Chan, 2003; Compagnon, 2011; Gatsheni-Ndlovu, 2009; Holland, 2008; Meredith, 2004; Meredith, 2009; Nyarota, 2018; Tekere, 2007). Mugabe’s 37 years at the helm of the Republic of Zimbabwe (now dubbed Zimbabwe’s First Republic), was very colourful, tainted by allegations of election thievery, dictatorship, gross human violations, allegations of genocide on the Ndebele population in Matebeleland and Midlands Provinces (Gukurahundi), the killing, maiming, violent retribution on opposition political parties (especially their leadership), and running down the economy among other deplorable characterisations.

Imagined in a large corpus of scholarship as initially African Nationalist in outlook, later transforming into a Leninist-Marxist form of governance, as well as radically metamorphosing to a pan-African centred policy advocate, Mugabe’s political philosophies, policies and ideology have been collectively tagged as *Mugabeism* (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009). In the earlier days of his leadership of the newly independent Zimbabwe, Mugabe was a celebrated liberation icon, revered by all and sundry – and imagined as conciliatory, progressive and a unifier. As part of demonstrating this acknowledgement, among other accolades that include a barrage of honorary PhDs from a multiplicity of international universities, he was also knighted by Queen Elizabeth II. In the later years of Mugabe’s rule, specifically after the radical land reclamations of the late 1990s to the early 2000s (ratified later by Mugabe’s government as the Fast Track Land Reform Programme), Mugabe lost this fame, especially with Europe (particularly the erstwhile former colonial master, Britain) and America, resulting in a barrage of sanctions/embargoes imposed on the country (Sabao & Visser 2020).

As Sabao (2013, p. 177) observes, “the continued alienation of the country, especially by the Western countries, who constituted the larger part of the country’s donor community as well as by multilateral institutions culminated in an unprecedented deterioration of the Zimbabwean economy characterised by a world record-breaking inflation index of 79.6 billion per cent between

2008 and 2009.” Drawing contributions from multidisciplinary expertise and/or active participation in politics, international relations, policy studies, history, social sciences, media studies and/or language studies, *Re/membering Robert Gabriel Mugabe: Politics, Legacy, Philosophy, Life and Death* presents scholarly contributions that are reflective of issues surrounding and about the life of the late former Zimbabwean President, Robert Gabriel Mugabe as it relates to his philosophy, life, politics, legacy and other relevant issues to understanding the ‘enigma’ that is Mugabe.

The Enigma that is Mugabe: History, Philosophy and Legacy

Mugabe has over the years proved to be a difficult man to describe successfully. Varied versions and understandings of him make it difficult to aptly locate a full description that encapsulates who he really is/was. In that way, he has continued, even in death, to remain an enigma – with a historiography so complex and controversial. Mugabe has always been a controversial character. Perhaps in trying to understand the complex person that Mugabe was, it is important to draw from those that knew him in his childhood and youth. As VOA (2019) explicates:

One of his childhood friends, (cousins to be accurate), James Robert Dambaza Chikerema who attended school and herded cattle with him, once described Robert Mugabe as an aloof, withdrawn temperamental young man who wanted to win all the time and would separate his cattle from the others if he was upset and spend the whole day alone.

This description can best, psychologically, explain how Mugabe turned out to be an adult and leader. In fact, as controversial and enigmatic as he was, it is said that Mugabe never forgave his uncle for such a description of him that was only sincerely meant to shed light on how to best explain his behaviours – through a psychoanalytical analysis of him. It is also on record that Mugabe refused to attend the uncle’s funeral because of these public pronouncements he made.

Even Mugabe’s rise to power is historically shrouded in controversy. Having been imprisoned for nearly a decade for political activism, Mugabe’s rise to power is credited to Solomon “Rex Nkhondo” (nom de guerre) Mujuru – famously referred to as the “Kingmaker”. As Sabao (2013 p. 82) explains:

General Mujuru is largely famous for having led the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) Shona speaking ZANLA forces together with Josiah Tongogara in the strategising of the guerrilla war during the period 1964 – 1974, a decade through with Robert Gabriel Mugabe, the incumbent president of Zimbabwe, was imprisoned in Rhodesian prisons. Mujuru, also known for having actively participated in the escape of Mugabe from Rhodesia into Mozambique soon after his release from prison, is credited as having been the ‘Kingmaker’ to Mugabe’s ascendancy to the leadership of the Zimbabwe National African Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and subsequently the presidency of the newly independent Zimbabwe.

Edgar “Two Boy” Tekere, who was also instrumental in the escape of Mugabe into Mozambique also describes him in his memoirs, *A Lifetime of Struggle*, as an unwilling participant in the armed struggle. Tekere (2007) former secretary-general of ZANU PF, states that Mugabe was a reluctant, scared and unwilling participant in the struggle. Tekere’s position delegitimises Mugabe’s exalted political grandmaster attribute accentuated in official history. Instead, Tekere (2007) only acknowledges Mugabe as a very articulate and educated political figure whose charisma was only confined to romanticism displayed in his written and oratory skills. Of note is that Tekere’s narrative like any other autobiography had its subjectivities and limitations as a descriptor of Mugabe’s place in Zimbabwe’s liberation history.

It has also been suggested that in Mozambique Mugabe’s popularity was catalysed by Mujuru’s machinations. As Sabao (2013 p. 82-83) observes, “Mugabe was allegedly not popular with the guerrillas, most of them had never seen him.” “It is universally accepted in ZANU PF that without Solomon’s active support, Mugabe would have been “a nobody”. Solomon and the late Josiah Tongogara led the ZANLA forces. “Following the assassination of the party chairman, Herbert Chitepo, in Lusaka and the detention of most of the ZANLA High Command by the Zambian government, Rex Nhongo [Mujuru] slipped out through Malawi to Tanzania and was the top-ranking commander outside of prison. He rebuilt a temporary command structure, maintained close contact with the imprisoned leaders, and put his signature to the document that emerged from the Zambian prison and the training camps in Tanzania, known as the Mgagao Declaration, that announced the

support of the young freedom fighters for Robert Mugabe as leader of the armed struggle for independence. The leaders of the War Council (*Dare reChimurenga*) in Zambia's Mpima prison subsequently issued a "Declaration formally pledging support to Comrade Robert Mugabe's leadership of the Zimbabwe African National African National Union (ZANU)", which was distributed to the guerrilla camps and party branches"¹.

Based on Tekere's account, the contributions that Mugabe made in the liberation of the country are overinflated. Tekere's selective forgetting of Mugabe's role in nationalist politics dating back to the National Democratic Party (NDP) and Zimbabwe African People (ZAPU) days exposes the varying standpoints of Mugabe's external representation. The confinement of Mugabe's instrumental role to the last very short leg of the liberation struggle from 1975 to 1979 – only four years sustains the view that Mugabe got far more credit than he deserves.

Mugabe's major philosophy rooted in Marxism and pan-Africanism has also been challenged and brought to question. Revered by many African leaders as epitomising pan-Africanist values symmetrical to those of Kwame Nkrumah, Jomo Kenyatta and Julius Nyerere, Mugabe's political philosophy over the years was centred on the preservation of Africa's sovereignty from neocolonialism and was underpinned by the mantra – "Africa for Africans". His controversial confrontations with the Western world and the Fast Track Land Reform are some of the decisions celebrated as influenced by pan-Africanist ideals. In philosophically turning back to who Robert Mugabe was –there is consensus in this book that the shifting turns of his political life mirror Africa's constantly changing interactions with imperialism. However, resistance has remained the cornerstone of Africa's repelling instinct to imperialism. As such, Mugabe is unequivocally memorialized as that defiant symbol of Africa's resistance to the changing manifestations of colonialism before and after Zimbabwe's independence.

These positions are however questioned by some who doubt the sincerity, concreteness and brevity of such ideological positions in Mugabe. Mahomva (2015 p. 208-209) argues that during the Government of National Unity (GNU), ZANU PF partially abandoned its pan-Africanist stance which was

1 "Mujuru: His courage in the struggle for independence" - The Herald, Thursday 18 August 2011

merely reduced to posturing:

ZANU PF's radical turn to "Pan-African" ideals of economic nationalisation was defiantly maintained – in the media, in any case. In the boardrooms, it was always the quiet exemptions for the big corporates. The outer shout for indigenes' control of all external investments was just that: obfuscation and campaigning for the 2013 elections. (In 2014, as this is being written, there is a deafening silence on any indigenisation quotas – as more and more companies close shop and throw thousands on the unemployment heap.)

Such is the multi-dimensional scope of Mugabe's political and philosophical construction. His legacy is intertwined within the varying currencies of re-membering and dismembering articulations. Mugabe was and remains thus indeed a subject of multifaceted descriptions. No single gourd could ever effectively contain the collective of the often highly contradicting and conflicting imagings of the person and icon that Mugabe was/is.

Controversy, Deposal and Death

The life of Mugabe was highly contentious and controversial. It was coloured by accusations of among many other things, gross violations of human rights, genocide, murder of political opponents, electoral theft, despotism, barbarism and many other colourful behaviours. The chapters in this volume deal with many of the multiplicity of imaginations and imagings of Mugabe. From accusations of being part of the plot that assassinated Herbert Chitepo for him to consolidate his reign over the ZANLA forces to his betrayal of the ZAPU party by diverting from the Lancaster agreement to contest the elections as a united front (VOA, 2019), to allegations for the genocide of the Ndebele people (predominantly ZAPU aligned) (CCJP, 2007), election rigging, the capture of the judiciary, and the killing and maiming of opposition political leaders.

Mugabe is controversially accused of genocide in the Matebeleland and Midlands Provinces of Zimbabwe following a fall out with ZAPU leader, Joshua Nkomo (see CCJP, 2007). He is further accused of election rigging and fraud in both the 2008 and 2013 general elections. Both plebiscites were marred by voter intimidation and the maiming of opposition party

leaders and members. In an interview after his resignation, Mugabe admits to these gross human rights violations, especially during election times. In responding to the question of violence against opposition members and gross human rights violations, Mugabe responded by saying that, “Yes, we have been accused of that. On that side, yes, some errors were done. They continue to be done. Human rights...that’s a very difficult area. I agree...I think it is more related to elections – how we handled other people, the opposition etc.” (ITV, 2018). Mahomva (2015 p. 189) summates the controversial descriptions of Mugabe by submitting that:

Opposition elements have sprouted up since 1980, but the realist wrath of *Mugabeism* has curtailed their effectiveness and appeal to the people of Zimbabwe. *Mugabeism* survived under weak opposition from 1980 until the rise of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999.

It is of course critical to observe that this is but just one version of Mugabe. Many world leaders continue to celebrate Mugabe for his pan-Africanist ideals and his fearlessness to speak truth to power on behalf of Zimbabwe and Africa. The contributions made in this volume grapple with varied aspects of the often contradictory plurality of the personal, political and philosophical being that Robert Gabriel Mugabe has over the years become.

Up to the time of his death, Mugabe expressed feelings of betrayal and beliefs that his ousting constituted a coup. He is on record maintaining that he only resigned from the presidency to avoid bloodshed in which the Zimbabwean population – not him and his family – would be the victims. Mugabe eventually died on 6 September 2019 of cancer-related diseases – probably further compounded by old age. He was 95 then.

Chapter Outline

Richard Runyararo Mahomva’s opening chapter partially historicises –but extensively discusses Robert Mugabe’s socialisation as a colonial subject and how colonialism reproduced him into a celebrated anti-colonial ideologue. As a product of colonialism, Mugabe is also viewed as a leader whose early post-independence policies were directed by the whims of imperialism. Mahomva further argues that Mugabe’s turn against independent Zimbabwe’s control by Western colonial powers rendered him a subject of immense

philosophical deconstruction by neoliberal ideological sponsored institutions and academics. On the other hand, Mugabe remained a philosophical father-figure to his allies in ZANU PF and among pro-land reform think-tanks. Mahomva observes that Robert Mugabe's memory is constructed from conflicting anti-colonial and imperialist reflective leanings. As such, Mugabe's philosophical perpetuity will be defined in terms of anti-colonial and colonial significations. Mugabe as an entry point of analysis symbolises the conflicting predicaments of the decolonisation project due to eminent imperialist ideological determinants to decolonisation. Mahomva's chapter advocates for an Afro-centred approach to re-membering Mugabe as part of a broad objective to challenge the imperialist philosophical immortalisation of the late former Zimbabwean head of state.

Chapter 2 makes submissions of contrasting imagings of Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwean nation-state in several twentieth-century Zimbabwean literary imaginaries. The plurality of the former and now late political leader of nearly four decades has created in him an enigma with no stable and universally accepted political or personal identity. Tendai Owen Chikara, Nhlahla Landa and Sindiso Zhou argue that this has resulted in the re/construction of largely conflicting imaginations of Mugabe, especially in post-2000 Zimbabwean literary creativity. Believing the oeuvre to be largely biographical of the Zimbabwean nation-state, the chapter explores the often highly conflicting and contrasting images of Zimbabwe's former, and now late president, Robert Mugabe as well as of the Zimbabwean nation during his tenure as imagined in literary fiction penned through and after the Zimbabwean decade of crisis (2000-2009). The chapter focuses on specifically literary imaginaries about Zimbabwe and which engage with the diverse socio-economic and political challenges consequent of Mugabe's tenure and which aid in shining "light on the obscured character that was Robert Mugabe."

Chapter 3 by Nelson Mlambo and Jairo Kangira focuses on the literary projections of Robert Gabriel Mugabe as a controversial figure. The chapter examines Mugabe's pervasive influence on Zimbabweans through an analysis of how Zimbabwean creative works which capture his omnipresence in every aspect of Zimbabwean life. Literature as an imitation of reality is deployed to depict the many ways in which Mugabe is an inherent feature of the

Zimbabwean reality. The chapter also explores issues of hope and the various ways used by Zimbabweans to cope with the daily survival challenges.

Collen Sabao, Emaculate Mvundura and Oiva Sikwaya Nauyoma, in Chapter 4 comparatively analyse the changing diplomatic relations between Zimbabwe and Europe (specifically the former colonial masters, Britain) as well as the USA as reflected in Robert Mugabe's first (1980) and last (2013) inaugural speeches. Through the lenses of the Appraisal theoretic framework, the chapter makes contrasting observations of the attitudinal resources that are used in addressing Britain, Europe and the USA. Sabao, Mvundura and Nauyoma, tracing the manners in which bilateral relations between Europe in general, Britain specifically and the USA degenerated over the years due to a series of disagreements and accusations. Major sources of diplomatic conflict include among other accusations against Mugabe: alleged genocide of the Ndebeles in the early 1980s, alleged gross human rights violations, election rigging and political intolerance demonstrated by allegations of killing and maiming opposition political leaders and members and perhaps more profoundly, the Mugabe government-led Fast Track Land Reform Programme of the late 1990s and early 2000s that saw the death of about two dozen British citizens. Britain and the USA in particular retaliated with a series of embargoes that resultantly saw the collapse of the Zimbabwean economy to world record lows. The chapter, drawing examples of evaluative and attitudinal resources from the two speeches, observes a shift from the conciliatory and welcoming tone in the 1980s to hostility and blame mongering, characterised by personal attacks on British and American leaders for alleged interferences in the sovereign matters of Zimbabwe. The analyses evince a deterioration of bilateral relations between Zimbabwe and these nations as well as between Mugabe and the nations too – who in his early days of leadership were full of nothing but praise for him.

In Chapter 5, Isaac Mhute, Ernest Jakaza & Hugh Mangeya explore language policy and planning issues in the Mugabe era and how they impacted national development. Exploiting the explanatory potential of the Utilisation-Focused theory (UFE) (Patton, 2008) together with the Applied African Socio-linguistic approach to language (Wolff, 2017; Ruiz, 1984), the chapter interrogates how the Zimbabwean language policies of the Mugabe era impacted the political, socio-cultural, economic and

educational development of Zimbabwe as a nation. Mhute, Jakaza and Mangeya, historicising the language policy system in Zimbabwe from the adoption at independence in 1980 of the Rhodesian policy which pedestals English, the elevation of Shona and Ndebele (the two dominant indigenous languages) to the status of English in 1981 and the reversal of such a directive due to the resistance from universities and employers in 1985, explicate the tumultuous process that national language policies can be in African settings. Amendment No. 20 Chapter 1 Section 6 of the current Zimbabwean Constitution has however reversed all this and officially recognises 16 languages (including English) as equal. The chapter argues that the constant maintenance of English as the official language of business and instruction has produced mixed fortunes in different facets of Zimbabwe as a country. For example, while in the economic front the use of English, the chapter argues, maintained a stable economy in the country on the educational front it was detrimental to the learning of indigenous children as the language of instruction (English) stood as a hurdle in their efforts to grasp the educational concepts and made learning ineffective.

Richard Muranda, Wonder Maguraushe and Weston Chimbudzi, in Chapter 6, discuss the support for and taste of music drawing from various events and incidences – direct and indirect – about his life. The chapter examines and discusses Mugabe's views regards musicals at graduation ceremonies at selected state universities in Zimbabwe – for which he presided over as Chancellor. By focusing on Mugabe's close interaction with the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) Police Band, as well as his observed deployment of liberation war songs as part of his tactics for the sustenance of his political hegemony, his apparent love for classical and folk music, Muranda, Maguraushe and Chimbudzi make submissions that, there was a softer side to Mugabe, after all. The chapter also recognises and commends Mugabe for his support for the academic study of music in higher education institutions, which has seen the contemporary teaching and learning of music up to degree levels. A very pertinent contribution that the chapter makes is its recognition of how Mugabe used music as a medium of political communication to reinforce and sustain his political hegemony and philosophies (even in the face of the threats of intraparty factional wars that threaten it) as well as to legitimate his nearly four decades of rule.

In Chapter 7, Chipo Chirimuuta & Magret Jongore deliberate on the history (in the First Republic under Robert Gabriel Mugabe) and future (in the Second Republic under Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa) of the land reform programme in Zimbabwe. The chapter, drawing from the intimations by the New Dispensation that it would adopt a paradigm shift in the running of the country with potential for the recall and reallocation of land to previously dispossessed white commercial farmers, interrogates the land and agrarian reform processes in Zimbabwe as they tie to the legacy of Robert Mugabe. The dawn of the Second Republic ushered in new sensitivities with regards to the trajectory that the land and agrarian reform processes in Zimbabwe would take. Observing as a point of departure that concerns that Robert Mugabe's legacy, has been from the onset, been aligned with a construction of him as the grand custodian of the liberation struggle and was thus strongly intertwined with the politics of land ownership in Zimbabwe, the chapter questions the character of the future of the land reform programmes in Zimbabwe in the absence of Mugabe. It asks critical questions on what route the Second Republic will take in addressing the issue. Will the New Dispensation maintain the status quo and preserve Mugabe's legacy (chiefly pro-peasant) or assume a radical stance that reverses Mugabe's policies in a bid to resuscitate the limping country? This is one of the pertinent questions that the chapter asks.

Obert Mpofu, in Chapter 8 uses his intimate vantage point to authoritatively discuss Robert Mugabe's entrapment in the colonial power dynamics as one of the leading Zimbabwean nationalist founding fathers. Mpofu's analysis of Mugabe hero and villain imaging in Zimbabwean politics takes a historical route spanning from the Lancaster Conference processes and resolutions right up to the post-independence land conflicts. The chapter addresses how Mugabe's demonisation and commemoration emanate from his interchanging roles in fighting for Zimbabwe's comprehensive political and economic independence. Mpofu concludes by proposing the need for Mugabe to be celebrated as a champion of Zimbabwe's continued fight against colonialism.

In Chapter 9, Lenin Tinashe Chisaira interrogates the influence of the Marxist-Leninist ideology on Zimbabwe's nationalist liberation movement and subsequently shaped the political culture and policymaking in post-

independent Zimbabwe. Aptly acknowledging that the political growth of Mugabe and Zimbabwe's liberation war was primarily couched within Marxist-Leninism, the chapter also examines how Mugabe's political philosophies and ideologies shaped his statesmanship. The chapter argues that Mugabe's tenure and legacy are characterised by ambivalences, largely manifest through political, historical and ideological inconsistencies and paradoxes. Chisaira maintains that because of these seeming inconsistencies, it has become difficult to concisely articulate the political philosophy of Robert Mugabe and thus resulting in a plurality of his political persona. Demonstrating through engagements with a host of political, economic, social and socio-economic policies, grappling with their establishment motivations, the chapter argues that the policies exhibit a potpourri of often conflicting ideological positions and subsequently a degeneration of the First Republic's once-flourishing state into anarchy, characterised by brutality, intolerance of the working class and capitalism – a complete departure from the Marxist-Leninist ideals.

Lawrence Mhandara, in Chapter 10, examines the role of SADC in the Zimbabwean political question – arguing how the regional bloc represents, on the one hand, a lifeline for the perpetuation of Mugabe's legacy and legitimacy and a diplomatic failure for the major opposition party leader Morgan Richard Tsvangirai and his Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) political party, on the other. The chapter succinctly moves through the political crises that Zimbabwe went through in the first decade of the second millennium, characterised by the greatest threat to ZANU PF's political hegemony from the MDC, and how SADC's diplomacy seemed to opt for a soft approach that favoured the sustenance of the Mugabe hegemony. Critically engaging with the SADC policy towards Zimbabwe and specifically Mugabe, in a period characterised by accusations of despotism, undemocratic conduct during elections and election rigging largely from the opposition parties represented at large by MDC, Mhandara explicates how "SADC eschewed coercion and opted for suasion and engagement with Mugabe" and also how the bloc's "policy on Zimbabwe represented a diplomatic failure for Tsvangirai and some career defining victories for Mugabe." The chapter concludes by raising a very pertinent observation of how Mugabe managed to outwit Tsvangirai philosophically by his insistence on the African Agency and the primacy of Africa before anything else.

Mugabe's victories were in part also compounded by Tsvangirai's lack of diplomatic experience.

In Chapter 11, Avoid Masiraha historicises the political demise of Mugabe, arguing that Mugabe's deposition was not a one-time spur of the moment event but a gradual process culminating from a multiplicity of preceding events over the years that can primarily be traced back to the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (with its associated human rights abuses) and the subsequent economic crises that it created, the escalation of opposition politics and the war veterans factor (and its attendant intraparty factional politics within ZANU PF). Masiraha argues that most of the causes were birthed from the Fast Track Land Reform Programme and were further compounded by the Western and American hostilities characterised by a series of sanctions – in response to the alleged “forced land grabs” by Mugabe. Contestations over the alleged undemocratic manner in which elections have been held in the country (specifically the 2008 and 2018 presidential elections), the chapter also argues, resulted in Mugabe's loss of political legitimacy and ultimately also contributed to sealing his fate.

In Chapter 12, Hugh Mangeya, Isaac Mhute and Ernest Jakaza discuss the deposal of Robert Mugabe as reflected in social media circulated jokes, specifically on WhatsApp. As such, the authors make analyses of the discursive nature of the jokes circulated in selected WhatsApp groups and examines how this form of humour dialogically entered into dialogue with the state-centric renditions of Mugabe during the November 2017 political transition in Zimbabwe which saw the deposal of Robert Gabriel Mugabe and his replacement as head of state by his sacked former vice president Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa - described in many circles as a “soft coup”. In making such an analysis with hopes of answering the question of whether Mugabe was a hero or villain, Mangeya, Mhute and Jakaza submit that discourses on Mugabe, personally and/or the office, even on social media banter such as jokes, are inherently characterised by elusiveness, ambivalence, a multiplicity of descriptions and oftentimes open-endedness. Adopting the concept of *Alltagsegeschichte*, a primary approach to the archiving and interpretation of history, the chapter argues that the jokes evince a multiplicity of histories and imagination of Mugabe and the November 2017 events. The chapter further argues that their contested

and conflicting nature is chiefly dependent on one's personal vantage point from which Mugabe, Zimbabwean politics at large and the November 2017 events are viewed. The jokes, the chapter concludes, therefore demonstrate a glimpse into the thinking of the 'common people' (Wozniak, 2014).

In Chapter 13 Ernest Jakaza, Isaac Mhute and Hugh Mangeya examine, through Appraisal Theory, the representation of factional politics within ZANU PF during the tenure of Robert Mugabe, in the state newspaper (*The Herald*) and the private newspaper (*Daily News*). It also appraises the evaluation of Mugabe himself in the context and discourse of these factional wars. Succession disputes within the party, largely culminating from the fact that Mugabe never clearly and publicly named his successor, resulted in tussles of power within the party and subsequently in the formation of two alleged "factions" – G40 and Lacoste. The chapter argues that the production of news, specifically political news production evidence subjectivity in media and augment the position that media and politics are inseparable. They argue that the news is never ideologically free. The analysis evinces the questioning and challenge to Mugabe's authority and capability through both the invoked and inscribed evaluations of the two factions - Lacoste and G40.

In chapter 14, Collen Sabao, Moses Magadza and Tendai Owen Chikara, in trying to configure the enigma that Mugabe is, comparatively analyse the framing of his death in Zimbabwean and British newspapers. The chapter makes a comparative discourse analytic and framing analysis of news reports breaking the death of Mugabe in British and Zimbabwean newspapers. In doing this and through the Framing Theory (Entman, 1996), the chapter demonstrates how Mugabe possessed a multiplicity of political personas as he is imaged in diverse and conflicting ways in different media, based on their content and context. Drawing from the elusive nature of his description, Sabao, Magadza and Chikara respond to the question of whether the apt description of Mugabe should be that of a liberation war hero to be celebrated. The chapter observes that the diverse ways in which Mugabe is framed can only be understood within the context of the history between Britain and Zimbabwe on the one hand (to understand the frames in British media) and political history and developments in Zimbabwe since the turn of the millennium (to be able to appreciate the frames in Zimbabwean newspapers)

on the other. Frames in British media, which largely and collectively vilify Mugabe on whatever pretext as a murderer, despot and tyrant under the guise of being the voice of reason and democracy, the chapter argues, are shaped by historical relations between Zimbabwe and her colonial master that have degenerated over the years into one characteristic by an insult hurling contest. On the other hand, frames in Zimbabwean newspapers can only be understood in the context of the media polarity in Zimbabwe that was birthed by the growth of populist oppositional politics as well as newspaper ownership patterns in Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

Mugabe in life and death was and remains a very elusive enigma. The chapters in this volume imagine Robert Gabriel Mugabe from varied contexts ranging from ideology, philosophy, popular culture (music and social media), politics, policy and personal histories. What is interesting is that despite the varied angles from which 'the contributions sought to understand one of the supposed historically inimitable African leaders, a unitary conclusion is that Mugabe presents a multiplicity of highly conflicting and contesting images. It becomes apparent through perusing the chapters, rich in analysis, that the character and persona of Mugabe (both personal and political) cannot be explained from one dimension and the multiplicity of the angles from which the contributions in this volume sought to understand the late Zimbabwean head of state of nearly four decades indeed make a significant contribution in understanding the "fantom" that Mugabe was/is.

References

- Alao, A. (2012). *Mugabe and the Politics of Security in Zimbabwe*. McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP.
- Bhabha, H (1993). 'Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche and the Colonial Condition', in Williams, L. and Chrisman, P. *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory A Reader*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace in Zimbabwe, & Legal Resources Foundation (Zimbabwe). (2007). *Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe: A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980-1988*. Harare: Legal Resources Foundation.
- Chan, S. (2003). *Robert Mugabe: a Life of Power and Violence*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.
- Compagnon, D. (2011). *A Predictable Tragedy: Robert Mugabe and the Collapse of Zimbabwe*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Holland, H. (2008). *Dinner with Mugabe: The Untold Story of a Freedom Fighter who Became a Tyrant*. Penguin Random House South Africa.
- ITV. (2018). *Robert Mugabe tells ITV News Zimbabwe 'must undo disgrace' of 'military takeover'*. Interview retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJG74nnDNAk&t=47s>.
- Mahomva, R. (2015). "Power Struggles in Zimbabwe, the Legitimisation of Mugabeism and the Future Beyond 2013". In Mahomva, R & Moyo, S (Eds). *The Post-1980 Chimurengas Explained*. Bulawayo: LAN Readers.
- Mahomva, R & Zinyama, T (2021). *Memory & the National Question in Zimbabwe: A Re-reading of Obert Mpofu*. Bulawayo: LAN Readers.
- Meredith, F. M. (2004). *Robert Mugabe and the Tragedy of Zimbabwe. Understanding The Tempest: A Student Casebook to Issues, Sources, and Historical Documents*, 162.
- Meredith, M. (2009). *Mugabe: Power, Plunder, and the Struggle for Zimbabwe's Future*. Public Affairs.
- Mpofu, O. M. (2020). *On the Shoulders of Struggle: Memoirs of a Political Insider*. Bulawayo: LAN Readers.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2009). Making Sense Of Mugabeism in Local and Global Politics: 'So Blair, Keep Your England And Let Me Keep my Zimbabwe'. *Third World Quarterly*, 30(6), 1139-1158.

Nyarota, G. (2018). *The graceless fall of Robert Mugabe: The end of a dictator's reign*. Penguin Random House South Africa.

Sabao, C. (2013). *The Reporter Voice and Objectivity in Cross-Linguistic Reporting of Controversial News in Zimbabwean Newspapers: An Appraisal Approach* (Doctoral dissertation, Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch University).

Sabao, C., Mvundura, E. & Nauyoma, O. S. (2021). Shifting Diplomatic Ideological Stance Taking? Comparative Appraisal Discourse Linguistic Analyses of Mugabe's First (1980) and Last (2013) Inauguration speeches. In Sabao, C. & Mahomva, R. R. (Eds). *Remembering Robert Gabriel Mugabe: Politics, Legacy, Philosophy, Life and Death*. Bulawayo: LAN Readers.

Sabao, C. & Visser, M. (2020). Sanctioning an Anti-Sanctions Campaign? Comparing the Textuality of News Reports in Zimbabwean Newspapers. *Journal of African Languages and Literary Studies* 1 (3), 179 – 202.

Tekere, E. Z. (2007). *A Lifetime of Struggle*. Harare: SAPES Books.

VOA. (2019). *Late Robert Mugabe Was Liked and Feared by Some Zimbabweans* (8 September 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.voazimbabwe.com/a/mugabe-dies-zimbabwe/5072780.html> (6 November 2020).

Winter, J. (2019). *Robert Mugabe: From Liberator to Tyrant*. BBC News (6 September 2019). Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27519044>.

The Philosophical Immortalisation of Robert Mugabe in the Post-colonial Quest for Decolonisation

Richard Runyararo Mahomva

President Mugabe had since been released from detention and we now knew each other because I had already stayed with him in Highfield. I was now mature and grown. I did not only enjoy his English; I also now enjoyed his clarity of thought, clarity of direction and how he articulated problems. He was now a lawyer and would deal with issues in such a surgical manner that one would admire him.

(Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, 2015)

Drawing a leaf from His Excellency President Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa – a lifetime disciple of Zimbabwe’s illustrious liberation icon, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, this chapter explores Mugabe’s philosophical registers in Zimbabwe and Africa’s decolonisation agenda. While his legacy and person has been narrowed to the generic imaging of dictatorship, patronage, human rights violation and Zimbabwe’s economic decline (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009a; 2015), this chapter unpacks and problematizes Mugabe’s rehabilitative and empowerment politics in the aftermath of Africans’ collective colonial humiliations and ill-treatment. In pursuit of this caveat, the chapter locates the philosophical impetus of Mugabe and how it has been sustained in Zimbabwe and Africa’s post-colonial struggles. Mugabe is reimagined as a bearer of a gamut of pro-African liberation philosophies whose relevance since the anti-colonial days continues to relevantly permeate the African nationalist and continental post-colonial discursive space. Put into context, Serequerberhan (1998) posits that post-colonial African philosophy is a product of the continent’s colonial abuse. As a response, to the decimating effects of imperialism on the African being, the key prerogative of African philosophy and philosophers is to solve the “essential problems” faced by the continent as a result of the colonial assault. Mugabe’s magnanimous gifting described above by Mnangagwa

(2015) as distinguished “clarity of thought ...and direction” in articulating problems fits well into Serequeberhan (1998)’s attributes of a post-colonial philosopher. Therefore, this chapter discusses the enduring function of Mugabe as a philosophical think-tank in the discourses of Zimbabwe and Africa’s decolonisation agenda. Guided by this position this discussion answers the following questions linked to the philosophical grounding of Robert Mugabe’s legacy: How was Mugabe’s philosophical standpoint constructed? What was the connection between Mugabe’s philosophical self and the defining moments of his career? What were the key ideological determinants of Mugabe’s imagination as a liberation hero and villain? As a figure of contested anti-colonial and neoliberal ideas, from which perspective must he be remembered? By responding to these questions, the chapter intends to establish the multifaceted philosophical personhood of Mugabe in all its contestations versus the goal of Zimbabwe and Africa’s pursuit for total decolonisation. At the same time, the chapter provides key philosophical highlights of Mugabe’s political journey which will remain an inherent part of Zimbabwe and Africa’s self-reassertion.

Biographic Background of Robert Gabriel Mugabe’s Philosophical Genesis

Born in colonial Rhodesia’s Kutama village, on the 21st of February 1924, Mugabe was a product of colonial subjectivity. His strong Christian orientation and Western education are part of his formative and imposed ideological socialisation (Holland, 2008). He was born into abject poverty and directly experiences many other forms of marginalisation of the Black majority. This background gives him a purely subaltern appreciation of life and also shapes his thinking as a subject of the brutal imperialist system. It is this background that facilitates his formative radicalisation. His training at the University of Fort Hare provides a strong ideological foundation for young Robert Mugabe as he was involved in student activism.

As a professional teacher, he finds himself conscripted in nationalist politics throughout the evolution of the National Democratic Party and the Zimbabwe African People’s Union, both led by Joshua Nkomo. In 1963, he was a key figure of the splinter group which fled ZAPU to form the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). He is at the helm of ZANU’s

leadership from 1975 to 1980 and led its successor political party, the ZANU-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), from 1980 to 2017 (Mpofu, 2020). For a decade (1964-1974), he was among the nationalists who were detained by the Ian Smith regime as part of the repression strategy to the wave of anti-colonial resistance (Martin and Johnson, 1980). This suggests that Mugabe's political activity was grounded in the nationalist and pan-Africanist school of thought of the 50s and the 60s.

After his release from prison in 1974, he fled to Mozambique and reasserted his strong influence in the leadership of ZANU and fast-paced the tempo of guerrilla warfare (Tekere, 2007). Mugabe used Marxism to give philosophical direction to Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA)'s activity. Mugabe is remembered as an ardent Marxist for his philosophical location of ZANLA's anti-colonial politics within the Marxist-Leninist ideology. It was at that point when ZANU/ZANLA assumed a strong Marxist ideological grounding courtesy of Mugabe's articulation of this philosophy and his constant location of the liberation struggle in such Western resistance logic. Mugabe's consistent anti-colonial position underpinned in nationalism, pan-Africanism and Marxism became the defining pillars of his power denotations. This continued right to the time of the nationalist parties' negotiation processes at the Lancaster Conference of 1979. This conference designed Zimbabwe's post-colonial transition as Mugabe became the country's first Prime Minister of Zimbabwe (1980-1987) and President (1987-2017). In his assumption of power as the Founding Father of the 'First Republic', Mugabe inherited a colonial state and his policies indicated partial preservation of some inequalities. At independence, Mugabe also adopted a reconciliatory policy that saw the Africans who were historically marginalised being reborn into an inclusive and egalitarian Zimbabwe. This superficial integration of all citizens in post-independence Zimbabwe is punctuated by obvious inequalities as far as property rights are concerned (Mpofu, 2020). This is mainly because the hereditary outlook of the law was still colonial and facilitated the subjection of the erstwhile marginalised. It is this tragedy that caused Mugabe to develop a radically intolerant position to Zimbabwe's sovereign coexistence with the colonial legacy.

Robert Gabriel Mugabe, a Philosophical Epitome?

Philosophy is a reflective science that seeks to respond to many questions defining certain existential political-economy and socio-cultural conundrums (Omorege, 1998). Through the contemplative as a science, the philosopher constructs ideas that serve as responses to self-enquiries on a plethora of issues. The thinking-body –the philosopher is inclined to deconstruct certain orthodoxies within their locale. This makes philosophy to be varyingly relevant from one space to another. Philosophy as an enabler to canon construction and deconstruction, forms contested belief systems that define the controversies of power, being and knowledge (Grosfuguel, 2007; 2011). Philosophy explains diverse human experience in all its conditionalities to self-determination and the competitive instinct of all humanity (Hountondji, 1983; Appiah, 1992; Serequerberhan, 1998). Put simply, philosophy refers to a body of thoughts that attempt to interpret various aspects of life.

This means philosophy does not have a monolithic Eurocentric form as believed by many. Perhaps we need to think of philosophy as evolving from one society to another. This validates the need to think in terms of Africa having its unique body of political philosophy which is context-specific with philosophers like Robert Gabriel Mugabe of Zimbabwe, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Steve Bantu Biko of South Africa, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia among others. As rightly put, by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015), Mugabe was part of the first generation of African nationalists cum anti-colonial political-thought leaders. This makes him an ideological repository of African nationalism and the full pan-African actualisation symbol of the struggle against colonialism. His ability to articulate this agenda from the outset right up to his death makes him a philosophical asset of Zimbabwe and Africa's continued quest for decolonisation.

In Freire (1971)'s perspective, Mugabe's educationist credentials qualify him to be remembered as a pedagogical custodian. Msipa (2015) in his autobiography, *In Pursuit of Freedom –A Memoir*, argues that Mugabe's political vocation was born out of training as a teacher in Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, and Ghana. Msipa also recounts Mugabe's outstanding

oratory skills and closely attributes his wordsmith character to his teaching profession. Msipa (2015) emphatically states that Mugabe's first anti-colonial activism was inspired by Rhodesian African teachers' trade union politics. Mnangagwa (2015) further argues that even after joining active nationalist politics, Mugabe took the classroom into the ZANLA camps in Mozambique: "it was President Mugabe who organised for everybody to get an education. ...Education was uppermost in his dealings with the party and comrades. Many people benefited from that education policy during the war – thousands of them." Mnangagwa (2015)'s recollection suggests that Mugabe facilitated ZANLA's reconfiguration into a historical, scientific and philosophically grounded institution in executing its anti-colonial mandate. Through this process of "schooling the comrades", Mugabe cultivated ZANU's preparedness for transition to governing the then envisaged Zimbabwean independent state.

On that same note, Kanengoni (2003) remembers Mugabe as a philosophical heavy-weight who could teach liberation philosophy at any given point:

Mugabe took us through the lessons: the history of Zimbabwe...and all through that rather academic process, there was not a single book, a single piece of paper, a single pen. What I found quite fascinating about him was how he had his facts at the tips of his fingers...When I look at him now – 23 years later – the man has not changed because what he told us then, he is telling an entire nation now¹.

Mugabe is presented by Kanengoni as a philosophical suave character. Kanengoni, a former ZANLA guerrilla presents an exalting perspective of Mugabe – a revolutionary ideologue. From Kanengoni's view, Mugabe knew it all about the struggle and was not only articulate in terms of historicising the objectives of the struggle, but he also remained a philosophical point of reference in articulating the complexities of imperialism in all their manifestations even after independence. To confirm the same, Obert Mpofu another Mugabe mentee, a former minister in Mugabe's cabinet, remembers Mugabe as a symbol of liberation philosophy retention with a profound commissariat charisma:

1. Alexander Kanengoni's presentation at the International Conference on Violence and Memory. Emory, September 2003.

Without acknowledging it then, I was unconsciously aligned with his charisma. In the process, I found ideological affections floating between Nkomo and Mugabe's dedicated leadership traits and how the two nationalists inspired the direction of the liberation struggle... I got access to a lot of literature on Mugabe from my ZANU counterparts and we held robust debates on the political issues emerging at the time. In the process, I got to appreciate the common vision which all of us from both ZAPU and ZANU shared. We had a common and dedicated passion for the total emancipation of Zimbabwe from colonial oppression regardless of our respective partisan affiliations (Mpofu 2020 p. 178-179).

Mpofu's ideological affinity to ZANU after his first encounter with Mugabe in 1976 exposes the late former President's philosophically magnetic impulse. Mugabe's philosophical imprint on young Obert Mpofu is even emphasised by his interest in pro-ZANU literature though he was a full member of ZAPU. Mpofu's case proves that Mugabe's philosophical being attracted far and wide support across the institutional ranks of the liberation movement. As a result, Mugabe was an embodiment of the anti-colonial values shared by both ZANU and ZAPU during the armed struggle. Like Kanengoni (2003) who asserts that Mugabe's reflective sophistication had a lasting impression on his students, Obert Mpofu argues that:

The mark of Cde Mugabe's influence continues to permeate across the political acumen of all of us who served under him in both the party and government. No doubt, the impact of his rich leadership is also visible in the statecraft of his successor, His Excellency, the President and First Secretary of ZANU PF, Cde Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa. Having been a close protégé of Cde Mugabe for more than 50 years, President Mnangagwa embodies the political genius which was much needed to carry on the virtues of our revolution beyond the Mugabe era (Mpofu 2020 p. 12).

Mpofu's recollection of Mugabe suggests that the late African icon was more than an ordinary statesman, but he is that unforgotten teacher and source of philosophical direction for those who served under his leadership in ZANU PF and the government. Kanengoni (2003) and Mnangagwa (2015) both assert that Mugabe was a philosophical powerhouse of the struggle and its

permanent values. From this view, Mugabe is still embraced as a source of ZANU PF's existential ideological clarity even from the grave. To this effect, the centrality of Robert Mugabe's legacy preservation formed the basis for the execution of Operation Restore Legacy (Mpofu, 2020). This ZANU PF 'insider' account about the events of November 2017 nullifies the external representation of Operation Restore Legacy as a Mugabe ouster project. The underlining pro-ZANU PF reflection on Operation Restore Legacy represents a collective voice of proverbial students who are forever grateful to Robert Mugabe their lifetime mentor. This position challenges emerging pro-coup interpretations (Simpson and Hawkins 2018; Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Ruhanya, 2020) of the transfer of power between the late African liberation stalwart Robert Mugabe and his successor, President Emmerson Mnangagwa. In seeking policy architecture homage to Mugabe's legacy, Mkodzongi and Lawrence (2019) recommend that the Mnangagwa administration must protect Mugabe's anti-colonial agrarian reform policy. Based on this view, suggestions of white land compensation is criticised as an abortion of Mugabe's agrarian landmark revolutionary position. Mkodzongi and Lawrence (2019) recommend that the state must not revert to the neo-liberal orthodoxy of reversing the agrarian reform born/e out of Robert Mugabe's *Third-Chimurenga*.

While in the most general sense, Mugabe is viewed as a philosophical archive of the liberation memory and its key tenets, within ZANU PF he remains a philosophical epitome of the party's principles. His role in the architecture of ZANU PF's internal democracy, constitutionalism – which gives internal power guidelines makes Mugabe a pivot of his party's existence. Outside ZANU PF, he is an orator par excellence who unified Zimbabwe through his consistent reference to the nationalist grounded philosophy. His policies also projected his philosophical impetus in articulating the urgency of economic democratisation, national unity and development in Zimbabwe. At a continental level, Mugabe's domestic policy pronouncement replicated Africa's desperate need for unity, development, equal access to opportunities and total economic growth.

Mugabe's Anti-Neoliberal Turn and the Proliferation of the *Mugabephobia*

The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) had harmful effects on the general welfare of the ordinary Zimbabwean. ESAP heightened unemployment and downgraded public service delivery with the health and education sectors being the most affected (Mlambo, 1995). This demonstrated the catastrophe of the negotiated model of independence which was followed by the adoption of neoliberal economic policies in Zimbabwe after 1980. Mugabe was responsible for Zimbabwe's plunge into the philosophical and pragmatic deficits of negotiated independence and the country's early independence subscription to neoliberalism. The failure of neoliberal expediency triggered the need for economic policy radicalisation aimed at dismantling the interests of white capital (Sadomba, 2011). Nhemachena and Warikanda (2019) argue that Zimbabwe's allegiance to neoliberalism immediately after independence preserved transnational plunder, looting, robbery and exploitation by Western-owned Multi-National Companies (MNCs). As a result, Zimbabwe was reduced into a surrogate state of colonial capitalist control after independence. As such, Mugabe's legacy must be located within the scope of neoliberalism's failure to deliver sustainable development in Zimbabwe.

One of the awakening points of Mugabe's philosophical signification was his ability to discern the Western capitalist sponsored charade on human rights, democracy, good governance and rule of law. The same rhetoric sponsors of neoliberal democracy continue to pursue the dispossession, looting, exploitation and plunder of Africans and their resources. By abandoning ESAP and leading Zimbabwe towards the land appropriation policy Mugabe became a re-claimer of the concept of economic democratisation. Mugabe's anti-neoliberal position demarcated a realisation of the exploitative binary of Africa's interface with capitalism as observed by Moyo, Yeros and Shivji (2020 p. 266):

In the neo-liberal world, the locomotive and engine of the worldwide capitalist accumulation are located in the North, making nonsense of the so-called 'locomotives of the South'. If anything, the 'locomotives of the South' are sub-stations pulling the Southern wagons behind them on an

onward journey of integration with the North. The surpluses of the South produced by the super-human effort of its working people are sucked into the belly of the Global Minotaur servicing the twin deficits of the United States, leaving the people in sub-human conditions. This is primitive accumulation on a global scale.

The decolonial dimension of Zimbabwe's land reform programme (Moyo and Yeros 2005) also discussed by Chirimuuta and Jongore in this book validates the need for Mugabe to be remembered as a Global South political father figure who refused to conform to the dictates of Western neo-colonial capitalist policy directions. Mugabe's centrality in de-Westernizing power was critical as it marked a noteworthy point of the renaissance to Zimbabwe's decolonisation course. As a response to Mugabe's philosophical defiance to colonialism, *Mugabephobia* emerged as part of a broad-based philosophical antagonism to Zimbabwe's policy resistance to Global capital conformities. Up to this day, *Mugabephobia* is sustained by anti-land reform reactionary thought aided by some think-tanks, academics and media houses:

Mugabephobia was generated by Euro-America because Mugabe unsettled the colonial/neo-imperial property relations in Africa. On the other hand, homosexuals do not unsettle any colonial/imperial property relations and so the world is ironically dissuaded from engaging in homophobia even as it is encouraged to develop *Mugabephobia*. Depicted in Eurocentric scholarship and media as more controversial than homosexuals and queers, Robert Mugabe was subjected to globalised *Mugabephobia*, stigmatisation and demonisation, which also unfortunately translated to Afrophobia. *Mugabephobia* can be interpreted more broadly as a phobia for Africans' repossession of their resources. In this sense, it is a restitutionphobia that struck Euro-America. Euro-America expects African presidents to act as safety valves or kinds of African prefects for the security of neo-imperial property (Nhemachena and Tapiwa Warikandwa 2019 p. 10)

In response to *Mugabephobia* a nationalist and pan-Africanist attribute of the Mugabe legacy has emerged. This antithesis to *Mugabephobia* has constructed Mugabe as a revolutionary, African icon, pan-Africanist and a champion of decolonisation:

Today Mugabe is the African force of ideological retention. He is the reclamer of the unifying virtues of the late Julius Nyerere, Augustino Neto, Samora Machel, Oliver Tambo and Sir Seretse Khama. He is the embodiment of the African legacy and African heritage which slavery, apartheid and imperialism thought they had dismembered for good. His elevation to glory renders a permanent scar to the body of the pan-Africanist movement (Mpofu 2020 p. 250).

The above homage to Mugabe assumes the counter-discourse to the neoliberal view of Mugabe's imagination as a dictator and a ruthless leader. As even indicated in this publication, Mpofu views Mugabe as a victim of imperialist demonisation because of his role in challenging white monopoly capital through legalising land appropriation without compensation in 1998. Mugabe's move to also license the economic indigenisation policy became part of his philosophical depiction as a true liberation icon.

***Mugabeism*: The Conflicting Africanist and Anti-Africanist Reflections on Mugabe**

In some corridors of the academia, Mugabe's political personality and his ideas have been framed as *Mugabeism* (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009a). *Mugabeism* is treated as a disputed phenomenon floating between pan-Africanist redemptive registers underpinned on redressing imperialist prejudices defined in terms of colonially inherited socio-economic inequalities. Among proponents of neoliberal thought, *Mugabeism* represents a violation of land-based property law, political repression and marks the climax of electoral fraud in post-independence Zimbabwe. In binary terms, *Mugabeism* represents the celebrated and despised attributes associated with Robert Mugabe's political life from both pan-Africanist and neoliberal insiders and observers of Zimbabwean politics (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009b). In the past, I have argued that *Mugabeism* could be described in terms of ZANU PF's power consolidation dexterity substantiated by Mugabe's longevity in power since Zimbabwe's attainment of independence in 1980 (Mahomva, 2015). *Mugabeism* as a representation of attributes outlining Robert Mugabe's immortalisation as the architect of political violence, economic collapse, patronage and bad governance in Zimbabwe continues to attract debate (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015). Apart from this villain depiction of Mugabe,

Mugabeism embodies the Africanist re-membering of the late Zimbabwean former President.

From an Africanist perspective, Mugabe is bestowed with the honour of an ideological antagonist to the West's dispossession mission in Africa. It was this perspective that qualified him the national hero status even after his self-dismissal from ZANU PF when he declared his intentions to vote for the opposition during the 2018 harmonised election. However, that did not dissuade ZANU PF from conferring him his deserved national hero status although his immediate family chose to have his remains interred at his rural home in Zvimba. The Africanist remembering of Mugabe projects him as an adored symbol of Zimbabwe's fight for liberation and economic decolonisation. The antithesis to the Afrocentred/pan-Africanist and nationalist sensitive reading of Mugabe's legacy narrowly depicts Mugabe as a dictator, election fraudster, murderer and one who solely contributed to Zimbabwe's economic collapse. The anti-Africanist reflection on Mugabe falls short of giving due recognition of Mugabe's commitment to total decolonisation and that some of his failures were a creation of his colonial subjectivity. Mugabe's anti-Africanist construction has thrived through vast neoliberal propaganda proliferation.

The anti-Africanist dimension to *Mugabeism* is largely propelled on neoliberal rationality has posited that Mugabe's rule deployed violence and racism as its hegemonic pillars. The cited and mostly emphasised debate of Mugabe's violent and racist rule is largely linked to the fast track land reform insurgences which saw the White minority being displaced from the farms as part of addressing land inequalities which were sustained by the Lancaster House's pro-White capital 'Willing Seller-Willing Buyer' clause (Moyo 2011a). The contested parameters of *Mugabeism* throughout Zimbabwe's political and historical discourses largely depict organised efforts aimed at either exalting or delegitimising Robert Gabriel Mugabe. Through *Mugabeism*, one cannot miss the legacy overlap between a hero and a villain depending on who is describing or attempting to remember Mugabe.

The Conceptual Outflows of *Mugabeism*

The major conceptual critique of *Mugabeism* is that it is largely grounded on external representation which is devoid of Robert Mugabe's endorsement

and ownership. Mugabe neither accepts nor abjures *Mugabeism* as a descriptive philosophical lens of his interaction with power in Zimbabwe. As an eloquent political figure which Mugabe was; he could have at least mentioned the concept in one of his many addresses, but there is no record to that effect. This could imply that Mugabe never knew that there was such a discursive description of his political career. His silence could also infer his disregard of the existence of *Mugabeism* as a linear vantage point to imagining his presidency. Instead, Mugabe openly and consistently appropriated Marxist, nationalist and pan-Africanist descriptions of his political character. Never at any point did Mugabe state that he had a self-referencing notion of power and governance. The existence of *Mugabeism* is mainly situated within the confines of biographic and academic debates. However, if Mugabe had a biography in which he spells out his notions of power and governance or a broad corpus of work that he generated like other atypical African philosopher-kings *Mugabeism* would be a more credible concept. *Mugabeism* could be a more sensible and befitting philosophical construct had it had drawn its existence from Mugabe's direct literary self-articulation as was the case with Kwame Nkrumah's Nkrumahism/African Conscientism (1964), Nyerere's African Socialism/ Ujamaa (1968a; 1968b) and Kenneth Kaunda's concept of African Humanism. The diverse and inconsistent meanings of *Mugabeism* render it an insignificant ideological descriptor. However, *Mugabeism* seems to be largely premised on the hostile demarcations of reflecting on Mugabe's contribution to Zimbabwean politics and the rest of Africa.

The Conflicting Philosophical Imagination of Robert Mugabe

Mugabe's legacy floats between praise and condemnation. As already established in the discussion, this proves that any recollection on Mugabe is centred on duo philosophical dimensions namely the colonial and the anti-colonial framing. It must be understood that Robert Mugabe was born into repressive dehumanising conditions as a result of colonialism. His educational and religious orientation made him a subject of colonial conditioning (Hill, 2005). His worldview is intensely defined in colonial terms. His entry into nationalist politics was driven by his colonial conditioning. Therefore, he is an embodiment of conflicting philosophical personalities. His political career is immersed in the twin contradiction of the colonial and anti-

colonial. As a result, the memory repositories interpreting Mugabe's legacy are determined by pro-African and neoliberal discourses. His colonial conditioning also explains why sometimes his political career was susceptible to colonial compromises particularly his engagement in the Lancaster Conference (Mpofu, 2020). Again, Zimbabwe's early independence neo-liberal entrapments substantiate without doubt the colonial pulse which characterised Mugabe's rule. Just like any other post-colonial African leader, Mugabe represented the essence of colonialism's imposing effect on the self-determination interests of African states. Many of his mistakes should be contextualised from the background of his colonial subjectivity. Any reflection on Mugabe must dissect his place in politics within the rationality of his colonial personality design.

Mugabe's refusal to continuously seek imperialist validation in his post-ESAP policy-making route resuscitated the anti-colonial dimension of his power base. With the implementation of the land reform and its political power utility to ZANU PF Mugabe became more attached to the liberation grounded philosophical contestation of White minority hegemony. In response to his attacks on imperialist monopoly, the West accelerated its anti-Mugabe propaganda. As a result, Mugabe remains philosophically defined in two conflicting registers of imperialism and anti-imperialism. Those aligned to views generated by the empire through anti-land reform-driven media houses, think-tanks and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) will selectively rationalise Mugabe as a tyrant who promoted corruption, suppressed opposition Movement for Democratic Change and its CSO proxies.

Mugabe's supporters within ZANU PF and those who regard him as an epitome of pan-Africanism celebrate his anti-colonial record before and after independence. To this group, Robert Mugabe is remembered much more than the former President of Zimbabwe, instead, he is celebrated as an accomplished anti-colonial stalwart. Through his self-representation in articulating economic democratisation policies, Mugabe philosophically situated himself into posterity as a champion of Black economic empowerment. His role in exposing the uneven order of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) further justifies his self-invested ovation as a mouthpiece of equality within the United Nations (UN). Ultimately, Robert

Mugabe's legacy is philosophically enshrined in his interchanging wrestles with imperialism in Zimbabwe and at an international level.

Robert Mugabe and the Immortalisation of African Liberation Ideologies

As already discussed above, Mugabe's legacy offers a two-fold appreciation of Zimbabwe and post-colonial Africa's interaction with the hegemonic residues of imperialism. The African post-colony is a product of post-independence power construction by colonialist powers. The anti-colonial philosophy continues to find its place in independent Africa because of colonialism's unfinished business in the entire continent. Zimbabwe has served as a case study in proving the unfinished reality of Africa's political economy and social restitution from the effects of imperialism. Robert Mugabe played an instrumental role in bringing a turnaround policy against the inequalities that imperialism entrenched in Zimbabwe. Mugabe mutated from being a pre-independence nationalist hero to a post-colonial advocate for the fall of neo-colonialism. The Mugabe policy concern to address the fundamental structural problems of the superficial post-colonial transition made Zimbabwe to be at loggerheads with colonial powers.

His (Mugabe) philosophical detachment from Western governance expectations subjected him to philosophical annihilations of conservative imperialist benchmarks by imperialist biographers (Blair, 2002; Meredith, 2002, Chan 2003; Compagnon 2011). Mugabe typifies the actualisation of national identity thought as his presence in Zimbabwean politics became centrifugal in articulating what neoliberal thinkers defined as the Zimbabwean crisis. His role in Zimbabwean politics becomes a contested notion even among key opposition figures like David Coltart who views Mugabe as an epitome of tyranny and an authoritarian who used force to decimate all political opposition (Coltart, 2016). In Coltart's autobiography, Mugabe is simplistically presented as a political monster who cannot even be credited for his contributions to Zimbabwe's liberation. Based on the pro-imperialist post-land reform reading of Mugabe, Zimbabwe is imagined as a symbol of Africa's unrealised dream of 'true independence' (Hammar, Raftopolous and Stig 2003). Ironically, Africa's deferred independence is mainly discussed by colonialist powers who fought so hard to maintain the

erstwhile status quo which protected their profits from colonial plunder. The neoliberal hardliner position of good governance experienced in Zimbabwe in challenging Mugabe's agrarian revolution is part of the philosophical machinery to preserve imperialist monopoly (Moyo 2011a). Zimbabwe under Mugabe is maliciously presented as an archetype of bad governance due to the anti-colonial sin of land expropriation from the settler minority. Through the neo-colonial register, Mugabe fits into the generic stereotype of African leaders as oppressive and non-adhering to the rule of law. To those with a less critical appreciation of the post-land reform villain Mugabe, he will be remembered as a dictator who had to be punished by the West through North-American sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe to sabotage the Government's land nationalisation policy. Sanctions amputated Zimbabwe's economic growth potential as Zimbabwe's agricultural revolution could not be supported by Western powers whose influence on our economic growth remained intact even in post-independent Zimbabwe.

From a pro-imperialist perspective, Mugabe will be forever philosophically smeared as a retrogressive African leader who denied Zimbabweans freedom of speech, freedom of association and suppressed opposition politics. This view will continue to sanitise the function of neoliberalism in conceiving and nurturing opposition political bodies which presided over the continued Western isolationist policies on Zimbabwe by global maniacs like the United States of America, the European Union, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). Through the narrow philosophical standpoint to link all economic problems and political woes in Zimbabwe to Mugabe and his ZANU PF, the effects of colonialism are erased in making sense of the 'crisis' equation as discussed by scholars like (Raftopolous and Mlambo, 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2009b).

While the pro-colonial auto/biographic construction of Mugabe has dominated the philosophical archive, one can also situate Mugabe's philosophical immortalisation through the auto/biography genre through contributions of his fellow nationalists. It is hard to avoid the celebratory remembering and consequent iconic philosophical sketching of Mugabe's legacy in autobiographies by Nyagumbo, (1980); Msipa (2015); Mpofu (2020). Again as one reads, Zimbabwean Vice President Constantine Chiwenga's *Goose or Gander – The United Nations Security Council and*

the Ethic of Double Standards (2018) it is easy to deduce the Mugabe philosophical dimension to lambasting the unevenness of power distribution in the UNSC. This follows the countless speeches by Robert Mugabe to the UN in addressing the multilateral injustice of its structures to Global-South nations. In the process, Mugabe became a proverbial spokesperson of the marginalised Global South states thereby exposing the institutional weaknesses of the UN. Mugabe became a philosophical spectacle of Africa's self-introspection in confronting contemporary multilateral organised racism. Consequently, Mugabe remains imagined as a darling to the global pan-Africanist and Afrocentric fraternity. To this group, Mugabe remains idolised as a representation of Africa's tireless fight against imperialist hegemony.

Mugabe has not also been spared criticism by some senior ZANU PF and pro-nationalist stalwarts as noted in the autobiographic accounts by Nkomo (1984), Tekere (2007), Msipa (2015), Dube (2019) and Mpfu (2020). Unlike the pro-Western capitalist reflective construction of Mugabe discussed above, these nationalist insiders use a liberation memory focused perspective to question Mugabe's leadership integrity and its obscurities. Nkomo's key point of dispute with Mugabe revolves around his role in the 1982 disturbances which were however rectified through the Unity Accord in 1987. The Unity Accord signed by ZANU and ZAPU both represented by Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe respectively provided a foundational platform for nation-building in Zimbabwe. It immortalised Mugabe and Nkomo as nationalists of note.

While Tekere's self-writing approach suffers the vice of the author's extravagant self-lionisation, his critique gives the reader an extra analytical mile to appreciate the unofficial heroic projection of Mugabe. The account by Tekere (2007) opens the curtains giving a view to the fallible 'behind the scenes' of Mugabe's rise to being a celebrated nationalist icon. Tekere (2007) exposes his role in building up Mugabe to 'greatness'. This proves that the struggle for Zimbabwe was a collective process and that Mugabe's assumed political greatness owes much to the support he received from comrades in the armed struggle. The same view is also expressed in Tendi's *The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe Mujuru, the Liberation Fighter and Kingmaker* (2020). Tendi (2020) writes about Mujuru as one of Mugabe's kingmakers who

influenced the late former President of Zimbabwe to be accepted into the upper echelons of ZANLA structures as the sole leader of ZANU.

It was also Mujuru who was central in the factional fights which called for Mugabe's exit from leading ZANU PF after independence (Tendi 2020; Mpofu 2020). The succession question is also elaborated in Tshinga Dube's *Quite Flows the Zambezi* (2019). Dube (2019), himself a decorated war veteran, former minister and the current Deputy Secretary for Finance in ZANU PF accounts for his role in challenging Mugabe for his centralised power approach in ZANU PF. Whilst Dube (2019)'s critique of Mugabe is not oblivious of his role in the birth of post-independence Zimbabwe, his account is adamant in exposing how Mugabe was to some extent corrupted by power to a point of neglecting some core values of the struggle to accommodate political opportunists in the ZANU PF succession matrix. Tshinga (2019) is supported by Mpofu (2020) who argues that Mugabe's failure to handle ZANU PF's succession issues attracted multifaceted disgruntlement which later contributed to Mugabe's fall. The two self-accounts by Tshinga (2019) and Mpofu (2020) interrogate Mugabe from a pro-nationalist and anti-colonial grounding. Therefore, in as much as the discussed texts challenge Mugabe's official idolisation in early independence nationalist commemorative historiography, their objectivity exposes that in as much as Mugabe remains a decorated anti-colonial giant, he also had personal weaknesses which threatened his legitimacy. To this end, this perspective offers a huge philosophical justification for the execution of Operation Restore Legacy. As already summarised in Mpofu (2020)'s autobiography, Operation Restore Legacy necessitated ZANU PF's continuity and served as an honour to Mugabe for the contribution he made in creating Zimbabwe's anti-colonial success even in the age of neo-colonialism.

Thinking Mugabe beyond the *Mugabephobia* Perspective

The two-fold philosophical situation of Robert Mugabe within the nationalist/pan-Africanist/anti-colonial memory and the legacy of colonialism in Zimbabwe and Africa exposes the continued dilemma of being post-colonial. Mugabe's philosophical appreciation floats within conflicting ideologies which must be interrogated deeply to understand Mugabe as a product of colonialism and its perpetual subject. This is why

his economic indigenisation policies become the reason for his international capitalist demonisation. Alexander (2006) makes explicit terms that the land reform was among the many major factors which ushered in the proverbial Zimbabwean crisis which is a neoliberal narrative signification of Mugabe's rule. As a result, Mugabe's legacy will remain interpreted from this imperialist logic which is grounded on demonising his consistency to anti-colonial loyalties.

To provide a counter position, Robert Mugabe's re-membering remains a mandate of Afro-centred thinkers and organisations. This is needed to unmask the neo-liberal motive to the mainstreaming of *Mugabephobia* as it is synonymous with Western obsessions against decolonisation and all anti-dispossession sentimentalism (Nhemachena and Warikanda, 2019). More intellectual effort must be invested in celebrating Mugabe for the anti-colonial father figure whom he was to Zimbabwe and the African continent. Whatever his mistakes, it must be constantly emphasised that his flaws were entrapped in the colonial direction of statecraft as a result of the Lancaster Conference's negotiated predisposition and how it compromised nationalist radicalism in influencing post-independence power dynamics in Zimbabwe. The turn to the land reform programme as Mugabe's ideological repentance route should be appreciated as the source of Mugabe's neoliberal decapitation which reduced him to a mere African authoritarian leader. As a counter-approach to the erasure of the anti-imperialist legacy linked to Mugabe, African scholars need to locate Mugabe's philosophical construction as an archenemy to international capital's continued expropriation of African resources. It is from this basis that future generations will also get to appreciate that outside his general and accepted errs, Mugabe became a subject of agitated imperialist philosophical ridicule due to his fight for the realignment of property rights. The mainstreamed character assassination and philosophical vilification of Mugabe by pro-regime change intelligentsia is part of the ongoing sanitisation of Africa's historical Anglo-American dispossession. The pro-Western capital projection of Mugabe –the villain must trigger a re-imagination of Mugabe as an idea for Africa's humanisation from imperialist structural dehumanisation. Mugabe must be philosophically re-centred as a symbol of resistance to the de-centred ontologies of African political-economy aspirations by imperialist powers.

Conclusion

The chapter has discussed the philosophical sustenance of Robert Mugabe's legacy in Zimbabwe and Africa's continued decolonisation agenda. While the discussion renders Mugabe mute in locating his philosophical attributes in the construction of the decolonisation mission, it remains undoubted that Mugabe was an articulate and self-constructing being. However, the chapter majored on Mugabe's external representation in attempting to understand the socio-genesis of his thought leanings during the armed struggle and after Zimbabwe's independence. Through a walk back to history, Mugabe's philosophical father-figure status is discussed from the vantage position of living and departed ZANU PF insiders. The consensus and points of divergence from Mugabe's lifetime allies in politics reveal the diverse attributes of Mugabe's philosophical construction. Mugabe's philosophical being is also located within his neoliberal framing as he became a subject of Western philosophical ridicule after ushering Zimbabwe into the agrarian revolution. Therefore, the major submission of the chapter is that Robert Mugabe's memory is a product of conflicting anti-colonial and imperialist reflective projections. Due to that, his philosophical immortalisation in articulating his role as an African decolonisation ideologue will be defined in terms of anti-colonial and colonial significations. So, Mugabe as an embodiment of Zimbabwe and African's liberation as discussed in this chapter symbolises the conflicting entanglements of the decolonisation agenda in imperialist ideological determinants. This explains why Mugabe's political milestones will remain a subject of imperialist adjudication. Without Afro-centred attempts to re-member Mugabe, the reputable side of his legacy—especially that of democratising the economy will continue to be denigrated by pro-imperialist institutions, scholars and activists. Therefore, this chapter is aimed at accentuating an Afrocentred clarification of Robert Mugabe's role as an anti-colonial memory bank of Zimbabwe and Africa's continued fight against colonialism.

References

- Alexander, J. (2006). *The Unsettled Land: State-Making & the Politics of Land in Zimbabwe 1893–2003*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Appiah, K. A. (1992). *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Chiwenga, C. (2018). *Goose or Gander – The United Nations Security Council and the Ethic of Double Standards*. University of Malaysia.
- Dube, T. (2019). *Quiet Flows the Zambezi*. Bulawayo: Amagugu Publishers.
- Grosfoguel, R. (2007). "The Epistemic De-colonial Turn." *Cultural Studies*, 21(2–3): 211–223.
- . (2011). "Decolonizing Post-colonial Studies and Paradigms of Political Economy: Transmodernity, Decolonial Thinking, and Global Coloniality." *Modernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1 (1):1–29.
- Freire, P. (1993). *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: The Continuum.
- Hammar, A., Raftopolous, B., & Stig, J. (2003). *Zimbabwe's Unfinished Business: Rethinking Land, State and Nation in the Context of Crisis*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Hill, G. (2005). *What Happens After Mugabe?* Cape Town: Zebra Press.
- Hountondji, P. (1983). *African Philosophy: The Myth or Reality*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Holland, H. (2008). *Dinner with Mugabe: The Untold Story of a Freedom Fighter Who Became a Tyrant*. Johannesburg: Penguin Books.
- Martin, D & Johnson, P. (1985). *The Struggle for Zimbabwe*. Harare: ZPH.
- Mnangagwa, E. (2015). "The Robert Mugabe I know". Sunday Mail, 23 February.
- Mpofu, O. (2020). *On the Shoulders of Struggle: Memoirs of a Political Insider*. Bulawayo: LAN Readers.
- Mkodzongi, & Lawrence, P. (2019). The Fast-Track Land Reform and Agrarian Change in Zimbabwe. *Review of African Political Economy*, 46:159, 1-13.

Mlambo, S. (1995). Towards an Analysis of IMF Structural Adjustment Programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA): The Case of Zimbabwe 1990-94. *Africa Development / Afrique et Développement*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (1995), pp. 77-98

Moyo, S. (2011a). "Changing Agrarian Relations after Redistributive Land Reform in Zimbabwe." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38 (5), 939–966.

_____. (2011b). "Land Concentration and Accumulation after Redistributive Reform In Post-settler Zimbabwe." *Review of African Political Economy* 38 (128), 257–276.

_____, & Yeros, P. (2005). Land Occupations and Land Reform in Zimbabwe: Towards the National Democratic Revolution. In S. Moyo, & P. (. Yeros, Reclaiming the Land: *The Resurgence of Rural Movements in Africa, Asia and Latin America*. London: ZED Books.

_____, Chambati, W., Murisa, T., Siziba, D., Dangwa, C., Mujeyi, K., & Nyoni, N. (2009). *Fast Track land Reform Baseline Survey in Zimbabwe: Trends and Tendencies 2005/06*. Harare: African Institute of Agrarian Studies.

Msipa, C. (2015). *In Pursuit of Freedom and Justice: A Memoir*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2009a). *Do 'Zimbabweans' Exist? Trajectories of Nationalism, National Identity Formation and Crisis in a Postcolonial State* Oxford: Peter Lang.

_____. (2009b). "Making Sense of Mugabeism in Local and Global Politics: 'So Blair, Keep Your England and Let Me Keep My Zimbabwe.'" *Third World Quarterly*, 30(6): 1139–1158.

_____. (2015). *Mugabeism: History, Politics, and Power in Zimbabwe*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

_____. & Ruhanya, P. (2020). *The History and Political Transition of Zimbabwe: From Mugabe to Mnangagwa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nhemachena, A. & Warikandwa, V. (2019). *From African Peer Review Mechanisms to African Queer Review Mechanisms? Robert Gabriel Mugabe, Empire and the Decolonisation of African Orifices*. Mankon: Langa Research & Publishing Common Initiative Group

- Nkomo, J. (2015). *The Story of My Life*. Harare: SAPES Books.
- Nkrumah, K. (1964). *Consciencism: Philosophy and the Ideology for Decolonization*. London: PANAF Books.
- Nyagumbo, M. (1980). *With the People: An autobiography from the Zimbabwe Struggle*. London: Allison & Busby.
- Nyerere, J. (1968a). *Freedom and Unity/ Uhuru na Umoja: A Selection from Writings and Speeches 1952-1965*. Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press.
- Nyerere, J (1968b). *Freedom and Socialism/Uhuru na Ujamaa: A Selection from Writings and Speeches 1965-1967*. Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press.
- Omorege, J (1998). "African Philosophy: Yesterday and Today". In Eze, E (ed). *African Philosophy: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Raftopoulos, B. and Mlambo, A. (2009). (eds), *Becoming Zimbabwe: A History from the Pre-Colonial Period to 2008* Harare: Weaver Press; Johannesburg: Jacana Media.
- Sadomba, W. Z. (2011). *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Revolution: Challenging Neo-colonialism & Settler & International Capital*. Harare: Weaver.
- Serequerberhan, T. (1998). "Philosophy and Post-Colonial Africa". In Eze, E. *African Philosophy: An Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Shiviji, I. (2020). "Whither Africa in the Global South? Lessons of Bandung and Pan-Africanism". In Moyo, S. Jha, P. & Yeros, P (Eds). *Reclaiming Africa Scramble and Resistance in the 21st Century*. New Dehli: Springer
- Simpson, M. & Hawkins, T. (2018). *The Primacy of Regime Survival: State Fragility and Economic Destruction in Zimbabwe*. Charn: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Tekere, E. (2007). *A Lifetime of Struggle*. Harare: SAPES Books.
- Tendi, B. (2020). *The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe: Mujuru, the Liberation Fighter and Kingmaker*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Conflicting Images of Mugabe and of Zimbabwe under Mugabe in Twenty-first Century Literary Imaginaries.

Tendai O Chikara, Nhlanhla Landa & Sindiso Zhou

Introduction

The chapter explores both the images of former Zimbabwean president Robert Gabriel Mugabe and of Zimbabwe under his reign for nearly four decades as reflected in selected literary imaginaries. We trace the often-conflicting pictures created of post-colonial Zimbabwe and Mugabe by creative writers writing in the post-2000 era. We hold that the selected texts are biographical of the Zimbabwe nation state and Mugabe, by far the most central figure in Zimbabwean society politically and economically. Hero, fearless, feared, liberator, dictator, human rights abuser and corrupt leader are some of the many images the texts create of Mugabe while the nation state is presented as desolate, desperate and poor, but also as peaceful and with strong-willed people. Mugabe's transition from hero to villain is a major concern for this chapter. As such, while many saw Mugabe as a villain, others in Zimbabwe and abroad still considered him the voice of reason and a champion of sovereignty. Central to our interpretation of the texts is that the traumatic experiences of the crisis that plagued Zimbabwe under Mugabe, and having a feel of Mugabe's 36-year rule over Zimbabwe, informed the fictionalised accounts of life as Zimbabweans know it. This drove writers to carve the story of a chaotic Zimbabwe, and in doing so, a portrait of the mastermind of that chaos, Mugabe, was painted.

Robert Gabriel Mugabe: A brief biography

The media, as demonstrated later in this section with examples from the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), show Robert Gabriel Mugabe as an enigma who is both a hero and a villain. The forever sharply dressed little man was an African giant; a devout catholic raised in the faith at Kutama Mission in Zvimba by gentle priests whose religion is one of the

most elaborate and peaceful religions in the world and which teaches that should one be slapped on one cheek they should turn and offer the other cheek. Mugabe's cruelty and vengeful nature, as demonstrated through his role in the tribal massacre in Matebeleland and Midlands through *Gukurahundi*¹ (Bratton and Masunungure, 2011) is apparent. Gukurahundi came after several attempts by Mugabe to provoke and humiliate Joshua Nkomo (Doran, 2011). Mugabe is a world of contradictions that could flawlessly play the role of both the hero and villain in a work of fiction. He is celebrated as well as denigrated in literary discourses, particularly those from the post-2000 era when Zimbabwe's waning economic fortunes went on a serious downward spiral. This was caused by the isolation of the country by the international community and a hurriedly implemented land reform exercise by a Mugabe-led ZANU PF government. ZANU PF was reacting to the biggest political challenge by a young dissatisfied demography finding an alternative through the new, Morgan Tsvangirai, led political party, the Movement for Democratic Change. The land reform itself has been a subject of debate in the mass media (Kuyedzwa, 2020; New Zimbabwe, 2 August 2020) and in research (Moyo, 2011; Matondi, 2012; Mkodzongi & Lawrence, 2019), and, as shall be seen, has been a subject of some of the literary imaginaries we analyse in this chapter. It won Mugabe support and political actors in other countries, like South Africa, seeking land reform have cited the Zimbabwean case as a success. However, it has also been criticised as a gross violation of human rights by Mugabe and his regime (Human Rights Watch, 2002; Shaw, 2003).

In this chapter, we explore what we call conflicting images of Zimbabwe's former president Robert Mugabe and of Zimbabwe under his reign as reflected in literary texts written during and after the Zimbabwean crisis (2000-2009). Our interest is in novels written about Zimbabwe reflecting the different socio-economic and socio-political challenges associated with the Mugabe regime that help shine a light on the obscured character that was Robert Mugabe.

1 *Gukurahundi* was an ethnic cleansing operation under Mugabe's regime that targeted people in Zimbabwe's Matabeleland and Midlands regions and that resulted in the "massacre of over 20,000 Ndebele-speaking Zimbabweans in the period between 1980 and 1987" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015; 3).

Beyond the scope of the texts analysed here, the conflict in images of Robert Mugabe is evident in the ZANU PF faction that removed him from office soon after the party made a bold move to memorialise him by changing Harare International Airport, the biggest in the country, to Robert Gabriel Mugabe International Airport. Later, they fought to have him buried as a hero at the National Shrine, which they did not succeed (Mavhunga, 2019). Furthermore, soon after ousting Mugabe from office, the 'new' government of Zimbabwe declared his birthday a national holiday: the Robert Gabriel Mugabe National Youth Day (BBC News, 27 November 2017; Samaita, 2020). However, *NewsDay* reported on 22 February 2020 (Matenga, Muromo & Chikandiwa, 2020) that the permanent secretary in the Information Ministry, Ndavaningi Mangwana, indicated that the holiday no longer had anything to do with Mugabe's legacy but now had to do with the youth, adding that it was mere coincidence that the holiday fell on the former president's birthday.

In addition, announcing the passing on of Mugabe in 2017, BBC described him as "Zimbabwe's strongman" (Harding, 2019). On the same day, another writer at BBC titled their article Robert Mugabe: From liberator to tyrant (Winter, 2019). As aptly put by Winter (2019, September 6), "to some, he was an evil dictator who should have ended his days in jail for crimes against humanity. To others, he was a revolutionary hero who fought racial oppression and stood up to Western imperialism and neo-colonialism". This demonstrates that at best the public was conflicted on how they viewed Robert Mugabe. This, among other things, motivated our interest in reading the images of Mugabe and of Zimbabwe under Mugabe's reign as reflected in Zimbabwean literary imaginaries.

While this chapter explores and remembers Mugabe using literary text as the primary source for establishing the identity of the man and the images of the country he led, it is interesting to note that the man evoked so much fear (Human Rights Watch, 2011) that those who wrote about him rarely did so overtly. Indeed, Mugabe was so feared that Doris Lessing remarked at one point that "writers are not made in Zimbabwe. Not easily, not under Mugabe" (Nyambi, 2013). This also speaks to the different repressive laws that were born in Zimbabwe during Mugabe's reign, including the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and the Access to Information and Protection

of Privacy Act (AIPPA), both of 2002. At the same time, the man was loved by many to such an extent that he was called a “messiah” and was celebrated through written discourses as well as other forms of art. As explicated by Ngugi (2019), “it took fleeing citizens for world to see messiah had turned pharaoh”. Mugabe was such a polarising figure; thus, this chapter seeks to remember him. This chapter may indeed produce an image of a complex Mugabe who is a modern day Frankenstein for some because the man was both loveable and an object of much hate.

In order to understand the approach this chapter takes, we need to first define a few literary terms. In the literary arts, the construction of characters may take between one and four approaches: direct comments from the person telling a story, commentary by other actors in the literary work, the direct words of a character or physical description of a character. In the course of characterisation, writers may produce round or flat characters who may be historical or ahistorical.

Because of the role that he has played in the affairs of Zimbabwe the nation-state, the 1924-born son of Gabriel Matibili, Robert Gabriel Mugabe has often indirectly featured in many novels set in Zimbabwe. This may be as a flat or round character. It is indeed difficult to speak of Zimbabwe and fail to make mention of the man who led the nation for a record thirty-seven years and this chapter argues that Robert Mugabe is an omnipresent character in most works of literature set in Zimbabwe particularly after the year 2000. This is why we have fused the analysis of the images portrayed of Mugabe by the literary texts with those of Zimbabwe during his reign.

Methodology

The chapter undertakes a textual analysis of four selected texts from the Zimbabwe literary scene. The texts, which are purposively sampled are NoViolet Bulawayo’s *We Need New Names* (2013), Valerie Tagwira’s *Uncertainty of Hope* (2006), *Writing Still: Stories from Zimbabwe* by Irene Staunton (2003) and *The Fear: The Last Days of Robert Mugabe* by Peter Godwin (2006). Guiding our selection of texts was our interest in literary texts produced post-2000. We assumed that texts produced in the post-2000 era were laden with an underlying thread of inevitable biographical

referencing. We posit that because of experiencing the traumatic crisis that plagued Zimbabwe and writing fiction in that period, authors were driven to write the story of a chaotic Zimbabwe and in doing so, a portrait of the mastermind of that chaos, Mugabe, was painted. We were also interested in texts whose reading relates to images of Mugabe and of Zimbabwe under his reign.

Discussion

The assertion by Compagnon (2011) that Mugabe was always going to oversee Zimbabwe's demise would seem to paint one extreme end of how the public thought of Mugabe and his regime. We read:

... this disaster should not come as a complete surprise since there were, from the beginning, many worrying signs of Mugabe's thirst for power, his recklessness, and his lack of concern for the well-being of fellow countrymen and women, as well as the greed and brutality of his lieutenants in his party, the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (Compagnon, 2011, p. 1).

In other words, Mugabe was "responsible for the collapse of Zimbabwe" (Compagnon, 2011, p. 7). We believe that this kind of thinking informed the imaging of Mugabe's Zimbabwe in the texts that we selected for analysis; the rot, corruption, crime and desperation of people in the face of terror. However, we acknowledge that this is merely one extreme of imaging Mugabe and Mugabe's Zimbabwe. On the other extreme is such views of Zimbabwe as, "After covering wars in Mozambique, Angola, Uganda, Somalia, Sudan, Zimbabwe feels to me like Switzerland" (Godwin, 2006, p. 33) or of Mugabe, as shown in a section in Bulawayo's *We Need New Names* that we analyse in this chapter, "That there, boys, is the only motherfucker with balls on the continent. Africa's leading statesman!" (Bulawayo, 2013, p. 193). These two extremes provide us with a point of departure for our discussion on the imaging of Robert Mugabe and of Zimbabwe during his reign. As indicated already, we were interested in literary imaginaries produced during and just after what has generally come to be called Zimbabwe's decade of crisis.

We Need New Names is set around *Murambatsvina* (non-tolerance of filth), a Mugabe operation of 2005 that left many homeless and starving in urban

Zimbabwe. This operation is also covered in Tagwira's *Uncertainty of Hope*. According to Zhou and Landa (2013, p. 417), *Murambatsvina* "presumably sought to rid the cities and towns of shack shelters and squatter camps where the poor and other people failing to find affordable accommodation had sought refuge". Benyera and Nyere (2015) and Potts (2006) have detailed how the operation affected the most vulnerable in Zimbabwe, inclusive of the poor, women and children while Chibisa and Sigauke (2008) have paid attention to how the operation specifically affected the millions in Zimbabwe whose lives relied on the informal sector.

Though (and maybe because) it is centred mostly around *Murambatsvina*, Bulawayo's novel deals with a multiplicity of themes. However, what is common in these themes is that they are all related to the dire circumstances in which ordinary Zimbabweans find themselves during and after the decade of crisis, within which *Murambatsvina* was operationalised by a desperate Mugabe regime seeking to dissipate urban support for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change. Tagwira also deals with the same themes. We hold, however, that the Zimbabwean crisis cannot be squeezed into a decade as some scholars have done. The decade (2000 – 2009) is only the beginning of the multifaceted challenges that Zimbabweans continue to face to this day. For example, The Guardian of 31 July 2020 carried the headline Soldiers deployed ahead of anti-corruption protests in Zimbabwe. We further hold that though the literary texts are fictional in their approach, any Zimbabwean national who experienced the socio-economic demise starting around the year 2000 will consider the texts to fall into what we describe as biographical accounts of the twenty-first century Zimbabwe thus far. Thus, they engage with the challenges that are associated with Mugabe's reign in Zimbabwe. However, these have outlived, first, Mugabe's reign and, secondly, his life as shown below by a snapshot of recent headlines from one newspaper:

Therefore, the multifaceted Zimbabwean crisis has continued beyond Mugabe. Some sections of the Zimbabwean community, such as the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), have already indicated that they think Zimbabwe is worse now than it was in Mugabe's reign (BBC, 25 August 2019; Hamill 2019).

In the anthology *Writing Still: New Stories from Zimbabwe*, Mugabe is an omnipresent character in most of the stories. In “The Grim Reaper’s Car” (Madanhire, 2003), characterisation estimating Mugabe presents a grim figure who terrorises a young boy’s dreams with his eye-less sockets and “toothy” smile, and his presidential limousine is an object of great trepidation and amusement hence the title of the short story, “The Grim reaper’s car”. Mugabe’s convoy and security were dreaded in Zimbabwe, with several individuals reporting abuse at the hands of the president’s security personnel for blocking or obstructing the presidential limousine or vehicles accompanying it². In June 2012, the Mugabe convoy was responsible for three deaths in a space of three weeks (Maclean, 2012). The presidential limousine was a source of fear to an extent that citizens would ensure they get as far away from its way as Mugabe and his security sped past or they would have to face the wrath of Mugabe’s feared and forever heavily armed security personnel. All this owed to Mugabe’s absolutism.

In *The Fear*, Peter Godwin captures the plight of white people driven by fear of Mugabe from their farms and town houses to foreign lands. When Mugabe embarked on the polarising fast track land reform programme whose motives were equally polarising, white Zimbabweans fled from “their” farms. The man once loved by the British royalty to the extent of earning knighthood had become a tyrant who called for landless Zimbabweans and his supporters to “strike fear into the heart of the white man” and declared himself “Hitler” for ‘his people’.

The Feared, Fearless and yet Admirable Leader

Mugabe was feared not only by white Zimbabweans but also by many black Zimbabweans who outrightly opposed his party, ZANU PF’s rule. Godwin captures the plight of some of these individuals who, out of fear of Mugabe, ran off to other nations like South Africa and even while there, as one of Godwin’s characters Chester, are still so afraid of Mugabe’s secret police (the Central Intelligence Office) that they dare not use their real names. Mugabe elicited fear in top opposition figures such that many like Tafadzwa Musekiwa, Roy Bennet and Tendai Biti exiled themselves before the formation of the Government of National Unity (GNU) of 2009.

2 See Nehanda Radio: <https://nehandaradio.com/2012/11/09/bulawayo-pair-arrested-for-blocking-mugabe-motorcade/>.

While the GNU was a conciliatory arrangement, it does not imply that Mugabe was a people-centric leader. Rather, it presents a facet of Mugabe who was unwilling to loosen his hold on power. Mugabe, presumably having lost the 2008 plebiscite, is thought to have sought means of retaining power with the presumed winner of that plebiscite (Tsvangirai), the latter reporting to him as head of state. This feat was achieved through the manipulation of election result figures, which forced a run-off (Global Witness, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2008). Before the run-off, Godwin reports that Mugabe intimidated opposition supporters through maiming and murdering some of them until his opponent opted out of the election to avoid further harm to his supporters. As depicted in Godwin's *The Fear*, Mugabe's secret police relentlessly pursued a member of the GNU government who held the position of Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Roy Bennet. The irony of this pursuit is that Mugabe preached reconciliation yet he sought vengeance against Bennet; he championed an agricultural revolution yet he victimised one of the nation's most productive farmers whose ability he acknowledged by allowing the appointment of Bennet to the significant post of Deputy Minister of Agriculture.

The historical GNU that Godwin speaks of depicts Mugabe's thirst for power and this is also made apparent in Wilson's "The Twelve Chitenges" in which Zimbabwe is described using a possessive "Mugabe's Zimbabwe". While it is plausible that the possessive that Wilson uses in the above quote simply makes an association, it is a matter of historical record that Mugabe considered Zimbabwe his fiefdom that he was not willing to give up. In the now-famous speech at the 2002 World Summit of Sustainable Development (WSSD), also known as Earth Summit 2002, Mugabe told British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, "Keep your England and let me keep my Zimbabwe", a clear testimony of how possessive Mugabe was of Zimbabwe. This is also captured in Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*, where we read, "Two days ago, the president of our country came on TV during BBC news. He was raising his fists and speaking, saying how our country is a black man's home and would never be a colony again and what-what" (Bulawayo, 2013; 192). For Mugabe, reigning over Zimbabwe was his preserve. He did not trust anyone to take the reins, hence the many years of succession wars in ZANU PF. His mother, Bona, expressed her fears that Mugabe would not make a good leader following his initial election victory in 1980. Godwin recounts

her comments in *The Fear*, “He (Mugabe) is not capable of doing it. He is not the kind of person who will look after other people”.

While Mugabe had his obvious weaknesses, the land reform program and his role in the liberation struggle of Zimbabwe and that of other African nation-states earned him support and sympathisers particularly by those of a pan-Africanist outlook. In Alexander Kanengoni’s “The Ugly Reflection in the Mirror”, the narrator comes across as celebrating the Mugabe championed programme, which aimed at redressing a challenge arising from the colonial era (the dispossession of land from the natives for the benefit of white farmers). Many on the African continent celebrated the repossession of land by Mugabe, and Mugabe thus continued to be respected for championing the African man’s cause as a result. South of Zimbabwe, Mugabe earned hero status from the respected opposition leader, Julius Malema the leader of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) who celebrates him as an icon and the only leader whose commitment to pan-Africanism has not waived since the days when Africa was fighting for decolonisation. Malema recently called Zimbabwe’s president Emmerson Mnangagwa a fool (New Zimbabwe, 2 August 2020), a treasonous and “a clueless ideological amoeba” (Daniel, 2020) for announcing that the Zimbabwean government will compensate white former Zimbabwean farmers who were displaced by Mugabe during the fast track reform programme nearly four decades ago. This could be because what President Mnangagwa is committing himself to do does not reflect well with Malema and his party EFF’s call for expropriation of land without compensation for equal redistribution.

In Brian Chikwava’s *Seventh Street Alchemy*, the author features a prostitute (Fiso) who admires Mugabe so much that she had two newspaper cut-outs with pictures of the president decorating her room. In *The Grim Reaper’s Car*, the president (Mugabe)’s wartime heroics are celebrated through a child’s equation of the liberator with the action hero, Rambo who is described as “just imitating our president”. The narrator loves the president because “He set us free”. South African firebrand opposition leader, Julius Malema of the EFF was very vocal in his support of Mugabe hosting a memorial to celebrate Mugabe upon his passing. At this event Malema described Mugabe as a “revolutionary”, “...a patriot...” and “a towering figure in the revolution” (Khumalo, 2019). At the same event, Malema emulated Mugabe’s famous

Earth Summit speech by chanting “Keep your De Klerk, we will keep our Mugabe”. The juxtaposition of De Klerk and Mugabe shows the central role that Mugabe plays in the Afrocentric movement and the decolonial project and in this regard, Mugabe is a celebrated hero. Being a hero of the African struggle, it is then not surprising that Mugabe is celebrated in some literary narratives while painted negatively in others.

Mugabe’s historical significance is so great that even the current administration strongly associates itself with Mugabe’s legacy. Mugabe’s predecessor Emmerson Mnangagwa has constantly referred to Mugabe as his “father” (Cowell, 2019) and a revolutionary who was “surrounded” by thieves who were the alleged targets of the veiled coup of November 2017 dubbed a military ‘operation’, “Operation Restore Legacy”. In *The Fear*, Mugabe is memorialised along with other liberation war heroes with pictures of the leader posted on the walls of parliament that the narrator in the novel sees as they are ejected from the house of parliament for wearing jeans.

The Corrupt leader, Unliveable Country and Resultant Mass Emigration

Writing about the post-colonial state in general, and the Zimbabwean crisis in particular, Valerie Tagwira engages with such themes as poverty, disease, social inequality, corruption, displacement of the poor, inflation, lawlessness, crime and violence and the question of legality versus illegality of especially economic activities under the Mugabe regime. This way, the images portrayed of the country extend to images of the man in charge. First, the questions of crime and illegality are weaved in with those of corruption. We read:

You said this assistant commissioner of police, Mr Nzou, is coming to collect the two thousand US dollars tomorrow at six o’clock. He will give me twenty-five thousand Zim dollars for every US dollar. That will make fifty million dollars,’ Katy said, feeling proud for remembering the details with such precision (Tagwira, 2006, p.30).

The rot in Mugabe’s government is such that the police are leading in criminal activities such as illegal dealing in foreign currency, a crime for which ordinary citizens are routinely arrested and prosecuted (Tshuma, 2020). A whole commissioner of police is buying foreign currency in the

streets. While there is no explicit reference to Mugabe the man, reference to the rot in his government paints a picture of high ranking officials Mugabe's government has condoned.

Besides illegal foreign currency deals, the police also take bribes from criminals and for traffic fines. At a roadblock, "when *Sekuru* Tendai was coming to see us, the police stopped him... they begged him for a bribe and then they just let him go" (Bulawayo, 2013; 107". Mugabe led a corrupt state, and corruption was allowed to invade the core organs of the state like the police and the finance systems. For example, in *Uncertainty of Hope*, a third bank in a row had collapsed because:

The youthful, flamboyant bank managers and their girlfriends were reported to have flown regularly to England to watch soccer matches at the bank's expense, their idea of job perks! It was beyond belief to imagine that the whole thing had gone unnoticed for so long, right until the bank had collapsed (Tagwira, 2006, p. 31).

Thus, Mugabe's reign was wrought with a lack of financial accountability in key functionaries of the state.

However, even in such a state, certain sections of the same text we read, "Tari smiled. 'So I decided to stop moaning and come home. True, it's hard here, but I'm coping better than I did there when I was constantly on the brink of clinical depression!'" (p. 206). Here, a medical doctor who has just returned from the UK is justifying why they think the situation is better in Zimbabwe than in many greener pastures that Zimbabweans were leaving the country in hordes for. This refers to the mass exodus of Zimbabwean professionals to other countries that has had coverage in many studies, such as Chikanda (2007) and Madebwe and Madebwe (2017). Bulawayo dedicates a huge section of her novel *We Need New Names* to the migration of professionals for distant lands and their lives there. We read:

Look at them leaving in droves, the children of the land, just look at them leaving in droves. Those with nothing are crossing borders. Those with strength are crossing borders. Those with ambitions are crossing borders. Those with hopes are crossing borders. Those with loss are crossing borders. Those in pain are crossing borders. Moving, running, emigrating, going,

deserting, walking, quitting, flying, fleeing – to all over, to countries near and far, to countries unheard of, to countries whose names they cannot pronounce ... When things fall apart, the children of the land scurry and scatter like birds escaping a burning sky. They flee their own wretched land (p. 145-146)

In *The Fear*, Godwin could as well add, “Those who are in fear crossed borders. Those persecuted crossed borders”. Thus, a picture is created of a desperate nation wrought with corruption, lack and violence. According to Bulawayo, the children of the land leave with “wounds on their bodies and shock on their faces and blood in their hearts and hunger in their stomachs and grief in their footsteps” (p.146). As soon as they were old enough, Zimbabwean youths were set on “blazing out of this kaka country” (Bulawayo, 2013, p. 13).

However, the texts indicate that the pastures elsewhere are not always green. Tagwira shows this with the return of doctors from abroad where they had sought refuge. The immigrants suffered racism and earned wages lower than natives doing the same jobs as them. Racism “is very subtle, but everyone knows it exists” (Tagwira, 2006, p. 205). Because of these problems, others do not go beyond African countries. For example, they avoid going anywhere where travel is only by air; “What if you get there and find it’s a kaka place and get stuck and can’t come back? Me, I am going to Jo’burg, that way when things get bad, I can get on the road and roll without talking to anybody” (p.14). Indeed, most immigrant Zimbabweans are in South Africa (See de Jager & Musuva, 2015; Idenudia, Williams & Wyatt, 2013.)

Many of the Zimbabweans fleeing Mugabe and Zimbabwe do so without proper immigration papers. For countries that are near, most just jumped the border. Tagwira highlights this. A lot of money was needed to get relevant papers to cross into South Africa. However, John charged only half of that and he could “smuggle women across the border for just half that amount, sometimes even without passports. He had identified a network of like-minded immigration officials whose only requirement was a hundred rands per head. ... he was quickly gaining a reputation for reliability” (Tagwira, 2006, p. 169). For countries that are far, they had to get the travelling papers to allow them to visit, but when they visited, they never left when

the temporary permits expired. Getting a visa was out of the question for the majority seeking to emigrate to the West and elsewhere. We read, “But do you know how difficult it would be for me to get a visa? I don’t think I would get one at all”. This is because Faith fit “definitely fit the British Embassy profile of a person who would disappear into the London crowds as soon as the plane landed ...another illegal immigrant” (Tagwira, 2006, p. 19-20). This is what many just did, forcing them to be always on the run in their host, and often hostile, countries. In Bulawayo’s *We Need New Names*, this is also reflected where the narrator says, “How hard it was to get to America – harder than crawling through the anus of a needle. For the visas and passports, we begged, despaired, lied, grovelled, promised, charmed, bribed – anything to get us out of the country” (p. 240). She adds that:

For his passport, Tshaka Zulu sold all of his father’s cows, against the old man’s wishes. Perseverance had to take his sister Netsai out of school. Nqo worked in the fields of Botswana for nine months. Nozipho, like Primrose and Sichelokuhle and Maidei slept with that fat pig Banyile Khoza from the passport office (Bulawayo, 2013, p. 240).

Corruption at passport offices has been reported immensely by even state media in Zimbabwe. Examples include reports by *The Sunday Mail* (19 January 2020) and *The Herald* (3 March 2020).

We also learn that because of their illegal immigration status, Zimbabweans engage in low-paying and dangerous jobs. At best, they had acquired school visas, though they did not go to school because they did not afford, and because there were other competing needs, like putting food on the table or sending money home through Western Union and MoneyGram because they continuously “got messages that said Hunger, that said Help, that said Kunzima, and we sent money” (Bulawayo, 2013, p. 244). In addition, because they have lied for a long time, they could not go back home. They stayed illegal, did menial jobs, and suffered hard labour. We read:

And the jobs we worked, Jesus – Jesus – Jesus, the jobs we worked. Low-paying jobs. Backbreaking jobs. Jobs that gnawed at the bones of our dignity, devoured the meat, tongued the marrow. ... our minds on the

money and never on our lives. Adamou got murdered by that beast of a machine that also ate three fingers of Sudan's left hand. We cut ourselves working on meat; we got skin diseases. We inhaled bad smells until our lungs thundered. Ecuador fell from forty stories working on a roof and shuttered his spine (Bulawayo, 2013, p. 244).

Furthermore, when they fell sick they could not go to hospitals because they were illegal. Yet, this was still deemed better than life in Zimbabwe under Mugabe.

Brutality and state sanctioned violence

We also located images of Mugabe as brutal and sanctioning violence against citizens, causing what Godwin (2010) describes as "*the fear*". This ranges from targeting individuals to targeting whole communities. Mugabe's brutality against selected communities did not end with *Gukurahundi* in Matabeleland and Midlands region. Bulawayo describes how white people were kicked out of their properties by the blacks that were led by the police. This makes it state-sanctioned. The whites are told, "If you didn't bring this land with you on a ship or plane from wherever you came from" (p118) then it does not matter that you have title deeds. While Bulawayo refers to land and inferences to the land reform, Tagwira delves in and deals with the violence associated with the land reform, also described by others as farm invasions or land grabbing by the War Veterans. We read:

...the farmer had been murdered in his home, and his family brutally assaulted in what had been widely reported in the papers as a burglary. His wife had fled abroad with her children, soon afterwards (p. 233).

Thus, Mugabe and his government sanctioned violence against white farmers in Zimbabwe, which resulted in the death of many and displacement of even more (See Willems (2004) for a detailed account of the killing of white farmers in Zimbabwe during the Fast Track Land Reform.)

In 2005, as already briefly indicated before, Mugabe sanctioned demolitions of some urban dwellings, which resulted in hundreds of thousands of people being homeless. The livelihoods of many were also affected as spaza shops and home industries were also targeted (Bratton & Masunungure, 2006).

Some of the displaced had no rural home to return to and were placed in informal holding camps (Chitekwe-Biti, 2009) “where living and sanitary conditions are worse than in the demolished settlements as there are no schools, health centers, communal safety nets for orphans and people living with HIV/AIDS” (Madebwe, Madebwe, Togo & Pazvakawambwa, 2005, p. 9). This is indicated in Bulawayo’s *We Need New Names*; there are no schools and the children no longer go to school. There is no running water either, and, as a result, the residents just use the bush in the place of toilets. All these they had before the demolitions. In Tagwira, displaced families slept in open spaces, and therefore children could not go to school. Thus, the picture of Mugabe we get is that of a ruthless leader who thinks little of the people he leads, especially those who did not support his ideologies. This is because the 2005 demolitions have been linked to the urban population supporting the opposition party, MDC.

Just as Madebwe, Madebwe, Togo and Pazvakawambwa (2005, p. 9) indicate, Bulawayo also shows that proper houses built at a great cost but deemed to be built in undesignated areas were also demolished and these people were taken to informal settlements. The narrator in *We Need New Names* describes the demolitions thus:

The bulldozers appear boiling...Then the lorries come carrying the police with those guns and baton sticks and we run and hide inside the houses but it’s no use hiding because the bulldozers start bulldozing and bulldozing and we are screaming and screaming. The men knock down our house and Ncane’s house and Josephat’s house and Bongi’s house and Sibo’s house and many houses. Knockiyani Knockiyani Knockiyani (p. 66).

Elsewhere the narrator indicates that the police would beat up those who tried to resist the demolitions. Because these were done without prior notice to the people, when one woman returns from shopping, she finds her house gone and her baby crushed. Thus, Bulawayo creates an image of a cruel and heartless president who sanctions violence against his people, and who turns on his people without hesitation.

The people retorted, “They shouldn’t have done this to us, no, they shouldn’t

have. *Salilwelilizwe leli*, we fought to liberate this country. Wasn't it like this before independence? ... Better a white thief do that to you than your own black brother" (Bulawayo, 2013, p. 75). This speaks of betrayal of the values of the liberation war and of the images of the leadership of the country that the people had at independence. The use of the state police and the army against unarmed citizenry in Zimbabwe is also very common, starting with *Gukurahundi*. Tagwira gives more detail on the killings associated with the demolitions in Mbare, Harare. We read:

In addition to Hondo's funeral, there were three other funerals in Jo'burg Lines that week. The saddest was one for two toddlers who'd died instantly when the demolition team erroneously moved in without checking whether there were people inside the targeted shack. ... One woman's bloated body had been found floating in a ditch overflowing with raw sewage. ... Another woman had committed suicide by taking rat poison, when both her tuckshop and her shack were demolished within a few hours of each other (p. 155).

However, state sanctioned violence against black brothers is not always by the police and the army. In *We Need New Names*, there is politically motivated violence; members of the opposition are killed and nobody does anything about it. This is not different from state sanctioned violence. While there is no mention of ZANU PF, it is easy to link the violence to the ZANU PF youths if one is aware of the Zimbabwean political landscape. The passage that reads, "In the days after the voting" people were restless with expectation, resonates with the 2008 elections. The adults:

...stayed up night after night and waited for the change that was near. Waited and waited and waited. But the waiting did not end and the change did not happen. And then those men came for Bornfree. That did it, that made the adults stop talking about change (Bulawayo, 2013, p. 134-135).

This description resonates with what the Human Rights Watch (2008) describes as Operation Makavhoterapapi (Operation Where Did you Put Your Vote?), "a campaign of violence and repression in Zimbabwe, aimed at destroying the opposition and ensuring that Robert Mugabe is returned as president in runoff elections on June 27". This has been covered by several other studies.

Conclusion

The titles in our analysis echo a metaphysical restlessness that reflects troubled times. *The Fear*, *The Uncertainty of Hope*, *We Need New Names* and *Writing Still: New Stories from Zimbabwe* are candid tales of a man's manic hold to power over a deteriorating nation of desperate and fearful people. The innumerable similarities that we see in the literary works of art, despite their ambivalence, are not random or coincidental. The numerous instances that we outlined and referenced in this chapter indicate the conflicting images of Robert Mugabe. The seemingly contradictory images that emerge from a careful re-membling of Mugabe and of Zimbabwe under his tyrannical and repressive rule are an axiomatic demonstration of the complexity surrounding Mugabe, who presided over the demise of a promising nation-state. The hero-villain instances that consistently interconnect in a kaleidoscope of Mugabe indicate the complexities associated with revolutionary figures in postcolonial spaces. The admiration of one who led the country from colonial rule lingers on even in the face of atrocities and outright failure in governance, hence the conflicting images in both media and what we refer to as biographical fiction.

References

- BBC News (25 August 2019). *Zimbabwe: Is it Worse Off than under Former President Mugabe? BBC News Africa*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-49375096>. [Accessed 30 July 2020.]
- BBC News (27 November 2017). *Zimbabwe officially declares Mugabe national holiday*. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-42136262>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]
- Benyera, E. & Nyere, C. (2015). An Exploration of the Impact of Zimbabwe's 2005 Operation *Murambatsvina* on Women and Children. *Gender & Behaviour* 13(1), 6522-6534.
- Bratton, M. and Musunungure, E. V (2011). '*The Anatomy of Political Predation: Leaders, Elites and Coalitions in Zimbabwe, 1980-2010*'. Research Paper 9.
- Chibisa, P. & Sigauke, C. (2008). Impact of Operation *Murambatsvina* (Restore Order) on flea markets in Mutare: Implications for achieving MDG 1 and sustainable urban livelihoods. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* 10(1), 31-65.
- Chikanda, A. (2007). Medical Migration from Zimbabwe: Magnitude, Causes and Impact on the poor. *Development Southern Africa*, 24:1, 47-60, DOI: 10.1080/03768350601165850.
- Compagnon, D. 2011. *A Predictable Tragedy: Robert Mugabe and the Collapse of Zimbabwe*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Cowell, A. (2019). *Robert Mugabe, Strongman Who Cried, 'Zimbabwe Is Mine,' Dies at 95*. The New York Times. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/06/obituaries/robert-mugabe-dead.html>. [Accessed 28 July 2020.]
- Daniel, L. (2020). *EFF slams Zimbabwe's 'treasonous' decision to compensate white farmers*. The South African. Retrieved from: <https://www.thesouthafrican.com/news/zimbabwe-compensate-white-farmers-eff-malema-calls-it-treason/>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]
- De Jager, N. & Musuva, C. (2015). The influx of Zimbabweans into South Africa: a crisis of governance that spills over. *African Review* 8 (1), 15-30.

Doran, S. (2017). *Kingdom, Power and Glory: Mugabe, ZANU and the Quest for Supremacy, 1960-1987*, Midrand: Sithatha Media.

Global Witness (2013). *Zimbabwe's Elections: intimidation, Vote Rigging and Diamonds*. Retrieved from: <https://cdn.globalwitness.org/archive/files/library/zimbabwe%20election%20briefing.pdf> [Accessed 18 October 2020.]

Godwin, P. (2010). *The Fear: The Last Days of Robert Mugabe*. London: Picador.

Godwin, P. (2006). *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun*. London: Picador.

Hamill, J. (2019). *Two Years after Mugabe's Fall, Zimbabwe Returns to the Abyss*. World Politics Review. Retrieved from: <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/28326/two-years-after-mugabe-s-fall-zimbabwe-returns-to-the-abyss>. [Accessed 30 July 2020.]

Harding, A. (6 September 2019). *Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe's strongman ex-president, dies aged 95*. BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-49604152>

Human Rights Watch (2008). *"Bullets for each of you": State-sponsored violence since Zimbabwe's March 29 Elections*. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2008/06/09/bullets-each-you/state-sponsored-violence-zimbabwes-march-29-elections>. [Accessed 24 July 2020.]

Human Rights Watch. 2002. *"Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe."* *Human Rights Watch 14 (1)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/zimbabwe/ZimLand0302.pdf>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Idenudia, E. S., Williams, J. K. & Wyatt, G. E. (2013). *Migration challenges among Zimbabwean refugees before, during and post arrival in South Africa*. *Journal of Injury and Violence*. 5(1): 17–27. doi: 10.5249/jivr.v5i1.185.

Khumalo, J. (2019, September 12). *Malema: "Keep your De Klerk, we will keep our Mugabe."* City Press. Retrieved from news24.com/citypress/news

Kuyedzwa, C. (2020). *Can it work? Zimbabwe's US\$3.5bn land reform compensation plan explained*. News24. Retrieved from: <https://www.news24.com/fin24/economy/can-it-work-zimbabwes-us35bn-land-reform-compensation-plan-explained-20200801>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Machivenyika, F. (10 Nov 2017). *Airport renamed after President*. <https://www.herald.co.zw/airport-renamed-after-president/>

Maclean, S. (2012, June 19). *He's done it AGAIN: Robert Mugabe motorcade kills a THIRD person in two weeks after colliding with minibus*. Daily Mail. Retrieved from dailymail.co.uk

Madanhire, N. (2003). 'The Grim Reaper's Car'. In I. Staunton (Ed.), *Writing Still: New Stories from Zimbabwe*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Madebwe, & Madebwe, V. (2017). Contextual background to the rapid increase in migration from Zimbabwe since 1990. *Inkanyiso, Jnl Hum & Soc Sci*, 9, 27-36.

Madebwe, C., Madebwe, V. Togo, M. & Pazvakawambwa, L. (2005). *Zimbabwe's Operation Murambatsvina (Operation Clean-Up/Restore Order): The Epitome of Forced Evictions, Broken Lives and Lost Livelihoods*. Paper presented at the Social Science Research Seminar Series at Midlands State University on 26 November, 2005.

Manayiti, O. (November 10, 2017). *Harare International Airport renamed*. NewsDay. Accessed from: <https://www.NewsDay.co.zw/2017/11/harare-international-airport-renamed/>

Matenga, M. Muromo, L. & Chikandiwa, H. (2020). *Mugabe 'tormentors' hijack holiday*. NewsDay. Retrieved from: <https://www.NewsDay.co.zw/2020/02/mugabe-tormentors-hijack-holiday/>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Matondi, B. (2012). *Zimbabwe's Land Reform*. London: Zed Books.

Mavhunga, C. (2019). *Zimbabwe's Former Leader Mugabe Buried at His Rural Home*. VOA News. Retrieved from: <https://www.voanews.com/africa/zimbabwes-former-leader-mugabe-buried-his-rural-home>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Mkodzongi, G. & Lawrence, P. (2019). The Fast-Track Land Reform and Agrarian Change in Zimbabwe. *Review of African Political Economy*, 46:159, 1-13.

Moyo, S. (2011a). "Changing Agrarian Relations after Redistributive Land Reform in Zimbabwe." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 38 (5): 939-966.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2015). *Mugabeism? : History, Politics, and Power in Zimbabwe*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Nehanda Radio. (9 November 2012). *Bulawayo pair arrested for 'blocking' Mugabe motorcade*. Nehanda Radio. <https://nehandaradio.com/2012/11/09/bulawayo-pair-arrested-for-blocking-mugabe-motorcade/>. [Accessed 25 July 2020.]

New Zimbabwe (2 August 2020). *Mnangagwa A Fool – Julius Malema*. Retrieved from: <https://www.newzimbabwe.com/mnangagwa-a-fool-julius-malema/>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Ngugi, T. (2019). NGUGI: *It Took Fleeing Citizens for World to Accept Messiah had turned Pharaoh*. The East African. Retrieved from: <https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/oped/comment/ngugi-it-took-fleeing-citizens-for-world-to-accept-messiah-had-turned-pharaoh-1427162>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Nyambi, O. (2013). *Nation in Crises: Alternative Literary Representations of Zimbabwe-2000*. Stellenbosch University.

Potts, D. (2006). 'Restoring Order'? Operation Murambatsvina and the Urban Crisis in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies* 32(2), 273-29.

Samaita, K. (2020). *Zimbabwe celebrates Mugabe holiday amid divisions over legacy*. BusinessDay. Retrieved from: <https://www.businesslive.co.za/bd/world/africa/2020-02-21-zimbabwe-celebrates-mugabe-holiday-amid-divisions-over-legacy/>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Shaw, W. H. (2003). 'They Stole Our Land': Debating the Expropriation of White Farms in Zimbabwe. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 41(1), 75-89. Retrieved from: <http://www.jstor.com/stable/3876190>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Shay, C. (2012). Fast Track to Collapse: How Zimbabwe's FastTrack Land Reform Program Violates International Human Rights Protections to Property, Due Process, and Compensation. *University American International Law Review* 27(1), 132-171. Retrieved from: <https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1730&context=auilr>. [Accessed 2 August 2020.]

Staunton, I. (2003). *Writing Still: New stories from Zimbabwe*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Tagwira, V. (2006). *The Uncertainty of Hope*. Harare: Weaver Press.

The Guardian (31 July 2020). *Soldiers deployed ahead of anti-corruption protests in Zimbabwe*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jul/31/zimbabwe-anti-corruption-protests-police-harare>. [Accessed 31 July 2020].

Tshuma, A. (2020). *150 illegal forex dealers arrested*. Chronicle. Retrieved from: <https://www.chronicle.co.zw/150-illegal-forex-dealers-arrested/>. [Accessed 20 July 2020.]

Willems, W. (2004). Peasant Demonstrators, Violent invaders: Representations of Land in the Zimbabwean Press. *World development*, 32 (10). pp. 1767-1783.

Winter, J. (6 September 2019). *Robert Mugabe: From Liberator to Tyrant*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-27519044>

Zhou, S. & Landa, N. (2013). Life narratives mirroring the feminization of HIV and AIDS Trauma: Zimbabwean Perspectives of Coping and Resilience. In Venkat Pulla, Andrew Shatte and Shane Warren (Eds.): *Perspectives on Coping and Resilience* (399-418). Nepal: Authors Press.

Fictionalising Activism, Voicing Contested Terrains and Survival Strategies under Mugabe's (Mis-)Rule

Nelson Mlambo and Jairos Kangira

One way of assessing the shadow of Mugabe's hold over Zimbabwe's history is assessing the shadow he casts over Zimbabwe's post-independence fiction. This is significant.

Christine Ro

Introduction

One way of registering Robert Mugabe's pervasive influence on Zimbabweans is through an analysis of how Zimbabwean novelists and creative artists project his looming political presence in their cultural works. Mugabe, as the famous and infamous leader of a country under turmoil, embodies complexities and contradictions that are obliquely referenced in Zimbabwean writings which reflect pain and suffering in multiple manifestations. However, the present chapter finds new touchstones for reflecting on the lives of people under Mugabe's shadow and the chapter serves as a more complex and nuanced exploration of how the people themselves sought to survive under their leader. This chapter is thus about the literary representation of the persistence of hope under political repression and ways of negotiating survival, as well as coping with a tyrannical regime and an arguable despotic leader in the name of Robert Mugabe. As a form of rhetoric of hope and a way of imagining a peaceful future, the chapter assumes an ideologically progressive strand that questions the status quo under Mugabe and yet invites the reader through exposure to the short stories, to consider alternatives to the existing order as a means of coping. The chapter explores how short imaginative narratives mirror the desirability of peace, the innovative ways to prevent and or evade violence and the democratisation processes ordinary people hope for. The axiom which states that the pen is mightier than the sword finds home in the form of literary analyses like the one attempted in this chapter. The present analysis can be understood to be falling into the realm of progressive literature, which is a way of interrogating life and its attendant contradictions

in a hopeful manner. This form of literary analysis is ultimately valorising peaceful and peace-oriented coping mechanisms though at the same time without silencing activism, as these short stories demonstrate.

In the words of a renowned critic of Zimbabwean and African literature, Ngara (n.d.), creativity and responsibility are Siamese twins in art. Taking the thread of argument from Ngara, therefore, the submission being made here is also that in the literature explored in this chapter, what we see is a commitment by the writers to boldly and critically examine the political ground in Zimbabwe and to do so with plausibility, passion and responsibility. The underlying principle is couched on how people devise mechanisms to survive Mugabe's (mis-)rule, which can be summed by the popular expression of the day "*tofira mutrial*". This is a popular colloquialism which, when literally translated, means "we will die trying", and this has become the defacto modus operandi. In this chapter, the central concern is on how the people cope with and survive the political onslaught they face from the forces under Mugabe's leadership.

The chapter is subdivided into two main sections. The first section analyses three short stories namely "At the sound of the last post" by P. Gappah (2009), "Hands" by M. Ndlovu (2006) and "They are coming" by C. Mlalazi (2011). In this section, the analysis is on how urbanites cope with tyranny, whether real or imagined. Political unrest and unease is another constant in the ever-changing sea of Zimbabwe's turbulent circumstances and how the weakest and vulnerable members of the society survive is the literary artist's concern. The section also takes a closer look at the resilience of activism, which is a positive survival mechanism inherently omnipresent in the ordinary, despite their perceived powerlessness which may often and erroneously be mistaken for docility and apathy. In other words, the major concern in this chapter is on protest literature and its relevance in times of political crisis under Mugabe, inviting the reader to experience moments of recognition, revelation, protest and rebellion alongside the characters and thereby participate in that rebellion through the act of reading. The chapter is grounded on fiction that is set in crisis-hit Zimbabwe (see Moyo, 2007; Raftopoulos, 2010). The political and economic crises dimensions have been explored by many and this chapter seeks to further these perspectives, particularly noting the "experiences and resilience of ordinary people in

negotiating, responding to and coping with the main political crisis as well as the series of other micro-crises engendered by the former” by also noting “the central role of Mugabe” (Chiumbu & Musemwa, 2012, p. ix).

The second section of the chapter looks at three short stories namely “The ugly reflection in the mirror” by A. Kanengoni (2003), “Notes from Mai Mujuru’s breast” by T.R. Mwanaka (2012) and “The chances and challenges of Chiadzwa” by E. Chinhanhu (2007). First the section forecasts a future-bound society with amiable interracial relations and also how the process can be represented in words as a precursor to real transitions. The section further takes a critical look at the potentialities the country portends and how this is imaginatively represented. The aim is to explore how the artists imagine a better Zimbabwe and how the stories attempt to shape the consciousness of the reader towards a peaceful reconciliation as the surest means to survive the injustices meted against the ordinary citizens by their leader in the name of Robert Mugabe. There is also an attempt to point out the critical questions on natural resources distribution (which have been the core of Mugabe’s Pan-African political rhetoric) as one sure way of ending the various crises in Zimbabwe in particular and Africa in general.

However, to fully explore and appreciate what these short stories are communicating in the context of the political survival and coping mechanisms of the ordinary people under Mugabe’s shadow, it is important to foreground the chronotope as the theoretical prism of the analysis. The chronotope, which emphasises the interpretation of texts as determined, shaped and informed by the time and space interplay in the story, is of great relevance here. The guiding principle in this chapter is a Zimbabwean setting of political upheaval which can also be described as a dystopian chronotope. A literary representation of a dystopian chronotope therefore in this study is captured here and this is corroborated by a concept that will be termed dystopian hope.

To clarify and justify these two concepts (dystopian chronotope and dystopian hope) in relation to this chapter in particular, first there is a need to capture the basic tenets of what dystopia in fiction means. A form of negative utopia, dystopia is characterised by a community or society that is in some way undesirable or frightening; where dehumanisation, totalitarian

governments, poverty, political repression, societal collapse are evident, and where humanity suffers from a lack of true freedom and liberty (Baccolini, 2008). In light of Baccolini's explanation, the short stories under discussion, which are inspired by Robert Mugabe's leadership, embody such features which to some extent qualify the Zimbabwean crisis (see Moyo, 2007; Nyambi, 2019; Raftopoulos, 2010) under discussion in this study to be a form of dystopian society. The short stories analysed in this chapter also add voice to this dystopian hope description of such a specific period (temporal) as the 1999 - 2009 Zimbabwean situation (spatial) in dystopian terms. That is why it is fit to analyse these stories under the emblem dystopian chronotope.

However, what is particularly important in this chapter is to explore to what extent the rendering in these short stories, how far it can be argued that there is a form of dystopian hope. Dystopian hope means a positive interpretation of the representation of nightmarish societies, hegemonic and totalitarian governments in a hopeful manner (Baccolini, 2008). It is a recognition that in the midst of these terrible fictions is a powerful message that an enlightened populace would best not leave unheard. Again, in the words of the social critic, Baccolini (2008), how utopian hope works in literature is critical and must be appreciated:

One might say that the novels promise doom and gloom, the perpetuation of a downward slope for humanity, and ultimate bondage rather than final liberty. But the true message of these classics is quite the opposite. By giving a warning, by exposing the dangers hidden in the world, dystopian works implicitly promise that mankind can avert this fate and work toward a brighter destiny. The very act of sounding the alarm presupposes that a rescue can be made. (p. 1)

That is the hope and also the coping mechanisms this chapter looks at, the idea that if society would look at itself, honestly and realistically, it could fix the problems it has and survive the crises it meets incessantly. Having laid the ground for this specific chapter and having illustrated the desirability of such fiction, and how Mugabe seems to be the springboard for such creativity, now an analysis of the short stories is attempted.

Surviving Mugabe's hegemony: Fiction, the feminisation of political survival and the resilience of activism.

The short story "At the sound of the last post" from P. Gappah's award winning novel *An Elegy of Easterly* offers a solid, intimate, yet complex and engaging critique on politics and the cunningly non-violent survival instinct of the weak. This version of political survival is presented through the form of the narrator – a woman who has been exploited, abused, chided and finally widowed. The woman is of foreign descent, having married her late Zimbabwean husband during exile as they are both bound by love, same political vision and a sense of hope for the future. The only glimpse into her origins is encapsulated in the statement, "I forgot about the fight against apartheid in my own country as his battle seemed more urgent" (Gappah, 2009, p. 9). What that could possibly point to is either the person is from South Africa or possibly Namibia if one considers the history of apartheid in these two countries. They get married; leave from exile for independent Zimbabwe where the wife realises that her husband was formerly married and the first wife is unceremoniously divorced, and because of the traditional custom of being offered *gupuro* (formal token of divorce through a pittance of possession given to the wife) she peacefully packs off, leaving her children with the husband.

However, what the story succinctly captures is a scene at the husband's death and the concern with political survival during the years 1999 - 2009. The narrative adopts a banal, graphic and no-holds barred depiction of "the President" speaking at a funeral. The author's blunt, yet lyrical and poignantly truthful narration of the scene before the funeral is captivating though it has also raised rancour and controversy in some who view the story as anti-patriotic and a vilification of President Robert Mugabe. The position taken here is based on the fact that the writer, Petinah Gappah, has shown a courageous artistic commitment and responsibility to reality as she perceives it. Therefore, to bring about the core issues in this study, the analysis here agrees with and leans towards Marima's 2009 commentary in his article "Silencing Silence and resisting repression", which posits that stereotypically reading the story as simply about the patriotism and anti-patriotism rhetoric is not enough. According to Marima:

This would be a gross misreading of the novel and the middle-ground needs to be drawn between these two camps. A sensible, impartial reading of this novel is necessary; all agendas aside and an appreciation of the fictional struggles faced and overcome, assessing the varying ways in which they mirror real life in present-day Zimbabwe. (p. 3)

What is important therefore is to analyse how this story affords the reader a futuristic gaze, calling one to extract the wisdom therein and think deeply about what the writing is communicating in veiled literary terms.

The first and most important point to take note of is that the story discusses physical survival. The story is alive and available to us because the narrator has defied death, remained alive to see a better tomorrow, and that she can even plan and talk about that tomorrow to the rest of the world. The setting of the story is at the national heroes' acre (see Kangira, 2010) where the "... Orator at the Funerals of Dead Heroes" gives his graveside speeches. What is much more important to the reader's keen eye is that "Close to him in the widow's place of honour, I am aware of his every movement. I watch him without moving my eyes" (Gappah, 2009, p. 3). The didacticism that is replete with subtleties and innuendos in this statement is a mark of artistic mastery in the writer. Reading between the lines, given the mood of the story, one can see a special emphasis on the phrase "widow's place of honour". Despite all the odds, as the saying goes, every dog has its own day; so this present day marks the narrator's day of glory. The badge of widowhood and the label of being the bereaved here becomes a paradoxical triumph. It becomes a blessing in disguise to be a widow and the fact that she is holding a place of honour is not the author's understatement. Her position affords her the ability to "watch" and in this particular diction, one can sense some form of biblical allusion, as Jesus talks to his disciples repeatedly about being watchful. The narrator does not allow bereavement and widowhood to condemn her to vulnerability, metaphorical blindness and pittance, but like an eagle she becomes alert and watchful so as to survive beyond the funeral. Digging deep into Shona wisdom, there is a saying that *nherera inoguta musi wafa amai vayo*, which literally means that an orphan eats to the full the day the mother dies. The narrator is keenly aware of this and takes this wisdom to extend the day of the death to her life ever after.

Furthermore, another important point to be noted here is how exactly she managed to survive and cope with what many heroes and mighty men have succumbed to. In a tone that is rather above sadistic overtones, the narrative voice lampoons how “They are all culled, all of them, age and Aids will do its work even among the most gallant of heroes (p. 6). Compounding the socio-economic and political crisis is the scourge of HIV/AIDS and the question is, how does one survive given the extramarital escapades of the spouse and, in this instance, Gappah gives this challenge a political dimension. Political in the sense that the challenge is not presented as a challenge of the poor but one that takes no boundaries. The powerful, prominent and “fathers” of the nation are the topics of discussion. What we see in the narrator is one of the most crucial avenues of fighting by those who are physically, politically and culturally weak but know the value of their sexuality in a modern context. This is enshrined in the statement that “He died, leaving me relieved that it had been years since I was wife to him in any but the social sense (Gappah, 2009, p. 18). The critical survival tactics being touted here are an echo of the Onai and Garikai situation in *The Uncertainty of Hope* (see Mlambo, Kngira & Smit, 2015). When Onai realises that her husband Garikai’s promiscuity has gone beyond reprieve, she vows to only allow him his conjugal rights if they use condoms. At the end of the day when Garikai dies of HIV/AIDS related illnesses Onai survives, and lives HIV/AIDS free, for that matter. The same applies to the narrator in the present story; she survives also and can afford to deride the late husband and others that:

Like the worthless dogs that are his countrymen, my husband believed that his penis was wasted if he was faithful to just one woman. He plunged himself into every bitch on heat, even that slut of a newsreader, the ruling party’s First Whore, who lends the services of her vacuous beauty to their nightly distortions. (Gappah, 2009, p. 12)

Setting the possible stereotyping in the above statement aside as well as the uncritical understatement, the point made in the above quotation is clear. Other than rising above the economic, political and social crisis, it is first and foremost important to survive physically, that is health-wise; and the narrator here is yet another survivor whose life story touches more than the head but the heart also. This is a further indication of the value of fiction, in that it connects the reader to the lived experiences of the people. Gappah,

as a modern writer does more than merely reflect and catalogue the despair and deeply entrenched ennui characterising crisis-hit Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe but takes on a critical perspective on this situation, thereby revealing positive possibilities beyond it – which is a mark of dystopian hope under discussion in this chapter.

In addition, another critical point to make is that in order to survive one has to adopt a never-give-up spirit, stick to your principles and, as in classical African American wisdom, to begin to bloom where you are planted. The adage that a rolling stone gathers no moss finds meaning in this story as we see how the narrator, a “foreigner” and just a “woman” is chided and ridiculed to such an extent that at one time she threatened to leave and go back to her own country. Later on, she stuck to her guns and decided to make the best out of her circumstances. When she threatens to leave and go back to her country of origin, this is what her sister-in-law, Edna, says of her:

Ngazviende (let it go), she said, and good riddance. Real women were divorced to make place for a *mhanje* such as this one. Thus my introduction to the word *mhanje*; their word for the lowest form of woman, womanhood without womanliness, *mhanje* being a barren woman, a woman without issue, unproductive, a fruitless husk. (Gappah, 2009, p. 9).

At this point it is important to recap and refocus this analysis. This story is set in the chronotope of a national crisis, the central figure behind all this being Robert Mugabe, and the challenges that the people face are dire. However, what is noteworthy and quite critical to note here is that over and above the socio-economic and political crisis which is faced by the generality of people, there is another incessant crisis along gender lines. This is the double burden of womanhood in a cultural setup that is patriarchal and whose social constructs and perceptions are discriminatory, biased and severely diminutive of the woman. The narrator therefore has to fight and triumph the crisis of the 1999 - 2009 in its generality and yet still fight more battles like the one in the quotation above (see Mlambo, 2010 on the double burden which women face and survive, compared to their male counterparts).

In order to cope, the narrator adopts a leaving and cleaving attitude towards

marriage and adapts, instead of running away from the challenges. The cliché, winners never quit and quitters never win, also finds a reinvigoration and relevance in this instance and it is indeed another survival strategy. One of her first tool for survival is a linguistic one whereby she learns the language of her adopted country including the subtlety of intonations such that "... in the end I did not need him, as he had done at first, to explain words to me" (Gappah, 2009, p. 11). The narrator lingers on, perseveres, and even when deserted by the husband, she still carries the day as evidenced by her pitying Edna, the cantankerous and rancorous aunt that "she really should start investing more money in shoes; her unshaped peasant's feet require something stronger than cheap *zhing-zhong* plastic leather shoes to contain them" (Gappah, 2009, p.9). This is a mockery of the substandard shoes of Chinese origin which are mainly worn by the poor and some non-resilient characters. The critical point here is that the narrator can stand on such a privileged position because she never gave up. So now even when the economic and political crisis claws have a vice-like grip on many people, as an independent woman who has persevered she is much better off than her former detractor, Edna.

Another critical point that is noteworthy in this story is that of one gaining a voice in a politically volatile and plagued society. The narrator survives the stifling silences of the day by criticising the society she lives in and protesting against the perceived injustices and social ills of the day which rightly or wrongly are categorised as life under Robert Mugabe. The narrator's voice is protest in tone and content, offering constructive and corrective criticism. In other words, this manner of reading the story moves from what the people do to survive, but veers more towards what the writer and the people as well hope for; what they aspire towards and also exposes the hopes and impediments faced, which are a contemporary reality. The act of writing in itself becomes a therapeutic measure and by the mere fact of writing Gappah assumes a position of authority; a voice of the voiceless and also an assumption that a woman's voice can and must be heard. Through authorial intrusion, Gappah's voice is both advising and chastising in one breath. Her rod of chastisement paves a way for a better Zimbabwe as feminises the political landscape; demonstrating that for a people and country to develop, there are some vices which the people need to do away with. The personal aggrandisement of office bears in African political circles and political

patronage is shown as one of the greatest impediments to the survival of African countries. This is coupled by the donor syndrome which the narrator lampoons. To demonstrate the facade and hypocrisy of some charity work she draws the reader's attention to how the first lady (supposedly Robert Mugabe's wife) once remarked, "If only I could", she said to the nation's orphans, 'I would really, really adopt you all' (Gappah, 2009, p. 17).

The point in this analysis is that, as a form of expressing dystopic hope, protest literature is the writer and the reader's coping mechanism against perceived hegemony. The writer ridicules and derides the various disorders in the society to evoke feelings of contempt, moral indignation and scorn so that ultimately human vices and folly can be corrected. To further attest to this, the narrator at the heroes' acre recalls how, "It is known that one of the heroes we buried recently was not the fine upstanding family man of the presidential speech but a concupiscent septuagenarian who died from a Viagra-induced heart attack whilst inside [having sex] an underage girl" (Gappah, 2009, p. 24). What the narrator hints at is the limit of pragmatic morality which has been discussed in previous chapters, showing that such coping mechanisms have limits. This is exemplified in the possible horror and psychological torment this underage girl possibly may have, all in the name of surviving the crisis. In other words, the writer here becomes society's moral compass, directing the society towards moral supremacy in spite of all the odds.

In addition, perhaps the most outstanding survival tactic in this short story is through the narrator's regaining of her voice and adopting a trickster method for political and economic ascendancy. This is done through non-violent means of attaining one's goals through calculated, well thought-out and well executed coping tactics. When the husband dies, the one who is politically connected and a powerful man, the narrator does not see her own demise as well but rather an opportunity to be seized and used to catapult her to greater heights. In the midst of adversity, she sees an opportunity for survival and regains her long lost voice. For the narrator (see also Kangira, 2010), the ruling party has to gain political mileage through her husband's death since her "... husband was from the restive tribe in the south that sleeps and feeds and knows not the President" (Gappah, 2009, p. 22). Therefore, to survive the political crisis, the ruling party has to use the narrator's

husband's death to their advantage in the name of altruism and patriotism. "Think of how good it will be for his region" (Gappah, 2009, p. 22) they say, meaning if the late politician is buried at the Heroes Acre then that would mean a satisfactory representation of the poverty stricken region – a typical opportunism which others use in order to survive politically and reap the economic benefits thereafter.

However, the author positively brings about the fact that to survive in a dystopian situation, one has to schematically and courageously use one's voice as the narrator does. Her voice of defiance and protest is made clear as she thinks to herself, "They did not tell me, his widow, of this decision and I, had to hear of it from his whore on the evening news" (Gappah, 2009, p. 20). This is when the animal trickster mode of survival comes into play. The animal trickster is replete in African tradition and folktales. It expresses the invincibility of the weak in the midst of major crises or hegemonic dispensations. In African folktales this takes the form of a weak and despised animal that eventually tackles a challenge. Some of these archetypes include the tortoise, chameleon, an ant and other small and weak animals. These folktales were used to bolster the story teller and the audience's confidence in their ability to survive and eventually to overcome the inhumanities and challenges they face, no matter what magnitude these difficulties can be. The wisdom enshrined in the animal trickster folktales include the principle in the Shona proverb which says that, *matanda makuru mazungunuswa*; which literally means that it's worth the effort to try and shake huge logs because you can meet one whose roots have been eaten by termites and at your fickle push the tree will fall and you get all the firewood. This is what the narrator does, she does not succumb but dares rise to the challenge, a coping strategy which even biblical literature in the gospels preaches when it talks of knocking and it shall be opened for you as well as seeking and it shall be found.

The narrator tricks her way into political power, economic emancipation and the regaining of her voice to also become a voice of the voiceless. She refuses to allow the death of her husband to be her end but in the midst of catastrophe, she sees opportunity aplenty. She does this by simply refusing to have her husband buried at the heroes' acre – in other words even at a time of bereavement she doesn't throw away her brains. Instead she resiliently

thinks of an overture:

And in that realisation, I saw my future. I have no home in my own country to go to; everything that I have invested in is here. I could choose to be an official widow to be trotted out at every commemoration of the heroes. Or I could choose my own path. (Gappah, 2009, p. 23)

Such is her plight and she has to find means and ways of surviving as well as make life worth living. She cunningly uses her wit and refuses to budge, threatening the emissaries sent to her with ngozi (deadly avenging spirit of a wronged dead person) and also going to the private press to expose political secrets which are purportedly damaging to the ruling party. She pools all the resources around her, real or imagined to survive; under such circumstances the lesson the readers learn is that at times it is not the survival of the fittest but of the wisest. Mental agility can indeed triumph over physical prowess.

Realising the opportunity before her, she makes her position clear, “I want my husband’s farm”, I said, “and I want it registered in title deeds in my name. I also want an uncontested seat in the new Senate” (Gappah, 2009, p. 23). Here we have the coping strategies of a survivor supreme. A woman of foreign descent, who is widowed, is without a job, has no investment in her country of origin, and also has no children of her own to possibly assist her to sail through as well as even offer her some form of comfort – but ultimately she is a survivor and victor. She is possibly not included in the late husband’s will if ever there was one and living in a country undergoing a horrifying political and economic crisis is no easy at all, but she is a survivor indeed. She is resilient, schematic and unyielding. The uncontested seat allows her to make a difference, to make her voice heard and be a voice of the voiceless, thereby contributing to national development instead of being on the periphery of national developmental issues. Emphasis is also on the point that this senatorial seat has to be uncontested to make it certain that really she gets the senatorial seat without any doubt. Furthermore, the fact that the senatorial seat is in the new senate implies that she has approximately five years to prove her worth. In addition, getting a farm with title deeds in her name assures her a home for sure. The story becomes representative of survival tactics not only for marginalised women but also citizens by marriage; a minority whose voices are seldom represented in literature and social science research.

Critical to note is exactly how the heroine manages to creatively craft a coping strategy that makes her carry the day. The narrator, as a paragon of survival, pulls off a grand plan by using the trickster method; beating the powers that be, and the President in particular, in their own game of political survival. The authorities survive political demise through singing praises to fallen heroes like the narrator's husband, especially if the death happens to fall in the strategic month of August when heroes' celebrations are held. So since the death of her husband is political mileage for the regime, she decides to make the cause worth her personal gains as well. This is how the author explicitly puts across this survival master plan:

So the bargain was sealed: for a seat in the new Senate, and a farm in my own name, I would close my mouth and let them bury wood and earth in his name. They jumped at this; how could they not, when my husband had died early in August, that they could have a real funeral in the month that they commemorate men of the ruling party who have died still in agreement with the President. And so the spokesperson arranged everything, the coffin, the service, the switch after the lying in state at Stoddard Hall. (Gappah, 2009, p. 22)

Desperate moments call for desperate measures indeed as above illustrates. During tempestuous moments it does not help to be whining and grumbling, whilst looking for someone to come and help you to overcome the crisis situation. Instead, there is a need to rise to the occasion as the narrator does, and use pragmatic morality, wit and courage to survive. As the saying goes, only dead fish flow with the current; the narrator decides to swim in an oppositional direction and rise up when vexed by threatening circumstances. Writing in almost similar dystopian contexts of apartheid, the renowned author, Athol Fugard in his celebrated play *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* demonstrates the same principle. Gappah here further suggests and corroborates that to cope and also survive; one has to cheat the system. Buntu in Fugard's play says to Robert Zwelinzima, "All I am saying is be a real ghost, if that is what they want, what they have turned us into. Spook them into hell man!" (Fugard, 2000, p.185). In the same manner, Gappah's narrator also spooks the system into hell and this is a version of the Shona colloquialism of the day called *kukorokoza*; which literally means gold panning, but now means scavenging around in order to make a fortune in spite of all the mishaps.

Ultimately, what stands out in the short story “At the sound of the last post” is the fact that politically the Zimbabwean crisis which lies squarely under Robert Mugabe’s feet as presented in such imaginative narratives is dystopian in nature. Yet still, such stories as the above are rhetorically effective in that they are hopeful. The story has demonstrated that escape is possible and the very act of writing is therapeutic as well as demonstrative of the human capacity to resist, resiliently imagine a way out of the *den of lions* and also politically manoeuvre one’s way into survival mode. Despite her numerous problems which are compounded by her position as a woman, the narrator remakes the world around her, defines her own destination and her life becomes a testament to how impossibilities can be made possible.

A further testament of how the Zimbabwean short story represents survival and coping mechanisms under Robert Mugabe is found in Mlalazi’s short story “They are coming” (2011). What is outstanding in the story is the author’s representation of the coping strategies and his provocative imagination of how change can be made more visible. Known for his protest fiction, Mlalazi writes to purposefully commit to the truth by pointing out and promoting the possibilities of positive changes and suggesting practical survival mechanisms out of the political malaise the people find themselves in. The story “They are coming” is about how Mr Nkani, a local school teacher who intends to be voted into power in the following elections. Because he belongs to the opposition party many people intend to vote for him. However, the state machinery – the police, who are nicknamed “green bombers”, cannot have any of it. So when the story begins, the police are chasing him but the omniscient narration quickly shifts to an ordinary township family which gets engulfed into the scuffle involving the police and the township dwellers. This scuffle includes a ten-year-old boy, Lungisani, his mother and father and Lungisani’s brother whom we only hear about but never meet. So when Mr Nkani is chased by the police, he runs past their house and a few minutes later he comes back with a group of people, now chasing after the police who are now running back in defeat.

The first coping mechanism that can be raised here pertains to protest that comes out through metaphorical terms. This is presented through the names which are given to the characters in the story. First, the township street also becomes a character whose name carries a lot of meaning. When the young

boy, Lungisani, gets out of his parents' house, the panoramic view meeting his eyes is that of Khumbulani street. This is an important street name which speaks volumes within the political context of Zimbabwe as it is situated in the Matabeleland town of Bulawayo, the second capital of Zimbabwe. Literally translated *khumbulani*, means "remember" or "recall". This is a clarion call to the citizenry of Bulawayo to remember how their past has been – and one of the political events that the people of the town can easily remember is that of Gukurahundi, which was Mugabe's (in)direct responsibility (see Maedza, 2019; Ndlovu, 2019). This [gukurahundi] is a historical massacre which took place shortly after the independence of Zimbabwe and resulted in thousands of civilians being brutally killed (Maedza, 2019, Ndlovu, 2019). Therefore, the reason why it should make sense in this instance is because on one level of interpretation the author is advising that for people to cope with the present crisis they need to remember such historical pains and thus be able to map the way forward.

Similarly, the name *Nkani* means to be unwavering, being stubborn and tenaciously soldiering on. As a way to survive this crisis in question, the writer is calling for such resilience and tenacity as we see in the bearer of this name, Mr Nkani. He is resolute, unmoved and strong headed, and this is in spite of how the state machinery is all bent on squashing the likes of him. However, the point that comes through him is that when times of political crisis like this come and when dealing with dystopian and hegemonic regimes, one has to be firm, courageous and resilient so that the whole nation can survive through that person. Furthermore, the name of the small boy who joins in chasing away the police is *Lungisani*, which means, "make right that which has been made wrong" or "correct and make things better". It is therefore not a coincidence that we have such names in a story that is about a crisis of such a magnitude as the one considered in this study. It is a symbolic name that emphasises the people's desire for survival and making their lives better and therefore it is a call to the authorities to do something for the people. This is sharply contrasted with the derogatory name given to the police officers – Green-bombers. This is an allusion to the very big houseflies which are green in colour and which quickly lay white eggs whenever they land on food. The idea created by the author through using such a name is to create a nauseating feeling and revulsion towards the state machinery used to silence people. Ultimately the point made here

is that if the previous section and chapter concentrated on showing how people cope with a crisis like the one in question, in this short story the analysis is extended to show how the authors of commitment like Mlalazi also grapple with that question and make their voices heard. It is not enough to discuss how the characters themselves interrogate the situation around them but to also interrogate how the writers themselves grapple with the concerns of the day.

Mlalazi also imaginatively forecasts the possibility of coping with the difficult times of the day through political involvement. In the previously analysed short story (*At the sound of the last post*), Gappah's main character resolutely decides to join the political senate so that she can bring about positive change which can enable people to survive and cope with the challenges they are facing. Mlalazi also brings about the issue of political involvement. Instead of wallowing in apathy and having a *laissez-faire* attitude as objects of history, the way to cope with troubled times is through taking up a position in the future government and make a positive difference. The story tells of how, "Mr Nkani's face is plastered on posters all around the township, posters that are tied to trees, to electricity and telephone poles, and stuck on the walls at the shopping centre where his father works. People say he belongs to the opposition, and that they will vote for him in the elections next week" (Mlalazi, 2011, p. 103). This statement is illustrative of the author's vision of survival when the political situation seems unfavourable. This can be done through the democratic means of taking part in elections so that the people's voices can be heard and ultimately bring about means of escaping the crisis that is gripping the whole nation. In addition, in this vision of coping with a political crisis, the author adds another very important dimension when it comes to the person who takes political office. Not only is Mr Nkani a stubborn, strong willed and determined man, as his name implies, but he is the Grade 7A teacher at Lungisani's school. The fact that he is a school teacher also adds another dimension to the author's vision of survival mechanisms – he is not just an ignorant political opportunist but an educated person with some sense of enlightenment. Which implies that being a respected member of the community and fairly educated, Mr Nkani has the potential to lead the people, represent them in government and courageously transform the political terrain - which is a true mark of democratic processes desirable in 21st century Africa.

Moreover, the story also insightfully and with measured wisdom represents some ways to cope with political repression – through resistance. When Mr Nkani is chased after by the “Green Bombers”, the picture painted is that of a dystopian society indeed and Mr Nkani is momentarily presented as an insignificant individual who cannot dare challenge the hegemonic regime with its mighty state apparatus like the unflinchingly ruthless police force. However, the author refuses to cultivate such a pessimistic, cynical and helpless situation. Instead the story is indeed one of dystopian hope as we see how the proverbial Goliath is now retreating as the masses charge after them – this is a possibility the author touts loud and clear. In order to survive, the people need to face their situations head on and take charge of their lives instead of timidly being bystanders as the story suggests. This we see as:

The group is comprised of a mixture of men, women and children, and tagging behind, is the township stray, Ginger, normally a timid dog, but now barking and chasing with the others. Mr Nkani, still in his torn and blood-stained shirt leads the group, snatching up stones from the ground and throwing them in the direction of the Green Bombers, as if he is lobbing grenades. (Mlalazi, 2011, p. 105)

Two points need to be emphasised here. First is that this group has a leader who is Mr Nkani and the group, with an advantage of numbers, is all inclusive as it has the men, women and children of the township, hence it is fully representative. Second is the interesting observation by the author that even the stray dogs like Ginger have also joined in the protest and fight for justice. Despite the fact that Ginger is normally known for being timid, the situation (crisis) has grown into such proportions that timidity and apathy can no longer be accommodated. Hearing of how the Green Bombers were defeated by the people, the representative voice of Lungisani’s mother rejoices, “They were defeated then. Good. There is exultation in MaNdlovu” (Mlalazi, 2011, p.107). Even the ten-year-old Lungisani cannot be an onlooker forever. His proverbial childhood innocence is cast aside as; “Lungisani joins the chase. Even though he is small, he overtakes some of the crowd” (Mlalazi, 2011, p. 105).

Furthermore, it also needs to be underlined that Mlalazi does not blindly preach tactless confrontation as the best way to cope with a political crisis. He presents this survival tactic with a lot of wisdom, guarding against rubble rousing and senselessness. The author, therefore, shows the possibilities the masses have to change their lives but warns against war. According to this story, as a country which gained independence through bloodshed, the Zimbabweans are keenly aware of the destructive nature of war, especially in the present day which is now different from the days when they were fighting for independence. Some form of authorial intrusion is discernable when Ngwenya, Lungisani's father, regrettably observes that, "Because then we had a common enemy, the white regime. Now it is our government versus the people, the war has changed complexion. What about our children" (Mlalazi, 2011, p. 107). The implication being that the survival tactic of confrontation to the point of civil war is not the best according to the story. This is further clarified by the fact that Ngwenya's own son, who is Lungisani's brother, is now on the side of the government, as one of the Green-Bombers. Lungisani swears that he saw his brother, Persuade, amongst the Green-Bombers and the parents cannot stomach it. Persuade is their own son and now the prospect is that their two sons are engaging in a war in which they support different sides, fighting against each other. This is the wisdom enshrined in this short story and through the concluding paragraphs; we can discern the value of artistic responsibility as the author refuses to commit the reader to a desire for war as a coping mechanism. Coping with hegemonic crises can take many forms including confrontation, as we see in this story, and the masses do have what it takes, but fatalistic survival tactics which end up in pyrrhic victories are not what the responsible writer wants to propagate. As the saying goes, a fly that has no one to advise follows the corpse into the grave, therefore, the author seeks to advise against any confrontational survival mechanism as the best way out. Physically confronting the regime can easily result in another Egypt, Iraq or Syria (see <https://www.history.com/topics/middle-east/arab-spring>), and such coping mechanisms are quite retrogressive and undesirable, the story seems to suggest.

In addition to the above, Mary Ndlovu's short story "Hands" (2006) brings other interesting dimensions of how the survival and coping mechanisms during a political crisis are represented through fiction. Set again in the

second capital of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo, under Robert Mugabe's leadership, the story is about the way the urbanites try to solve the challenges they face during the crisis. It is a story about the discord between father and son who occupy opposing viewpoints when it comes to the challenges facing the country and the proposed ways of solving these challenges. The emphasis in the story "Hands", just like in "They are coming", is that the way out of the situation is to do something about it rather than simply complain with folded hands - taking action is the way out. Bongani, who is the son to Ndlovu retorts to his father's disapproving interrogations and says that; "No, Baba, it's not like that. We are trying to solve our problems; it's not easy" (Ndlovu, 2006, p. 37). In other words, this is yet another reiteration of the colloquial *tofira mutrial* (we die trying) which has been popularised during the period of the crisis. Instead of waiting for a messiah, outside help or handouts, the urbanites like Bongani act; they have to resiliently make meaning for themselves, explore alternatives and find a possible way out. Therefore, one way of surviving is through protesting against the status quo under Mugabe (regime) which is perceived to be the sole cause of much of the problems. This comes out when Bongani argues with the mother and says:

Can't you see, that's exactly what I am fighting? Things are all wrong. Your generation messed everything up – no food, no jobs, no rights to anything. We have to fix it. Who is going to fix it if we don't? We can't even imagine having families and homes; those are for the big thieves who want to be called chefs. Do you want all of us to run away to South Africa to live in the streets there, or do you want some of us to do something? (Ndlovu, 2006, p. 3)

The golden statement which colours this whole study, therefore, is in one doing something, taking charge and arising to make sure that in the midst of the crisis and Robert Mugabe's misrule, one can salvage something and be a survivor. Survival at national and political level is presented as something which needs to come through the young generation as we see through Mlalazi's presentation of Lungisani and now also through Ndlovu's Bongani. Arrests and persecution come Bongani's way, just like Mr Nkani's beatings and torment by the state apparatus, but with resilience and fortitude, there is a possible future for the nation.

However, what needs to be further explored is the fact that the political, economic and social crisis gripping the urbanites is at a macro level, but at a micro-level and mostly importantly as occasioned by the national crisis is also a family crisis. In “They are coming” by Mlalazi, we already saw a family crisis as the son Persuade has become one of the Green Bombers who is fighting against his own family. In the present short story (“Hands”), the fight is directly between the son and father but the positive voice that is celebrated is the voice of wisdom coming through the pacifier, Bongani’s mother. The chasm between the father and son is quite disturbing but the mother has a way out as she advises:

No, Ndlovu, that’s not the way. This is a time of understanding, not for temper and violence. Surely it’s a time to reflect and consider what has gone wrong here. The boy is the same as you: headstrong but brave. We need to find out what he is doing and why. My guess is that you will find he has not strayed as far as you think. (Ndlovu, 2006, p. 39)

Here we see the role that women can and do play in the quest to solve a national and family crisis - they are a voice of reason which prefers reconciliation, engagement, dialogue and progressive effort over violence. Bongani’s mother advises her son, Bongani to go and apologise to the father for the sake of progress and family unity; “Just apologise and then do whatever you think you have to do” (Ndlovu, 2006, p. 41). Whilst at the same time she is admonishing her husband to try and understand the changing times and not live in denial of the fact that things are bad and the young have to do what they think is the best, just like he (the father, Ndlovu) previously had to go into exile and come back as a freedom fighter for independence. Finally, the husband also concedes that the time for the gun is now past; shedding blood to solve a crisis like this is not an option to consider at all. “All he knew was that his wife spoke the truth”, (Ndlovu, 2006, p. 41). Therefore, the value of the short story is further amplified here as one of the innovative ways to prevent violence. Such reconciliation and reconstruction mechanisms are highly welcome in the highly volatile and polarised world we live in today, characterised by religious extremism, terrorism, xenophobia, civil unrest and the threat of weapons of mass destruction, covert and overt political domination, to mention but a few. Peace-oriented mechanisms are therefore not solely found in the highly

politicised indabas of international organs but are also found in simple stories like these ones. With peaceful conflict resolutions starting at family level like this, positive avenues are created for national and international harmony as they are already imaginatively presented in this short story. To attest to this, in practical terms, it is such peace-oriented mechanisms which prevented Zimbabwe from total collapse in the year 2009 when there was a formation of a government of national unity between arch-rivals Robert Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai.

The argument above can therefore be summarised with the idea that protest fiction opens locked doors and does not condemn the reader to futility and disgruntlement but moves the reader to a higher level of consciousness. It is not simply an “unbeliever’s journey” or “a dry season” which results in a “house of hunger”, “nervous condition” and “a harvest of thorns”; to string together some fictional titles in Zimbabwean literature. Instead of simply “waiting for the rain”, the people resolve to act, they go to fetch water, metaphorically dig deeper wells and aim at surviving against all the odds as the three stories so far analysed in this chapter have demonstrated. To echo the late Chinua Achebe, there will always be some “anthills of the savannah” which can survive the horrendous bush fires of the hot summer time and this is the wisdom enshrined in this fiction - resiliently surviving against all the odds.

In the next section, the chapter takes a further step as it critically looks at how some of the short stories present an imaginative and suggestive view of what Zimbabwe and indeed Zimbabweans need to address in order to survive the political and socio-economic malaise besieging the country under Robert Mugabe. The section breaks new ground in that it further explores constructive fiction which is both corrective and motivating in the way it represents not only what people do or are doing to survive Mugabe’s dictatorship but also what they need to do – these are the myriad possibilities which go beyond the current problems and challenges.

Fictionalising resource politics under Mugabe’s rule and the imagination of a better Zimbabwe

In Alexander Kanengoni’s short story entitled “The ugly reflection in the mirror” we are faced with suggestive writing that expresses the aspirations

of the people, with a particular emphasis on the critical resources of the country. The story “The ugly reflection in the mirror” is not so much about a narrative with a lot of action and a chain of events but about a few minutes of encounter between two characters. One is the narrator, a black war veteran who has newly acquired a farm, and the other a white commercial farmer. The brief encounter which they have is highly suggestive of how the author imagines survival and coping strategies inasmuch as the story dwells on the sensitive and contentious issue of resources and interracial relations.

The first point that needs to be raised from this story is how the author presents multiracial harmony as a critical ingredient in the making of a better Zimbabwe. The first illustration on interracial harmony as a coping tactic comes through the title itself - “the ugly reflection in the mirror”. This is a metaphorical title which speaks volumes about how interconnected the human race is, and that for the country to move forward there is a need for true reconciliation. This is particularly significant in the wake of the unrest which followed the land invasions/repossessions which took place in the country of Zimbabwe and how violent the process became. This violence was mainly along racial lines. In this story, by presenting two men, one white commercial farmer and the other a war veteran, the author is explicitly drawing the reader to the idea that racial harmony is desirable for there to be progress - this is a survival and coping mechanism which needs to be put into practice. The war veteran is the narrator of the story and as the story draws to a close, after an enchanting dialogue with Mr Flemming, the white commercial farmer, he realises to his utter amazement how they are both human beings who can relate in a civil manner. “And then I also noticed the stoop in his old frame and I thought, My God, how like my late father he looks” (Kanengoni, 2003, p. 108). This is the ugly reflection in the mirror, the encounter with the truth of the cords that bind humanity together despite the racial differences; when one looks in the mirror the reflection that comes out is that of the neighbour who can be any colour. This reflection urges the Zimbabwean citizenry and the reader at large to embrace this reflection so that together they can swim across the tide with a united and stronger front.

Furthermore, to cope with the crisis in its many forms, the story also calls for the people to confront the critical resource of contention which has partly

been blamed for having been one of the causes of the Zimbabwean crisis - the land issue. Kanengoni, through this story, is suggesting that for the country to move forward and for the people to cope with the land issue's attendant challenges, there is a need to face reality so that solutions can be found. Avoiding the issue does not seem to help at all and Mr Flemming has thought deeply about it and critiques how, "My friends don't talk to me anymore," he said, and laughed carelessly "... because I tell them that no matter who comes to power if he doesn't resolve the land issue, the people will chase him out of office" (Kanengoni, 2003, p. 106). For the sake of progressing towards a better Zimbabwe the author through Mr Flemming urges that some historical issues which are always resurfacing need to be bravely faced and embraced so that lasting solutions can be found. This is the invaluable didacticism of the story and through the institutionally weak and crisis-hit Zimbabwean story, a lot can be learnt. The historical contentions need to be ironed out and this cannot necessarily be done through the political way or the SADC tribunal which has already had challenges in this regard. Mr Flemming is quite analytical and perceptive when he reiterates, "How am I expected to avoid this confrontation when Tony Blair disowns his past?" (Kanengoni, 2003, p. 107). In other words, for one to make informed decisions with regards to the crisis at hand, some historical connections have to be made so that, informed by the past, one can safely manoeuvre through the various landmines which have been exposed by the crisis.

To survive the resource politics which compounded the crisis Mr Flemming decides to strategically make linkages with the community around him. "But that day, as we stood in the middle of my twenty-acre field of beans that he had helped me to plant, the man looked away into the distance and said there was nothing in the country as close to the hearts of the people as the land" (Kanengoni, 2003, p. 105). Significant is the fact that Mr Flemming realises that "... this is the war we will never win" (Kanengoni, 2003, p. 107) and in order to survive and protect his interests, he begins to extend a hand to his neighbour who has been resettled next to his farm. That way he manages to keep his farm from repossession and also forge some acquaintances, especially considering that his own friends no longer want to talk with him. Moreover, he also ploughs back into the community around him as he speaks of "... how he helped communal farmers from Musana and Masembura to grow paprika; how as a result, he had been

issued with an EPZ certificate to enable him to export paprika to Spain...” (Kanengoni, 2003, p. 106). The EPZ (Export Processing Zone) certificate is a form of certification that authorises someone to export the produce from his/her farm whilst those without the export processing zone certificate are not allowed to export but have to sell the produce locally. Whereas many other farmers are being chased out of their farms, Mr Flemming survives the invasion. The point is not to condone the chaotic invasions and lawlessness but to point out that in a dystopian state of affairs these are realities that cannot be ignored. However, what is salutary in the story is a presentation of the survivor personality through the likes of Mr Flemming. Furthermore, the EPZ certificate which he gets is a certification for his farm to be regarded as an export processing zone - an authorisation that sees him sell his products outside the country thereby making him get the much needed foreign currency. The foreign currency he gets is the life blood of the companies in crisis-hit Zimbabwe and Mr Flemming pulls off this deal through realising that to survive during such political unrests one has to engage the communities so that everyone becomes a winner - he is a survivor indeed.

Furthermore, another outstanding coping mechanism is presented through the characters’ acceptance of change. This change comes through self-evaluation, a critical reflection on the transitions happening in the society around and a rethinking of preconceived ideas and prejudices. These prejudices cut across racial lines and Mr Flemming manages to surmount these – he embraces a black war veteran, gives him advice and shares ideas about farming, politics and ways to survive. Similarly, the narrator also re-evaluates his preconceived ideas and stereotypical views of the white race. The narrator talks of how:

... right from the outset, the farmers always assumed a domineering attitude. You saw it in the elevated look in their eyes; you saw it in the arrogant way they wanted to control the discussion, reducing you to a mere listener. The most exasperating thing was their indifference as they put you through the humiliation as if this was the only way there was to deal with blacks. That was how I had known it to be with the white commercial farmers. Perhaps it was my imagination. Perhaps I was seeing things that were not there. (Kanengoni, 2003, p. 105)

The above quotation marks a transition in perception by the narrator. The desirability of peace and amiability during a crisis is demonstrated to be the best way for fostering togetherness. The repetition of the word “perhaps” is a mark of change in attitude and this change in attitude is in both the narrator and Mr Flemming. The crisis in question in this study calls for concerted efforts from all racial and ethnic groups. For one to imagine a better tomorrow there is a need to join hands. Mr Flemming and the narrator begin to build an enviable relationship. The story also uses repetition of how the two characters looked into the far distance as if to imply that lasting survival and coping mechanisms are couched in building lasting interracial relationships. To reinforce this idea, the author ends the story with some symbolism which marks the furthering of a brighter future for the two characters. “And then heavy drops of rain began to hit the ground and I continued walking across the field. We had never come before” (Kanengoni, 2003, p. 108). The confrontation marks the breaking of new ground in their quest for survival and the rains which are beginning to fall symbolise the cultivation and flourishing of their relationship and the country’s new beginnings as well.

Finally, looking at the last two stories to be analysed in this chapter, the reader further meets with an admonishing voice that seeks to give direction to what needs to be addressed in order for the country to survive the crisis and Mugabe’s infamous rule. The mineral wealth of the country has to be well taken care of and made to benefit the citizens. The short stories “Notes from Mai Mujuru’s breast” by T.R. Mwanaka and “The chances and challenges of Chiadzwa” by E. Chinhanhu talk about the grapple by the ordinary people to also get the newly found diamonds in the Chiadzwa area of Zimbabwe. Looking at the titles themselves, one can see a lot of significance. In the later, what stands out clearly is the fact that indeed there are challenges which are associated with the hunt for the diamonds in the area of Chiadzwa but amidst all the challenges there are chances. These are the chances which others exploit, therefore, emphasising the core message of this study that no matter how tough and unbearable the situation, there is always a way out and a lesson to be learnt. In the former story, it needs to be pointed out that Mai Mujuru is the Vice President of the country, with Robert Mugabe being the President and by talking of her breast, the author metaphorically brings to the fore the idea of life, sacredness, a strong

willed desire and also intimates to issues pertaining to the heart. The breast gives milk, which is life to a child and through this connection the author demonstrates how the diamond as a natural resource is akin to a breast. When talking about “notes” the idea can be that these are ideas, some advice or piece of information and to interpret it that way also means that the author seems to highlight core issues which need to be addressed in order for the people to survive.

A tone of dystopian hope pervades the whole story by Mwanaka (“Notes from Mai Mujuru’s breast”) as we see how lives are lost whilst trying to look for a way out of their troubles. “It was at the height of the political problems in the country. People were still scuttling all over the country trying to eke an existence” (Mwanaka, 20012, p. 195). The story is about Daniel and Chris who decide to try their luck in the hunt for diamonds in the Chiadzwa / Marange area. The area is heavily guarded but the need to survive makes them throw all caution to the wind. The repetition of the word “survive” in the story is telling. Even when death is threatening him, “Some would have given up, but Chris had to survive to tell the story, for Daniel and the other people who had died at the hands of the police here in Marange” (Mwanaka, 2012, p. 193). Furthermore, to illustrate the resilience of the young man, the writer speaks of how “He had survived before in this place” (Mwanaka, 2012, p. 193). The reason why Chris becomes such a daredevil, risking his life, is because of the need to survive. The natural resources of the country afford him a way out, especially if he were to manage to pan for diamonds at the lot nicknamed “Mai Mujuru’s breast” because as he reminisces, “A breast to a little kid or even to an old man represents life, living, loving” (Mwanaka, 2012, p. 197). So Chris and his friend Daniel strong headedly find their way to the volatile diamond mine with the conviction that, “If you were to lick a bit of that breast, you would go home smiling yourself out of the Mufakose township into the lush, leafy suburbs of Harare” (Mwanaka, 2012, p. 198). Whilst the story ends on a rather sad note, with the tragedy of Daniel’s death, the point has been made. The natural resources are a key to the survival of the country and the ordinary citizens also deserve them to cope with the crisis. By using a metaphorical title and linking it to the vice president of the country, Amai Mujuru, the story is a direct indictment of the politicians; it is a protest form of writing that is highly suggestive. The story gives direction and searches for survival paths in a crisis hit country

like Zimbabwe. In the final analysis, the story demonstrates further the value of dystopian hope and protest literature in that it powerfully and intimately exposes the shortcomings of society so that corrective measures can be thought of and thereby bring about a brighter future.

In addition, Chinhanhu's short story "The chances and challenges of Chiadzwa" further demonstrates the resilience of the ordinary people in their bid to survive the crisis through the utilisation of the natural resources available to them. When the diamonds are discovered all over the area, the people think that their prayers have been heard and they will avert the crisis. However, the government swoops in, sealing the whole area, mounting roadblocks and thorough searches of everyone who leaves or enters the area of Chiadzwa in Marange district. However, this only curtails but does not extinguish the people's desire to survive. The people, using the trickster method manage to outwit the hegemonic authorities. The elders of the village meet at night to plan:

So everything is in your hands, to be brave and save your fellowmen, or be cowardly and watch them die one by one as before. A lot of my contemporaries died without witnessing these diamonds, and I consider myself privileged to have at least seen them. It is God-given wealth. God has heard our cries over the years, and gave these stones to us. But now look ... (Chinhanhu, 2007, p. 20)

This is the honest truth they are confronted with and instead of sitting down and watch, the people decide on a plan to trick the authorities and smuggle the diamonds. This plan is hatched in connivance with the traditional authorities and it is a plan to feign the death of one of the villagers who has to be buried outside the district of Marange. When the "corpse" is being transported to the burial place, they hide lots of diamonds and later meet up with an arranged buyer. The buyer gives the village men accompanying the corpse an amount of US\$500,000 and also Z\$44,000,000. As the story comes to an end we see how "The villagers took their money, to be shared equally among themselves later, before each thought of where to spend the next few nights. But first they had to bury the empty coffin, which they did with a pomp and glee rarely seen at a 'funeral'" (Chinhanhu, 2007, p. 22). This is another representation of the fortitude ordinary people have, their inextinguishable desire for survival and the resilience of hope. Instead

of being bystanders succumbing to the wills of a hegemonic regime, the ordinary people demand a piece of the national cake and they do this through careful planning, use of their wits and cooperation. They 'spook' the authorities to hell, to use Fugard's terms, and manage to lay their hand on the natural resources which according to them are God-given and rightfully belong to them instead of a few members of the regime.

Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to demonstrate the literary representation of political survival and natural resource utilisation under Robert Mugabe, how the ordinary people resisted his repression, and also about the resilience of hope. The chapter's main concern has been to show how the writers imagine possible coping strategies which are peaceful, non-violent and futuristic. The short stories analysed have represented the Zimbabwean crisis under Robert Mugabe as a form of dystopia; with authoritarianism, the dehumanization of the ordinary people and the oppression of the weak being reflections of Robert Mugabe's (mis-)rule. However, the ultimate idea that carries the day is that this is a form of dystopian hope; beyond the gloom, the outrageous and the horrific is a world full of possibilities and it is this potential that needs to be celebrated. The short stories analysed here are hopeful and suggestive; and the act of protesting and sounding the alarm is an act of didacticism, directing the reader towards the realisation that despite Mugabe's hold on their lives, survival is ubiquitous and a possibility, thereby spurring the reader onwards.

In the story "*At the sound of the last post*" by Gappah, the heroine defies all the odds and ends up being the last woman standing. She outwits the political authorities in general and Robert Mugabe in general, regains her voice and ends up with a farm delivered to her on a silver platter and a senatorial seat is awaiting her without her having slaved in campaigns and voting processes. Whilst in Ndlovu's short story, "Hands" the value of protest literature is valorised. The story admonishes that in order to survive the political crisis and Mugabe's despotism; the ordinary people have to protest, take control of their destiny and courageously challenge the system. The woman's voice is given more prominence in the story as a voice of wisdom, which pacifies the father and son and also calls for reconciliation. The short story "They are

coming” further emphasises the value of political engagement and physical resistance to harassment under Mugabe as a coping strategy. Through Mr Nkani, the story advises that apathy will not help the situation but capable people must get into government so that they can bring about positive change. The story further illustrates the power which the masses have to drive away from the state apparatus like the “Green-Bombers”, whilst at the same time cautioning against civil war since it pits brother against brother hence it is not the best survival mechanism the country needs to utilise.

In the second section of the chapter, the short story “The ugly reflection in the mirror” by Alexander Kanengoni suggestively presents some of the issues that need to be confronted in order for the country to survive the crisis. The story calls for multiracial harmony and a peaceful resolution of the contentious land issue as well as community engagement as well as community upliftment. This is ably done through the presentation of Mr Flemming and his encounter with the narrator who is a war veteran and as the story comes to a close, these two people are headed towards a better Zimbabwe and they have sailed past the crisis. Whilst in the stories “The chances and challenges of Chiadzwa” as well as “Notes from Mai Mujuru’s breast”, the writers grapple with resource politics. The goal has been to show that for the nation to sail past the crisis, this issue has to be addressed and if handled well enough the economic crisis may be contained. In the former short story, the people’s ingenuity and resilience is celebrated as the author presents how they outmanoeuvre Mugabe’s hegemonic authorities and manage to survive off the proceeds of the God-given diamonds.

Through this chapter that is constructed on Mugabe’s shadow that pervasively colour the stories and their settings, it can be concluded that fiction can foster innovation and change which is peaceful and non-violent. The short stories analysed here are vehicles of emancipation which bring about hope, growth and awakening as well sensitisation to the fact that despite the dystopian nature of the crisis there are always coping mechanisms and survival strategies. Instead of solely concentrating on what the people do to survive, the pedagogical value of this analysis is discerned through how the writers imaginatively present what needs to be done in order to survive. Through protest, admonishing and ridiculing in some instances, the reader is left with optimism, courage and energy to face challenges in life.

References

- Baccolini, R. (2004). *The Persistence of Hope in Dystopian Science Fiction*. Modern Language Association, 119(3), 518-521.
- Chinhanhu, E. (2007). The chances and challenges of Chiadzwa. In Staunton, I. (Ed.). *Laughing now: New stories from Zimbabwe* (pp. 16-22). Harare, Weaver Press
- Chiumbu, S., & Musemwa, M. (2012). Introduction: Perspectives of the Zimbabwean crises. In S, Chiumbu, & M. Musemwa, (Ed.) *Crisis! What crisis? The multiple Dimensions of the Zimbabwean Crisis* (pp. ix – xxiii)
- Fugard, A. (1993). *Township plays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gappah, P. (2009). At the sound of the last post. In Gappah, P. *An Elegy of Easterly* (pp. 3-24). London: Faber and Faber.
- Kanengoni, A. (2003). The ugly reflection in the mirror. In Staunton, I. (Ed.). *Writing Still: New stories from Zimbabwe* (pp. 105 -109). Harare: Weaver Press.
- Kangira, J. (2010). Mugabe's Graveside Orations: Collective Memory and Nostalgia. In D.O. Orwenjo, & J.O. Ogone (Eds.), *Language and Politics in Africa: Contemporary issues and critical perspectives* (pp. 27-49). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Press.
- Maedza, P. (2019). 'Gukurahundi – A Moment of Madness': Memory Rhetorics and Remembering in the Post-colony. *African Identities*, 17(3-4), 175-190.
- Marima, T. (2009). *Silencing Silence and Resisting Repression: A commentary on Brian Chikwava's Harare North and Petinah Gappah's An Elegy of easterly*. Retrieved from www.mazwi.net/essays/silencing-silence-and-resisting-repression.
- Mlalazi, C. (2011). They are coming. In Morris, J.(Ed.). *Where to Now? Short Stories from Zimbabwe* (pp 102-108). Bulawayo: amaBooks.
- Mlambo, N., Kangira, J., & Smit, T.C. (2015). Critical reflections on surviving against all odds in Valerie Tagwira's The Uncertainty of Hope. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, 2(2), 48 - 56.
- Mlambo, N. (2010). *The Paradox of Modernization in African literature:*

Progress or Retrogression in the Contemporary Zimbabwean Short Story. Saarbrücken, Germany: Lambert Academic Publishing.

Moyo, D. (2007). Alternative Media, Diasporas and the Mediation of the Zimbabwean Crisis. *Ecquid Novi: African Journalism Studies*, 28(1-2), 81-105.

Mwanaka, T.R. (2012). Notes from Mai Mujuru's breast. In *The Caine Prize for African Writing: African violet and other Stories* (pp. 193 -201). Johannesburg: Jacana Media.

Ndlovu, M. (2006). Hands. In Morris (Ed.). (2006). *Short writings from Bulawayo* (pp. 36-41). Bulawayo: amaBooks.

Ndlovu, N. (2019). The Gukurahundi "Genocide": *Memory and Justice in Independent Zimbabwe*. (Doctoral Thesis, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa. Retrieved from <https://open.uct.ac.za/handle/11427/30431?show=full>

Ngara, E. (n.d.). *Artists must be responsible beings*. Retrieved from www.mazwi.net/essays/artists-must-be-responsible-beings.

Nyambi, O. (2019). *Life-writing from the Margins in Zimbabwe: Versions and Subversions of Crisis*. Routledge

Raftopoulos, B. (2009). The Crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998 – 2008. In B. Raftopoulos, & A. Mlambo, (Ed.), *Becoming Zimbabwe: A History from the Pre-colonial Period to 2008*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Shifting Diplomatic Ideological Stance-taking? Comparative Appraisal Discourse Linguistic Analyses of Mugabe's first (1980) and last (2013) Inauguration Speeches

Collen Sabao, Emaculate Mvundura & Oiva Sikwaya Nauyoma

Introduction

The name Robert Gabriel Mugabe conjures a multiplicity of often highly divergent thoughts, emotions and sentiments. With conflicting reflections of Mugabe in both his personal capacity and as head of the Republic of Zimbabwe, being lauded as an inimitable African nationalist, orator, liberator, reformist, decolonialist, Pan Africanist among other praises on the one hand and vilified as a despot, murderer, election thief, gross human rights violator among other colourful indictments on the other, Mugabe remains in death as he was in life, an enigma. One constant in these classifications and descriptions is his oratory skills – albeit not always diplomatic. His ideological stance regarding Zimbabwe-Britain bilateral relations reflects, over time, a shift from conciliation to hostility conditioned by a multiplicity of controversial conflicts over policy matters specifically land redistribution processes in Zimbabwe and human rights violations. Through the lenses of Appraisal theory (White, 1998), we attempt a linguistic discourse comparative examination and argument for a shift in Mugabe's ideological stancetaking (Gale, 2010) with regards to Europe (especially Britain) and America as evinced in his first and last inauguration speeches (1980 and 2013 respectively). We argue that the linguistic resources utilised in the speeches evince shifting diplomatic ideologies and evaluations of both the West (specifically Britain) and the United States of America (USA) – as well as political actors in the two countries.

Mugabe: A brief biographical history

The late former leader of the Republic of Zimbabwe for 37 years, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, born on the 21st of February 1924 passed on the 6th

of September 2019 in Singapore from cancer related illnesses. Mugabe had reigned over Zimbabwe for almost four decades – as Prime Minister (1980 – 1987) and President (1987 – 2017). Mugabe was on 17 November 2017 removed from office and replaced by his once Vice President (who he had fired several days before) and is current President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa. Because of the involvement of the military in this political transition, Mnangagwa's rise to the presidency has vastly been theorised as a 'soft coup' (Moore, 2018). In interviews and news reports after the so called 'soft coup', Mugabe is on record expressing bitterness over what he termed his illegitimate removal as well as expresses sentiments of betrayal from his close allies in the party and country. He is also on record believing that his removal from power, with its military intervention, amounted to a coup. The public euphoria which accompanied Mugabe's office exit suggests the military intervention was a necessary transitional step.

The Mugabe regime's reign was largely defined by controversy and accusations of mismanagement of national resources, appropriation of national resources, corruption, thievery as well as allegations of electoral theft, despotism, gross human rights violations and largely the Matabeleland and Midlands civil unrests the early 1980s (through an operation code named *Gukurahundi*), violent retribution on opposition political parties (especially their leadership), running down the Zimbabwean economy and a host of several deplorable acts. Hailed especially in broader Africa as a statesman and liberation hero, Tendi (2011) cites the *Gukurahundi* episodes as one event that evinces the fallacy of the imaging of Mugabe as a selfless revolutionary and an independence war hero. Tendi (2011, p. 309) argues thus, "one clear illustration of this is the violent 1980s campaign Mugabe ordered in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces" which culminated in the deaths of tens of thousands of people – largely of Ndebele descent and allied to a parallel political party to Mugabe's ZANU PF, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU).

Mugabe and the Zimbabwe – Britain and the West (Europe) Relations

Relations between the Robert Gabriel Mugabe-led Zimbabwe and the western world (especially Britain) are best described as confusingly tumultuous. Once

a darling to the western world soon after Zimbabwe attained independence from British colonial rule in 1980, Mugabe was considered a gentleman, peace loving liberator especially because of his conciliatory tone towards the former colonial masters. So admired was Mugabe and his policies that he was even knighted by the Queen Elizabeth II of England in 1994 “for his significant contributions to relations between Britain and Zimbabwe” (Musila & Moyo, 2012 p. 217). Mugabe’s knighthood was, however, in June 2007, withdrawn on the basis of alleged human rights abuses and disregard to democratic processes in Zimbabwe. Interestingly, as Musila and Moyo (2012, p. 221) argue “ironically, Britain had turned a blind eye to the atrocities perpetrated by Mugabe against the people of Matabeleland in the early 1980s”. The revocation of the knighthood has been perceived as a response to the killing of British farmers during the illegal land seizures – exposing the hypocrisy of Britain who remained mum when tens of thousands were massacred during the *Gukurahundi* genocide of the early 1980s (CCJPZ & LRFZ, 1997). Relations began deteriorating over failed conciliations regards land redistribution in Zimbabwe, with the Mugabe government accusing the British of reneging on their initial promise to fund land redistribution processes and programmes in Zimbabwe.

In the late 1990s, the ZANU PF backed war veterans began invasions of all white owned farms in Zimbabwe – and most of these were British citizens. The illegal farm invasion culminated in the murder of several white farmers for resisting the forced evictions as well the destruction of millions of dollars worth of property and farming equipment. The ZANU PF government went on to eventually legally ratify the land grabs through a programme dubbed ‘The Fast Track Land Reform Programme’. “The Fast Track Land Reform Programme (popularly known in Eurocentric scholarship as the Zimbabwe Land Grabs of the late 1990s and early 2000s) dubbed in Zimbabwean and ZANU PF discourses as the Third Chimurenga evinces an ideological conviction of reclaiming the land” (Sabao, 2019, p. 68) appropriated by former colonialists (the British) and emphasises the centrality of land to the rift that developed between Zimbabwe and her former colonial masters. This attracted a huge backlash from the former colonial masters resulting in the waning of diplomatic relations between Zimbabwe and Britain. The end of the Zimbabwe-Britain romance was so dramatized in the media as well as several international fora and conferences with Mugabe taking each and

any occasion in front of national and international media to throw chides at the British government – most notably the then British Prime Minister, Tony Blair.

The deterioration of affinities between Zimbabwe and Britain resulted in the USA imposing barrages of ‘sanctions’ against Zimbabwe. Those affected by the sanctions are broadly speaking, the President of the Republic, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, his immediate family and close relatives as well as his political allies (a group largely constituted of his ministers, heads of security agencies, that is, the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), the Police, the Army and the Prisons Services as well as their immediate families). “The ‘illegal sanctions’, which are largely travel and trade restriction on the named individuals forbade United State nationals to ‘do business with [these named persons], these designated entities or with other entities they control” (Sabao, 2013). This translates thus to the sanctions also affecting named corporations and organisations run by the embargoed individuals. The continued alienation of the country, especially by the Western countries, who constituted the larger part of the country’s donor community as well as by multilateral institutions culminated in an unprecedented deterioration of the Zimbabwean economy characterised by a world record breaking inflation index of 79.6 billion percent between 2008 and 2009.

Inauguration speeches, ideological stancetaking and Appraisal Theory

One of the most important speeches that any national leader, specifically elected presidents, makes is an inauguration speech. Inauguration speeches (delivered at the onset of assumption of the presidential office and usually delivered at a swearing in ceremony) are critical to any presidency in that they spell out the ideology or driving influence governing the tenure of an elected president. As Sameer (2017, p 141) explains:

The most important political discourses are presidential inaugural speeches. They are of great significance to the new president, because they form a very special moment when he stands before the whole nation or even the whole world to express his fundamental political policies and principles for the country’s development during the period of his presidency.

The new president thus takes the podium to attempt to convince his nation and the world about the ideology guiding his leadership – often including domestic and foreign policy stipulations among other several pertinent issues. In making these expressions and proclamations, the speaker assumes a stance (Gales, 2011). The ‘stance’ refers to a speaker or writer’s feelings, attitudes and opinions about an entity – be it human, country, proposition and so on. Through the words and expressions they use, we can evaluate their ideological perspective towards other entities – human or otherwise. This linguistic discourse analysis is made quite reflective through the Appraisal Theoretic analysis of the speeches.

Gales (2010) explains that ‘stancetaking’ is a concept that examines how a speaker/writer positions themselves, through choices made at both lexical and syntagmatic levels, towards a given ideological [or political] standing. In line with this, Du Bois (2007, p. 139) postulates that, “one of the most important things we do with words is taking a stance”. And the stance – a speaker or writer’s personal feelings, opinions, and attitudes about a person or proposition – is expressed subtly or boldly through the lexico-grammatical choices one makes (Biber, 2006) and also with regards to how they attribute such linguistic resources. It is also important to observe that, when viewed across a text, particular indexes of stance can significantly influence the emotions and reactions of the audience as well as demonstrate the stancetaker’s commitment to the mentioned proposition. Furthermore, they can serve the purpose of aligning or disaligning the ‘stancetaker’ with another person or proposition or of reproducing and reinforcing a socially-situated ideology, thereby making stance an extremely powerful construct (Biber, 2006; du Bois, 2007; Martin & White, 2005).

Appraisal Theory “is concerned with evaluation – the kinds of attitudes that are negotiated in a text, the strength of the feelings involved and the ways in which values are sourced and readers aligned” (Martin & Rose, 2003). Authors/speakers employ the resources of Appraisal for negotiating their social relationships; in other words, how they feel about things and people involved in the discourse and this is evidenced through linguistic choice – the choices of linguistic resources they choose to express themselves. Within the subsystem of Appraisal are further subsystems of ATTITUDE, ENGAGEMENT and GRADUATION. Within the subsystem of

ATTITUDE there are further subdomains of AFFECT, JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION. These are the Appraisal resources through which we analyse the proliferation of authorial evaluative language and discern authorial 'stance' and subjectivities.

As a subsystem of ATTITUDE, 'JUDGMENT' is concerned with the assessment of human behaviour based on a set of established social norms and expectations. It is 'the evaluation of human behaviour with respect to social norms (White, 2001). "It deals with attitudes towards behaviour, which we admire or criticise, praise or condemn" (Martin & White, 2005). It is realised in expressions that a speaker/writer makes attitudinal evaluations of human behaviour based on social expectations and often this is construed through 'judgments' based on legality/illegality, morality/immorality, politeness/impoliteness as these are configured within a cultural, institutional or social context. 'APPRECIATION' concerns itself with the examination and analysis of linguistic 'resources that construe values of things including natural phenomena and semiosis' (Martin and White, 2005) specifically focusing on non-humans. It is 'the evaluation of objects by reference to aesthetic principles and other systems of social value' (White, 1998, 2006, 2008).

Lastly, AFFECT resources are concerned with the construal of 'emotional reaction to events, for example, feelings of shock, elation and so on' (Martin and White, 2005). According to White (2005), 'the general outlines of the grammar and semantics of AFFECT are well understood. 'Affect' is concerned with emotional response and disposition, and is typically realised through mental processes of reaction.' In essence, our analysis of the resources of Affect are concerned with the identification of instances of both explicit (inscribed) and implicit (invoked) instances of a writer's/speaker's emotional reaction to the subject/events of their text. This can also cover the emotional reactions of the sources within the text (attributed text) as 'observed by the writer.' In the analysis of the occurrence of attitudinal evaluations within the texts, occurring as both explicit (inscribed) and implicit (invoked) evaluations, the study adopts the analytical key proposed by Tran and Thomson (2008, p. 55) which is reproduced below:

KEY

bold underlining = inscribed (explicit) negative attitude

bold = implicit (implied) negative attitude

italics underlined = inscribed positive attitude

italics = invoked positive attitude

boxed material = heterogloss (material attributed to an external source)

The subtype of the attitude is indicated in square brackets immediately following the relevant span of text:

[j] = judgment (positive/negative assessment of human behaviour in terms of social norms)

[ap] = appreciation (positive/negative assessment of objects, artefacts, events and states of affairs in terms of systems of aesthetics and other systems of social valuation)

[af] = affect (positive/negative emotional response); 1st af = first person or authorial affect; 3rd af = observed affect, i.e. the reporter describing the emotional responses of third parties.

Kinds of attribution

<ack> = ‘acknowledgement’: material is attributed to some external source by means of quotation and related formulations. Nothing in the lexicogrammar of the words by which the quotation is framed indicates where the writer stands with respect to propositions being presented – i.e. there is no overt indication of the writer favouring or disfavouring the attributed material. It is, however, possible that the writer’s position vis-à-vis the attributed material will be indicated elsewhere in the text. Attribution is typically via a formulation involving reporting verbs – for example, “X stated that...”, “X argues that...”, “X believes that...” or through adjuncts such as “according to X...”

<end> = ‘endorsement’: material is attributed to an external source – as is the case with acknowledgement – but the framing is such as to indicate that the writer holds the material as true or valid – for example by means of ‘factive’ reporting such as ‘to prove’, ‘to show’ or ‘to demonstrate’;

<dist> = ‘distancing’: material is attributed to an external source – as in the case of acknowledgement – but the framing is such as to indicate that the writer holds the material to be still open to question, as not yet proved. Distancing in English is typically achieved by the use of the reporting verb ‘to claim’ and by the use of so called ‘scare quotes’.

*** There is a notion of ‘proclamation’ <proc> which Van and Thomson (2008) describe as those instances when the reporter makes overt interventions into the text which “present themselves as challenging or dismissing some alternative viewpoints.”

Analysing ideological stancetaking and shifting in Robert Mugabe's inauguration speeches

In this section, the two speeches are analysed through the tools of Appraisal Theory to identify and mark the resources related to stancetaking and ideological shift with regards to Zimbabwe – British (and USA) relations. The speeches are independently analysed and a comparative analysis is done at the end of the section. In analysing the 2013 speech (which is quite long), paragraph not directly speaking to the concerns of the study are deleted and where such happens, its indicated by (...).

a) Analysis of Mugabe's first inauguration speech (4 March, 1980)

	APPRAISAL ANALYSIS
001	Greetings in the name of freedom. May I <u>thank you most heartily</u> [1st af] for your votes and support. <u>I feel overwhelmed</u> [1st af] as at the same time <u>I feel humbled</u> [1st af].
002	I wish to address you tonight on <u>the significance of the election victory</u> [ap] you awarded my party, ZANU (PF). In doing so, <u>I would like to thank all</u> [1st af] those who, either by their direct vote as our supporters or by their efficient campaigning as our organizers, have contributed to this favorable result. In addition, <u>may I also thank</u> [1st af] all officials who participated in the mechanical exercise of handling the elections, without whose organizational and administrative efforts the whole election process would have been a failure.
003	Soon a new government will come into being and lead our country to independence. In constituting this government, <u>my main concern</u> [1st af], and that of the party, <u>is to create an instrument capable of achieving peace and stability as it strives to bring about progress</u> [ap].
004	<u>Peace and stability can only be achieved if all of us, first as individuals and secondly as part of the whole Zimbabwean national community, feel a definite sense of individual security on the one hand and have an assurance of national peace and security on the other</u> [ap].

005	It must be realized, however, that a state of <u>peace and security can only be achieved by our determination, all of us</u> [j], to be bound by the explicit requirements of peace contained in the Lancaster House Agreement, which express the general desire of the people of Zimbabwe.
006	<u>In this regard, I wish to assure you that there can never be any return to the state of armed conflict which existed before our commitment to peace and the democratic process of election under the Lancaster House Agreement</u> [ap/j].
007	<u>Surely this is the time to beat our swords into ploughshares so that we can attend to the problems of developing our economy and our society.</u> [j/ap]
008	My party recognizes the fundamental principle of that, in constituting a government, it is necessary to be guided by the national interest rather than by strictly party considerations. Accordingly, I am holding consultations with the leader of the ZAPU (PF), Comrade Joshua Nkomo, so we can enter into a coalition. What I envisage, however, is a coalition which, in the interests of reconciliation, can include, by co-option, members of other communities whom the constitution has denied the right of featuring as our candidates by virtue of their being given parliamentary representation. <u>We should certainly work to achieve a national front</u> [1st af/ap].
009	Whatever government I succeed in creating will certainly adhere to the letter and spirit of our constitution, since the government will itself have been the product of such constitution.
010	...
011	Our constitution equally circumscribes the powers of the government by declaring certain rights and freedoms fundamental. <u>We intend to uphold these fundamental rights and freedoms to the full</u> [1st af].

012	Similarly, it is not our intention to interfere with pension rights and other accrued benefits of the civil servants. I may mention here that I have now held discussions with chiefs of joint operations command, as well as heads of ministries, and all of them have given me the assurance of their preparedness to work under my government. <i>I, in turn, assured them of our concern about their position and the position of the civil servants</i> [1st af].
013	<u><i>We have assured them that it is not the intention of our government, when it comes into being, to deprive the civil servants of their pension rights and accrued benefits; nor do we want anybody out of the country; nor do we intend to interfere unconstitutionally with the property rights of individuals</i></u> [1st af].
014	<u><i>I urge you, whether you are black or white, to join me in a new pledge to forget our grim past, forgive and forget, join hands in a new amity, and together as Zimbabweans, trample upon racialism, tribalism, and regionalism, and work to reconstruct and rehabilitate our society as we reinvigorate our economic machinery.</i></u> [1st af]
015	<u><i>The need for peace demands that our forces be integrated as soon as possible so that we can emerge with a single national army</i></u> [ap]. Accordingly, I shall authorize Gen. Walls, working in conjunction with the ZANLA and ZPRA commanders, to preside over the integration process. We shall also happily continue to enjoy the assistance of British military instructors.
016	<u><i>Finally, I wish to assure all the people that my government will strive to bring meaningful change to their lives. But everyone should exercise patience, for change cannot occur overnight</i></u> [ap/ 1st af]. For now, <u><i>let us be united in our endeavor to lead the country to independence. Let us constitute a oneness derived from our common objectives and total commitment to build a great Zimbabwe that will be the pride of all Africa.</i></u> [1st af]
017	<u><i>Let us deepen our sense of belonging and engender a common interest that knows no race, color, or creed. Let us truly become Zimbabweans with a single loyalty</i></u> [1st af]. Long live our freedom!

This transcript is taken from archive.org and adamwelz.wordpress.com Accessed on 4 July 2020

Appraisal theoretic analysis of ideological stance

Mugabe's first inaugural speech is largely characterised by inscribed 1st AFFECT resources that express elation for the victory that the ZANU PF party has just scored in the recently concluded elections. Mugabe also employs a host of affectual resources to express hope for a brighter future for the newly independent Zimbabwe. The major concerns culminating from the speech are thus amply captured in the resource of AFFECT. In some way of course, APPRECIATION resources are also utilised to explain the current state of affairs as well as anticipations for the new nation-state. Positive inscribed affectual resources are in the early stages of the speech adopted to express joy for the independence of the country as in 001

May *I thank you most heartily* [1st af] for your votes and support.

I feel overwhelmed [1st af] as at the same time I feel humbled [1st af].

They are also used to convey thankfulness to the voters for voting the ZANU PF party into power as in 002

I would like to thank all [1st af] those who, either by their direct vote as our supporters or by their efficient campaigning as our organizers, have contributed to this favourable result. In addition, *may I also thank* [1st af] all officials who participated in the mechanical exercise of handling the elections,

Mugabe expresses hope for a united Zimbabwe that would quickly forget the evils and enmities of the war. He is conciliatory in tone – a classic example of hope that foes in war could be brothers in peace. He is embracing of the white minority population despite the recent realities of colonialism in which the same oppressed the masses. He casts himself as a nation builder and believes that his dream could only be achieved through unity. Examples of such resources that evince Mugabe as uniting and conciliatory are as follows;

...my main concern [1st af], and that of the party, is to create an instrument capable of achieving peace and stability as it strives to bring about progress [ap]. (para 003)

...peace and security can only be achieved by our determination, all of us [j],
(para 004)

In this regard, I wish to assure you that there can never be any return to the state of armed conflict which existed before our commitment to peace and the democratic process of election under the Lancaster House Agreement [ap/j].
(para 006)

Surely this is the time to beat our swords into ploughshares so that we can attend to the problems of developing our economy and our society. [j/ap] (para 007)

So conciliatory is Mugabe that he is willing to engage members of the former colonial administrative systems to continue in their offices, including allowing the Rhodesian Army Commander, General Walls to facilitate and lead in the creation of a national army comprised of both the Rhodesian army as well as the two wings of the nationalist movement – ZANLA and ZIPRA.

Perhaps, because of the euphoria of independence, Mugabe, in 1980 emerges as a nation builder and not the guerrilla monster that Rhodesian news media had cast him to be. He emerges as a unitary hero and statesman who was blind to colour or creed as expressed in paragraph 017

Let us deepen our sense of belonging and engender a common interest that knows no race, color, or creed. Let us truly become Zimbabweans with a single loyalty [1st af].

Over the years however this honeymoon with the British government and nationals in Zimbabwe was to end following successive bilateral disputes largely couched in ideological differences. Incessant blame games from both nations severed ties irreparably and in later years Mugabe became increasingly strong fisted towards Zimbabwe's white minority population who in 1980 he had assured of their protection of their land rights "nor do we intend to interfere unconstitutionally with the property rights of individuals [1st af]" [013]. Mugabe in 1980 emerges as a colour blind leader willing to forgive the transgressions of the white minority colonial admiration had committed that led to the Chimurenga wars. He expresses hope in a unity based development agenda

that included all persons in Zimbabwe at the time. He is at best imagined as conciliatory towards his former enemies who had not only oppressed the black majority population but had also imprisoned him for over a decade.

b) Analysis of Mugabe's last inauguration speech (22 August, 2013)

	APPRAISAL ANALYSIS
001	<u>Vice president Cde Joice Mujuru, Heads of State and Government, Former Heads of State and Government, Outgoing members of cabinet, Esteemed delegates representing various countries and organisations, Representatives of sister liberation movements and parties, Newly elected Members of Parliament, The Chief Justice and Members of the Judiciary, Senior Civil Servants, Representatives of War Veterans, Detainees, Restrictees and War collaborators, Representatives of the Business Community, Representatives of our Farming Community, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Representatives of the Civil Society, Student activists, Invited guests, Comrades and friends [1st af]/j.</u>
002	On behalf of the people of Zimbabwe, <u>I wish to extend to you all a very warm welcome to this joyous occasion marking the end of our electoral processes, and the beginning of steps towards shaping a new administration</u> [1st af] which shall mind the affairs of our Nation for the next five years. In welcoming you, I am aware of the inconveniences you suffered from what really was a short notice to this event [1st af].
003	Our invitations reached you very late, forcing you to set aside equally pressing commitments you may have scheduled for the same time.
004	<u>We apologise most profusely for this inconvenience created by certain Constitutional requirements that perforce precede the inauguration of the President-elect. We had to allow for petitions as required by our Supreme Law</u> [1st af].
005	Yet it is this positive response to this short notice on your part which attests to the deep affinities between you and ourselves.
006	We are truly humbled and today our hearts are aglow with happiness which we readily share with you on this joyous occasion.

007	Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades and Friends, The just-ended harmonised polls whose high point we now gathered to celebrate, do mark and usher in a new Constitutional dispensation for our country, Zimbabwe. This poll is the first we have held under a new home-grown Constitution which has replaced that which we negotiated at Lancaster House with our erstwhile colonial masters, the British, in 1979.
008	<i>While the Lancaster House Constitution served us well as we moved from war to peace</i> [ap/j], from a settler colonial administration [j] to black African self-rule [j], the passage of time and the sheer weight of emerging issues progressively made the document rather too old [ap].
009	...
010	...
011	...
012	...
013	Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, comrades and Friends, I have no doubt that the days of our elections were quite engrossing, if not, nail-biting to some of you. [3rd af]
014	<u>The undue politicisation and publicity of our polling processes, the ominous auguries that stalked those harmonised polls [j], could have made you fear for us, indeed may have triggered deep anxieties regarding our prospects here</u> [3rd af]. Routinely we were imaged as a society at war, a society riven by conflict [j].
015	After all, the preceding elections of 2008 had been disputed on allegations of violence, itself a fertile backdrop to these rumours of war. Since that disputed poll, Zimbabwe had hung on an uneasy peace, indeed had tenuously held together on a fraught coalition, an inclusive Government of three uneasy partners.
016	Genuine friends feared that the five uneasy years during which the coalition had survived — barely — would soon see Zimbabwe to this violent patch which had slurred its electoral honour.
017	<u>Our enemies and detractors sought to goad us toward such a self-destructive path.</u> [j]

018	Happily, <u>this negative augury, this hell-fire vision of Zimbabwe and its electoral prospects</u> [j] <u>now stands confounded by the durable peace that reigns over this land</u> [ap].
019	<i>We have had peaceful elections. We have had free elections. We have had fair elections, with our Constitution allowing for any challenges from whomsoever.</i> [ap/j]
020	<i>Well done Zimbabwe! We pledge to ensure that the peace we have built endures.</i> [j] And that the attainment of that peace we pay unstinting tribute to all our people who accepted the exhortations to peace from us all, who practiced and radiated it reciprocally in their immediate neighbourhoods. The result was local peace which built towards and fed into perfect national peace.
021	<i>I want to pay tribute to my partners in the Global Political Agreement for joining hands in these peace-building efforts. Equally, I salute church and community leaders who prayed for it, demonstrated it through personal example.</i> [j]
022	I have no doubt that I continue to count on them all for durable peace that subsists for all times.
023	Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades and Friends, <u>Except for a few Western dishonest countries</u> [j], <i>our elections have been hailed as peaceful, free, fair and credible. Sadc, Comesa, the African Union, the ACP, the United Nations as well as many nations of good will have praised our elections here</i> [j/ap]. We welcome this positive spirit, this encouragement which should see us do even better, move forward faster as a nation.
024	<u>But like in all elections, there will always be bad losers, real spoilers</u> [j]. It is a part-price we pay for electoral democracy, indeed an inevitable phase in our growth as a people wedded to democratic practices. Where such a grousing stance remains non-antagonistic, where it expresses itself within the four corners of the law, it must be tolerated as part of the democratic tussle, part of the post-electoral adjustment.

025	<u>As of those odd Western countries who happen to hold a different, negative view of our electoral process and outcome [j], well, there is not much we can do about them. We dismiss them as the vile ones whose moral turpitude we must mourn. [j]</u>
026	They are entitled to their views, for as long as they recognise the majority of our people endorsed the electoral outcome, indeed for as long as they recognise that no Zimbabwean law was offended against. And for us that is all that matters. After all, Zimbabwean elections are meant for Zimbabwe's voting citizens.
027	<u>After all, Zimbabwean democracy is meant for the people of Zimbabwe who must, within set periods, go to the polls to choose and install a government of their choice [j]. It is their sole prerogative and no outsider, however superior or powerful they imagine themselves to be, can override that right, let alone take it away from them [j].</u>
028	<i><u>It is our inherent right. We fought for it when it was lost .We won it through our own blood. We keep it for us and posterity; we reserve forever as an expression of our sovereignty as a free people [j/1st af].</u></i>
029	<u>Today we tell those dissenting nations that the days of colonialism and neo-colonialism are gone, and gone forever. The era of white colonial "whispers behind the African throne" passed on and got buried together with Lord Laggard the author of this anti-African, neo-colonial notion [j].</u>
030	Having struggled for our independence our fate has irrevocably orbited out of colonial relations, indeed can no longer subsist in curtsying and bowing to any foreign government, however powerful it feigns itself to be and whatever filthy lucre it flaunts. [j]
031	<i><u>We belong to Africa. We follow African values here. We follow our conscience. We abide by the judgment of Africa as indeed, we did in 2008 when Africa advised us to set aside results of the disputed elections. [j/1st af]</u></i>

032	<u>Today it is Britain, and her dominions of Australia and Canada who dare tell us our elections were not fair and credible. Today it is America and her illegal sanctions which dare raise a censorious voice over our affairs. Yes, today it is these Anglo-Saxons who dare contradict Africa's verdict over an election in Zimbabwe, an African country. [j]</u>
033	<u>Who are they, we ask? Who gave the gift of seeing better than all of us? [j]</u>
034	Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades and Friends, With the elections now behind us, we can now focus on rebuilding <u>our nation which has been ravaged by illegal sanctions imposed on us by the West [j]. If yesterday the pretext for imposing those sanctions was to do with a deficit of democracy here, today we ask those culprit nations what their excuse is now? [j]</u>
035	<u>Whose interest are those sanctions serving? [j]</u> <i>Zimbabwe is an open, friendly country. We seek friendship across geographies, across cultures, and quite often against past wrongs. We seek partnerships with all nations of goodwill, but partnerships based on sovereign, equality and mutual respect. [j]</i>
036	Those are the sacred principles that upon which the global architecture, as defined by the United Nations, is founded.
037	Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Comrades and Friends, <u>Elections here were fought over the question of sovereignty gained in 1980 after a gruelling armed liberation struggle. [j]</u> <i>Today the flag of that sovereignty flutters gaily in the winds of our spring. We sing our national anthem, itself a compendium of all that we aspire for, with full-throated ease [j/ap].</i>
038	...
039	...
040	...
041	But our dominion goes beyond land. It extends to all those resources found in and on our territory, including those lying beneath our land, principally minerals.

042	And nature has been generous, prodigal in fact, granting us oversized portions of almost all minerals that matter on earth. It has been a generous serve. The time has come for us to extend our dominion to all those resources which the Almighty has been so generous enough to give. That is the next revolution whose first step is this administration, this new Government.
043	I stand before you as now a sworn President of Zimbabwe. My mandate comes from the just ended election which my party won resoundingly. But there are key truths that come with that victory, which come with that honour.
044	The peasant who cast his vote on July 31, created my victory and thus made a portion of my Presidency, I am at his service, and his emissary and servant. He or she did not cast that precious vote in vain, did not repose it in us without expectations of a good, deserved return.
045	...
046	...
047	...
048	So, too, are those who did not vote me, those who voted for other parties. They have hopes and expectations which must reside and repose in my Presidency.
049	As we move into the future, our work as a nation is cut out for us. Although God may favour us, not all men do. <u>We have been under sanctions for a decade and three years. Most likely we shall remain under these sanctions for much longer.</u> [j] <i>But we have held our own. Our will has been our principal resource.</i> [j]
050	...
051	...
052	...
053	...
054	...
055	...
056	...

057	We dare not let our people down. We are aware that people of ill will have cast aspersions on our hallowed policy of indigenisation and economic empowerment. Well, it is a set policy, our chosen path to full sovereignty.
058	The premise of what policy is an easy one. Our minerals are a depletable resource. We cannot grow them again once they have been exploited. Consequently, we cannot be bystanders in their exploitation. We need a share, a controlling share in all ventures that exploit our non-renewable natural resources. [j]
059	Where we can, we can go it alone. Where we cannot do so, we seek partners on a 51/49 percent shareholding principle. Genuine partners should find this acceptable.
060	We reject totally as skewed the economic principle which puts capital, technology or expertise before natural resources. [j] It is a principle of imperialism, the source of unequal agreements which have been the bane of our ever exploited Africa. [j] That is our reckoning here and we stand by it.
061	Unequal agreements are unacceptable; they reek of colonial and neo-colonial relations. [j] But where an investor brings in his or her capital, technology, expertise and raw materials, we will not insist on the principle!
062	<u>The five years of the inclusive Government have seen a slowdown in agriculture. Our farmers — big and small — have gone without the support of Government. They have not been assisted in accessing inputs and capital from banks.</u> [j] Except for tobacco which has been funded by the private sector, food agriculture which tended to lean on Government support declined.
063	Yet agriculture remains the mainstay of our economy, the source of raw materials for our manufacturing sector. We must become a food secure nation, and that means sensible agriculture policies that recognise support to the farmer by way of inputs. No nation on earth does without such support.
064	...
065	...

066	...
067	...
068	...
069	...
070	...
071	...
072	...
073	We have key power projects which are about to take off, and which, if completed, should augment internal power generation. All these are key enablers which must now kick in. There are many financing models which the new Government will explore, including public-private-partnership on the strength of which some projects have moved.
074	...
075	<u>We are fast turning into one huge warehouse, a dumping ground for all manner of imports.</u> [j/ap] Our cities and towns are dying. Bulawayo, for a long time the industrial capital of Zimbabwe, has now become a sorry industrial scrap yard. And this has been an indicative trend for all manufacturing centres in the country.
076	<u>We have become a net importer of finished goods, while also being a net exporter of raw materials.</u> [ap/j]
077	Even our cotton industry, for a very long time an area of comparative advantage, has collapsed, with it many small cotton growers. This has become a structural handicap which we must tackle head on, and urgently too. Plans to resuscitate our ailing industries never took off largely because of internal contradictions during the era of the inclusive Government.
078	That era is gone and we must now move purposefully.
079	<i><u>Internationally and diplomatically we remain friendly and well disposed towards all nations.</u></i> [j]

080	<i><u>We seek friendships. We seek partnerships. We seek to diversify our relations to encompass new, emerging regions of the world. Principally: we continue to look East, hoping all those countries which had held back on fears of our unsettled situation here can now move forward to partner with us on clear parameters laid out in our policies. [j]</u></i>
081	<i><u>We seek peace; we work for peace and exhort the rest of the world to do likewise. [j]</u></i>
082	We do not brook any form of interference in the internal affairs of other nations. [j] A strong sense of right must always temper might. As our own case demonstrated, often it is local solutions which work best in curing problems that may rise within and between nations.
083	<u>The current Western policy of sponsoring conflict in the Middle East must be condemned.</u> [j]
084	<u>As the desperate situation in Syria has shown, such a policy brings enormous grief to affected nations.</u> We watch helplessly as small nations get wrecked by high-handed nations. We hold deep fears for Egypt, that great African country. We hope that peace can return to it soon, and hold for all time. [j]
085	<i><u>In concluding, I want to thank countries of Africa, both singly and organised as sub-regions.</u></i> [1st af/j]
086	<i><u>In particular I thank Sadc and AU for standing with us during our difficulties. I thank the sister Republic of South Africa, I thank its leadership which, in succession, played the difficult role of facilitating political dialogue and settlement in our country.</u></i> [1st af/j]
087	<i><u>It was a trying task but the two men burdened with that role, firstly, former president Thabo Mbeki who is here with us, and later President Jacob Zuma bore it all with amazing patience and perseverance. I am sure today is a happy day for both men. They can walk tall in full knowledge that they have signed off a rare but glorious chapter on African solutions to African problems!</u></i> [j] <i><u>Siyalibonga sonke!</u></i> [1st af]
088	<i><u>Lastly, I owe nothing but praise and respect to my GPA-era partners who are also my fellow countrymen.</u></i> [1st af]

089	I am referring to former Prime Minister Morgan Richard Tsvangirai, former Deputy Prime Minister Arthur Mutambara and, much later, Professor Welshman Ncube.
090	<i><u>We have worked together. Initially compelled by GPA protocols, we eventually found each other and proceeded to produce the current Constitution.</u></i> [j/ap]
091	This is our land, our country together and for as long as our nations subsist, so will elections and the opportunities they offer.
092	Our common destiny bids us to work together, never at cross purposes.
093	...
094	Ndinotenda! Ngiyabonga! Zikomo kwambiri, Asante sana! I thank you!

Source: <http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/news/transcript-mugabes-inauguration-speech-22-august-2013/> Accessed 12 June 2020

Appraisal theoretic analysis of ideological stance

The 2013 inaugural speech exhibits contrasting imaging of the West and the United States of America. In the speech, Mugabe offers divergent evaluations of Zimbabweans and African states on the one hand and of the West (especially the former colonial masters, Britain) and the United States of America on the other. With regards to the British and the United States, the speech embarks on a crusade to discredit them and accuse of them of being the root cause of the economic and political problems that Zimbabwe was going through then. Mugabe begins warmly acknowledging Zimbabweans and African leaders attending the inauguration through positive AFFECT resources as evinced in paragraphs 2, 3 and 5. This is exemplified in 2 when Mugabe acknowledges that;

I wish to extend to you all a very warm welcome to this joyous occasion marking the end of our electoral processes, and the beginning of steps towards shaping a new administration [1st af] which shall mind the affairs of our Nation for the next five years. *In welcoming you, I am aware of the inconveniences you suffered from what really was a short notice to this event* [1st af].

It then proceeds into a vitriolic attack of the West (specifically Britain) who

it initially refers to as '**a settler colonial administration** [j]' (para 008). The West and the USA are accused of meddling in the internal affairs of Zimbabwe, in the current context by refusing to legitimate the recently held elections. Zimbabwean and British (as well as USA) relations had degenerated and become sour. The rhetoric of Mugabe in this regard images them as the enemy of progress geared towards destabilizing Zimbabwe and the world. The following examples reflect such a position culminating from severed relations between Zimbabwe and the Western world.

A vast number of JUDGEMENT resources are utilised in imaging Britain, Europe and the USA. For example, from paragraph 14 we are presented with the following negative judgement resources that present these members of the international community as anti-Zimbabwean sovereignty,

The undue politicisation and publicity of our polling processes, the ominous auguries that stalked those harmonised polls [j], could have made you fear for us, indeed may have triggered deep anxieties regarding our prospects here [3rd af]. Routinely we were imaged as a society at war, a society riven by conflict [j].

The same rhetoric is presented in paragraph 17 and 18 through negative JUDGEMENT resources,

Our enemies and detractors sought to goad us toward such a self-destructive path.[j] (para 17)

Happily, **this negative augury, this hell-fire vision of Zimbabwe and its electoral prospects** [j] *now stands confounded by the durable peace that reigns over this land* [ap]. (para 18)

Further in paragraph 24,

But like in all elections, there will always be bad losers, real spoilers

And in paragraph 25,

As of those odd Western countries who happen to hold a different, negative view of our electoral process and outcome [j], well, there is not much we can do about them. **We dismiss them as the vile ones**

whose moral turpitude we must mourn. [j]

And in paragraph 29,

Today we tell those dissenting nations that the days of colonialism and neo-colonialism are gone, and gone forever. The era of white colonial “whispers behind the African throne” passed on and got buried together with Lord Laggard the author of this anti-African, neo-colonial notion [j].

And in paragraph 32,

Today it is America and her illegal sanctions which dare raise a censorious voice over our affairs. Yes, today it is these Anglo-Saxons who dare contradict Africa’s verdict over an election in Zimbabwe, an African country. [j]

In these instances of overt negative JUDGEMENT of the European world, Mugabe images them as still bent on a neocolonialist agenda and harbouring ambitions to perpetually colonise Zimbabwe and Africa. Mugabe expresses a seeming concern of the negativity of these states on anything Zimbabwean and hence their refusal to endorse the elections as credible. They are thus **‘dissenting nations’** (para 29), **‘the vile ones whose moral turpitude we must mourn’** (para 25), **‘our enemies and detractors’** (para 17), **‘bad losers, and real spoilers’** (para 24) and who are **‘sponsoring conflict in the Middle East’** (para 83) among many other colourful adjectives and descriptions. Such a barrage of overt negative JUDGEMENT evaluations speak loud of the skewed relations that were characteristic of Zimbabwe relations with the international community, especially the former colonial master (Britain) and the USA. These are further augmented by invoked negative JUDGEMENT evaluations of the same actors as in paragraph 30,

Having struggled for our independence our fate has irrevocably orbited out of colonial relations, indeed can no longer subsist in curtsying and bowing to any foreign government, however powerful it feigns itself to be and whatever filthy lucre it flaunts. [j]

And in paragraph 37,

Elections here were fought over the question of sovereignty gained in 1980 after a gruelling armed liberation struggle. [j]

And in paragraph 49,

We have been under sanctions for a decade and three years. Most likely we shall remain under these sanctions for much longer. [j] *But we have held our own. Our will has been our principal resource.* [j]

And in paragraph 60,

We reject totally as skewed the economic principle which puts capital, technology or expertise before natural resources. [j] It is a principle of imperialism, the source of unequal agreements which have been the bane of our ever exploited Africa.

And in paragraph 82,

We do not brook any form of interference in the internal affairs of other nations. [j]

And in paragraph 84,

We watch helplessly as small nations get wrecked by high-handed nations. We hold deep fears for Egypt, that great African country. We hope that peace can return to it soon, and hold for all time. [j]

These invoked negative JUDGEMENT resources further strengthen Mugabe's stance on the Western world and the USA. These iterations draw to attention all the evils that these nations have allegedly committed all over the world and thus implicitly indirectly downplay their legitimacy to provide opinions and commentary on Zimbabwe's 'internal affairs'. They also, as reinforcement to the overt negative judgement resources discussed above, provide moral capital to Mugabe's political stance towards them. These statements also inadvertently evince the waning international relations between Zimbabwe and these nations and thus are contrasting of the initial stance that Mugabe assumes towards them in his first inauguration and tenure of office.

To vividly explicate his disdain for these nations and their policy towards Zimbabwe, Mugabe contrasts them with what he considers friends – largely comprised of African countries in the SADC bloc as well as the Eastern world – who for example endorsed the election and have been supporting Zimbabwe economically. We can consider the following evoked positive JUDGEMENT resources in this regard:

From paragraph 23,

...our elections have been hailed as peaceful, free, fair and credible. Sadc, Comesa, the African Union, the ACP, the United Nations as well as many nations of good will have praised our elections here [j/ap]. We welcome this positive spirit, this encouragement which should see us do even better, move forward faster as a nation.

And from paragraph 35,

Zimbabwe is an open, friendly country. We seek friendship across geographies, across cultures, and quite often against past wrongs. We seek partnerships with all nations of goodwill, but partnerships based on sovereign, equality and mutual respect. [j]

And in paragraph 79,

Internationally and diplomatically we remain friendly and well disposed towards all nations. [j]

And in paragraph 80,

We seek friendships. We seek partnerships. We seek to diversify our relations to encompass new, emerging regions of the world. Principally; we continue to look East, hoping all those countries which had held back on fears of our unsettled situation here can now move forward to partner with us on clear parameters laid out in our policies. [j]

The above overt positive JUDGEMENT evaluations made of other countries not falling within the category or those Mugabe consider hostile is merely a contrasting imaging that seeks to demonstrate and further illustrate the evils of the Western world and the USA. By drawing such a contrast between

them and the Western world and the USA, Mugabe strategically maneuvers and draws further attention to these nations he considers hostile. In the process he also establishes legitimacy for the presidency whose election then, was still hotly contested. By alluding to the endorsement of the election by regional and continental blocs, Mugabe is merely seeking legitimacy for his 'election victory' in the contested presidential election.

Conclusion: Comparative analyses of ideological stance-taking in the speeches

Mugabe's relations with Britain, the Western world in general as well as the USA over the years was characterised by shifts from respect and friendship to hostility and enmity. At the instance of the birth of the Zimbabwean nation state in 1980, Mugabe was welcoming to all and sundry and even preached the gospel of reconciliation and brotherhood. Mugabe was geared towards the reconstruction of the country – having been at war for the better part of the previous decade. Because of the conciliatory tone that Mugabe enunciated as evinced in the 1980 inauguration speech, he was viewed by Britain and the Western world as a progressive leader and was even hailed as epitomising an ideal African leader – and he was even knighted. The fallout between Mugabe's Zimbabwe and Tony Blair's UK over the fulfilment of the provisions of the Lancaster House Agreement saw bilateral relations wane to the point of launching personal attacks even on public platforms. Further compounding the deterioration of relations was the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe – which Britain saw as an affront to its citizens living in Zimbabwe and ultimately an attack on Britain herself. Mugabe, as evinced in the 2013 inaugural speech began grabbing any opportunity that he could to launch attacks on Britain and her allies – chiefly driven by his disappointment over failed fulfilments of earlier promises. The contrasting imaging of the former colonial master and her allies in the above two speeches by Mugabe speaks volumes of the deteriorating relations and bilateral ties between Zimbabwe and the West.

References

- Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace in Zimbabwe, and Legal Resources Foundation (Zimbabwe). (1997). *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988*. Harare: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe.
- Chan, S. (2007). *Nietzsche in Harare*. Prospect, 134 May.
- Chigora, P. (2006). On Crossroads: Reflections on Zimbabwe's Relations with Britain at the New Millennium Alternatives: *Turkish Journal of International Relations* 5(3), 61 – 76.
- Du Bois, J. W. (2007). The stance triangle. In R. Englebretson. (Ed.) *Stancetaking in discourse: Subjectivity, evaluation, interaction*. Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 139-182.
- Gales, T. A. (2010). *Ideologies of violence: A corpus and discourse analytic approach to stance in threatening communications*. (Unpublished PhD Thesis) University of California.
- Kruger, N. J. (2003). Robert Mugabe: Another Too-Long-Serving African Ruler: A Review Essay. *Political Science Quarterly*, 118 (2), 307-313.
- Martin, J. R., & Rose, D. (2003). *Working with discourse: Meaning beyond the clause*. London, England: Continuum.
- Martin, J. R., & White, P. R. R. (2005). *The language of evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Meredith, M. (2007). *Mugabe: Power, Plunder and Struggle for Zimbabwe*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Moore, D. (2018). A very Zimbabwean coup: November 13 – 24, 2017. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 97, 1 – 29. DOI: 10.353/tm.2018.0009
- Musila, G. A., & Moyo, D. (2012). Subterranean Faultlines: Representations of Robert Mugabe in South African Press Cartoons. In Chiumbu, S. & Musemwa M. (eds). *Crisis! What Crisis? The Multiple Dimensions of the Zimbabwean Crisis*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 199–224.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J., (ed). (2015). *Mugabeism: History, Politics and Power in Zimbabwe*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. DOI: 10.1057/9781137543462.

Sabao, C. (2019). 'Mapfupa angu achamuka' (My bones will rise again): Spirituality, History, Memory and Ancestry in Land Ownership 'Debates' in Zimbabwe. In Kangira, J., Nhemachena, A. & Mlambo, N. (eds). *Displacement, Elimination and Replacement of Indigenous People: Putting into perspective land ownership and ancestry in decolonising contemporary Zimbabwe*. Cameroon: Langaa RPCIG, 65-82.

Sameer, I. H. (2017). Analysis of speech act patterns in two Egyptian Inaugural speeches. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 4(2), 134-147.

Tendi, B. M. (2011). Robert Mugabe and toxicity: History and context matter. *Representation*, (47) 3: 307-318, DOI: 10.1080/00344893.2011.596439

Tran, T. V. H., & Thomson, E. A. (2008). The nature of the 'Reporter Voice' in a Vietnamese hard news story. In E.A. Thomson, & P.R.R. White (Eds.). *Communicating conflict: Multilingual case studies of the news media*. London, England: Continuum, 51-64.

‘One of the Finest English Speakers Zimbabwe Has Ever Had’: Impact of Robert Gabriel Mugabe’s Exoglossic Language Policy on the Development of Zimbabwe

Isaac Mhute, Ernest Jakaza & Hugh Mangeya

Introduction

A language policy is an embodiment of the ideology behind a national government’s operations. It determines the attitude a government adopts towards the nation’s linguistic communities and their approaches to life and development. Language policy is pertinent in influencing the hierarchical ordering of priorities towards development within a nation. Zimbabwe assumed mainly exoglossic policies on language under the leadership of Robert Gabriel Mugabe, as clearly documented in the 1981 language policy amendment, Education Act of 1987 that was revised several times as well as the 2013 national constitution. The policies emphasised on different perceptions of reality and approaches to development by the Zimbabwean government. Drawing inspiration from the Utilisation-Focused theory (UFE) (Patton, 2008), as well as the Applied African Socio-linguistic approach to language (Wolff, 2017; Ruiz, 1984), this chapter explores the impact of the language policies of the Mugabe era on the political, economic, educational and socio-cultural development of the Zimbabwean nation. It makes a qualitative analysis of purposively sampled aspects of the reign and proves that the Mugabe government’s attitude and approach towards development can easily be linked to his language policies over the years. It also demonstrates that the successes and failures encountered during his long reign can be attributed, either directly or indirectly, to the mainly exoglossic language policies he implemented. The chapter concludes by imploring the entire populace to always participate in programmes meant to decide on the nature of their national language policies as this would automatically determine the ultimate degree of success and failure of national development.

This submission is underpinned by a qualitative evaluation of how the late Robert Gabriel Mugabe's handling of language, a vital national resource (as perceived by the Applied African Socio-linguistics approach (Wolff, 2017)), has contributed to the development of the lives of the people of Zimbabwe (as prescribed by the Utilisation-Focused Evaluation (UFE) (Napier & Simister, 2017)). It assesses the implication of the inspiration his leadership received from the mainly exoglossic language policies he adopted in the development of the Zimbabwean nation.

Mugabe (21 February 1924 - 6 September 2019) has been described by many as one of the finest speakers of English that Zimbabwe and Africa have ever had (Gono, 2017). He was so comfortable with the language and was quite pivotal to the success of the 1979 Lancaster House negotiations with the former coloniser that culminated in the nation's attainment of independence on 18 April 1980. For instance, he stressed that if the British resist pleas against the colonial unequal status quo in Zimbabwe, the liberation struggle fighters would ignore the Lancaster settlement, intensify the struggle and attain an outright victory through the barrel of the gun (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015). After independence, he held influential positions internationally, such as the 13th Chairperson of the African Union from 30 January 2015 to 30 January 2016 and the 10th Secretary General of the Non-Aligned Movement from 6 September 1986 to 7 September 1989. He served the Zimbabwean nation, first as prime minister from 18 April 1980 to 31 December 1987 and then as executive president from 31 December 1987 to 21 November 2017 (Burke & Smith, 2019). He was completely in charge of Zimbabwe during this period (though it is also believed his wife Grace made decisions towards the end of his reign) consequently making the period typically tagged as the 'Mugabe era' (Dorman, 2016). The epochal benchmarking of Mugabe's presidency, especially after the land reform, has, for instance, been defined in the context of bad governance and suppression of the rule of law. However, this chapter is not solely confined to assessing Mugabe within such a scope. Instead, it majors on how the exoglossic language policies that were adopted throughout the era directly or indirectly facilitated that approach to leadership.

Mugabe grew up in the Rhodesian era characterised by the oppression of the black majority by the racist white colonial government. His hatred for

the era moulded him into a strong African nationalist whose criticism of the colonial rule culminated in his conviction for sedition and a ten-year jail term from 1964 to 1974 (Chingono & Adebayo, 2019). Upon release, he fled to Mozambique where he cemented his leadership in the guerrilla warfare against Ian Smith and his mainly white government prior to the Lancaster house conference alluded to earlier. With such a background, one wonders how Mugabe's immense hatred for the whites did not disturb his mastery of the English language since in second language learning native-like fluency is usually achieved by those who have exposure to and have a positive attitude towards the culture carried by the target language. This is in line with Brown's (1986) observation that while attitudes are just beliefs which a learner holds towards the second language community (in terms of whether they are interesting or boring; honest or dishonest; good or bad), only positive attitudes facilitate effective second language learning. Gwete (2014) reiterates this by describing attitudes as related to motivation by serving as supporters of the learner's overall aim(s). In Mugabe's case, there was abundant exposure to the English-speaking community, but he did not seem to have any admiration for it. Probably this demonstrates that the dilemma of the colonial construct of power produced anti-colonial radicals whose victimhood formed the urgency of anti-colonial aggression, at the same time leaving engraved colonial decorum(s) such as an affectionate embrace of the English language.

Language policy has been defined in several ways. Kaplan & Baldauf (1997) refer to it as a body of ideas, laws, rules, regulations and practices intended to achieve a planned change in a society or group. This is supported by Mhute & Musingafi (2014) who define it as what a government or institution does to determine how languages are used within a speech community, such as a company, country or region. Language policies are modelled in line with the ideology of the responsible policymakers and usually result in the promotion and/or demotion of some languages, hence the reference to language policy as the interface between linguistics and politics. This makes language policy a proper tool for use in examining the ideological make-up of an era such as the one in question.

Popular Ideologies Informing Africans

According to Wolff (2017), there are basically two popular ideologies informing Africans. Firstly, there is the ideology informed by an anti-colonialist struggle and anti-imperialist philosophy which rests on the recognition of socio-linguistic realities in Africa that are different from 'the West' in being characterised by an extreme ethno-linguistic plurality and diversity. Those who adopt this ideology tend to promote language policies acknowledging the existence of such different languages in Africa. It is obfuscating that Mugabe's hatred and criticism of the white Rhodesian government did not culminate in his adoption of this ideology for a country like Zimbabwe, a former colony liberated by a bloody armed struggle and with about 18 indigenous languages (Hachipola, 1998). How did he instead settle for one that embodied in his former coloniser's exoglossic language policy? Probably this is clear testimony of Ngugi's (1917) argument that during colonial conquest, the systematic obliteration of African languages has had the same effect on the mind of Africans the colonial sword had on the African body. Ngugi, therefore, perceives language on its own as having the capacity to keep Africans in some full-fledged slavery if not placed at the centre of the decolonisation process.

Secondly, there is the ideology based on European historical and cultural experience, which gives rise to a western mind-set emphasising on European exceptionalism and notions linked to linguistically and culturally homogenous nations. Most African discourses on national progress and development tend to be based on this ideological position which advocates for official monolingualism, typical of western societies (Wolff, 2016). This is why most African countries characterised by a multiplicity of languages tend to emphasise on the need for some common or neutral language with which development can be ushered into the country (Wolf, 2016), stressing the capacity of such a neutral language to unify the nation. Their belief is on witnessing the emergence of some European model of nation state which is characterised by factual or ideologically postulated linguistic, cultural and possibly ethnic homogeneity, ideally allowing one to speak of one single nation (Wolff, 2016). Such a western mind-set has seen African people viewing the European standard languages of the former colonial powers as being essentially superior to the essentially inferior indigenous vernaculars,

often belittled as dialects, outside the Western world. Consequently, in this line of thinking, all modernisation and development, in particular (higher) education, can only and must be conducted in these 'superior languages' in order to meet the models provided by Western civilisation. Such a European Project Nation is considered extremely successful and has been turned into a prototype of modern statehood (Wolff, 2016). Since it is understood as being largely based on the hegemonic imposition of one 'superior' language over lesser vernaculars or 'dialects', the governments of most African post-colonies have been tempted and advised to copy such models about their own national language policies. These governments tend to stick to the former coloniser's language and if anyone would lobby for the promotion of the local languages, they would only go as far as having their status raised in principle (*de jure* policy), leaving the former power's mother language in its former position practically (*de facto* policy). Such is the order that prevailed in the Mugabe era and its aftermath where English's position has hardly been reduced in practice to this date.

Theoretical Framework

Two theoretical frameworks inspired the current chapter with the first one being the Utilisation-Focused Evaluation (UFE) (Ramirez & Broadhead, 2013). This is an evaluation approach that, according to Napier & Simister (2017), can be applied to any kind of work in any sector. Its premise is that evaluations should be carried out and judged with a critical focus placed on their utility value to society and this might come, for instance, through informing decision-making, facilitating public participation and performance (Patton, 2008). UFE is a guiding framework emphasising on situational analysis whereby evaluation should be people and context dependent. In this case, the language policies of the Mugabe era were evaluated to facilitate proper understanding of the power of language policies and participation in language planning exercises by the entire populace in order to promote proper development.

Secondly, it borrowed a leaf from the Applied African Socio-linguistics approach to language, a sub-discipline based on the 'language as a resource' paradigm (Wolff, 2017; Ruiz, 1984). It argues in favour of and illustrates an interdisciplinary macro socio-linguistic approach to discourse on

nation-building and comprehensive language planning for multilingual, multicultural and multi-ethnic societies in Africa. It perceives languages as critical resources of societies which are pertinent to nation-building and development in the socio-cultural, economic and political dimensions. In this light, the chapter considers Zimbabwean languages as assets from which the nation chooses to use and ignore some as stipulated in the adopted policies. The chapter evaluates how the choice of the resources impacted national development during the Mugabe era.

Language Policies under Mugabe Era

When Mugabe came to power in April 1980, he upheld the Rhodesian language policy until an amendment of the language policy was put introduced in 1981 in the form of a directive by the Ministry of Education. It made English an optional subject for the school-leaving certificate just like Shona and Ndebele. It required one to pass any of the three to proceed to higher education or get a job (Government of Zimbabwe, 1987; Hungwe, 2007). This was a considerable effort in partially reducing the status of English from its hegemonic position during the Rhodesian era. However, when white-led colleges, University of Zimbabwe and businesses showed signs of resisting the adoption of students who had started learning under this policy, instead of ensuring that they were accepted, Mugabe allowed the 1985-revocation of the directive and a return to the Rhodesian language policy (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999). Following the revocation, the government made a new set of provisions for language in education through the Education Act of 1987. Hungwe (2007) notes that the Act was strikingly consistent with the Phelps-Stokes recommendations of the Rhodesian era in emphasising on an early transition to English, and on the assumption that indigenous languages may be used to build the cognitive foundations of literacy in English, though the provisions of the Education Act was weaker on the status of indigenous languages in the primary school grades than the Phelps-Stokes recommendations. The provisions were as follows:

1. The three main languages of Zimbabwe, namely Shona, Ndebele and English shall be taught in all primary schools from the first grade as follows:
 - a. Shona and English in all areas where the mother tongue of the majority or the residence is Shona, or

- b. Ndebele and English in all areas where the mother tongue of the majority or the residence is Ndebele.
2. Prior to the fourth grade, either Shona or Ndebele may be used as the medium of instruction depending upon which language is more commonly spoken and better understood by the pupils.
3. From the fourth grade, English shall be the medium of instruction provided that Shona or Ndebele shall be taught as subjects on an equal time allocation as the English language.
4. In areas where minority language exists, the Minister may authorise the teaching of such languages in primary schools (Government of Zimbabwe, 1987).

Thus, 'either Shona or Ndebele could be used' in the first three grades. In contrast, the requirement to use English after the third grade was definitive. Thus, from the fourth grade, English was to be the sole medium of instruction and, in as far as availing similar times for the teaching of the three languages as subjects was concerned, practically English got accorded the lion's share as it was the only compulsory subject for advancing to higher and tertiary education as well as employment (Hungwe, 2007). It was usually slotted in the morning when the learners would be having a fresh mind whilst the others were mostly scheduled for the afternoon when, besides students' tiredness, most interruptions usually occurred (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999). This meant a total replacement of a step towards a seemingly endoglossic language policy amendment that had been introduced in 1981. The Zimbabwe Languages Association described the Education Act as 'characteristically colonial because it promoted English at the expense of developing indigenous languages' (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999, p. 161). The criticism of such a policy on indigenous languages of an independent nation assumed high profile in 1997, when the Zimbabwe government hosted a UNESCO sponsored Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa (ICLPA). The conference called on governments to create policies that clearly define roles for indigenous languages and the mechanisms for their development and support and set a timeline and targets to be met (Chimhundu, 2002).

The revisions to the Education Act of 1987 that were put in place in 1991, 1994, 1998, 2001 and 2004, maintained most of the aspects mentioned

earlier with regards to the status of English as the sole official and most important language. It was only added that a minority language could also be used as a medium of instruction in the first three grades, with the consent of the Minister of Education. Key to note as well is that, responding to the ICLPA criticism and the subsequent Nziramasanga Report (1999), the Ministry of Education issued a 'new' curriculum policy for primary and secondary education to be implemented from January 1, 2001 (Ministry of education, Sport and Culture. (2001). The policy affirmed the provisions of the Education Act of 1987 at the primary school level. At the secondary school level, English was retained as the only mandatory language of study. Shona and Ndebele were kept as electives in an expanded list that now included Sign Language, German, Portuguese, Latin and five minority languages (Kalanga, Tonga, Shangani, Venda and Sotho). Under the new regulations, it would be possible to go through secondary school without studying an indigenous language at all.

Some hope only emerged when the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No.20 Chapter 1 Section 6 (2013) (binding to date) totally reversed everything by officially recognising sixteen languages in the country. It recommends the official use of all these languages, their use as languages of instruction and their teaching where they are native. Thus, it makes all the sixteen languages equal and, thus removing the roles of Shona and Ndebele as the National languages and English as the sole official language. It meant English would not be the sole language subject compulsory for access to jobs or higher education. However, this ended up in principle. In practice, nothing changed from what was in place before 2013. English has remained the sole language of all official communications in the country. It is basically the language of instruction for the teaching of all subjects including some languages at some tertiary education institutions. It retains its status as the single most important language subject area in the curriculum and the only language subject that is required for the school-leaving certificate and for entry into further education and training, a place held since the Rhodesian era. It is the focus of the current chapter to establish how this approach of the Mugabe era to the national language policy influenced the nation's efforts towards development.

Mugabe Language Policy and Political Development

At independence, Zimbabwe inherited an administrative system designed to serve the interests of the colonising power and the settler elements. Mugabe's administration had the mandate to reverse this order for the benefit of the locals but at the same time not stalling progress in national development. His decision to inherit the colonial language policy with English at the centre for continuity was appropriate as it sustained his political call for reconciliation for ensuring progress. Similarly, for continuity in politics, he also served as prime minister and chose to follow a pragmatic course designed to reassure the remaining whites, whose skills were critical to the country, that there was room for them to continue peacefully staying and contributing to the country. He abided by the constitution's guarantees of substantial parliamentary representation for whites and ensured their representation in the cabinet by handing them two seats. Hence the observation by Noyes (2020) that Mugabe's first years in office were held up by most international actors as a post conflict success story and a shining example of racial reconciliation. Handing them only two seats, however, meant a major shift from the colonial order strictly designed to serve whites. It entailed the addition of new major political participants into the House. These were ZANU and ZAPU. He formed a coalition government between the two parties and accorded twenty-two ministry seats to its members with Joshua Nkomo scooping the powerful Home Affairs Ministry. He also took steps to improve the status of black Zimbabweans through increased wages, social services and food subsidies. This raise in the black majority's status was also linked to a change of status for some indigenous languages. This was to be captured by his ministry's 1981 policy amendment asserting that in schools English, Shona and Ndebele be accorded equal status as indicated earlier (Government of Zimbabwe, 1987), which meant addition of new linguistic participants as well.

In 1985, Mugabe's administration decided to revoke the 1981 language policy amendment to remove other linguistic participants and ensure English return to its colonial position as the sole language with the highest status again as captured by the 1987 Educational Act (Government of Zimbabwe, 1987). This development was linked to a sudden shift of political policy as well. The unfortunate disagreement between Joshua Nkomo's PF ZAPU

and ZANU PF from 1982 to 1987 resulted in the ousting of Nkomo from the coalition cabinet and the outbreak of the dissident war (Gukurahundi) in Matabeleland provinces and parts of the Midlands (CCJP & LRF, 1997). It is estimated that more than 20 000 people lost their lives during the cracking which only ended with the signing of the Unity Accord on 22 December 1987 merging the two warring parties into ZANU PF. Hence a return of ZAPU political participants though as part of ZANU PF. This consolidated a single power base (Noyes, 2020) thereby signalling Mugabe's new intolerance to any other centre of power, just like Ian Smith. Linguistically, this was linked to the Education Act of 1987 which returned the status of Shona and Ndebele though only as inferior national languages.

With the adoption of a Rhodesian ideology signalled by the language policy, Mugabe adopted several political habits from the Smith regime as well. For the love of wealth, the British settlers came all the way from Europe and their administration was established specifically for their benefit. Mugabe similarly developed greediness for wealth which saw him sending troops all the way to Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to assist President Laurent Kabila for gains that could not be linked to the nation but to his friends and himself. This is captured by MacLean (2002) who notes that two years after Zimbabwe entered the war, John Makumbe accused Mugabe and his friends of 'looting' the natural riches of the DRC.

Like Smith who blamed sanctions after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) for all his challenges and mistakes, Mugabe always blamed his troubles either on Western countries led by the UK, arguing they were trying to facilitate regime change by ousting him from office, or the sanctions imposed on the country by the West and America. Further, like the Smith regime that discriminated blacks and subjected them to all forms of injustice, Mugabe did the same to non-ZANU PF members. Crisis Coalition, an umbrella of civic organisations, confirmed this by reporting on how the Mugabe regime stalled a lot of progress in the distribution of food aid, drugs, clothing and blankets sourced by donor organisations by demanding all aid to be channelled through ZANU PF, for political gain (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, 2006). Thus, the regime politicised aid by ensuring that only ZANU PF supporters benefit and ultimately force MDC supporters to defect to the ruling party.

Mugabe's Language Policy and Economic Development

Upholding of the linguistic order by the Mugabe administration inspired a continuation of the Rhodesian approach to the economy as well. Mugabe designed his cabinet to placate whites by reassuring businessmen and farmers of the white minority that the advent of black rule would not lead to revolutionary changes. David Smith, long-time finance minister, became minister of commerce and industry while Dennis Norman, head of the white Commercial Farmers' Union became minister of Agriculture. This meant continued participation of the very same whites by maintaining their control over the farms (for 20 years) and the various commercial practices that were pertinent to the national economy's well-being. Courtesy of the continuity, as of 31 March 1990, USD1.00 was equivalent to ZW2.30 (Department of Treasury, 1990) which demonstrates how the approach maintained the power of the Zimbabwean economy. This is reiterated by Noyes (2020) who says the economy expanded, and Zimbabwe was often referred to as the "breadbasket" of the region though this honeymoon period only lasted for almost a decade.

For continuity, Mugabe first tried to continue with Rhodesia's protectionist policies of the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) which in his case were characterised by economic sanctions following the refusal of Britain to recognise Zimbabwe's independence and the calling for UN sanctions (MacLean, 2002). After it was proving to be unworkable, he then decided to shift to a market-friendly Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) (1991-5). It involved the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank's economic reforms which were applied to Zimbabwe in a five-year period. Unfortunately, due to poor economic management, the expected dividends did not materialise as virtually a high number of jobs were lost without the creation of any replacement leading to a subsequent total economic breakdown that saw the country drowning in debt for many years.

Like Smith who chose to disrespect Britain leading to UDI sanctions, when in 2000 white landowners and the MDC celebrated a surprise victory against ZANU PF in a constitutional referendum aimed at granting further powers to the president, Mugabe faced with his first real political

threat since independence, reacted with an iron fist (Melber, 2003). He cracked down on dissent and orchestrated a series of violent elections. The fact that many white landowners or commercial farmers had openly supported and bankrolled the MDC, not only infuriated Mugabe and his party but also made land a viable election and political issue for both of them. The resort to “authoritarianism” (Melber, 2003) and the politics of the liberation struggle essentially dictated the need for the revival of ZANU PF’s long forgotten comrades in arms, the war veterans of the pre-independence period. They were given the lead in radically expropriating land from white farmers without compensation, a sudden reversal of the previous Lancaster House arrangement to maintain white occupation of the land on a 99-year lease agreement. This was clear testimony of his ideology as captured in Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s (2015) description of Mugabeism as an ideology that sought to deal with the problem of white settler racism by engaging in a project of anti-white racism that sought to deny white Zimbabweans citizenship by constantly referring to them as “amabhunu/Boers” to enable their removal from their land. This signalled adoption of Ian Smith’s racist approach alongside his language policy. The fast-track land reform was followed by hunger as production from the farms almost came to a sudden halt. Subsequently, relations with the British soured leading to economic sanctions from the European Union as well as USA’s Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) of 2001. In response, he engaged in large-scale corruption, and printed money to pay off veterans of the liberation war and distribute patronage to other key bases of support (Blair, 2002). These actions precipitated a political and economic crisis and earned Zimbabwe pariah status on the international stage, with the United States and the European Union levying targeted sanctions on dozens of officials (Blair, 2002). Consequently, by 31 March 2004, the Zimbabwean economy had fallen considerably with USD1.00 trading for ZW4381.88 (Department of Treasury, 2004).

To demonstrate how much he adopted Smith regime’s economic move of a continuous fight against UDI inspired sanctions at all costs, Mugabe demonstrated lack of concern as well and kept fighting the sanctions by the west, adopting a look east policy in the process that also proved inadequate. Most of the many tenders received by the Chinese never benefited the Zimbabwean nation (Noyes, 2020). Mining in Chiadzwa, for instance, saw

a lot of diamonds being externalised without the miners even honouring the agreement to resettle and develop the infrastructure for the local community as per the signed agreement. To raise the struggle, Mugabe went on to sign into law the Homogenisation and Empowerment ACT on 7 March 2008 which required foreign-owned companies to cede 51 percent of their shares to Zimbabweans. The consequences were bad as the move convinced investors that there was no respect for private property ownership and, thus no room for investment in Zimbabwe.

The adoption of English as a language of instruction during the Mugabe era facilitated fluency in the language by most Zimbabweans as it had been accorded the greatest value as a subject in school. However, though this had some advantages such as enabling Zimbabweans to fit perfectly into the global job market (Nhongo, 2013), Zimbabwe's economy since the Mugabe era has always been threatened by brain drain. Hungwe (2007) observes that, while there are some push factors responsible for brain drain, such as the economic meltdown and poor remuneration, a major pull-factor is also responsible for the recruitment of labour from Zimbabwe in form of English language skills. Zimbabweans are considered by foreign employers to have good English language skills that properly compliment their hard-working character. This has earned them priority over many locals in different countries in Africa and other continents (Tevera & Crush, 2003). For instance, South Africans have justified their Xenophobic attacks against Zimbabweans by alleging that employers prioritise their neighbours instead of them. Hungwe (2007) supports this by arguing that English language skills have been critical pull-factors in the recruitment of labour from Zimbabwe as evidenced by the list of their Most Likely Destinations. As a result of the priority offered to them elsewhere, among other things, a 2003 survey, involving 900 Zimbabwean skilled professionals, indicated that 86% had given some thought of emigrating from Zimbabwe, and 51% expressed a strong desire to leave permanently (Tevera & Crush, 2003).

Corruption emerged as another major setback for the Mugabe era's economy. The 2017 military transition that ended Mugabe era targeted 'criminals that surrounded Mugabe'. This referred mainly to perpetrators of corruption, among other crimes. But how did this become possible in Zimbabwe? By adopting a language policy designed by the westerners,

Mugabe administration was forced to sustain a philosophy carried by foreign languages and cultures that is individualistic and solely concerned about self-enrichment. This explains activities like involvement of Mugabe in DRC where he amassed personal wealth using the national military (Nutt et al., 2011). Had the Mugabe administration considered placing a local language at the centre of the policy, it would have succeeded in ensuring total embracing of the *Unhu/Ubuntu* philosophy carried by the local languages as recommended by the Commission of Inquiry (Nziramasanga, 1999). This philosophy would have inspired the Zimbabweans to ensure selfless love and respect for others at all costs. Such would have made the entire administration find corruption a difficult exercise in the Mugabe era.

Mugabe's Language Policy and Educational Development

The Mugabe era's adoption of the former coloniser's language policy cemented the role of English as the language of instruction in education. This approach had the advantage of allowing continuation with the textbooks that had been in use during the Rhodesian era. This, together with the ability of teachers to continue with their work as usual, facilitated a proper transition in education. Adoption of the former coloniser's language also promoted either bilingualism or multilingualism in almost every Zimbabwean child with English as a necessity in formal settings and a mother tongue a must in informal settings. Vygotsky (1962) is of the view that access to two languages accelerates the development of metalinguistic skills. It is argued that bilingualism enhances cognitive flexibility, analytic skills and creative thinking. Bilingual education thus supports children's personal development and assists towards a positive exchange between two languages and cultures, and the development of knowledge in both languages has a positive effect on children's opportunities to express their feelings, thoughts and needs (Yazici et al., 2010). This could be the reason the Mugabe era has always been characterised by a rise in pass rate at almost every level of education.

However, Maintenance of English as practically the sole language of instruction has had considerable impact on the education of Zimbabweans under Mugabe. Mhute & Musingafi (2014) researched the impact of the Zimbabwean language question on the education of disadvantaged students and established that the use of English as a language of instruction makes

learning very unfriendly to the learner. It confirmed the United Nations' observation that the mother tongue is central to cognition. This holds a considerable amount of water since not every student manages to effectively undertake the learning of the second language the way Mugabe himself did. Most students struggle due to lack of exposure to the native English-speaking community and scarcity of the necessary resources, among other factors. Such students always find the language of instruction standing as a hurdle in their efforts to grasp the educational concepts and this often makes learning ineffective.

The role of indigenous languages as a resource for learning and conceptual development can never be over scored. From a psychological and learning perspective, systems of signs (of which language is the most universal) provides the psychological foundations of human cognition (Vygotsky, 1962). In the same vein, Nettle and Romaine (2000, p. 60) argue that words are a 'source of conceptual categories and a window into the rich creativity of the human mind' adding that a society's vocabulary constitutes 'an inventory of the items a culture talks about and has categorised in order to make sense of the world and to survive in a local ecosystem'. This is in line with the Nziramasanga Commission's conclusion that due to the adopted Rhodesian policy, the country did 'not have a clearly articulated philosophy of education, and that, consequently, there was no clear national vision to guide the formulation of the goals of educational excellence' (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999, p. 23). It proposed that the educational system be re-oriented towards an African value system. The specific proposal was called *Unhu/Ubuntu* (in two main indigenous languages, Shona/ Ndebele). As described by the Commission, the goal of the *Unhu/Ubuntu* would be to 'produce youths who can face the rapid changes in the socio-economic environment without losing their identity and integrity' (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999, p. 77). *Unhu/Ubuntu* also entailed giving serious consideration to the mother tongue for use as a medium of instruction in the schools, on the grounds that it is the vehicle for culture and transmits people's experiences gathered over many centuries. The 1987 Education Act partially provided for this for the first three grades, but in reality, English was being widely used as a medium of instruction from the first grade (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999). Thus, concern was expressed that the dominance of English adversely affected the quality of learning.

The adoption of the Rhodesian language policy by the Mugabe era meant efforts to continue viewing national development with the white man's lenses and pursuing it through similar means which is quite impossible. This meant keeping Britain and her ways as the centre upon which every developmental effort revolves. Mhute & Musingafi (2015) provide support for this by contrasting the nature of the education system in Zimbabwe to that of developed countries that support creativity. They note that almost all developed countries have attached value to their indigenous languages by promoting them through their language policies. Making them languages of instruction ensured effective bridging of the gap between the taught concepts and the learner's background knowledge thereby making learning effective. Against this background, the Japanese, for instance, first made it to the group of developed nations through an intensive production of their type of rice using their indigenous methods and facilities blended by the western ones, learned through their Japanese language. Therefore, placement of their own Japanese language at the centre earned them unwavering respect for their own indigenous knowledge systems which became the foundation for their development. Similarly, the Chinese crossed over from being developing by using their indigenous language, Mandarin, as the official and language of instruction allowing them to fully understand and experiment with the knowledge acquired from western education in an indigenous language. This saw them using advanced western ways to package their indigenous herbs. Again, due to their language policy that attached value to indigenous languages, they were able to cherish their own indigenous knowledge systems carried by all their indigenous languages. This submission argues that demotion of the indigenous languages by the language policy adopted by the Mugabe era threw away the possible foundations for real development in Zimbabwe. For instance, one can contrast this Chinese case to how HIV and Cancer were responded to by the Zimbabwean medical specialists. They were never heard taking the initiative in searching for the cures for these illnesses from the local indigenous knowledge systems. Rather, they continued waiting for other countries to discover the answers.

Mugabe's Language Policy and Socio-Cultural Development

As indicated earlier, languages are resources since they carry cultures including indigenous knowledge systems. By inheriting a language policy that promoted

English at the expense of about eighteen indigenous languages, the Mugabe administration chose to promote the white settlers' culture that was carried by English at the expense of the ones carried by the local languages. Ngugi (2017) supports the position arguing that empowerment is the ability of a person to fully appreciate his/her own mother tongue and cultural history to the extent of perceiving it as inferior to none. Unfortunately, the language policy of the Mugabe era placed more value on the colonial language and the culture associated with it at the expense of local ones. This, for instance, meant the promotion of the foreign religions like Christianity and even Satanism at the expense of the local traditional ones. This is why, even forty years after independence, the local religions are still tagged as demonic, evil and associated with darkness. The move has also facilitated the dismissal of local indigenous knowledge systems as backward, evil and linked to witchcraft. For instance, while other countries are developing using their indigenous knowledge systems (like the Chinese case alluded to earlier), not many have interest and respect for the power in the indigenous knowledge systems of Zimbabwe.

By prioritising English, the Mugabe administration prioritised the foreign norms and values, as well as lifestyles typical of foreigners, especially the whites. As a result, some Zimbabwean women go as far as spending lots of money on skin lightening creams for bleaching themselves to look more like the whites. Ambi skin care fade cream, which was popular in Zimbabwe in the 1980s and 90s, ended up having very bad side effects on most local women's skins. The same occurred with the hair creams and dyes which have caused considerable damage on some women's heads as they spent their hard-earned money to lengthen their hair. A lot is also spent on western types of clothes and food as the Zimbabwean traditional foods were condemned as old-fashioned resulting in their loss of popularity in most homes. Unfortunately, researches are proving some of the western foods to be responsible for the health challenges on the increase locally like diabetes, cancer and hypertension for whose control there is need to consume more of the Zimbabwean traditional foods like small grains.

The Zimbabwean languages carry cultures advancing the *Unhu/Ubuntu* philosophy. Samkange (1980) describes the critical maxims of the Shona people's *Unhu/Ubuntu* philosophy saying to be human is to affirm one's

humanity by recognising the humanity of others and establish respectful human relations with them and secondly, should one be faced by a decisive choice between wealth and the preservation of the life of another human being, then one should opt for the preservation of life. The promotion of a foreign language saw the rise in admiration for other philosophies. The Mugabe era was characterised by rampant individualism amongst Zimbabweans which is atypical of *Unhu/Ubuntu*. Most Zimbabweans are now concerned about nothing other than their own well-being. Some go to the extent of killing or raping their own children for wealth. Others even go as far as cohabiting with snakes and goblins some of which survive on relatives' blood.

Mugabe's Language Policy and Health Development

Continuation of the Rhodesian language policy ushered in a continuation in the health care system as well. The same medical practitioners remained in place allowing a considerably healthy nation. Valuing of English language came with a culture that values western health facilities which saw many clinics and hospitals being constructed during the Mugabe era. Many training centres were put in place for nurses and doctors.

However, as already demonstrated, the move placed more value on foreign medical facilities and tagging of local herbs as evil and not many of the young generation are prepared to inherit the knowledge from their departing elders. This is responsible for the seemingly lack of interest and faith Mugabe had in local health facilities as well. Dendere (2019) argued that Mugabe claimed the paramount importance of Zimbabwe's sovereignty yet had no faith in the medical facilities he created. She adds that most of his hospitals were severely under-resourced and unable to perform simple procedures like caesarean surgery on expecting mothers. As a result, his entire top administration officials never left room for them to attain medical services from local health institutions. They popularised a culture of seeking medical assistance from other countries now typical of all the rich people in the country. Mugabe would cross the border into South Africa or even fly as far as China or Singapore for routine check-ups where he eventually died. This habit seems to have made him neglect investing in the development of the local health. As such, no proper efforts were made to avail state of the art medical equipment

in most of the local hospitals. His attitude towards the critical sector also saw him allowing hospitals and clinics to run from around 2005 to 2009 without even the most basic medicines, thereby putting many lives at risk. Hence the observation that in some cases doctors would perform surgery with bare hands and pain killers were considered luxury which forced migration of thousands of medical practitioners especially between 1999 and 2008 (Dendere, 2019). Even the ordinary people ended up spending lots of money to cross over to South Africa for critical medicines such as those for chronic illnesses.

Conclusion

The chapter demonstrated that the deep-rooted residence of the English language in our political-economy and social space symbolises the birthmarks of imperialism in the post-colony. It demonstrates how much Mugabe and colleagues' efforts in the liberation struggle were more of a partial radicalism of the decolonisation project. The presence and continued consolidation of the English language (a vestige and a footprint of colonial hegemony) not only in Zimbabwe but in the so-called Anglophone Africa, shows the unfinished challenge of colonialism. To this end, while Mugabe can be credited for advocating for the radical disposal of the colonial system through the armed struggle, the land reform and economic indigenisation, we can look at his cultural proximity to the Western world, through the English language, as a metaphor of the cosmetic construct of the liberation project. This has been clearly demonstrated by the level at which his leadership's policies were geared towards a continuation of the colonial regime. As a result, though some short-term benefits were enjoyed, the Zimbabwean society seems to have a permanent slot on the map of developing countries, courtesy of the decisions he made. There seems to be no room for proper development of the nation as long as the ideology behind the exoglossic language policy is still in place. It is very unfortunate that whilst the people's efforts in 2013 had brought about a liberal language policy, this ended as a *de jure* as the Mugabe government never seriously considered its implementation. Considering the power of a language policy in determining the future of a nation, there is, therefore, need for the populace to always go beyond lobbying for a language policy to making sure no de-facto policy remains in place.

References

- Blair, D. (2002). *Degrees in Violence: Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*. London: Continuum.
- Brown, H. D. (1986). "Learning a Second Culture". In Valdes, J. M. (ed.) *Culture Bound*. Cambridge: CUP
- Burke, J. & Smith, D. (2019). "Robert Mugabe: former Zimbabwean President dies aged 95". <https://www.theguardian.com>. Accessed 1/7/20.
- CCJP & LRF (1997). *Report on the 1980's Disturbances in Matabeleland & the Midlands*. www.rhodesia.nl Accessed 17/10/20.
- Chimhundu, H. (2002). *Final Report: Language Policies in Africa: Intergovernmental Conference on Language Policies in Africa*. Harare: UNESCO.
- Chingono, M. & Adebayo, B. (2019). "Zimbabwe's Former President Robert Mugabe Buried in his Hometown". <https://www.edition.cnn.com>. Accessed 1/7/20.
- Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment No.20 Chapter 1 Sec.6 (2013). <https://www.constituteproject.org> Accessed 14/7/20.
- Dendere, C. (2019). *Mugabe's Foreign Hospital Treatment: Time for Africa to Stop Funding Medical Tourism*. www.dailymaverick.co.uk Accessed 17/10/20.
- Department of Treasury. (2004). *Reporting Rates of Exchange*. New York: International Funds Team.
- Department of Treasury. (1990). *Reporting Rates of Exchange*. New York: International Funds Team.
- Dorman, S.R. (2016). *Understanding Zimbabwe from Liberation to Authoritarianism*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Gono, C. (2017). *The President a Renowned Orator*. www.chronicle.co.zw Accessed 15/10/20.
- Government of Zimbabwe. (1999). *Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training*. Harare: Government Printers.
- Government of Zimbabwe. (1987). *Zimbabwe Education Act*. Harare:

Government Printers.

Gwete, W.B. (2014). *English as a Second Language*. Harare: Zimbabwe Open University.

Hachipola, S.J. (1998). *A Survey of the Minority Languages of Zimbabwe*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications.

Hungwe, K. (2007). Language policy in Zimbabwean education: Historical antecedents and contemporary issues. *Compare* 37 (2), pp. 135-149.

Kaplan, R.B. & Baldauf, R.B. (1997). *Language Planning from Practice to Theory*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

MacLean, S.J. (2002). Mugabe at war: the political economy of conflict in Zimbabwe. *Third World Quarterly* 23 (3), pp. 513–528.

Melber, H. (ed) (2003). *Limits to Liberation in Southern Africa: The Unfinished Business of Democratic Consolidation*. Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press.

Mhute, I. & Musingafi, M.C.C. (2015). Centrality of Language in Development: A Case of Zimbabwe. In *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*. 6 (20), pp. 181-190.

Mhute, I. & Musingafi, M.C.C. (2014). The Language Question, Development and the Education of the Disadvantaged through Open and Distance Learning (ODL): A Case of the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU). *Asian Journal of Social Sciences and Management Studies* 1(2), pp. 40-47.

Ministry of education, Sport and Culture (2001). *The Developments in Education: The Education System at the end of the 20th Century. National Report of the Republic of Zimbabwe*. <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/International/ICE/natrap/Zimbabwe.pdf> Accessed 22/3/05).

Napier, A. & Simister, N. (2017). *Utilization-Focused Evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Intrac.

Nettle, D. & Romaine, S. (2000). Vanishing Voices: The Extinction of the World's Languages. *TESOL Quarterly*. 35(3), pp. 408-412.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J. (2015). Introduction: Mugabeism and Entanglements of History, Politics and Power in the Making of Zimbabwe. In: Ndlovu-

Gatsheni S.J. (eds) *Mugabeism? African Histories and Mordenities*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2017). *Public Lecture: A Call for Preservation and Inclusion of African Languages in Learning Institutions*. www.nepad.org/news Accessed 14/10/20.

Nhongo, R. (2013). A National Language Policy for Zimbabwe in the Twenty-first Century: Myth or Reality? *Journal of Language Teaching and Research* 4(6), pp. 1208-1215.

Noyes, A.R. (2020). *A New Zimbabwe: Assessing Continuity and Change after Mugabe*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.

Nutt, C. et al. (2011). Muffling the Sound of Murder: Re-interpreting Zimbabwe's Strategic Choices in the Congo. *Strategic Comments*, Vol 5 (2), pp. 232-258.

Nziramasanga, C.T. (1999). *Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training*. Unpublished.

Ramirez, R. & Broadhead, D. (2013). *Utilisation Focused Evaluation A primer for evaluators*. Penang: Southbound Sdn. Bhd.

Patton, M. Q. (2008). *Utilisation-focused evaluation* (4th. Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (2012). *Essentials of utilisation-focused evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ruiz, R. (1984). Orientations in Language Planning. *NABE Journal* 8(2), pp. 15–34.

Samkange, S., & T. M. (1980). *Hunhuism or Ubuntuism: A Zimbabwe Indigenous Political Philosophy*. Harare: Graham Publishing.

Tevera, D.S. & Crush, J. (2003). The New Brain Drain from Zimbabwe. *SAMP Migration Policy Series* No.29.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and Language*. Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press.

Wolff, H.E. (2017). 'Language ideologies and the politics of language in postcolonial Africa.' *In Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus* 51, pp. 1-22.

Wolff, H.E. (2016). *Language and Development in Africa. Perceptions, Ideologies and Challenges*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yazici, Z. et al. (2010). How Bilingual is Bilingual? Mother-tongue Proficiency and Learning through a Second Language. *International Journal of Early Years Education* 118 (3), pp. 259-268.

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum. (2006). *Political Violence Report, (2000-2005)*, Harare.

The Musical Side of Robert Mugabe

Richard Muranda, Wonder Maguraushe & Weston Chimbudzi

Introduction

Robert Mugabe has been both celebrated and vilified in his capacity as leader of both Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF). Pursuant to his legacy constructions and deconstructions, this chapter analyses the musical inclinations of Robert Mugabe during his political life. This may have been influenced by the fact that he set a record for being one of the longest serving statesmen the world over. The late Mugabe was a phenomenally noticeable icon on both the national and international scenes. Some of his notable traits include his contribution to the liberation struggle up to independence as first prime minister in 1980 and executive president from 1987 to 2017. We reflect on Robert Mugabe's support for and taste of music as exhibited directly and indirectly in his life. The chapter focuses on the period from the *Second Chimurenga* to his demise in 2017. We examine and discuss his view on musicals at graduation ceremonies at selected state universities in Zimbabwe. We place his close interaction with the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) Police Band, and the deployment of liberation songs in the Mugabe era. We also assess Mugabe's love for classical and folk music and how it defined his political personality. We also analyse his support for the academic study of music in higher education institutions. The main submission of the chapter is that Mugabe used music as a medium of political communication to reinforce his hegemony.

The Philosophy and Utility of Music

The role and functionality of music goes beyond socio-political spheres of life. It has been used to advance certain beliefs, ideologies and philosophies embraced by people. Manyawu (2013) argues that lyrics of jingles by the ZANU-PF group Mbare Chimurenga Choir (MCC) use folklorisation discourse strategies to appropriate the national heritage to ZANU-PF while alienating rival parties from that heritage. The strategies that the MCC uses to enhance folklorisation thus exploit a presumed desire to be associated with the national heritage along with the presumed fear of alienation and

ridicule to establish ZANU-PF hegemony. Ngoshi and Mutekwa (2013) suggest that the choreography exalts the female body as a metaphor for the authoritarian creed, and the gyrating MCC choir members' bodies make tangible the objectification and metaphorisation of women in political discourses, while thematically, the lyrics suggest that the Zimbabwean nation cannot be construed outside ZANU-PF's terms, thereby foreclosing any alternative discourse on Zimbabwe. Sabao (2018) examines how the proliferation of linguistic resources that espouse politically and ideologically embedded positive attitudinal resources exhibit a perpetuation of Robert Mugabe's rule, legacy and hegemony and by extension, that of ZANU-PF. He discusses how Mbare Chimurenga choir song lyrics are perceived of as a super structural semiotic tool through which hegemonies are (re)constructed, (re)negotiated and sustained.

Music is closely associated with doctrinal treatises and deities in several religions around the world. Music has been associated with humanity for many years and it is part of life. Britan (1908: 352) submits that, "music can claim for itself a larger and a more appreciative audience than any other art." Music has the power to attract people. Political movements in the world have utilised music to reinforce propaganda and consolidation of their stay in power.

In Africa, people live and breathe music in contexts that speak to their day to day activities. Britan (1908: 353) further avers that "... the power of music... has a way of forcing itself upon our attention as no other art has. It impresses itself upon our minds, so that we must give it audience and listen to its message." The character of music in human life suggests that almost all activities revolve around music and all its related endeavours (Blacking, 1969). In African traditions indigenes celebrated victory and engaged in thanksgiving through music. African nationalist movements that birthed the political independence of many nations including Zimbabwe rode on the prowess of music (Pongweni, 1982; Vambe, 2004; Mahomva, 2016). Philosophically, music has power to enthuse humans to their highest possible level of practical and spiritual engagement. Furthermore, Africans appeal to their divine beings through ritual ceremonies to their ancestors to intervene in their human affairs. They also commune with their ancestors and implore them to sustain their families through music and dance (Berliner, 1993).

In Zimbabwe, we notice that music is an expression of everything as it expresses people's positive or negative feelings. Music is used to express gratitude, feelings and engagement in economic activities such as farming, hunting, fishing, and mining just to name a few (Nketia, 1972). In as much as music is a reverential conduit to access deities the world over, the liberation struggle under the leadership of Robert Mugabe upheld the role of music and dance. The guerrillas used music to garner resilience, tenacity, and exuberance to disentangle the bonds of colonialism by the Rhodesian regime. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Willems (2009) inform on the rise of Mugabe and his power consolidation manoeuvrings. Mugabe's use of music to consolidate power and deal with adversaries within and outside the political lines of ZANU-PF is an issue of concern in this chapter. The liberation movement esteemed the leadership of Robert Mugabe after the exit of Ndabaningi Sithole, his forerunner. Music was used to steer propaganda and support from the masses in the battle zones within rural settlements in Rhodesia - now Zimbabwe (Pongweni, 1982). The *Second Chimurenga* was largely carried by music up to independence and the years after.

The years in post-independent Zimbabwe saw the rise in the development and support for the music industry. The formulations of policies during the reign of Mugabe evidenced changes that gave opportunities to aspirant music educators, music producers and musicians to engage in a liberated space in the music industry (Zindi, 1985). The institutions of higher learning had not fully embraced the study of music until the mid-90s when the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) began to offer academic studies in teacher education with an option of music. Mugabe's personal interactions with music at state functions such political rallies, hero burials, banquets, the 21st February Movement celebrations, Heroes and Independence commemorations, as well as graduation ceremonies at state universities reveal his regard for music as a core requisite in this life (Oeste, 2013). It must be noted that Mugabe bequeathed a vibrant education system and a high literacy rate in Zimbabwe. Substantive literature has been penned concerning Mugabe's political activities, artistry, craftsmanship and memorabilia. However, there is a musical side to Robert Mugabe which has not been brought under the spotlight. Robert Mugabe's romance with music bequeathed us with an ardent interest to engage in a discourse on his musical legacy.

Conceptual Cast and Methodology

We draw stand points for discussion in the study from Antonio Gramsci's hegemony theory which assumes the foregrounding of domination through using any form of media (music included) and cultural organizations to implant political fundamentals and ideologies. The theory also illuminates on how political leaders win acceptance and support in order to remain in power. The use of the language of balance and equilibrium in Gramscian theory of hegemony matches the person of Robert Mugabe in his quest to remain the leader of ZANU-PF and Zimbabwe (McNally, 2008).

Analysis in this chapter is oriented towards Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony, which describes how the state and ZANU-PF ruling elite use cultural institutions (music in this case) to maintain power in Zimbabwe. Gramsci's concept of power is based on coercion or consensus, two essential constitutive elements of a state of balance between social forces; the leaders and the led. Mugabe's (and by extension ZANU-PF's) hegemony was rule in which consensus had to be made to appear predominant over coercion. Consensus rests at the level of the civil society and had to be won there, while coercion rests at the level of the political society. Mugabe used music so that his rule would be perceived as characterized by the predominance of consensus over coercion, which represented a balance between political society and civil society. The hegemony of ZANU-PF over Zimbabwe during his reign was exercised through private organizations in balance with public (coercive) organizations such as the state, the bureaucracy, the military, the police, and the courts. Therefore, state power rested in a hegemonic equilibrium with alternated moments of force and consensus but without the necessity of predominance by coercion over consensus. In this state of balance, the use of force was risky unless there emerged an organisation or crisis which threatened ZANU-PF's ruling position (Ramos, 1982).

This chapter is also inspired by the power of music and the influence of propaganda (Agawu, 1992 & 2007). Pufleau (2014) regards propaganda as a piece of influential machinery that is deployed by dictators in order to stay in power. Guthrie (2014) also says propaganda is used to speak to the issues affecting people at a given time. Propaganda is used to wage wars. Propaganda music wields power to propel premeditated moves by politicians (Chauncey,

1941). This chapter embraces the view that music can be packaged with rhetoric and propaganda. Propaganda and music as a conceptual footing gird the fundamental focus of this chapter. The chapter submits that music is a political driving force with a propagandising nudge. The power of music is exploited to bourgeois political publicity and visibility through text in songs (Shaw, 1974; Hamilton, 2008). To bring to light the political struggles by Mugabe and his party, we deploy a historical content analysis to interrogate the Robert Mugabe regime coupled with his interaction and the use of musicals to remain at the helm of the leadership of Zimbabwe in the political, social and educational domains (Moodie 1971; Baird, 1976; De Keere, 2014). Historical content analysis was preferred to engage visual and verbal materials, transcriptions and historical documents to derive data (Gustafson, 1998; Hsiu-Fang, & Shannon, 2005). The methodology was coupled with propaganda music as a conceptual basis for the discourse. The life of Robert Mugabe can be examined through the music that punctuated his rise to, and grip on power. We mounted content analysis to scrutinize, musicals, transcriptions, and song text, political publications and media communications.

The *Second Chimurenga* Era

Music was a resource and conduit for inspiration and solace for the armed guerrilla forces during the *Second Chimurenga* which intensified in the mid-1970s up to 1980 when political independence was realised (Chikowero, 2008; Viriri, 2012; Viriri, 2013; Ravengai, 2016; Chitando & Tarusarira, 2017). Music was a third force in tribal wars as well as the *First Chimurenga* waged by proponents like Sekuru Kaguvi, Mbuya Nehanda, Mapondera and many others. The need for music as an ingredient to win the armed struggle was more intense in the *Second Chimurenga* than the first one (Shambo, Chivandika & Chikonzo, 2016; Sabao, 2018). The independence struggle had hero worshiping songs and praises for father and mother figures in the struggle. Mugabe's predecessor, Ndabaningi Sithole as a clergyman had laid a strong pillar of music to the political foundation for the liberation movement. It is also sensible and logical to assume that being a Reverend, Sithole also understood well the place and function of music from a religious perspective. We imagine he borrowed such knowledge and utility of music from the church and aptly embraced and applied it to the revolution.

Such knowledge should have translated into the espousal of music into the political arena by Mugabe and the rest of his subordinates - including the war fighter at the battle front.

Although the above view may not be a given fact, it is critical to note that the church holds strongly the use of music in liturgy and Mugabe having been raised under the auspices of the Catholic Church understood that conception. Hailing from a society endowed with a rich musical culture, Mugabe readily embraced the use of music in the armed struggle after the Mgagao declaration in 1975 (Moore, 2014). He continued the use of music in the liberation struggle which had been there before he was at the helm. After the ouster of Ndabaningi Sithole, Mugabe maintained the cardinal function of music and went beyond the ordinary. He perpetuated the use of music to further political and personal agendas. Momentum for the *Second Chimurenga* gathered impetus to depose colonialism through the gun.

Comrade Chinx and the ZANLA Choir, as well as ZIPRA's Light Machine Gun (LMG) Choir provided music and enthused the freedom fighters with zeal and motivation to go on with the liberation war (Pfukwa, 2008; Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Willems, 2009; Viriri, 2013; Moore, 2014; Willems, 2015; Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru, 2016; Khan, 2018; Marongedze, 2019). These choirs carried the musical torch from the *Second Chimurenga* to independence. Some of the war songs include *Ndiro gidi*, *Gwara reZANU*, *Sendekeza mukoma*, *Tinorwa hondo*, *Kure kwatinobva*, *Maruza vapambepfumi*, *Emoyeni*, *Kwakal'ingane* and *Nzira dzemasoja*. Mugabe, being a wise person of sober habits, knew that music was in line with party policy and ideology.

The choirs had the full blessing and backing of Mugabe and the entire leadership of the armed struggle. Mobilisation songs sung during the armed struggle instilled discipline, resilience and tenacity in the guerrillas. The use of songs transcended ordinary pastime as they emphasised the ideology and direction of the struggle. The freedom fighters deployed in different provinces during the *Second Chimurenga* created awareness on the focus and aspirations of the liberation movement through music. From that standpoint *Pungwes* were held throughout the liberation struggle (Pfukwa, 2008; Viriri, 2013).

Pungwes were all-night gatherings mounted by the guerrillas and the villagers with an aim to educate, encourage and instil hope in the oppressed masses of Zimbabwe. In Shona cosmology it is a bira traditional ritual to appease ancestors which is conducted throughout the night punctuated by song and dance. During *pungwe* people stay awake until sunrise for a ritual. Viriri (2012, p. 2) postulates that, “*Pungwe* arguably and demonstrably became the venue of much vigour, vitality, dialogic variation.” This is an event during which both villagers and the warriors became embodied in the spirit of the armed struggle and got enthused to go forward and never give up. During the *Second Chimurenga*, *pungwe* became a platform for interaction and sharing of information concerning the struggle. Under the command of the First Secretary and President, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) forces advanced the agenda of the war. There were no spiritual rituals that took effect at such gatherings because the gatherings were not done under any one clan or dynasty. Rather it was a collective gathering of different people with different totems and beliefs. The all-night liberation war *pungwe* was an unstructured programme during which guerrillas and villagers ate supper, sang songs, conducted political lectures and discussed party policy and ideology. Some of the songs were led by *Chimbwidos* and *Mujibhas* (youths) and the liberation war soldiers commonly known as comrades. The choice of songs sung set the tone of events at each *pungwe*. If there were disciplinary cases to be brought before the congregation, songs that hinted that were sung by the comrades or someone appointed to lead.

After the singing the freedom fighters would stand up to address the gathering. Sell-outs were rebuked and reprimanded individually before being sentenced then punishment was meted out on the culprits (Mazarire, 2011). Any counter revolutionary tendencies were discouraged and the guerrillas infused propaganda. Sadly, some of the alleged sell-outs were victims of false allegations. Some elderly respondents who chose to remain anonymous informed that some unfounded accusations could be laid against members of the community with no tangible evidence to support the claims against those purported to be dissenting against the struggle. Any disciplinary action was always accompanied with song and dance to instil a sense of fear and restraint to the generality of the people. It was quite a terrifying experience to see someone being killed or getting to be beaten as a form of punishment. It was very traumatising for family members to

observe their sell-out relative die and or get maimed in the process while people sang and danced to celebrate their demise. Sell-outs or dissenting elements were exposed through singing and *kongonya* before their trial and subsequent sentence. In as much as *kongonya* was mostly associated with joy, it was also synonymous with the sad moments of seeing people getting killed and or being subjected to strong beatings as some form of disciplinary action. In a sense *kongonya* was the interlude to the serious matter of the struggle (Gonye, 2013; Gonye & Manase, 2015).

Kongonya is a dance loaded with meaning to the liberation movement. *Chimurenga* War campaign music was broadcast on Radio Mozambique where jingles were played to reinforce the no-going-back attitude of the liberation. Throughout the *Second Chimurenga pungwe* gatherings were tied to the struggle and held frequently because they were regarded as the most ideal mode to deliver messages to the people and also keep the people in the spirit of the liberation movement. The most common feature was songs and dance (*kongonya*) into the deep of the night to the early hours of the day (Viriri, 2012). Songs for cheering up the villagers and the comrades were often followed by *kongonya* a kind of a dance that signified hyped supporters ready to do anything for the cause of the struggle (Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru, 2016; Marongedze, 2019). *Kongonya* could be done even outside a night vigil; it was used to demonstrate displeasure, pleasure, approval and or disapproval of certain behaviours by villagers or the armed struggle.

The use of *kongonya* continued to take place after independence as a way to discipline both defaulting party and opposition members. In our thinking the place of the above insignia was part of the legacy of the struggle led by the late Robert Mugabe. *Kongonya* was also performed as *Third Chimurenga* fighters grabbed the land from the capitalist farmers. Music and dance in the struggle for economic emancipation was an essential ingredient which was marked with the deployment of *kongonya*. It was also used as a demonstration against employers who were alleged to be underpaying citizens of an independent country Zimbabwe. It was a weapon to deal with members who side-tracked the ideology of the party followed by disciplinary action and or expulsion from their party ranks.

The Post-Independence Era

The BBC correspondent Fleming (2014) suggests that during the organisation of independence celebrations in 1980, the late Tekere, a long-time buddy of Mugabe, indicated the unwillingness of Mugabe to have Bob Marley coming to perform in Zimbabwe. Instead, Mugabe, had preferred British pop star Cliff Richard. Mugabe abhorred Rastafarian singers whom he alleged were smoking *marijuana*. Mugabe held the notion that such musicians only wanted to be singers without education and move around with their dreadlocks. Mugabe feared that the Jamaican musician would impose a negative influence on the youths and did not want such influence to sweep across the new Zimbabwe. Fleming (2014) further submits that Mugabe would rather have had Jimmy Cliff who was a clean Jamaican musician to come and grace the occasion of Zimbabwe's Independence.

The atmosphere during Zimbabwe's independence celebrations was electrifying. The unmistakable reggae thump of the legendary Jamaican musician Bob Marley filled the air as chants of “*Viva Zimbabwe*” boomed out (Matiashe, 2020). The influx of reggae music into the country is largely inspired by Marley's performance during the 1980 independence celebrations. Robert Mugabe capitalised on the musician's popularity even though he had initially expressed reservations about his coming.

The subsequent influence that rocked the nation is evidence that the liberation movement exploited the power of music to their advantage. Marley's performance of the hit song ‘Zimbabwe’ at Rufaro Stadium changed the face of music in the history of Zimbabwe. Reggae music by Buju Banton, Bunny Wailer, Don Carlos, Gregory Isaacs, Joseph Hill, Peter Tosh, Yellow man the UK outfits Misty in Roots and UB40 also found space in Zimbabwe following Bob Marley's success. This influenced Thomas Mapfumo, John Chibadura, Solomon Skhuza and the Zig Zag Band to record reggae music a few years later. Following the visit of Bob Marley, the youths in the towns and cities of Zimbabwe began to idolise Bob Marley by wearing dreadlocks and playing reggae. It was also at this point that the advent of the RasTafari Movement arguably emerged and gained its momentum in Zimbabwe.

Reforms followed after independence and the Rhodesia Broadcasting Cooperation was renamed the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation. Homegrown programmes Mvengemvenge, Ezomgido, on ZTV and Nziyo Tichishanda, Kanda pafudzi/ Selimathunzi on Radio 2 (later renamed Radio Zimbabwe) were broadcast. These programmes came as a fresh breath of life for the once oppressed Zimbabweans who recorded the liberation songs that had been banned under the colonial regime of Ian Smith. With Mugabe at the helm, the music industry grew with the playing of revolutionary songs that had once been part of the armed struggle on Radio Two. The songs which hailed the political independence of Zimbabwe included '*Rufaro rwedu*', '*Zuva ranhasi izuva guru*', '*Tinorwa hondo*' '*Ndiro gidi vakomana*' and '*Kure kwatinobva*', '*PaChimoio*'. Mugabe remained in the picture as many songs were recorded and published on radio and television to esteem the new leader of Zimbabwe.

The political thrust of the time soon after the independence of Zimbabwe made Mugabe an instant hero of that time. Ambitious artistes and bands regardless of genre tried their luck with politically charged lyrics. Thomas Mapfumo churned out songs that pledged allegiance to the freedom fighters singing '*Kwaedza muZimbabwe*' (it is dawn in Zimbabwe) was a song to celebrate independence to thank the freedom fighters. The Runn Family sang a song 'Komborera! President Mugabe' (Bless President Mugabe), Oliver Mtukudzi also sang the song Zimbabwe also praising the liberation movement and giving freedom to the masses. Simon Chimbetu also sang the song '*Ndarangarira gamba*' (Remembering the hero) in which he says 'Vana veZimbabwe ngatibatanei tina VaMugabe tikurire mhandu' (Children of Zimbabwe let's unite under Mugabe so as to defeat the enemy). Most songs had the slogan Pamberi na President Mugabe! Forward with President Mugabe! Such a slogan was mandatory.

The *Third Chimurenga* Era

With time, the obsession of singing and praising the liberation movement dropped significantly and it largely remained a ZANU-PF party espousal. Opposition elements began to sprout in both the Shona and Ndebele communities. The deployment of propaganda music was to salvage the sinking ship and the dwindling trust one given to the liberators including

Mugabe. Thomas Mapfumo was one of the hardliner critics of Mugabe through song and soon the two fell out. It is thus sensible to see why no serious challenges emerged in spite of the intra ZANU-PF fissures that had manifested since the departure of Ndabaningi Sithole. An astute plan had to be deployed to oust the guileful nonagenarian who had survived 37 years of absolute power. The songs sung by the supporters besides forewarning listeners of impending disciplinary action to contenders, also paralysed opponents and instilled fear in the populace by creating an untouchable and sacrosanct Mugabe.

The remarkable event that ignited the spate of a fresh land grabbing was the move by the people under Chief Svosve in Mashonaland East. The ZTV which is pro ZANU-PF flighted the news, people sang and danced revolutionary songs at the onset of the land reform. In the past any steps to grab the land were thwarted by the police. This time around it earned the blessing of the head of state, like a veld fire it swept across the face of Zimbabwe. The early 2000s became saturated by the land reform which some had always hoped to have been undertaken in a different way. An intensified quest for the land ownership took off in spite of all odds as the Third Chimurenga also known as Hondo yeMinda (struggle for the land). Upon realising that the population was going to dump ZANU-PF just like the way they had trashed the constitutional reform in the referendum of 2000, Mugabe wittingly opted to engage the land reform. The idea of adopting a new constitution had flopped and that changed the politics in ZANU-PF and the people of Zimbabwe. At the beginning of the new millennium a heightened urge to grab land from the minority white farmers, Hondo yeminda ensued through music. Music was deployed as part of the weaponry through radio and television broadcast. Comrade Chinx, Tambaoga a ZANU-PF enthusiast, The Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) Band, Marko Sibanda, Mbare Chimurenga Choir and war veterans were at the forefront of the Third Chimurenga. The momentum of the Mbare Chimurenga Choir went beyond the power of other ZANU-PF stalwarts like the Vice Presidents, National Chairpersons and the Women's League. Robert Mugabe used Mbare Chimurenga Choir songs in around the country to campaign and cement his support base.

The period after 2000 was characterised by land seizures, (Musiyiwa, 2013). Whereas on the ground people undertook a revolutionary land grabbing of white owned farms, the radio adverts and news purported a well organised venture. The adverts showed flourishing farming under the guise of black farmers and songs sung to praise the fighters for land. The 'Hondo yakura muZimbabwe' song by Comrade Chinx injected hope in land fighters to win the land. Tambaoga sang the song 'Rambai makashinga' in the advert to invigorate the cadres involved in the struggle. The advert was played on all national radio stations every 30 minutes in a bid to underscore the land reform message. In real terms the land reform speaks loudly of Mugabe's political architecture on propaganda music. The truth be said not all that engaged in the land reform benefitted from the whole land narrative. The Mbare Chimurenga Choir with the *kongonya* and *Jiti* songs continued to thrive with their sloganeering music to praise the person of Mugabe and his cronies for a job well done in the land reform. Even though the music of Tambaoga, ZRP band and Marko Sibanda still lives way after the Third Chimurenga it is docile in the archives of both television and radio broadcasting entities. In a way, music sustained the revolutionary euphoria of the public land grabs.

To counter the growing despondency and opposition the government and ZANU-PF launched campaigns that thrived on musicals to strengthen their grip and bring solidarity to keep Mugabe in power. The Mbare Chimurenga and Mabvuku-Tafara Chimurenga Choirs emerged as mouthpieces of the party and Mugabe. One of their songs that articulated power struggles in the party include 'Nyatsoteerea unzwe kutonga' the lyrical content denounced aspiring contenders to the presidium that there were no open vacancies to ambitious candidates. The 'VaMugabe vanofamba nemamonya' song was meant to ward off any threats of harming Mugabe. The song also intimidated potential threat through unleashing mamonya people who can quash any form of physical confrontation. The same song also says that Mugabe moves around with magweja (people with nothing to lose and can do anything) to protect the wellbeing of Mugabe and his party. Indeed, these two groups - magweja and mamonya - were revered for their daring acts during political campaigns. The Women's League fronted the political arena with arsenal that was born in music. Chitando (2002) refers to the Christian hymn 'Handimbochema kana Jesu aripo' (I will not cry as long

as Jesus is there). This was converted to include the name of Mugabe in place of Jesus, thus 'Handimbochema kana Mugabe aripo'. The Women's League would endorse the leadership of Mugabe way before the onset of the ZANU-PF congress and other party leagues would follow the wave. Indeed, they would not cry or suffer as long as Mugabe was in power. The Women's League was a musical mouth piece of propaganda. The Mabvuku and Mbare Chimurenga choirs pledged allegiance to the Mugabe regime because they felt secure just like Christians do under the covering of their saviour, Jesus. Mugabe prized the Women and the Youth Leagues even if it seemed like he did not care much. In religious circles women and youth usually give their all to the service of God and in a similar way the women pledged their allegiance to the party to keep Mugabe in power, hence the use of song of praise of his image (Chitando, 2002).

At the fall of Mugabe, it looks like he departed with the choir into the grave and all the songs that carried the land reform and his persona. The new dispensation under Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangangwa turned a deaf ear on the musicals that speak to Mugabe and all his achievements except where the music is unavoidably useful to re-count issues of national concern. To the masses of Zimbabwe including some factions said to be aligned to Mnangagwa, songs that laud Mugabe's legacy cut across the grain of the current ZANU-PF composition. It seems they have not learnt from their past to detest excessive hero worshipping through music. ED Pfee songs are also doing the same. Recorded music will remain alive many years after the demise of the singer. In this case, Mugabe will live to be remembered through the music that was recorded about him.

Some Reflections on Post-independence Issues

Professor Jonathan Moyo, the Minister of Information and Publicity and the ZANU-PF kingpin from 2000 to 2005 and again from 2013 to 2015, engineered a legislation that was meant to lift music and the arts. The Broadcasting Services Act of 2001 was met with stiff opposition and despondency by some sections of the society. The policy enforced a 75% Local Content on radio and TV broadcasting. The locally produced music and performative arts were to ultimately become beneficiaries of the above legislation. The ploy of the then Minister of Information was to give more

time to Zimbabwean music productions. At first the television and radio broadcasting were deficient due to lack of adequate products to consume on all the national broadcasting stations. The radio and television also saw a paradigm shift where National FM based at Pockets Hill was put in place to reach out to all minority languages through news, musicals and documentaries. Following that, the Broadcasting Services Act of 2001 made provisions for the establishment of Spot FM in Bulawayo, Power FM in Gweru, and Radio Zimbabwe and National FM in Harare. These national broadcasting stations replaced radio 1, 2, 3 and 4 which were largely colonial. Although the greatest time of radio broadcasting is taken up by musicals, the legislation was not well received. As we grew up we noted that the local radio stations took most of their repertoire from the republic of South Africa. Historically it was normal because of the umbilical cord that was there especially the record industry.

Prior to the above move the music industry in Zimbabwe emulated the prototypes of music from the Southern African region especially DRC, Kenya, Tanzania, and South Africa. Musical broadcasts from those countries filled the airwaves of the radios in Zimbabwe. There was always going to be a time when the alluded connection was to be broken. There was no opportune time other than the Broadcasting Services Act of 2001. This came into place during the time of Mugabe and credit should perhaps be given to his reign for ushering a platform for the people to own their own music. Through the legislation Urban Grooves, Zimdancehall and other digitally driven genres were born. The long tradition of dominance by a few record companies came to an abrupt halt as new studio owners started to ply trade using makeshift, garage, backyard and portable studios. The tradition of pro-studio hegemony fell off and the once dominant genre faced steep competition from the youthful generation of music artists and music producers.

Moyo, the then ZANU-PF spin doctor mooted an intensified concept of national galas. The concept of galas borrowed the *Pungwe* or *Bira*. However it was different in that it included diverse musicals. It did not directly require musicians to demonstrate allegiance to ZANU-PF. Participating groups were paid to appear on the stage and this was done soon after they moved off the stage. As an incentive and a bit of loyalty many small and big musicians

participated in these galas. The galas served initially to cater for the 21st February movement, the Heroes, Independence, and Unity days. Of note were the Simon Muzenda and Joshua Nkomo galas to commemorate the lives of the late first and second Vice Presidents of Zimbabwe. Music as a powerful force drew people together. The gathered people shared common ground through music. It was also beamed live through the night for all people in Zimbabwe to follow and enjoy. The ZANU-PF machinery used the big-name artists like Charles Charamba, Mechanic Manyeruke, Alick Macheso, Oliver Mtukudzi, Nicholas Zachariah, Tongai Moyo and Hosiah Chipanga as bait to woo people to the gatherings. During the course of events the directors of ceremonies took time to remind people of the essence of the gala. People entered free of charge and enjoyed listening to their favourite musicians who churned out their popular compositions. What was understood by the system was the power of music hence the people who were experiencing hardships found these galas as a worthy pastime especially that the music was brought to the people on a rotational basis in all of the 10 provinces (Shaw, 1974; Wang, 2004; Hamilton, 2008; Long, 2013; Oeste, 2013; Pierce, 2015). An average of five galas took place every year and each of these effected an enduring impact upon the citizenry.

During the same period of time many names came to the forefront of the music industry under the urban grooves genre. Moyo set up a band in the name of Pax Afro which with a national drive to portray a good image about Zimbabwe with prospects of luring tourists. They churned out songs that gave a bright side of Zimbabwe and advertised the tourist attractions such as Great Zimbabwe, Nyanga Mountains, Matopo Game Park and Victoria Falls just to name a few. Just before the news bulletins, audio and video adverts of different sorts were run as propaganda to cement the grip of the ruling party. Indeed, the outside world remained oblivious of the deep-seated political matters that upset the populace of Zimbabwe. In the interim, tourists continued to visit Zimbabwe taking their interests to Chinhoyi caves, Chimanimani Hot springs and other resorts. Zimbabwe enjoys a rich and diverse musical culture and some of the resorts like Great Zimbabwe and Victoria falls host various ethnic musical groups that do traditional and modern contemporary performances.

Intra ZANU-PF Factional Politics

Mugabe understood the philosophies behind music to advance an agenda to remain in power. He used music to perpetuate external party hegemony, intra ZANU-PF political agenda setting and suppress opposition elements (Humbe and Mawere, 2016). Mugabe's political struggle as leader of ZANU-PF is quite synonymous with the deployment of music to drum up propaganda, and quell internal party dissent and opposition elements in the third Chimurenga (Lindgren, 2003; Johnson & Cloonan 2013; Chitando and Tarusarira, 2017; Jenzen, et al. 2020). Songs were sung in action as the people went in to grab the land. *Kongonya* as a hallmark of the Chimurenga struggle carried the resilient ZANU-PF supporters to express going forward. During the Government of National Unity (GNU) 2009-2013 a there emerged a growing fissure within ZANU-PF between G40 mainly constituted of young party members who claimed allegiance to Mugabe and Lacoste comprised of the old guard and some "Young Turks" said to be under Mnangagwa. It is interesting to see how each of the opposing elements used music to postulate their agenda. Songs were sung by the G40 to demean the Lacoste. The pro-G40 songs expressed the camp's invincible character. The song 'Unconquerable' spelled that no other ethnic people would rule Zimbabwe particularly the Karanga where Mnangagwa hailed from.

In the previous years, Mugabe never openly took sides in factional politics however, this time his own wife grace was at the fore of the G40. Hate, ridicule and defamation speeches were delivered to denounce those opposing the G40 movement. At rallies such songs would be sung to show off who wielded the power to rule. The above song carried connotations that the next government was to be made of a leader from the Zezuru people. Mugabe and his wife Grace belonged to the Zezuru ethnic group. The reality is that for the rest of the people it was an open show off. Mpelekezela Mphoko of Ndebele ethnicity was one of the Vice Presidents who also belonged to the G40. He came into politics but was not popular among the perennial ZANU-PF cadres. The other Vice President Mnangagwa believed to be the brains behind the Lacoste faction was somewhat indifferent to the G40 drive. Mphoko never caused any threat as he was believed to be a Robert Mugabe sycophant leader. This was a survival tactic for him to remain safe and relevant to the politics of the day. Mphoko in one of his addresses made

a palpable error to denounce the Karanga people asserting they would never taste the power to rule Zimbabwe. Some key members of the Youth League and Women's League sang songs to moot an agenda that saw Grace Mugabe rise to the political pinnacle. The speed with which Grace gained power to address the people of Zimbabwe was not amazing as the women and youths gave her support. They would use the popular song by Jah Prayzah 'Mudhara achauya' to consolidate the G40's foothold. Mudhara achauya meant that the man was to come, ishumba inoruma is a lion that kills. The valiant Mugabe had withstood all factional fights and proved formidable but for once he faced a seemingly toothless Lacoste. Instead of responding to the lashing Mnangagwa took a stance of a crocodile to remain tight-lipped. Throughout, the Lacoste faction played second fiddle to the smear campaign that was mounted by the G40. The Lacoste silence was always suspicious no wonder why they ended up silently pipping Mugabe. In spite of the many efforts by Prof Moyo to salvage the political quandary born of ZANU factionalism the craft of Mugabe was decimated by the Lacoste with the backing of the army.

Music in Mugabe's Private life

Besides classical choral music he also preferred music that conveyed meaning rather than those that tended to be all over the place without explicit significance. In his private life, Mugabe preferred decent music especially the folk songs bearing profound and fecund lessons of life. From his remarks as retorted by some informants to this study 'Vamudhara' and other social songs took him down the memory lane enjoying music that he had been exposed to over time, then on Makwiro by St Paul's Band he remarked that 'Makwiro' was a short distance away ironically, so he found the song richly figurative in that it hinted on preparedness in the face of an unpredictable future. For 'Nanhasi' by Shingisai Suluma he felt that it impacted on his personal life marvelling that indeed it was the God's hand that he (Mugabe) had seen him thus far with most of his peers long departed. Mugabe expressed deep appreciation for music and its complexity, and adherence of performers to the dictates such as proper harmony, voice tone usage, dynamics, and cadences. Soon after the 2016 graduation ceremony, Mugabe requested sought audience with the MSU music department. It was amazing to hear him (Personal Communication, 28 November 2016) make reference

to issues which are rooted in the theory of music, yet he understood them from a practical viewpoint. Mugabe would not let go an opportunity to express gratitude through well-constructed remarks and indeed he used appropriate musical terms.

According to one of Mugabe's aides (Personal communication, 28 November 2016) who preferred anonymity, the people who were closely knit to Mugabe's daily routines informed that was he was a very cautious person concerning making comments about musical genres. Mugabe may have opted neutrality and abhorrence to openly discrediting certain musical genres to keep himself away from controversy. As a leader of the ruling party ZANU PF it was important and necessary to avoid disappointing his supporters who could have loved the music that Mugabe might have hated or disliked. The ZRP Band was one group of entertainers that graced the then first family. The authors were informed that Robert Mugabe freely expressed deep appreciation of the African musical performances as in traditional dance, mbira and African drums in the band. He would never get to request any of the Chimurenga songs as he opted the social songs that carried philosophical matters of life. The performance of some Chimurenga songs was largely a call by cronies' bent on man pleasing Robert Mugabe. At some functions it was an issue of creating an atmosphere of solidarity, but he enjoyed, tunes apolitical tunes the most. It was the people around him that could openly demand for certain types of music and not Robert Mugabe himself. Under normal circumstances, it would be unusual for the president to become very social and freely interact with the people. From the above we understand why some took advantage of his being laid back impose the choice of for him or on his behalf It should also be understood that by keeping his views to self may mean that he approved it.

Policies on the Performative Arts

The University of Rhodesia did not have an academic study of music during the time of Ian Smith as the head of state and government. The arrival of Robert Mugabe who also became the Chancellor to all the state universities in Zimbabwe did not immediately give way to the study of music at university level. Robert Mugabe as the chancellor endorsed the first ever academic study of music in Zimbabwe at the University of Zimbabwe in

teacher education. This came as an answer to the many college lecturers and school teachers at primary and secondary schools to upgrade their education from mere certificates and diplomas to degree level. On record the first batch of students to undertake the Bachelor of Education were lecturers from the Teachers colleges in Zimbabwe in 1994. The graduates from University of Zimbabwe (UZ) as torch bearers became the crop of students from which the UZ was to spearhead the degree at UZ and other colleges around the nation. Midlands State University (MSU) later opened with the first intake for the Music and Musicology Honours Degree in March of 2003. The cries to have a purely academic study in music had been met with many hurdles until a few of the first UZ graduates had earned master's degrees in music. The department of Music and Musicology started off with a small number of students and that marked the beginning of a new musical journey in Zimbabwe. The department participated in all the university ceremonies including ground breaking, graduations, and cultural commemorations. The culture of performative arts grew with time and MSU became a destination of choice to the chancellor and his entourage. On certain three different graduations the Chancellor Robert Mugabe by virtue of his authority interjected the graduation proceedings to pass a comment on a Ndebele classical rendition by the MSU choir. On another occasion in his capacity as a Chancellor against all odds requested the choir to sing two songs for him just before the luncheon outside the set venue of the proceedings. While the rest his entourage was highly concerned about his security, Robert Mugabe was immersed in that sweet music that the choir sang for him. The MSU musicals are/were arranged in five sections Marimba, Mbira, Folk and Classical Choral, Electric Band and Traditional dance and in all he expressed a sense of appreciation that went beyond a lay person's view point. On that occasion he made reference to harmony, cadences, form and texture of music the very terms used in music analysis. To date the department has evolved to Music Business, Musicology and Technology with a compliment of 10 members of staff, four (4) of them hold PhDs, with the rest working towards their doctoral degrees. The department had several students working on their MPhil theses. The mandate to offer degrees in music was also extended to the Great Zimbabwe University (GZU) in 2010 with a niche for the arts. There is remarkable development in the academic study of the visual and performing arts.

The curriculum reforms of 2017 cannot be left out of this discourse as some of the implemented policies drew from the Nziramasanga Commission (1999). Although the former Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Lazarus Dokora was at the forefront of educational reforms, his endeavours can be seen as a Robert Mugabe project. The appointment of Dokora had the blessing of Mugabe. It is a fact that visibility of certain concepts in the new curriculum speak more to modern technology. Although the new document speaks to the Visual Performing Arts rather than music, a holistic view indicates that music still holds a stake in the education system. The use of certain software application was more implied in the old curriculum than in the current. Although it looks ambitious to expose some of the fundamental concepts to Early Childhood Education, there is nothing out of order with the 21st generation that is given to the emerging digital technologies. Even though Mugabe is gone with his cohort of ministers his legacy is likely going to live with the current and future generations of learners in the area of music. The current Covid-19 pandemic has revolutionised the mode of instruction to a more secure and virtual mode of teaching and learning. Failure to comply with certain inevitable changes brought by digital technologies can render vibrant practices irrelevant.

Points of View

The Mugabe era realised a number of achievements benefitting music and the arts based on policies, and their effective implementation. Looking at the struggle we note that the deployment served to enthuse the liberation fighters with tenacity and resilience in the battle zones. Indeed, music carried the day for the freedom fighters who could have gone a day or two with no food in the face of a raging war. The same agency of music was also purposeful to convey the ideology of ZANU-PF during the struggle especially among the ordinary villagers who supported the success of the anti-colonial movement.

During the armed struggle *Pungwes* were moments to boost moral with singing coupled with *Kongonya* dance (Gonye and Manase, 2015). This was an opportunity for the freedom fighters to instil propaganda and earn the society's collaboration. Without determined efforts it was likely possible for the ordinary unarmed villagers to opt out of the potential cost of standing

unarmed between the guerrillas and the Rhodesian forces. The songs that were sung during all phases of the Chimurenga instilled persuasion, and pride in people to believe in what was ferocious and deadly. Music was used effectively to dismantle the strong resistance and provide ways out of a system that was insurmountable. As trained musicians with more than 20 years of experience in the academic study of music, we concur that the force of music can be manipulated in many ways to stimulate both explicit and hidden schema. We see Mugabe as a genius in the path alluded to outsmart his detractors and foes in his political career.

Robert Mugabe immensely owed dearly to music to control others and survive the rough political terrain occupied by numberless colossuses in ZANU-PF. His musical schemes laid down the path to follow in the Mugabe regime. From Independence to date there are traces where Mugabe has openly appreciated the role of music and sometimes he also did that indirectly without showing an open view to his political magic. The tradition of music galas was reinforced after the historic the Unity Accord of ZANU and ZAPU on the 22nd December 1987. The festivals were organised around political themes but music was largely apolitical. We think that this was a well calculated trajectory that gathered people on a national rather than partisan line. That as a strategy was on point however the populace was hoodwinked into political mire without knowing. The token of appreciations given to participating bands and musicians were a rational incentive in the milieu of an electorate struggling with poverty and lack. It was rare to hear the chanting of ZANU-PF party slogans, as everything was neutral. We also think that it was also a ploy to placate the potential volatility in the people. Musicals were also done at receptions of guest dignitaries at the state house and also at their sending off at the airport. All these indicate that Mugabe was a man who liked and appreciated music all the way to the end.

While many achievements could be written on the account of Mugabe, we maintain that any leader could have done more or less than what was wrought by the former president Mugabe throughout his entire life. It is only a question of Mugabe having had the opportunity and that he was one of the most intelligent and eloquent leaders to grace the African continent. Some of the achievements that were realised in Zimbabwe could still have come through because leaders strive to develop their economies.

Indeed, music business soared high during the Robert Mugabe era. Record companies did brisk business, the production and sales of popular music increased, radio and television broadcasting thrived. We also concur that the livelihoods of musicians and music business persons also experienced extremes of slump once in 2007-2009. Even though a glorious peak was realised in 2009 to 2013 it was rather transitory. Mugabe's success was an encrypted formula which many could not crack over many years. In Shona, they say *chisingaperi chinoshura* meaning nothing ever remains the same. Those that removed him from power did that by a whisker otherwise his wit and vice transcend his predecessors. Indeed, Mugabe stands in a class of his own in almost all facets of life and history will not forget him for the good and bad which epitomised his leadership.

From an emic perspective, we view music as a critical ingredient that is widely abused and manipulated by people the world over hence Robert Mugabe and ZANU-PF are no exception to this feat. The DRC, then Zaire, succumbed to the dictatorship of Joseph Mobutu Sese Seko through the use of music. He drummed support through the deployment of traditional music as part of his propaganda (White, 2004). Basing on the allusion to the above perception we hold strongly that President Robert Mugabe was hugely engrossed with musicals in the period covering his whole socio-political life. As such, we see music as a resource that flaunts power to persuade a people to engage in collective action as was observed in Zimbabwe's Second and Third Chimurenga. In the African traditional society, members of a community drew solace and courage to engage in arduous and physically straining activities such as hewing stone, cutting firewood and withstanding harsh weather conditions through music.

The Mbare Chimurenga Choir, among others, Tambaoga and many political commemorative groups of the once esteemed Robert Mugabe are now part of our history. It did not come as surprise that hero worshipping and bootlicking of political leaders through populist songs die with their heroes/heroines. Today Mugabe is gone but ZANU-PF is still there. Tomorrow another political staunch figure will come and in due time they will also go. There is always a danger of becoming irrelevant especially on the political arena even if one is on the correct lane. Not many ever thought that Mugabe would die and be buried far from the National Heroes' Acre in spite of

having been the brains behind the liberation of Zimbabwe. In their hey days, the Mbare Chimurenga Choir praised the rule and political initiatives of Mugabe in many songs. Today not many ZANU-PF members take the choir as a serious music group. In fact, they have become irrelevant. The danger with music is that it takes obscure personalities to the limelight where many can perceive them. Once one gets to the top, the next thing is to fall. Upon falling from the public view, onlookers will see and realise the dangers of politics after they fall victim. Tambaoga ruined his musical career by jumping into the political mire such that today people cannot accept him even without a slightest tilt towards politics.

The Third Chimurenga was fought through the weaponry of music on radio and television broadcasting with strategic deployment of jingles and songs, as mantra of the struggle (Shambo, Chivandika, & Chikonzo, 2016). It was quite a common trend to have the adverts, jingles behaving like an aeroplane thus in the autopilot mode. Without saying anything the radio and telecast communicated the ideology of the political party ZANU-PF. The 'Rambai makashinga' tune was clearly a sign to show that both the one taking the land and the one losing the land needed to be strong. However, the song was sarcastic to black farmers who lost their hard-earned pieces of land. Indeed, it was always going to be difficult to be strong knowing one was losing revenue and their property. For the ones that grabbed the land it was just a question of time before they could be called landlords even without the necessary equipment to become productive. They really came to believe that they needed to be strong to become farm owners.

Conclusion

The chapter looked at the political figure of Robert Mugabe and the issues that appeal to music in his political and social life. We took a historical look at the events that unfolded from the *Second Chimurenga* in the 1970s up to his fall from power in 2017. In this chapter we applied the philosophy and role of music in a broad spectrum. We related the function of music to the utility of propaganda as a conceptual cast that guided analysis of issues. We noted that the proponents of the second and Third Chimurenga understood the efficacy of music. The deployment of musicals in the liberation attests the crucial role it played. The celebrations of the Independence of Zimbabwe

with the hosting of the reggae star Bob Marley opened the Zimbabwe music industry to vibrant business. *Kongonya* and *Pungwe* remain relevant critical insignia of Zimbabwe's liberation history. It is worth noting that the people of Zimbabwe still use *Kongonya* and *Pungwe* in social functions to celebrate life. The chapter reveals that through numerous activities Robert Mugabe showed his affection for music and used it to maintain his hold on power. Indeed, he can be regarded as an iconic leader who transcended his peers locally and abroad. During his rule he managed to craft policies that promoted the performative arts through the informal and formal sectors. Robert Mugabe preferred traditional music. According to some online letter published by Zimbabwe Today (2016) Mugabe says the people of Zimbabwe will appreciate his legacies after his passing on. As part of our history Mugabe fell at the hands of a ZANU-PF internal contradictions but left a musical legacy behind him.

References

- Agawu, K. (1992). Representing African Music. *Critical Inquiry*, 18(2), 245-266.
- Agawu, K. (2007). To Cite or Not to Cite? Confronting the Legacy of (European) Writing on African Music. *Fontes Artis Musicae*, 54(3), 254-262.
- Baird, J. (1976). Content Analysis and the Computer: A Case-Study in the Application of the Scientific Method to Biblical Research. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 95(2), 255-276. DOI:10.2307/3265240
- Berliner, P.F. (1993). *The Soul of Mbira: Music and Traditions of the Shona People of Zimbabwe*. London: University of Chicago Press.
- Blacking, J. (1969). The Value of Music in Human Experience. *Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*, 1, 33-71. DOI:10.2307/1767634
- Britan, H. (1908). The Power of Music. *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, 5(13), 352-357. DOI:10.2307/2011756
- Chauncey B. K. (1941). Propaganda Music. *Music Educators Journal*, 27(5), 59-59.
- Chikowero, M. (2008). 'Our People Father, They Haven't Learned Yet': Music and Postcolonial Identities in Zimbabwe, 1980-2000. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 34(1), 145-160.
- Chitando, E. (2002). 'Down with the devil, Forward with Christ!' A study of the interface between religious and political discourses in Zimbabwe. *African Sociological Review / Revue Africaine De Sociologie*, 6(1), 1-16.
- Chitando, E. (2005). 'In the Beginning Was the Land': The Appropriation of Religious Themes in Political Discourses in Zimbabwe. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 75(2), 220-239.
- Chitando, E., & Tarusarira, J. (2017). The Deployment of a 'Sacred Song' in Violence in Zimbabwe: The Case of the Song 'Zimbabwe Ndeye Ropa Ramadzibaba' Zimbabwe was/is Born of the Blood of the Fathers/Ancestors in Zimbabwean Politics. *Journal for the Study of Religion*, 30(1), 5-25.
- De Keere, K. (2014). From a self-made to an already-made man: A historical content analysis of professional advice literature. *Acta Sociologica*, 57(4), 311-324.

- Fleming, L. (2014). *Mugabe turns 90: Nine things you may not know*. BBC News. Available online at <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-26257237>
- Gonye, J. (2013). Mobilizing Dance/Traumatizing Dance: “Kongonya” and the Politics of Zimbabwe. *Dance Research Journal*, 45(1), 65-79.
- Gonye, J., & Manase, I. (2015). Debunking the Zimbabwean Myth of “Jikinya” Dance in Ndhlala’s “Jikinya” and Zimunya’s “Jikinya” (Dancer) and “Jikinya” (An African Passion). *Journal of Black Studies*, 46(2), 123-141.
- Gustafson, W. N. (1998). Content Analysis in the History Class. *The Social Studies*, 89(1) 39-44. DOI: 10.1080/00377999809599821
- Guthrie, K. (2014). Propaganda Music in Second World War Britain: John Ireland’s “Epic March”. *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*, 139(1), 137-175.
- Hamilton, J. (2008). *With Arts Unknown Before: Kleist and The Power of Music*. In *Music, Madness, and the Unworking of Language* (pp. 134-158). New York: Columbia University Press. DOI:10.7312/hami14220.10
- Hapanyengwi-Chemhuru, O. (2016). Music and a Contested Terrain in the Dynamics of Politics in Zimbabwe. In Fainos Mangena, Ezra Chitando and Itai Muwati (Eds). *Sounds of Life: Music and Politics in Zimbabwe*, (146-164). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishers.
- Hsiu-Fang Hsieh & Shannon, S.E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research* 15(9), 1277-1288. DOI: 10.1177/1049732305276687
- Humbe, B., & Mawere, M. (2016). Intra-and Inter-party Violence in Africa: Narratives and Reflections from Zimbabwe. In Mawere M. & Marongwe N. (Eds.), *Myths of Peace and Democracy? Towards Building Pillars of Hope, Unity and Transformation in Africa* (pp. 337-366). Mankon, Bamenda: Langaa RPCIG. DOI:10.2307/j.ctvk3gm8z.14
- Jenzen, O., Erhart, I., Eslen-Ziya, H., Güçdemir, D., Korkut, U., & McGarry, A. (2020). Music Videos as Protest Communication: The Gezi Park Protest on YouTube. In Jenzen O., Erhart I., Eslen-Ziya H., Korkut U., & McGarry A. (Eds.), *The Aesthetics of Global Protest: Visual Culture and Communication* (pp. 211-232). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. DOI:10.2307/j.ctvswx8bm.16

- Johnson, B & Cloonan, M. (2013). *Dark side of the Tune: Popular Music and Violence* Ashgate Popular and Folk Music Series. London: Ashgate.
- Khan, K. B. (2018). Girls of War and Echoes of Liberation: Engaging Female Voices through Chimurenga Songs about Zimbabwe's Armed Struggle. *Muziki* 15 (1), 58-67, DOI: 10.1080/18125980.2016.1249165
- Lindgren, B. (2003). The Green Bombers of Salisbury: Elections and Political Violence in Zimbabwe. *Anthropology Today*, 19(2), 6-10.
- Long, N. (2013). The Power of Music: Issues of Agency and Social Practice. *Social Analysis: The International Journal of Social and Cultural Practice*, 57(2), 21-40.
- Mahomva, R.R. (2016). *The Chimurenga-culture in Contemporary Zimbabwe*. Bulawayo: LAN Readers.
- Manyawu, A.T. (2013). The promotional discourse of liberation movements in Zimbabwe: A textual analysis of political jingles. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 31(1), 71-88, DOI:10.2989/16073614.2013.793952
- Marongedze, R. (2019). *Interface of Music and Politics: Versions of Consciousness in Zimbabwean Music 1970-2015*. PhD Thesis, University of South Africa.
- Matiashe, F. (2020). *When Bob Marley serenaded Zimbabweans celebrating independence. In 1980, the Jamaican reggae superstar was invited to perform at the festivities for the birth of independent Zimbabwe*. 17 April, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/bob-marley-serenaded-zimbabweans-celebrating-independence-200417104524823.html>
- Mazarire, G.C. (2011). Discipline and Punishment in ZANLA: 1964–1979. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 37(3), 571-91, DOI: 10.1080/03057070.2011.602896
- McNally, M. (2008). The Organization of Balance and Equilibrium. In Gramsci's Hegemony. *History of Political Thought*, 29 (4), 662-689.
- Moodie, D. (1971). Content Analysis: A Method for Historical Geography. *Area*, 3 (3), 146-149.
- Moore, D. (2014). The Zimbabwean People's Army moment in Zimbabwean History, 1975–1977: Mugabe's Rise and Democracy's

Demise. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 32 (3), 302-318, DOI: 10.1080/02589001.2014.956499

Musiyiwa, M. (2013). Hit Songs and the Dynamics of Postcolonial Zimbabwe: A Study in Popular Music Trends, 1980-2009. *African Music*, 9(3), 59-91.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S., & Willems, W. (2009). Making Sense of Cultural Nationalism and the Politics of Commemoration under the Third Chimurenga in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35(4), 945-965.

Ngoshi, H.T. & Mutekwa, A. (2013). The Female Body and Voice in Audiovisual Political Propaganda Jingles: The Mbare Chimurenga Choir Women in Zimbabwe's Contested political Terrain. *Critical Arts*, 27:2, 235-248, DOI:10.1080/02560046.2013.784388

Nketia, J.H.K. (1972). *The music of Africa*. London: Gollancz.

Oeste, P. (2013). Professional Notes: Something More—Reflections on the Power of Music. *Music Educators Journal*, 99(4), 15-16. Retrieved June 18, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/43289008

Pfukwa, C. (2008). "Black September et al: Chimurenga Songs as Historical Narratives in the Zimbabwean Liberation War." *Muziki: Journal of Music Research in Africa* 5(1), 30–50.

Pierce, D. (2015). *Redefining Music Appreciation: Exploring the Power of Music*. *College Music Symposium*, 55. Retrieved June 18, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/26574401

Pongweni, A.J.C. (1982). *Songs that Won the Liberation War*. Harare: College Press.

Pufleau, L.V. (2014). *Reflections on Music and Propaganda*. *Contemporary Aesthetics*, 12 Retrieved July 21, 2020 from: <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.7523862.0012.007>

Ramos, V.J. (1982) *The Concepts of Ideology, Hegemony, and Organic Intellectuals in Gramsci's Marxism*. In Theoretical Review No. 27 Accessed from <https://www.marxists.org/history/erol/ncm-7/tr-gramsci.htm> on 28 October 2020.

Ravengai, S. (2016). Chimurenga songs of Liberation and Dances as Cites of struggle to counter Rhodesian Discourse: A Postcolonial Perspective. In *Sounds of Life: Music and Politics in Zimbabwe* Edited by Fainos Mangena, Ezra Chitando and Itai Muwati, p. 165-183. Cambridge Scholars Publishers: Cambridge.

Sabao, C. (2018). Hegemonising Zimbabwe? The Polity of Mbare Chimurenga Lyrics in Perpetuating Mugabe's and ZANU-PF's Rule, *Muziki Journal of Music Research in Africa* 15:1, 109-130, DOI: 10.1080/18125980.2018.1482093

Shambo, K., Chivandika, S. N. & Chikonzo, K. (2016). When Propaganda Boomerangs: The Case of Third Chimurenga Music visuals. In Fainos Mangena, Ezra Chitando and Itai Muwati (Eds). *Sounds of Life: Music and Politics in Zimbabwe*. (127-144). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishers.

Shaw, A. (1974). *The Power of Music*. In *A Pima Past* (pp. 178-188). Tucson: University of Arizona Press. Retrieved June 18, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1h4mj50.21

Viriri, A. (2012). Cultural Diversity and the Zimbabwean *Pungwe* as Carnival Space: A Comparison with the Brazilian Carnavalesque Experience. *UNISA Latin American Report* 28(1), 279-287.

Viriri, A. (2013). "*Seiko Musina Morari?*" *The Carnavalesque Modes of the Pungwe Institution in Selected Shona Novels*. PhD Thesis, University of South Africa.

Wang, Y. (2004). The Ethical Power of Music: Ancient Greek and Chinese Thoughts. *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, 38(1), 89-104. doi:10.2307/3527365

White, R. (2004). Music: Atalaku of Congo (Zaire) Edited by Philip M. Peek and Kwesi Yankah, *African Folklore an Encyclopedia*. London: Routledge. (527-229).

Willems, W. (2015). Risky dialogues: The performative state and the nature of power in a postcolony. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 27(3), 356-369. Retrieved June 18, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/24758686

Zimbabwe Today. (2016). *Opinion. Robert Mugabe letter to black #Zimbabwe*

citizens -You Will Appreciate Me More When I Am Gone, 18th November.
Retrieved from: https://zimbabwe-today.com/robert-mugabe-letter-black-zimbabwe-citizenswillappreciategone/?fbclid=IwAR3vp88XOq2qQeehCvnD6CVyvkGe0GtAlUNKnFUyJriMQ75veVKLTtOn_dY

The Land Question and the Legacy of Robert Mugabe: Thinking Zimbabwe's Agrarian Reform Beyond Mugabe

Chipo Chirimuuta & Magret Jongore

"It was about land in the beginning; it was about land during the struggle; it has remained about land today. The land issue in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe is not ancient history. It is modern history"

Sir Shridath 'Sonny' Ramphal Secretary-General of the Commonwealth
1975-1990

Introduction

The end of the Robert Mugabe era raised speculations with respect to the land and agrarian reform in Zimbabwe. This became unavoidable following the new administration's pronouncement to adopt a market driven running of the nation under the 'Zimbabwe is Open for Business'; 'Engagement and Re-engagement' mantras. These groundbreaking policy positions of the 'New Dispensation' which marked the fall of Robert Mugabe remain aligned to the idea of mutually attracting domestic and foreign capital as opposed to Mugabe's radical economic indigenisation initiatives including the Fast Track Land Reform Programme. In fact, the land and agrarian reforms had their shares of obstinate anxieties on the new administration, that is, the Second Republic led by Emmerson Mnangagwa. To this effect, the chapter interrogates the land and agrarian reforms in Zimbabwe in light of the legacy of Robert Mugabe. The land reform in Zimbabwe during Robert Mugabe's reign attracted attention at local, regional and international levels. The end of his era equally drew a lot of attention from diverse publics, especially with respect to the possible trajectory of the land and agrarian reforms, with a lot of suppositions as to whether there would be changes in policies. As a result, the chapter explores the construction of Mugabe's legacy within the context of the land question in Zimbabwe. The chapter examines the influence of his childhood, his life as a politician ultimately as part of the force fighting for the liberation of the country and his entire ideological orientation with

regards to the land question. His formative socialisation as a colonial subject and later his later life as an anti-colonial champion buttress the submissions of this chapter. Here, we deploy a retrospective analytical approach to ascertain the future and prospects of the struggle for land in Zimbabwe.

Robert Mugabe, the Land Question and National Memory

The land and agrarian reform in Zimbabwe have to be viewed within the context of the Zimbabwean people's struggle for their heritage, the land and all the resources, beneath and above the said nation. The land question formed the crux of the initial purposes of the *First Chimurenga* in the 1890s. The contentious question of land ownership which gave birth to the *First Chimurenga* graphically painted the conspicuous social inequalities between the indigenous people and the settler minority (Muchemwa, 2015). The struggle against land ownership-based inequalities continued, sparked and fuelled the anti-colonial resistance which manifested itself through the *Second Chimurenga* in the 1960s as well as the *Third Chimurenga* of 2000-2003. The *Second Chimurenga* culminated in the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979. This agreement fostered the subsequent ceasefire between the major warring parties and the ultimate independence of Zimbabwe on 18 April 1980. It has to be highlighted that the Lancaster negotiations produced several disputes, stalemates and even the ultimate compromises which emanated from attempts to create an impartial sharing of the land between the indigenous peasant farmers and the descendants of the colonial settlers who had more than 60% of the fertile land in their possession (Alexander, 1991). The search for compromise resulted in a nationalist disenfranchised outcome of the negotiation which later gave a resurgence of the land issue. Twenty years after the negotiated Lancaster transition to independence, the Robert Mugabe Administration, once again found itself engrossed in yet another land struggle, the *Third Chimurenga*. What is of importance with regards to Robert Mugabe's legacy is that right from the onset, his role as the grand custodian of the liberation struggle was strongly intertwined with the politics of land ownership in Zimbabwe. The events that characterised Mugabe's legacy validate the submission by Deininger, Hoozeven and Kinsey (2004) that the land question stemmed from the colonial experiences,

...when Rudd, in 1888, persuaded Lobengula, King of the Ndebele, to sign land concession. It was further aggravated by the British South Africa Company, which, after 1893—when hopes faded for striking gold in what was to become Rhodesia—turned its attention to the land, initially as payment to soldiers and later for sale to white settlers for a profit (Deininger, Hoogeveen & Kinsey 2004: 1697).

The land question, thus, became the heartbeat of the *First Chimurenga* War (1893–97). This *Chimurenga* is the same war that Dawson (2011, p. 145), has described as “a complex set of struggles over land, cattle and taxes”. Unfortunately, these initial attempts by the indigenous people to repossess their land received a heavy blow, leaving them with no option, but to succumb to the settler administration. The indigenous people were defeated primarily because they used inferior weapons in comparison to those used by the settlers. The defeat in the *First Chimurenga* (Dawson, 2011) paved the way for the racialised land allocation which was strategically supported by a series of legal instruments to legitimise settler land claims and uphold their interests. Soon after the defeat of the indigenous people in the *First Chimurenga* War, the settlers instituted the Native Reserve Order in Council in 1898 which informed the creation of the Native Reserve areas (Mafa, et al, 2015) as the settlers expropriated land that belonged to the local communities (Chitiyo, 2000 cited in Mafa, Gudhlanga, Manyeruke, Matavire & Mpofu, 2015). This Native Reserve Order in Council gave way to the establishment of the communal reserved areas such as Gwai, and Shangani in Matebeleland and Chikwakwa, the rocky landscape in *Chimanimani* (Maposa, Hlongwane and Gamira, 2010), where the climate was very hot, terrain uneven, soils poor and rainfall patterns unpredictable and tsetse fly infested (Beach, 1980; Moyo, 2007). Later came the Land Apportionment Act of 1930, which gave approximately 6000 settlers, among whom were global companies such as Anglo-American, Liebig's, Lonrho and Hallettes Corporations ownership of almost half the total land of the country (Caute, 1983 cited in Muwati, Mutasa & Bopape, 2010, p. 157). The establishment of the settlements spelt out the total land dispossession and displacement of the indigenous people. The Land Tenure Act of 1930 made sure that the most fertile land was placed within the domain of the whites, allowing the settler communities to prescribe certain areas for certain groups of people within the colony.

Nyemba (2020) revealed that Robert Mugabe was born and bred in the Zvimba communal lands, where the family languished in poverty. Kutama was an area that had been set aside by the settler administration for indigenous Zimbabwean peasant farmers. Like all other native reserved lands, the area within which Robert Mugabe grew up was also strategically designed to “build walls of racial prejudice buttressed by vested self-interests” (Mafa et al, 2015, p. 40), and above all work as a fortress to prevent the unequal races from warring (Hill, 2003, cited in Mafa et al. 2013). The abject poverty characteristic of Robert Mugabe’s life signifies that he was indeed a victim of settler land tenure laws. It would be correct to conclude that the land deprivation in Kutama provided the seed for his passion with the land, a concept that dominated his political career and his entire legacy. In addition to the alienating land tenure system, the colonial system introduced the colonial education system which in turn created a class of educated elite as represented by Robert Mugabe. This education system had its own contradictory characteristics. Instead of being beneficiaries of the colonial education system the majority of the graduates of the colonial education system were the direct victims of the newly introduced epistemology (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 5). The kind of education system that they were introduced to was one that:

...repressed where it should have fostered, tamed instead of inspiring and enervated rather than strengthened. It succeeded in making slaves of its victims, to the extent that they no longer realise they are slaves, with some even seeing their chains of victimhood as ornamental and the best recognition possible (Fonlon: 1965, cited in Bourdieu 1996, p. 21-28).

Significantly, the system created Robert Mugabe whose legacy is at the centre of this chapter. As already mentioned, he became part of the elite class that was produced by the colonial system. The class of elite, that has been defined as “a stratum of the population which for whatever reason claim a position of superiority and hence a corresponding measure of influence over the fate of the emerging state” (Crowder, 1982, cited in Oyeweso, 2020, p. 86). Like the land tenure system, the education system was equally alienating. It alienated the beneficiaries from the cultural set-up through its construction of a superiority complex within the victims. Kutama Mission, thus symbolised all the other missionary and colonial education set-ups

that “had far-reaching impacts on [Africans] as many of the beneficiaries formed the core of what later became the political elites of the society” (Oyeweso, 2020:1). This explains why Robert Mugabe a product of the colonial education system finds himself at the helm of the political arena in Zimbabwe. As indicated in the definition of the elite, Mugabe also claimed a position of superiority and even challenged systems at global level without any fear.

The land was again at the centre of the *Second Chimurenga* (1969-1979) with the principal goal being to reverse the disequilibrium in land ownership that had been created by the colonial system. The freedom fighters fought to bail the impoverished indigenous people from the bondage created by the land disposessions and displacements. “Land and the love for the nation became a prominent factor that made people participate in the liberation struggle” (Muwati et al., 2010, p. 158). Robert Mugabe became one of the Zimbabweans who committed their lives to the liberation of the land from the colonial tentacles. He joined the National Democratic Party (NDP) in 1960, then the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU) after the ban of the NDP and later Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in 1963 (Chung, 2006; Muchemwa, 2015; Nyemba, 2020). He was arrested and detained from 1964 to 1974. In 1975 he demonstrated his unwavering commitment to the cause of the liberation struggle and skipped the borders in the company of Edgar Tekere, into Mozambique to join the freedom fighters. “Under his leadership, the armed struggle was embraced as the only route to independence” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, nd, p. 6). In 1979, Mugabe became part of the delegation that sat at the Lancaster House Conference to chat the way forward for the transformation of Rhodesia into Zimbabwe. This is the settlement through which the seemingly unwavering champion of the land question metamorphosised and unconsciously endorsed a colonially designed pseudo independence of Zimbabwe complicating its land and agrarian reform trajectory.

The Ticklish Land Question and Mugabe’s Political Construction

The delicacy and complexity of the cornerstone of Robert Mugabe’s legacy, the land question was compounded by the Lancaster House Agreement. The agreement was a product of the Lancaster House Conference that

opened in Britain on September 10, 1979, with representatives of the British government, leaders of the Patriotic Front and Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government present (Lancaster House Agreement, 1979). The Conference was aimed at helping Zimbabwe forge into a lawful and internationally recognised independent state, with the parties settling their differences by way of negotiations (Report of the Constitutional Conference, 1979). The major role of the conference was to create a platform for the parties to 'iron' out their differences, come up with a constitution and modalities for holding elections (Report of the Constitutional Conference, 1979). For the Frontline States and the freedom fighters, the aim was to reverse the land ownership imbalances between the historically marginalised indigenous Zimbabweans and the minority whites, who had ruled Southern Rhodesia from 1890 to 1979 (Nyemba, 2020). They advocated for the indigenous people's control of the economy and the natural resources within the country. The Rhodesian delegates on the other hand was bent on securing an exit package that was favourable to the settler community, one that protected their economic interests and kept a grip on the 'quasi-independent' country (Novak, 2008). They wanted a structural system that sustained their imperial interest which allowed them to manipulate the development stratagems for the white community's advantage rather than deconstruct the colonial legacy (Babatola & Ajayi, 2013).

Many issues were discussed and agreed upon on this conference. The parties agreed to a ceasefire that was supposed to pave way for elections. They agreed that the new government would pay pensions to all civil servants including those who had migrated and above all pay Rhodesia's outstanding 200 million debt (Report of the Constitutional Conference, 1979). It was agreed that 20% of the total seats had to be reserved for white legislators in Parliament for a period of 7 years. Critical to note is the fact that the Lancaster House Agreement dictated that the new government that would ensue from the elections had to pay for all the land that they wished to allocate to the landless indigenous people. Robert Mugabe and the Patriotic Front walked out of the talks arguing that they could "achieve peace and justice for our people through the barrel of a gun" (Davidow 1984 cited in Novak, 2008, pp. 165). According to the All-Party Parliamentary Report (2009), the Lancaster House talks resumed after the British and the Americans had promised to assist the new government to raise funds for the

purchase of the land from the former settlers. Therefore, at independence, the colonial structured unequal distribution of land remained in place. With such a structural arrangement, Robert Mugabe's chances of establishing a fully economically independent nation that immediately reclaimed and consolidated his legacy were blurred. Deininger, Hoogeveen and Kinsey (2004) argue that 15 million hectares of the fertile land in the nation remained in the hands of 4000 farmers of colonial settler descent while 6.4 million hectares of less fertile lands were reserved for the indigenous Zimbabwean people. To compound the situation, in Matebeleland North large portions of the land remained apportioned to commercial farming, national parks, sanctuaries and state forests at a time when the indigenous people were overcrowded in communal areas that are semi-arid and have unreliable rainfall patterns (Hill and Katarere 2002). These communal areas set aside for the indigenous majority at independence constituted 39% of the total land in Matebeleland North.

Having grown up in a poverty-stricken area of Zvimba reserved for peasant farmers, signing a peace settlement that compromised the masses' access to land was one of the biggest dents to his legacy. In fact, accepting to go for negotiations when he had gained popularity amongst his supporters and the rest of the masses through the rhetoric statements such a "the surest victory for the people and the surest defeat of the enemy can only be the product of our armed struggle" (Mugabe, 1983, p. 110) was a betrayal of his self-constructed legacy. There was no reason why he had to allow himself to be trapped when he had always been of the conviction that the involved parties "are not after a genuine settlement" (Mugabe, 1983, p. 110).

The Lancaster House Agreement compromise marked the initial dent on his popularity and credentials as a champion and mouthpiece of the land-starved Zimbabweans. Muchemwa (2015), in defence of the compromise, pointed out that 1979 was as difficult year for the freedom fighters as they experienced more raids and attacks than ever before. Even during the period, the conference was held, there were heavy bombardments on the freedom fighter camps such as Mavonde and Mapai (Muchemwa, 2015), which resulted in heavy losses. The raids also influenced the decision to quickly come to an agreement and bring an end to the bloodshed. The 15-year acrimonious prolonged armed struggle had cost more than 10 000 people

(Yorke, 1996, p. 200) in the then Rhodesia. The Frontline states on the other hand, were also eager to see an end to the protracted war between the Freedom fighters and the Rhodesian forces as their infrastructures and their citizens were also on the receiving end when the cross-border raids were being made (Renwick 1997).

Chung (2006, p. 247) states that at this point in history “all sides were ready to compromise and compromise was reached”. Supporting the stance adopted by the negotiators, Novak, (2008, p.155-156) points out that by 1979 “both the Patriotic Front and the [settler regime] were disintegrating, unable to continue promoting a common, unified agenda”. Within the delegates of the Patriotic Front, “General Josiah Tongogara, had the clearest understanding of the disastrous nature of the war” (Davidow 1984 cited in Novak, 2008, p. 158) and strongly advocated for compromises. Sound though these arguments are if the crux of the protracted liberation struggle was to regain the land that had been lost at the point of the handshake with the imperial settlers, any peace settlement that did not honour the demands of the majority was surely a miscarriage of justice. The Rhodesian delegation had its own fair share of challenges that would otherwise have forced it to make great compromises, Rhodesia was at the time being choked by pressures from economic sanctions as well as the demands of sustaining the war (Novak, 2008). The Rhodesian side was more than cognizant of the dire need for an end of the war. In spite of that, they kept in mind their conflict goals and “negotiated a new constitution that permitted a semblance of black majority rule while maintaining significant power in the hands of the white community (Novak, 2008, pp. 149-150). They, ironically successfully “negotiated” for the “restoration of British rule and the disarmament of the guerrillas”. The concession made at this landmark conference could not be made without jeopardising the reputation and legacy of Robert Mugabe whose leadership during the war had become synonymous with the land that had been lost to the settlers.

Looking at the Lancaster House Agreement from the perspective of a poor landless Zimbabwean who would have had the privilege to survive into the Second Republic one is persuaded to conclude that Robert Mugabe presided over a colonial state masquerading as an independent state. The Lancaster Agreement was orchestrated to present a colonial set-up covered in a ‘black

mask'. When the ten years after independence was realised, another strategy to keep Robert Mugabe bonded to the former colonial master was devised, Queen Elizabeth II in 1994 knighted him (Chutel, 2017). The knighting was another ritual that further immersed him into the imperial systems creating discord between what his revolutionary orientation expected of him and the subtle neo-colonial demands placed on him. By posing as a knight, Robert Mugabe symbolically presents himself as a quintessence of neo-colonial interests. Symbolically, at the point of knighting, he is ideologically recruited into serving the interests of the former oppressors and their Multi-National Companies as opposed to the masses whose support continued to sweep him into the leadership post ever since 1980. Hence the continued maintenance of the unequal land ownership situation far beyond the ten years restriction which was set by the Lancaster House Constitution. By accepting the knighthood Robert was accepting the role of safeguarding the interests of Britain and other imperial powers in Zimbabwe. As a knight he proceeded consciously or unconsciously to consolidate racially determined unequal land distribution social system. One is persuaded to conclude that his move to address the land ownership disparities was only taken when he felt that his popularity with the war veterans and the landless masses was taking an irreversible nose dive. Ironically, Robert Mugabe's decision to consolidate his power through giving in to the demands of the masses resulted in Britain revoking the knighthood.

Land-related Disgruntlements and the Legacy of Robert Mugabe

The attainment of independence did not bring any relief to the masses in Zimbabwe since the land policies in the new nation were controlled by the agreements that were reached at the Lancaster House Agreement. As has already been highlighted, at this landmark conference, the indigenous Zimbabweans were not given automatic access to the very resource that they had shed blood for. There were clauses in the agreement that dictated that the acquisition of land for redistribution to the indigenous Zimbabweans was not for free; it had to be governed by the Willing Seller-Willing Buyer principle. This implied that land acquisition or repossession was not a given, the 'owners' of the targeted land were supposed to be willing to sell the land for purposes of decongesting the indigenous Zimbabweans who were overcrowded in semi-arid regions of the nation. The Willing Seller-Willing

Buyer principle was augmented by another clause that dictated that 20% of the parliamentary seats had to be reserved for the white community in the new nation. Such a clause had its own implications for the land and agrarian reforms in the newly independent nation. The parliamentarians who occupied the reserved 20% of the parliamentary seats would contest any policy changes that could affect or threaten the interests of the white community in the new 'independent' nation, including their rights to land.

The majority, continued to live in devastatingly crowded, overused land while the minority white owned the bulk of the land. Demobilised former freedom fighters and other members of communities who had been displaced by the war returned home with high hopes that the new Robert Mugabe Administration would provide decent settlement areas for them. Through the Willing Seller-Willing Buyer policy, Mugabe had an uphill task of acquiring large tracks of land to allocate land to the land-starved peasants. The first decade of Robert Mugabe's reign witnessed the acquisition of "more than 1300 farms amounting to around 3 million hectares" (CORE African Programme Mission Report, 2001) and the subsequent resettlement of more than 50 000 families. The second decade of his reign registered the resettlement of almost 20 000 families (CORE African Programme Mission Report, 2001). This drastic drop in efforts to reverse the disequilibrium in land ownership leaves one wondering as to whether Robert Mugabe was still the liberator of the poor masses, dedicated to giving them the land they had sacrificed their lives and loved one for. These doubts can be raised on the pretext that constitutional instruments which dragged the processes of the majority's access to land. These include constitutional Amendment (No.11) Act 30 of 1990, the Land Acquisition Act (Chapter 20:10) of 1992; the Constitution of Zimbabwe (No. 12) Act 4 of 1993; the Constitution of Zimbabwe (No 14) of 1994" (CORE African Programme Mission Report, 2001). These instruments could have provided all the required room from which to ensure an enhanced land reform that benefited the poor people. The Mugabe-led government blamed the stagnation in the reallocation of land to the change in the British Administration that defaulted on providing funds for reimbursing the farm owners. The second decade of his reign demonstrated Mugabe's shift from the masses to the elite. The land reform during this period diverted from the impoverished peasants and tilted

towards individual indigenous commercial farmers (Blair, 2008). At this point, the urgency of the land issue had skipped the minds of the Robert Mugabe Regime.

The Svosve people were the first to take the bold move of demonstrating their disgruntlement with the shelving of the peasantry targeted agrarian reform. Generations had lived on the same land ever since the racial-based colonial distribution of land. They had waited in vain for the Robert Mugabe Administration to allocate them the much-needed resource and fulfil the promise to return land to the people who were dispossessed and displaced from 1890 on the eve of colonisation. Eighteen years after the attainment of independence they continued enduring the pain of watching helplessly the beauty of adjacent, unutilised, commercial farms with fertile soils. For the disgruntled Svosve people, the commercial farms bordering their area, were rightfully their birth right, hence their decision to use their own strategies of reversing the discrepancies (Blair, 1998). In June 1998, 300 members of the Svosve community moved into nearby commercial farms in Marondera (Blair, 1998) and vowed to stay there until the government allocated them a share of the land for which blood was shed during the *Second Chimurenga*.

The Svosve incident got a lot of attention because it occurred at the time when Zimbabwe was hosting a donor conference aimed at raising funds for the acquisition of land to decongest the communal areas (Muchemwa, 2015). The raised funds from generous donors, was expected to plug the financial gap that had been created by the renegeing of the British Government in honouring its Lancaster House Agreement promise on the land issue. The behaviour of the Svosve people is enough to explain the elitist orientation of the Mugabe Administration at this point in history. It indicates that the poor peasants were not being represented in this donations sourcing conference, otherwise they would have exercised patience and waited for the outcome of the meeting. The Svosve insurgence exposed the gravity of Mugabe's blunder of trying to please the few indigenous elite commercial farmers and ignoring the glaring perennial demands for a decent life on productive land by the peasants. In his preference and promotion of the elite indigenous farmers, the Queen Elizabeth II knighted Robert Mugabe was now exhibiting signs and qualities of a champion and protector of imperialist interests in a nation masquerading as independent. A fertile ground was laid for the acrimonious

land ownership disequilibrium that, again, occupied the centre stage of disturbances that have ever rocked the nation.

The *Third Chimurenga*/ Fast Track-Land Reform in Zimbabwe (Jambanja)

Robert Mugabe's legacy and the agrarian reform in Zimbabwe will be incomplete without the mention of the *Third Chimurenga*, the Fast Track Land Reform he championed during his tenure. The Fast Track Land Reform was a righteous historical reconstruction of the Zimbabwean land history that made an indelible mark on the land and agrarian reform in not just Zimbabwe but the Sub-Saharan Region at large (Moyo, 2007). In the same vein, it created a landmark chapter in Robert Mugabe's legacy. It presented him an opportunity to re-wire and press the reset button after having gone out of sync with the liberation struggle ethos that was hinged on the land question, control over the natural resources and the economy (Beach, 1980; Moyo, et al, 2008; Muchemwa, 2015). "Accordingly, the FTLRP is most likely to be remembered in Zimbabwe and Africa as the culmination of the anti-colonial struggle, despite the liberal democratic deficit (Mamdani, 2008) and economic policy contradictions that accompanied it" (Mamdani, 2008, cited in Moyo & Chambati, 2013, p. 12).

The land repossession program of 2000-2003 popularly known as the Fast Track Land Reform also advanced Mugabe's political mileage. The Administration, especially after the renegeing of the British Administration on its Lancaster House Agreement promise of availing funds for the purchase of land, could no longer stop the voice of the emotionally bottled up people. The pressure to transfer land from the white minority ownership to the indigenous Zimbabwean majority came from the masses, the former war collaborators and the war veterans. The occupation exercise was locally organised and executed such that the Mugabe regime only came in to regularise what the masses had initiated and put in place.

During the *Third Chimurenga*, the masses, with war veterans at the forefront, instinctively took over white owned commercial farms. In some instances, they looted and poached livestock from the commercial farmers as a way of expressing their grievances to the unequal distribution of the prime land

in the nation (Alexander, 1991). This behaviour of the land-hungry people demonstrated the magnitude of deprivation, long and unstoppable bottled emotions of the deprived people in Zimbabwe owing to the lip-service paid to the land question within the nearly two decades of the Mugabe regime. In virtually all the provinces, people moved into commercial farms. “In Nyamandlovu, about 800 ‘squatters’ moved onto three properties... In June, several farms in Marondera were occupied” (Selby, 2006, p. 18). The white commercial farms take over demonstrated a response to the “dire pressure on land within communal areas” (Selby, 2006, p. 9).

Despite the fact that the *Third Chimurenga* was not a consciously and systematically planned campaign to address the welfare of the people (Maposa, Hlongwana & Gamira, 2010), it reignited the legacy of Mugabe which had been constructed around the land question. It consolidated his position as the champion of the land deprived indigenous people globally, winning him the respect of many formerly colonised nations. The ire of the imperialists whose survival was dependent on usurping the resources of the poor nations and the indignation of local Zimbabweans who felt that he was an actor on the global land theatre hoodwinking uncritical minds into believing that he was a defender of the rights and interests of the poor when he was actually part of the elite that disadvantaged them (Nyemba 2020). Of most importance to this chapter is the fact that the *Third Chimurenga* catapulted him into yet another term of office in 2013.

With war veterans running berserk and the peasants following behind, Mugabe played into the land issue card, rode on the land repossession wave and resultantly improved his popularity amongst the masses. This card really worked well for him, because according to Patel (2006, p. 178), “the fast-track land reform programme since 2000... resulted in a historically and morally necessary massive redistribution of income, wealth and ownership to the majority population”. Mkodzongi and Lawrence (2019) observe that Zimbabwe’s Fast Track Land Reform Program effectively co-opted the farm occupations since 1998, reallocated former white owned farms and estates, as well as state lands, to more than 150,000 farmers under two models, A1 and A2. The A1 model allocated small plots for growing crops and grazing land to landless and poor farmers (Mkodzongi & Lawrence, 2019), while the A2 model allocated farms to new black commercial farmers who were

believed to have the skills and resources to commercially produce, plough back and raise agricultural productivity (Mkodzongi & Lawrence, 2019). The number of large settler farms, mainly white owned, fell by around 75%, while there was a 16% drop in the number of large foreign and domestically owned agro-estates (Moyo, 2011) owing to the Fast Track Land Reform.

The A1 scheme was meant for the villagisation, mainly concerned with decongesting the communal areas. It is in these A1 schemes that the majority of the masses that constituted the brave group of people who moved into the formerly impenetrable settler farms was found. The A2 scheme was set aside for the elite indigenous commercial farmers and a few white farmers whose land has been spared of the wrath of the agitated masses. These A2 farmers were given land leases. Those white farmers whose land had not been repossessed were expected to be given five-year leases while the indigenous commercial farmers acquired 99-year leases. Paradoxically, the majority of the farms that have been reported as being underutilised belong to this A2 category. Juxtaposed against these seemingly unutilised farms are the semi commercial (A1) farmers, comprising mainly of the masses, who are fully utilising the land with the little support they get from the government. These constitute the majority and probably account for the rise in agricultural productivity which was recorded in 2017 (FAO, 2018).

The Post Mugabe Administration's Thrust on the Land Reform

Operation Restore Legacy, the campaign that brought Mnangagwa to power, is believed to have been taken to salvage the ethos of the liberation struggle that was being endangered by political novices and counter revolutionaries (Hodgkinson, 2019, p. 981). The master minders of the campaign gave an impression that the political newcomers, who happened to be the elite, were wrestling the liberation gains from the people and also putting the liberation struggle legacy, around which Mugabe's career was constructed, into disrepute. Taken within the context of the land and agrarian reform, Operation Restore Legacy was aimed at redirecting and re-configuring the land distribution patterns that was now becoming skewed in favour of the elite. The elimination of the "political novices" also marked the end of the Robert Mugabe tenure at the helm of Zimbabwe and ushered in the Second Republic under the leadership of Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwe (ED).

In the land and agrarian reform under the Emmerson Mnangagwa administration, the pressure for land appears to be coming from other forces in addition to the poor peasantry. While a large percentage of the peasants is still waiting for their chance to be allocated their share of land, the white commercial farmers are also anxiously waiting to either be reinstated or reimbursed for the land they lost through the Fast Track Land redistribution. Therefore, Emmerson Mnangagwa's moves have to be calculated to ensure that he corrects the blunders of the Mugabe legacy without diminishing the gains of the liberation struggle. He also has to handle the agrarian reform in ways that would reduce the rift between Zimbabwe and the West to end the isolationist policy that the Mugabe legacy had plunged Zimbabwe into. Therefore, when Mnangagwa Administration came into office, he initially pronounced that the land reform was an exercise that could not be reversed. His point was that, if anything, the new agrarian reform thrust would be to ensure that there was maximum utilisation of the land. The new administration, thus, promised to call for a land audit through which it would establish the utilised and the unexploited land for redistribution. In his inaugural speech, Emmerson Mnangagwa promised the reduction of the land ownership discrepancies in all respects and make land accessible to everyone in Zimbabwe regardless of creed or colour. He promised to work towards restoring the nation to its former African breadbasket status (Presidential Mnangagwa Inauguration speech 24 November 2017). His intention to create room for the former white farmers in the 'new' Zimbabwe was confirmed in his statement that "we are in agreement that skilled white farmers must be put back to work – but they must be allocated available land without reversing the land reform," (Presidential Mnangagwa speech 17 July 2018). He promised to reimburse the white farmers who lost their farmers as a result of the Fast Track Land Reform in 2000 (Presidential Mnangagwa speech 17 July 2018). His move was in contrast Robert Mugabe's dogmatic stance whose conviction was that his administration had no obligations to pay for the return of what they consider 'their stolen land' (All Party Parliament 2009). In a way Mnangagwa's handling of the question of the agrarian reform is done with the aim of mending the shattered relations with the West.

Conclusion

The chapter has revealed that Mugabe's legacy was intertwined and interwoven with the land question in Zimbabwe. Having grown up in the reserved areas, epitomised by Zvimba, where the effects of the land ownership inequalities were most felt, he committed his life to reversing the anomalies through his political career which resulted in his detention for ten years. His leadership in Mozambique reinforced the belief among the fighters and the masses at home that the gun was the only route to effective reversal of the land ownership disparities in the then Rhodesia. The Lancaster House Conference that resulted in the in the Lancaster House Agreement and the constitution for the new Zimbabwe marked the turning point in his legacy as he and the Patriotic Front delegation found themselves signing an agreement that safeguarded the economic and political interests of the settler community while disarming the freedom fighters through a ceasefire. The agreement had clauses that made it difficult for the new Zimbabwe to have immediate access to the land that they fought for. Mugabe and the patriotic Front became victims of an imperially planned peace and reconciliation settlement. As a champion of the land, Mugabe's legacy and popularity received a dent. While the resettling of 50 000 families during first decade of the Mugabe reign was promising, settling only 20 000 families in the 1990, a period when the Lancaster House Constitution had been amended several times to allow for the reversal of the land ownership disparities greatly affected his legacy and reduced his support base. The land discourse in the nation became more of empty rhetoric that overshadowed the social and economic aspect of the land for which the general masses had lost lives. Land-related disgruntlements erupted in the late 1990s and culminated into the *Third Chimurenga* of 2000-2003. Mugabe rode over the wave and regained his popularity among the masses. Unfortunately, his "marriage" to the elite won him the wrath of the core supporters of the liberation ethos resulting in Operation Restore Legacy and the end of his political career. The Second Republic of Zimbabwe under the leadership of Emmerson Mnangagwa continues to face pressure with regards to land and agrarian reform. It needs to adopt a pragmatic stance and satisfy the land-starved peasants and pacify the formers commercial farmers who lost land through the *Third Chimurenga* at the same time.

References

- Alexander, J. (2006). *The Unsettled land: State Making and the politics of Land in Zimbabwe*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Babatola, J. & Ajayi, A.T. (2013). *African Elites and the Perpetuation of Neo-Colonialism in Africa*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317069646_The_Role_Of_African_Elites_in_The_Perpetuation_of_Neo-Colonialism_in_Africa
- Beach, D.N. (1980). *The Shona and Zimbabwe 900-1850*. Gweru: Mambo Press.
- BBC News 29 July 2018. *Zimbabwe elections: What happened to Mugabe's land reforms?* <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-44956670>. Accessed: 15/10/18
- Blair, E. R (1998). Zimbabwe's Agrarian Answer- The Rhetoric of Redistribution Cultural survival. <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/zimbabwes-agrarian-answer-rhetoric-redistribution>
- Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The State Nobility. Cambridge: Polity* Bourdieu, P. 1996. *The State Nobility*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Chung, F. (2006). *Re-living the Second Chimurenga War*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Chutel, L. (2017). *From teacher to oppressor: Robert Mugabe's rise and fall*. Accessed from: <https://qz.com/africa/1131354/from-teacher-to-oppressor-robert-mugabes-rise-and-fall/>
- CORE African Programme Mission Report. (2001). *Land, Housing and Property Rights in Zimbabwe (September)*.
- Davidow, J. (1984). *A Peace in Southern Africa: The Lancaster House Conference on Rhodesia, 1979*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Dawson, S. (2011). The First Chimurenga: 1896-1897 Uprising in Matabeleland and Mashonaland and continued conflicts in Academia. *Constellations*. 2 (2), 145-153.
- Deininger, K., Hoogeveen, H. & Kinsey, B.H. (2004). Economic Benefits and Costs of Land Redistribution in Zimbabwe in the Early 1980s. *World Development*. 32(10), 1697-1709.

Food and Agriculture Organisation (2018). *Global Information and Early Warning System*. <http://www.fao.org/gIEWS/countrybrief/country.jsp?code=ZWE> Accessed 21/10/18.

Mafa, O., Gudhlanga, E.S., Manyeruke, N., Matavire, E.H. M. & Mpofu, J. (2015). *Gender, Politics and the Land Use in Zimbabwe 1980-2012*. Dakar: CODESRIA.

Maposa, R.S, Hlongwana, J. & Gamira, D. (2010). 'Aluta continua': A Critical Reflection on the *Chimurenga-within-Third Chimurenga* among the Ndau people in Chipinge District, South-Eastern Zimbabwe. *Journal of African Studies and Development*. Vol 2(6). 191-2 Accessed from: http://www.researchgate.net/publication/'Aluta_continua'_chimurenga_within_Third-Chimurenga_among_the_Ndau_people_in_Chipinge_district_Southeaster_Zimbabwe

Moyo, S., (2007. *'Emerging Land Tenure Issues in Zimbabwe'*. *AIAS Monograph*. Harare: African Institute for Agrarian Studies.

Moyo, S. & Chambati. W. (2013). *Introduction: Roots of the Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe*. https://codesria.org/LMG/pdf/Iand_and_Agrarian_reform_in_Zim_Introduction.pdf

Muchemwa, F. (2015). *The Struggle for Land in Zimbabwe*. Harare: Heritage Publishing House.

Mugabe, R. (1983). *Our War of Liberation: Speeches, Articles, Interviews 1976–1979*. Gweru: Mambo Press.

Muwati, I., Mutasa, D.E. & Bopape, M. L. (2010). The Zimbabwean liberation war: contesting representations of nations and nationalism in historical fiction. *Literator*. 30(1):147-173.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (nd) *Robert Mugabe's Liberation War Credentials: ZANU-PF's Winning Card?* Accessed from: https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/assets/boell.de/images/download_de/mugabes_liberation_war_sabelo.pdf

Novak, A. (2009). Face-Saving Manoeuvres and Strong Third-Party Mediation: The Lancaster House Conference on Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. *International Negotiation* 14 (2009), 149–174.

Nyemba, E. Z. (2020). *Advancing African Interests and Survival? Robert Mugabe's Messianic Role at the United Nations*. Langaa RPCIG. Stable. <http://>

www.jstor.com/stable/j.ctvhn0cq.15

Oyeweso, S. (2020). *Colonial Education, Identity Construction, and Formation of Elites in Nigeria. Indigenous Epistemology, Strengthening Research and Decolonization of Education in Nigeria* (p. 89-100). Nairobi: African Ethnography Services Ltd.

Renwick, R. (1997). *Unconventional Diplomacy in Southern Africa*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Report by the Africa All Party Parliament Group (2009). *Land in Zimbabwe: Past mistakes, future prospects*.

Report of the Constitutional Conference Held At Lancaster House, London September - December 1979 Report

Selby, A. (2006). *Radical Realignment: The Collapse of the Alliance between White Farmers and the State in Zimbabwe*. ODID Working Paper No. 44. Accessed from: <https://www.qeh.ox.ac.uk/publications/radical-realignments-collapse-alliance-between-white-farmers-and-state-zimbabwe-1995>

The New Times (September, 9 2019). *Robert Mugabe, Strongman Who Cried, 'Zimbabwe Is Mine,' dies at 95*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/06/obituaries/robert-mugabe-dead.html>

Yorke, E. (1996). 'A Family Affair': the Lancaster House Agreement D. H. Dunn (ed.), *Diplomacy at the Highest Level* Palgrave Macmillan 199649-24915-2

Robert Mugabe: A Victim and hero of the Anti-colonial Constructions and Deconstructions of Power in Zimbabwe

Obert Moses Mpofu

Introduction

Robert Gabriel Mugabe, the doyen of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle, renowned pan-Africanist and champion of economic democratization is a decorated symbol of Africa's continuing decolonisation question. Zimbabwe's history is replete of the footprints of Mugabe's heroic exploits (Martin and Johnson, 1985). His successor, President Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, has been consistent in submitting his bona fide credit to the late Africa icon (Mugabe) as the "Founding Father of the First Republic". Outside the establishment circles, Mugabe has been discordantly branded as a dictator, looter, plunderer of Zimbabwe's economy, murderer among his other neo-liberal pronounced demonisation titles. The conflicting attributes of Mugabe heroic construction and deconstruction mutually validate the grounding of his legacy in the anti-colonial ethos. This discussion underscores that in as much as Mugabe also had his obvious and undisputed imperfections, he was a victim of the colonial devices of his heroic deconstruction. Through a historical mapping of the evolution of the Zimbabwean nation, the chapter traces Mugabe's entanglement in the snares of imperialist hegemony dating back from the Lancaster negotiations and early independence conflict (*Gukurahundi*). Focus is also extended to some key highlights of his career especially the Fast-Track Land Reform Programme and the Economic Empowerment and Indigenisation Programme. These seemingly radical economic policies in the eyes of neoliberal antagonists of Mugabe's anti-colonial renaissance stance are examined to prove the pro-imperialist framing of Mugabe. The chapter engages the simplistic characterization of Mugabe as Zimbabwe's worst political leader and exposes the underpinning push-factors to such a narrow dismembering of Zimbabwe's former Head of State. The main import of this submission is to unmask the function of colonial imagination of Mugabe's legacy in an attempt to reimagine him as a consistent benchmark of anti-colonial values.

The Lancaster Conference and Mugabe's De-radicalisation

Mugabe's diplomatic maneuver during the Lancaster Conference earned him a darling status to both Britain and the US. As already indicated in my autobiography, Nkomo's Soviet links set up Mugabe for easy transfer of power (Mpofu, 2020). The affluent diplomatic scores by ZANU at the Lancaster negotiations validated a transition in its favour. In the process, the inheritance of the colonial state by ZANU meant that colonial dominance had to be consolidated. In the interest of creating a viable transition, it can be reasonably argued that Mugabe had to partially conform to the manipulative schemes of the colonially set negotiation terms. In this sense, Mugabe became a subject of the colonial agenda setting towards the birth of the post-colonial state.

When ZANU emerged triumphant from the Lancaster House and declared its position to disconnect itself from the Patriotic Front, it was apparent that the imperialist bargain had assumed a substantial hegemonic stretch. Whilst the desire to cede collective blame to Mugabe alone as the key benefactor of the Lancaster resolutions, there is also need for a blanket critique of both ZAPU and ZANU in ushering a negotiated post-independence transition. As highlighted by Sithole (2015) the conflicting interests of nationalist political parties marked an inherent character tension among nationalist movements. Further to this, Bhebe (2004) traces post-independence tensions to an unresolved history of inter-party strife between the twin nationalist parties who united under the Patriotic Front. Nkomo was dissuaded from taking part at the Lancaster Conference by his counterparts in the military. The accommodation of a diplomatic turn by the nationalists to resolve the armed struggle stalemate was a compromise that led to a rift. From the Geneva Conference right up to Lancaster, the founding fathers, Dr Nkomo and Cde Mugabe, were being ripped apart. The acceptance of the negotiated model of independence substantially laid the foundation for neo-colonialism. The imperialist guided constitution was a major signification of the limitations of negotiated independence. The same constitution gave legality to the uneven economic order which sustained colonial supremacy. As such, Mugabe's manoeuvre presented him as an entangled actor in the road to Zimbabwe's independence.

Now with the Lancaster as the final stroke to their common cause, Mugabe became the heir of a colonial state. The wide economic exclusion of our people made the Lancaster constitutional arrangement flawed and the aggressive turn to the land reform retrospectively proves fault lines in the settlement. Mugabe incidentally came into power without power, because the idea of independence was arranged and needed to be reconstructed and recreated. The land reform programme was the prefacing point of total independence reclamation (Moyo, 2013).

Against this backdrop, Mugabe as a revolutionary mentor, founding father of the First Republic and an outstanding champion of Pan-Africanism also finds his legacy entrapped in imperialist manipulations. The footprint of negotiated independence attached to his legacy is an antithesis of how those of us in the nationalist and anti-colonial movement would want him to be memorialised. This substantially implicates all his right-hand men (myself included) as bearers of a paradoxical ideological predisposition.

Having acquired an imperialist education and soaked in imperialist socialisation, only to be radicalised by and against the same colonial tradition to seek independence, the outcome was a bi-polar national consciousness. As pioneering post-colonial political leaders, Mugabe had to grapple with internal binaries encapsulated in the colonial and anti-colonial latitudes of power. The post-colonial state he (with us) built was an embodiment of the conflicting psyches of power. This is why after independence, up to this day, we continue to fight amongst ourselves in ethnic, partisan and racist based terms. Mugabe must be seen as a creation and a victim of the colonial paradigm of power. The colonial state he inherited continues to be ensnared in the long-term effects of imperial domination. It is in this context that the colonial interpretative function of the Mugabe legacy has only projected a dictator, simply because he decided to decriminalise the distribution of land to the long economically marginalised black majority. Holland (2008) among other writers of Mugabe's biographies have selectively portrayed Mugabe as the sole mastermind of violence, repression, bad governance, assault to the rule of law, military capture of the state among other vices of power.

Gukurahundi

The legacy of post-colonial violence is also imprinted in the contemporary affairs of our country. Zimbabwe was entrapped in the post-colonial trend as the country entered into ethnic and tribal conflict mode. The footprints of *Gukurahundi* like political violence in any other part of the continent entailed the loss of lives, massive displacements and inter-generational trauma. *Gukurahundi* as an imperialist strategy to assert itself in post-independence politics brought about mass violence and betrayal of confidence in the post-colonial state (Nyathi, 2018). This marked the beginning of Mugabe's estrangement from the people of Matebeleland and Midlands provinces. Just like many other African countries, Zimbabwe experienced what many have regarded as the trend of post-colonial ethnic purging. However, *Gukurahundi's* link to Cold War dynamics has been conveniently ignored to sustain reactionary regime change positions. Until today, this part of our past remains exclusively linked to Mugabe as the main perpetrator without considering that he only became an object of colonial strategy to promote instability in post-independent Zimbabwe.

Gukurahundi history continues to surface in contemporary contestations of power to promote the electoral marginalisation of ZANU PF. Unfortunately, the other underlying roots of this ugly side of our history have been ignored to justify the calls to remove the ruling party from power. This outbreak of violence under Mugabe's rule only exposes him as an unwitting pawn of colonial entanglements as the *Gukurahundi* assisted greatly in curtailing the Soviet influence in Southern Africa.

Regardless of the efforts dedicated towards post-conflict peace resolution, Mugabe has been presented as a prominent human-rights violator in the same way his past has made him to forcefully acquire the "despot" tag (Manyanya and Bond, 2003). *Gukurahundi* must be located in the contested forces of friction dating back to the break-up of the Patriotic Front and other tensions which confronted the liberation movements. *Gukurahundi* must also be appreciated as one of the major colonial machinations of state disintegration to give perennial political traction to the imperialist world.

The former President and Joshua Nkomo must be applauded for their initiation of the Unity Accord as a way of ending *Gukurahundi*. The two

leaders united to form ZANU PF, leading to the continued peace and stability in the country. The *Gukurahundi* and post-conflict interventions by Cde Nkomo and Mugabe reversed the retrogressive effects of *Gukurahundi* and all its neo-colonial undercurrents. From this perspective, Mugabe has to be remembered for ushering peace in Zimbabwe in as much as his legacy was initially exposed to volatile entanglements of colonial hegemony.

Mugabe and Zimbabwe's Economic Democratisation

The period between 1980 and 1990 was hugely defined by transitional administrative incompetence which created the foundation for an economic crisis. The lack of adequate governance skills emanating from inheriting a failed colonial state was noted through the systematic degeneration of the economy. Various sectors of public service delivery, namely health, education, recreation and the social welfare sector declined. The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) vividly demonstrated the failure of the state to be self-sufficient. Just like the rest of the post-colonial world, Mugabe turned to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) loans to succour our deteriorating economic landscape. Taking this route affirmed the economic insubstantiality of post-independence policy-making. This infancy in statecraft offers a defining mark of the colonial entrapment of the First Republic's sovereignty. The reality of post-colonial dependence syndrome cannot be detached from the legacy of Robert Mugabe and those of us who served under him since independence. I can relate to this position given the initial assignment I directly received from him upon my appointment in the Customs Department. This was only one area where colonial interest was deeply entrenched. It was equally manifesting itself in other areas of the economy. The colonial class dominated industry and had an absolute monopoly of the exports sector. Land ownership was still a preserve of the white minority.

Whilst it sounds highly convenient to label the crisis of economic independence as a failure of the post-colonial state, it is imperative to trace this challenge within the broader scope of neo-colonialism which interrupted development across post-independent Africa. From an all-inclusive African view, the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were created to align imperialist capital with post-independence power contestations. This was a

strategic reaction of the imperialist world to decolonisation and its impact in disordering colonial hegemony. By inheriting the colonial state, Mugabe like the rest of his counterparts on the continent involuntarily succumbed to the Global South's structural dependence on the North. Under Mugabe, we became subscribing entities to imperial hegemony. This is why the major opposition to ZANU PF was a product of imperialist design.

By attaining independence in its highly negotiated form, we became actors in the neo-colonial power matrix. Consequently, we became subjects of global capital which has always been at the centre of the neo-colonial agenda. The continued rise of poverty levels in Zimbabwe, like everywhere else in Africa, is manipulated to justify imperialist-aided regime change initiatives. After reviling this colonial positionality in the late 90s, Robert Mugabe was globally denigrated as a dictator (Hill, 2005). In the same way, top ZANU PF leaders have been subjected to wholesale demonisation. This feeds into the simplistic characterisation of Zimbabwean politics into binary extremes of dictators and democrats. ZANU PF, which has become an inconvenient entity for its pursuit of resource nationalism and protection of liberation gains after coming to terms with colonial duplicity, is now portrayed as an enabling organ for polarisation, corruption, human rights violation and electoral fraud.

The allegations leveled against the Zimbabwean government at the behest of the opposition, MDC formations, have failed to remove ZANU PF out of power since the dawn of the millennium. While the agenda of neo-colonialism seems to be excelling in the Zimbabwean political landscape, it stands to be noted that ZANU PF continues to command and attract the support of the majority. ZANU PF owes this continued relevance to the pioneering anti-colonial spirit which the late former President defended. His defiance to colonialism enabled us to fight for the liberation of the economy. In the same spirit, we continue to be guided by his passion to incessantly fight for political self-determination.

Fast-Track Land Reform Programme

The compromised transfer of power at the Lancaster Conference left the land question unaddressed for close to two decades. The turn to the agrarian reform was a strategic reclamation of the essence of decolonisation. Upon

establishing this irreversible turn, Mugabe became famous for the dictum: “Zimbabwe will never be a colony again.” This became the rallying point of Zimbabwe’s lasting anti-colonial political culture associated with the late icon. The side-lining of the land reform and its replacement with the white land ownership monopoly after 1980 was suicidal to the democratisation of the economy. The Willing Seller -Willing Buyer land ownership-impediment clause had to be reversed and the land reform played a crucial part in this respect (Moyo and Yeros, 2005).

I am particularly grateful for being allowed to serve as the Minister of Provincial Affairs for Matebeleland North at the peak of the fast-track land reform. For me, this was edifying as one of the core values of my participation in the liberation struggle was founded on the need to deliver economic equality. On the part of the white beneficiaries of economic inequality, there was no conscious conviction and willingness to give away the land. An exclusively commercial conscience motivated the settlers’ desire to hold on to the land. The tradition of settler monopoly narrowed the post-colonial state’s capacity to redress the land distribution inequalities. Therefore, Mugabe empowered all those who served under him to champion the noble cause of economic liberation. This made him unpopular with the imperialists and their local proxies. It was on this basis that Zimbabwe had to face the colonially formulated wrath of economic sanctions under the guise of promoting democracy and ending the alleged human-rights crisis (Mukodzongi and Lawrence, 2019).

The Sanctions Regime and the Internationalisation of the Anti-Mugabe Campaign

As an offensive reaction to the land reform, the European Union imposed sanctions on Zimbabwe. The US Congress also enacted illegal sanctions on Zimbabwe. In sanitising the retribution for the land reform, the sanctions were imposed as “targeted” at ZANU PF elites who were criminalised for collective human-rights violations. The sanctions served as a direct attack on the political interests of the ruling party as they safeguarded the opposition-driven regime-change mandate. At face value, Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) was founded on catalysing a democratic transition to terminate ZANU PF’s purportedly repressive rule. ZIDERA

also purported to usher in economic recovery in Zimbabwe. This legislation was signed into law by George Bush with the full backing of the U.S Congress.

The imposition of sanctions substantially outlines the significance of Mugabe as a target of imperialist political hegemony. The introduction of the land reform and the consequential imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe gestured the initial breakdown of relations between Zimbabwe and the West. Substantially, Mugabe reincarnated the timeless revolutionary spirit in our contemporary politics. Serving under him offered a direct chance to encounter the reality of the imposing character of neo-liberalism and all the resilient dictatorship facets of imperialism. The shadow of the rule of law and protection of colonially underpinned property rights became the facade for Zimbabwe's global marginalisation. As a result, the Mugabe era symbolises a period of directly grappling with neo-colonialism at its worst.

Regardless of the punitive impact of sanctions, Robert Mugabe boosted the anti-colonial resistance through an ideologically solid basis of emasculating the vestiges of a white economic monopoly. The imposition of sanctions was inclined to reinstating minority dominance under the guise of a democratic transition. Technically, this was aimed at propelling the few remaining colonial descendants to reassert their space as a solid oligopoly. The same imperialists would capture the government and hold it to account in the service of its interests. Sanctions served as a mitigation measure to stifle the emergent anti-colonial notion of realigning property rights. As a senior member of Mugabe's government, I witnessed the crumble of the economy because the West was agitated by the radical redefinition of our economic sovereignty pursued under the leadership of the former President. In the first decade into the sanctions, human-capital exodus was heavily experienced with a majority of our people turning to the diaspora for greener pastures. Brain drain reached alarming levels as we were exposed to the sanctions regime which the West imposed on us.

Both the country and those aligned to ZANU PF have been victims of the polarised global capitalist demonisation. The hostility which has existed between Zimbabwe and capitals of Western supremacy in the aftermath of the land reform displays a pragmatic breakaway from cosmetic independence.

The land reform-inspired foreign policy justifying Zimbabwe's de-link from the West has successfully aided in the strategic slamming of the West's continued interests in former colonies. Therefore, concerted attacks on the legacy of Mugabe today is no different from the vilification of the liberation struggle as a terrorist undertaking. Many have failed to appreciate the role of Mugabe as a liberator and victim of neo-imperialism. The privilege of working closely with the late former President exposed those of us in ZANU PF to endless efforts by the West to interfere in our politics.

In all these frantic efforts to destabilise our principled stand against neo-colonialism, ZANU PF has emerged as a champion of Western driven political dismembering and socio-economic disruptions. Courtesy of the ideological sobriety of Mugabe, the future of ZANU PF remains intact considering the triumph of the ruling party in submerging Western-sponsored regime-change operations.

As a result of the ideological scores, courtesy of the anti-imperial values espoused by ZANU PF, Cde Robert Mugabe is decorated as an anti-colonial champion and a radical defender of economic justice. The imposition of sanctions only accelerated the ideological pre-eminence of the Third Chimurenga and the resurgence of the Pan-Africanist tenets. In this light, Mugabe's service to the nation during the sanctions era heightened his commitment to a profound Pan-African consciousness and global justice. Given the strong echo that the political and social issues raised by Mugabe found across Africa, several African leaders paid reverence to him. In this regard, Mugabe gained international political latitude from such wide solidarities. Mugabe will be best remembered as a think-tank of African liberation.

Economic Indigenisation: A Counter Response to Zimbabwe's International Isolation

The radical de-link from the West under Mugabe will be recalled for disbanding colonial supremacy in the area of resource control and ownership. The protracted history of colonial domination and its decapitating effects on Africa's economic growth continuously validates the logic of economic indigenisation. The call for economic indigenisation, which is not unique to Zimbabwe but is spreading across the post-colonial world, is underpinned

by the need to remedy the uneven economic structure created by the colonial system. The official pronouncements on racial reconciliation immediately after independence were never successful in circumventing the reality of the evident and popular call for democratising the economy.

The social connection between the erstwhile colonisers and the colonised remained imperceptibly conflictual towards a looming explosion. The resultant characteristic of deracialisation and its shortcomings manifested in the form of pronounced economic disparities. The undercurrents of pushing for a post-colonial system of economic equality surfaced through collective pressure group campaigns for the inclusive participation of the indigenous people in building the national economy. African business communities emerged and were organised into cooperatives, associations and policy action groups.

Faced with widespread calls for economic indigenisation between 1980 and 1982, the government pacified and dismissed this as populist. Africanisation of labour, nationalisation and socialist redistribution became central in the public policy discourse. Africanisation entailed the increased inclusion of Africans in the public service. The evident contradiction to the overall call for total economic indigenisation was that Africanisation only became a veneer for true economic empowerment. Ironically, the long economically marginalised Africans only became labour subjects of colonial Europe's capital.

A highly ambivalent response to socialist promises made during the liberation war was deployed as a means of securing allegiance to the ruling party. Coincidentally, conservative white capital felt threatened. The call for socialist distributionism and nationalisation created animosity between the state and the private sector which was predominantly White. Capital flight heightened and Foreign Direct Investment dwindled. There was an increase in foreign currency shortages. The need for value addition and beneficiation became an important panacea to our looming economic crisis. Without the processing industry, the scale of productivity did not attract meaningful gains. At the start of the millennium, levels of unemployment were heightening. Urban councils' service delivery started to decline.

The introduction of the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Programme through an Act of Parliament in 2008 was critical not only in re-entering the erstwhile economic marginalised majority, but the policy was pivotal in ideological re-entering of the working-class, and peasantry to participate in economic policy-making. The legislation offered a 51% mining and industrial ownership share for the black majority. This trajectory re-organised ZANU PF into a pro-majority economic empowerment political organisation. The launch of this policy, just like the land reform, ushered in an era of liberation philosophy renaissance in statecraft design and policy delivery. As an antithesis to this trajectory, the opposition advanced the neo-liberal “property rights” protection politics. This contradictory landscape of pro-indigenisation and pro-Western capital polarisation are highly definitive of the Robert Mugabe legacy. However, the compelling justifications of the indigenisation programme make me a proud insider of Zimbabwean politics. Those opposed to Mugabe and ZANU PF have conveniently misrepresented the indigenisation policy as a vanguard for state-led primitive accumulation, corruption and cronyism. While some of these accusations can be substantiated, it must be emphasised that the major criticism of the indigenisation policy was meant to whitewash the policy’s cardinal feature of widening economic empowerment access.

The major shortcoming of the policy was the level to which it was personalised by some elements who later emerged as having actively captured the former first family. At the party level, my role as the Secretary for Economic Affairs was equally disregarded and this makes it more evident that the economic indigenisation policy was applied under chaotic circumstances because some party members betrayed the trust which the late former President, Cde Mugabe, had bestowed on them. It is some of these shortcomings which have validated the imperialist retaliation mechanisms to ZANU PF’s commitment to achieving:

- Eradication of the excess colonial monopoly on the means of production
- Socio-economic equality against a background of uneven resource distribution
- Provision of even infrastructure development
- Decolonised labour practices in a bid to eradicate exploitative labour relations

- Control of monopolies
- Reduction of the power of private capitalists, and
- Legislation of corporate social responsibility

Through some of these cardinal tenets of the economic indigenisation programme, we were able to emasculate global economic imperialism. As a result, at a global stage, Zimbabwe was negatively projected in Western media as a failed state. At the same time, Cde Mugabe's open attack on the uneven global political-economic order validated his domestic policy of indigenisation. In reciprocation, opposition and civil society have continued to exert efforts to remove ZANU PF from power. The Western world's interests in the 2008 and 2013 election demonstrated the extent to which the indigenisation policy distressed frontiers of global capitalism.

Mugabe Nostalgia Dilemma and the Post-Mugabe Transitional Realities

Among some pro-indigenisation radicals in ZANU PF, Mugabe's exit from the political stage has been viewed as the demise of the anti-Western capital policy position. This follows the New Dispensation's economic revival strategy for the privatisation of the economy in a manner which is viewed by some as more tilted towards neo-liberalism. The accelerated inclination towards opening Zimbabwe for Business has been welcomed as a strategic path for investment attraction. However, to some, the "Zimbabwe is Open for Business" policy is retrogressive and a counter-position to the economic indigenisation agenda instituted under Mugabe. The current emphasis on inclusive economic empowerment which is open to foreign investment has been partially viewed as an attack on the economic indigenisation policy. Among some radicals, the current penchant on re-engagement has been criticised for potentially reversing the achievements of indigenising the economy. However, moderates within ZANU PF feel that economic re-engagement employing the strategy of opening up the economy to foreign capital will contribute to overall national development. This explains the imprinted effect of Mugabe in the internal political culture of ZANU PF.

An Anti-colonial Champion

Mugabe will be better remembered as a Pan-Africanist and anti-colonial champion. This is chiefly influenced by his role in challenging the Global

North and the Global South's asymmetrical relations. As a sovereign defender of Zimbabwe's international image, he will be remembered for his role in exposing the West's bullying, especially to its former colonies. The land reform programme executed during his tenure further revealed that the post-colonial regime change agenda is founded on colonial reason (Moyo and Yeros, 2005). The selective framing of the discourse of human rights after the land reform also exposed how the West is preoccupied with securing hegemony in Africa. As a result, Mugabe's defiant position in the fight against relics of imperialism will make him a perennial symbol of African liberation. Under Mugabe's imperial de-link position, it became apparent that African governments which rebel from the colonial global order are punished.

Back at home, the White community and some civil society organisations (CSOs) became more politically stratified in anti-establishment fraternal terms. Mugabe was able to hold together the relevance of ZANU PF through his populist proclivity. This way, the mass party status of ZANU PF was galvanised by the membership of the working class, peasants and indigenous business communities. The indigenisation of the economy became the rallying point of ZANU PF's support base. The war-veterans continued to maintain their revolutionary vanguard status in the fight against efforts inclined to imperial domination. As a result, Mugabe's memory will remain more associated with the aspirations of the masses and the liberation struggle. The urban resentment of Mugabe as a result of opposition political capital will never erase the illustrious mark of his role as a decolonial giant considering the extent to which he moved beyond deracialising the status quo. However, his role in promoting economic liberation and agitating the West in the process serves as a critical mark of his enduring contribution in the fight for the total political and economic freedom of Africa.

Under Mugabe's mentorship, I was taught to be an African who is proud to reaffirm values of liberation in every aspect of governance. The monumental lesson of serving as a public administrator right up to my promotion to various ministerial capacities is that policy-making must be responsive to the enduring aspirations of a people. Under Mugabe, the key lesson was that leadership must be guided by the historical experiences of those whom one serves. This principle made much more sense considering the deep-rooted

Re/membering Robert Mugabe: Politics, Legacy, Philosophy & Death
reality of economic inequalities which were inherited from colonialism and later infused into post-colonial governance. The weight of this burden of history must be reconciled by paving a way for equality and widening the people's access to the control of their resources. Colonialism was founded to secure resource control for Europe on the back of the exploitation of Africa.

The launch of the land reform was critical as it exposed us to the reality of the unfinished business of the liberation struggle (Moyo and Chambati, 2013). After the mass resettlement of our people, polarisation was constructed to help create a mass dislike for ZANU PF. However, this has not been successful because the party continued to win elections regardless of the efforts by the West and its proxies to fragment national consciousness along pro-liberation and neo-colonialist lines. No matter how much the subject of property and human rights was deployed to make ZANU PF unpopular, Mugabe remained resolute in reasserting his irreversible defiance against the West's meddling in Zimbabwean politics.

The FTLRP simultaneously took off when Zimbabwe was intervening in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) crisis. This resulted in the restriction of Zimbabwean manufactured military equipment in the international market. Zimbabwe's support to the Joseph Kabila-led administration threatened the efforts of the US-supported rebels to take over the state. Once again, Mugabe proved to be a rock-solid Pan-Africanist who supported other African countries in the face of acute neo-colonial hostilities. In response, the EU, UK and US governments froze the assets of notable government officials and senior ZANU PF members. The officials were also issued with travel bans. Zimbabwe was ejected from the Commonwealth. In all this, Mugabe maintained unrestrained defiance in castigating Western powers for their hegemonic meddle in the affairs of weaker nations in the world. Sanctions have necessitated Zimbabwe's isolation from the international market and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) credit lines. Zimbabwe has found regional support against the continued renewal of the sanctions. For me, the sympathy Mugabe got from other African countries substantiates the reward of his determination in challenging the West's dominating influence in African politics. The regional call against sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe is not only a success of the re-engagement policy instituted by the Second Republic. This should also be viewed as a total response to the logic of the late Cde Robert Mugabe's determined stand against Western domination.

Conclusion

The discussion demonstrated that the former President of Zimbabwe gained both popularity and demonisation due to his anti-colonial ideological locus. As such, the chapter traced how Mugabe was constructed into a villain due to his policies which defied residues of colonialism in post-independence Zimbabwean politics. Therefore, the chapter maintains that in as much as Mugabe had his leadership flaws like any other politician, his legacy remains largely defined in terms of colonial propaganda and his initial entrapment in the long term power capture agendas of Anglo-American neo-colonial regimes in post-colonial Africa. In attempting to rethink the simplistic labelling of Mugabe as a dictator, we need to understand the Western ideological influences to deconstructing his role as a champion of decolonisation and economic indigenisation. In pre-independence and after Zimbabwe's liberation struggle, Mugabe remained a constant threat to the interchanging hegemonic interests of colonial forces. The same powers have worked hard to discredit Mugabe for his distinguished anti-colonial heroic status. As a person, Mugabe represents a threat to the legacy of imperialism in Zimbabwe in as much as he remains a decorated symbol of our fight against neo-colonialism.

References

- Blair, D. (2002). *Degrees in Violence: Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe*. London: Continuum.
- Bhebe, N. (2004). *Simon Vengayi Muzenda & the Struggle for and Liberation of Zimbabwe*. Gweru: Mambo Press.
- Bond, P. and Manyanya. (2003). *Zimbabwe's Plunge: Exhausted Nationalism, Neoliberalism and the Search for Social Justice*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth*. Great Britain: Mcgibbon and Kee.
- Hill, G. (2005). *What Happens after Mugabe?* Cape Town: Zebra Press.
- Holland, H. (2008). *Dinner with Mugabe: The Untold Story of a Freedom Fighter Who Became a Tyrant*. Johannesburg: Penguin Books.
- Martin, D. and Johnson, P. (1981). *The Struggle for Zimbabwe: The Chimurenga War*. London: Faber.
- Mashingaidze, T. M. (2006). "The Zimbabwean Entrapment: An Analysis of the Nexus between Domestic and Foreign Policies in a 'Collapsing' Militant State, 1990s–2006." *Alternatives Turkish Journal of International Relations*, 5(4) Winter: 15–32.
- Mkondzongi, & Lawrence, P. (2019). The fast-track land reform and agrarian change in Zimbabwe. *Review of African Political Economy*, 46:159, 1-13.
- Moyo, S. and W. Chambati (eds.). (2013). *Land and Agrarian Reform in Zimbabwe: Beyond White-Settler Capitalism*. Dakar: CODESRIA.
- _____. (2013). "Introduction: Roots of the Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe." In S. Moyo and W. Chambati (eds.), *Land and Agrarian Reform in Zimbabwe: Beyond White-Settler Capitalism*. Dakar: CODESRIA.
- Moyo, S. and P. Yeros (eds.). (2005). *Reclaiming the Land: The Resurgence of Rural Movements in Africa, Asia, and Latin America*. Cape Town: David Philip.
- Sithole, M. (2015). *Zimbabwe: Struggles-within-the-Struggle (1957-1980)*. Harare: Rujeko Publishers.

The First Republic and Marxism-Leninism Glamour: A Public Policy Perspective

Lenin Tinashe Chisaira

Introduction

This chapter makes a critical analysis of Robert Mugabe's statesmanship's interaction with the Marxism-Leninist ideology. The core thrust of this position is to understand how Marxism-Leninism curated and modeled the course and the culture of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle and post-independence policy-making. The chapter understands Marxist-Leninism to be a philosophical bedrock of Mugabe's power consolidation strategies before and after independence. The Constitution of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party continues to claim the aspiration of socialism. The chapter posits that Robert Mugabe's adherence to Marxism-Leninism dovetailed with the historical and class context which led to his rise in as much as his eventual shift to the right contributed to his inevitable fall from power. His administration presents incredible policy lessons for future administrations including the 'new dispensation' and general liberation movements on ideological clarity. The researcher mainly uses a Marxist theoretical perspective, concentrating on power relations and social and economic class debates and contestations in Zimbabwe and Africa. The research methodology consists of a critical analysis of Zimbabwe's key policies during the Mugabe administration as well as speeches and primary materials on Robert Mugabe.

The statesmanship of Robert Gabriel Mugabe, as Head of Government in Zimbabwe from 1980-2017, during the period of the First Republic, is a story of political, historical and ideological paradoxes. He became a hero of one section of the world's populace and a villain to the other. Ideologically, his term in office showcased a man who was at once neither one hundred per cent to the left and yet not wholly neoliberal either. He is a man to whom the Western media referred to as one whose 'eventual goal is a Marxist-led United States of Africa' (Moore-King, 2002). It seemed an interesting

pursuit for many researchers, biographers, historians, academics or critics to delve into the story of the man and his leadership style in the party, state and government. Indeed many works have focused on-or greatly mentioned-Robert Mugabe: Western journalist (Holland, 2008); to liberation allies turned foes (Tekere, 2007), (Chung, 2006), (Machingura, 2011), (Msipa, 2015); to opposition leaders (Tsvangirai & Bango, 2011), (Mutambara, 2017); to local journalists (Nyarota, 2018). Above these works and insights, the enigma and thrust of Robert Mugabe's leadership can be derived from critical analyses of his political pronouncements and a perusal of the public policy processes and products during the First Republic.

Public policy has been defined as a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives (Kilpatrick, 2000). In evaluating the policy framework under the Mugabe regime, there is a need to analyse key State decisions, for instance, the adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), Growth with Equity Policy, Education, Health and Housing for All by the year 2000 policies and the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation (ZIMASSET) as well as the legal framework. The laws enacted by the ZANU PF-led government were a peculiar mixture of the progressive and the reactionary. Progressive enactments during the First Republic included the Land Acquisition Act [Chapter 20:10], the Labour Act [Chapter 20:01], the Legal Aid Act [Chapter 7:16], the Anti-Personnel Mines (Prohibition) Act [Chapter 11:19]; the Legal Age of Majority Act (1982), the Environmental Management Act [Chapter 20:27], the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act [Chapter 19:09]; the Administrative Justice Act [Chapter 10:28] and the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act [Chapter 14:33] among others. Likewise, counter-progressive enactments were operating or initiated during the First Republic such as the Public Order and Security Act [Chapter 11:17], the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act [Chapter 10:27], the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act [Chapter 10:20] and the Interception of Communications Act [Chapter 11:20] among others.

Marxism-Leninism has been one of the vital inspirational ideologies behind policymaking in the contemporary developing world. Marxism derives from

the philosophical social and economic works of Karl Marx. These ideas were tested and solidified by subsequent revolutionaries, the most notable of whom is Vladimir Lenin. Vladimir (Ilyich Ulyanov) Lenin (22 April 1870-21 January 1924) was a communist revolutionary and philosopher in his own right and was the leader of the Russian Revolution in 1917. He led the government of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) from 1917 to 1922 and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR/ Soviet Union) from 1922 until his death in 1924. Marxism-Leninism hence refers to 'an expanded form of Marxism that emphasises Lenin's concept of imperialism as the final stage of capitalism and shifts the focus of struggle from developed to underdeveloped countries' (American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2016). The ideology becomes a perfect fit for the Zimbabwean scenario since the country was involved in a liberation struggle against imperialism and settler rule. At the time of writing, the ruling party Constitution provides for an odd mixture of socialist and free-market aspirations. There is no mention of Marxism-Leninism. Article 2 (9) of the ZANU PF Constitution provides that:

The aims and objectives of the Party shall be to establish and sustain a socialist society firmly based on our historical, cultural and social experience and to create conditions for economic independence, prosperity and equitable distribution of the wealth of the nation in a system of economic organisation and management in which elements of free enterprise and market economy, planned economy and public ownership are combined. (Constitution of The Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front, ZANU PF, [Incorporating amendments ratified by the National People's Congress held in Harare in June 2005) Art 2 (9)].

This submission refers to the critical policies and laws in the First Republic and how they dovetailed with the Marxist-Leninist ideology. The relationship was undoubtedly a matter of tough love. At once, the ideology provided the desired life support for Mugabe's freedom fighters and for the first cadres who made up the first government. An inclination and drive to adapt and solidify Western-inspired neoliberal policies proved to be one of the gravediggers for the Mugabe regime. It is essentially necessary to admit at the beginning that the fall of Mugabe was not strictly revolutionary. The system which had sustained the Mugabe government remained in place: the ruling ZANU

PF party remained the ruling party, many key players in the First Republic continued to hold power, whether in the army and cabinet or newly-created full-time positions in the ruling party (Munyoro and Kakore, 2018).

Ideology and Liberation in Retrospect

Many interests and ideologies informed Zimbabwe's struggles against imperialism. In the end, though, the dominant and victorious ideology was the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist leanings of the Robert-Mugabe led ZANU PF party. The other crucial party, the Joshua Nkomo-led Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) had its fighters trained in the Soviet Union (Alexander & McGregor, 2017). The struggle was also fought on various fronts besides the ideological. Some of these fronts were tribal, ethnic or religious. The religious front was represented by clergymen like Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, Reverend Canaan Banana and Bishop Abel Muzorewa who took charge of political formations or positions (Thomas, 1985). Mugabe himself was greatly influenced by a member of the clergy, Father Jerome O'Hea an Irish Catholic priest who reportedly used to share stories of the Irish War of Independence against British imperialism with the young Mugabe (Holland, 2008). The liberation struggle was also affected by tribal inclinations, as some undeveloped political leaders were more concerned about tribal affiliation rather than ideological positions (Sithole, 1999). However, while acknowledging the influence of these other fronts, is mainly concerned with a critical analysis of the influence and interactions between Mugabe's time as a perceived Marxist-Leninist and his leadership style and ideological orientation during the times of the liberation struggle and the First Republic.

The rampant racism and exploitation undoubtedly informed the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia). There was exploitation from Cecil John Rhodes' British South Africa Company (BSAC) in the 1890s during periods of occupation and dispossession to the time of the successor responsible-government white settler minority-led State. White settler rule became dominant from 1923 until the Independence of Zimbabwe in 1980.

The vast literature on Zimbabwe's liberation struggle point to the omnipresence of Marxism-Leninism within the main protagonist, namely

the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) party and its military wing, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA). The victory of ZANU, in the 1980 Independence elections, therefore, brought expectations that public policy making in the New Republic will be informed by Marxism or at least anti-imperialist perspectives. A letter of support and warning for the future of the new regime from the Central Committee of the Communist Workers Party of the United States of America in 1980 highlights this view. The party wrote to the newly-elected Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe:

The election has a profound influence on world opinion. It confirms once, and for all, that Comrade President Mugabe and ZANU speak for the Zimbabwean people. The two superpowers, British imperialists and the South Africa racists can no longer hide. In this sense, the electoral victory has given ZANU tremendous initiative. However the tasks at hand are more complex, and the struggle will be on a higher, more difficult level. We know you are faced now with three fronts instead of mainly one as before: parliamentary/diplomatic, economic and military. The imperialists will try to ambush ZANU on the economic and political fronts, what they were not able to accomplish on the military front. (Congratulations Comrade Mugabe: Letter from the Central Committee of the CWP, 1980)

However, in retrospect a, critical revisit of the First Republic highlights many loopholes with ideological clarity and state practice. Therefore, there were instances of progressive policies and laws that were formulated side by side with right-wing policies. Examples which will be explored include the relations between the State and the working class, the push for *Gutsaruzhinji* (Satisfy the majority) and the introduction of ESAP, as well as the adoption and later clandestine rejection of the ZANU PF Leadership Code. The now abandoned ZANU PF Leadership Code provided in its preamble that: 'WHEREAS the Zimbabwe African National Union constitutes a Socialist party; and; whereas it is expedient to impose on leaders a strict code of behaviour with a view to assuring the advent of socialism in Zimbabwe.'(ZANU PF Leadership Code, 1984, preamble) The Code outlined a number of rules, for instance, party leaders were precluded from the following: owning a business, a share or an interest in a business organised

for profit; receiving more than one salary; serving as a director of a private firm or business organised for profit; owning real estate or other property or an interest in real estate or other property from which he receives rents or royalties; and from owning more than one dwelling house. By the end of the First Republic the code had been discarded into the dustbins of history.

Marxism-Leninism and Policy-making in the First Republic

The influence of Marxism-Leninism was apparent during the first decade of independence (1980-1990). Various works have highlighted how the government embarked on social services such as the provision of free basic education and health services as well as housing and social welfare (Chung & Ngara, 1995). The drive for progressive socialist policies in the first Independence decade is aptly highlighted in the following passage:

At independence, the government sought to redress a myriad of social inequalities and injustices, and ‘growth with equity’ became the fundamental thrust in the reconstruction phase. The provision of better housing to low-income people became one of the government’s measures for redressing inequalities in pursuance of its socialist goals (Kanyenze, Kondo, Chitambara & Martens, 2011, p 349).

This view at once brings out to the fore the overwhelming influence of the Marxist-Leninist philosophy that had underpinned the recently concluded liberation struggle. The future abandonment of such policies was to have disastrous consequences, especially for the trust and social contract between the state and the governed at the minimum.

This abandonment of Marxist-Leninist principles by the Robert Mugabe government, to be fair, cannot be analysed in isolation to the occurrences at the world stage. The fall of the eastern bloc left even any meaningful application of socialist ideas in jeopardy. Well-meaning regimes around the world were placed at the mercy of Western neoliberal imperialism. Hence even though the First Republic tried to implement progressive policies such as the land reform programme, they were bound to be on the receiving end of the Western capitalistic world’s attacks. Dwyer and Zeilig (2012, p. 187) point this out:

While the land seizures triggered the economic crisis, it has been worsened by the implementation of direct and indirect sanctions by Western countries. The regime has swung wildly back and forth between price controls and market-based approaches. Land and business contracts were distributed to cronies while Mugabe mouthed platitudes about “foreign powers.” Zimbabwe’s reserve bank governor Gideon Gono pursued a haphazard program of cuts in subsidies, privatisation, and debt repayment. The regime’s authoritarian neoliberalism continued unabated, albeit chaotically, for years.

Similar economic and political sanctions were hence the order of the day, not just in Zimbabwe, but in other states such as Cuba and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for instance. Western media, for instance, took a critical position on the land reform, but mostly from a neoliberal property rights perspective and never from the social justice and historical perspective. One notable article claims that:

The seizure of commercial farms, it turns out, kicked away the legs of the economy. With property rights no longer assured, foreign money fled. With no foreign money, Zimbabweans could no longer buy imports. Without imports -- fertilisers, spare parts, gasoline -- large-scale agriculture has collapsed and with it most of the industry that supported farmers. At the same time, the ousting of all but about 600 of the nation’s 4,500 white farmers also uprooted nearly 300,000 black workers on those farms, almost all of whom are now jobless’ (Wines, 2003)

All these Western and neoliberal efforts and acts, especially concerning the land reform programme, had their toll on the effectiveness of the First Republic. However, the lukewarm resilience of the elite was also to blame for the wholesale departure from progressive socialist policy-making.

Ideological Departure and the Problems of the First Republic (1980-2017)

The ending of the first decade of independence, that is, the late 1980s were a time of turmoil on the global ideological battleground. In the case of Zimbabwe, the departure from the socialist Marxist-Leninist ideals of the liberation struggle and the first Independence decade were noticeable. Saul and Saunders point out that ‘the initial evidence of this (departure) was seen

on Independence Day 1989, the first time that Mugabe did not explicitly invoke Marxist-Leninist principles in his annual address to the nation - and the first time mention was made of “trade liberalization” policies for the sake of resuscitating employment prospects’ (Saul & Saunders, 2005, p. 963). The push for even more trade liberalisation has continued in the Second Republic with the oft-repeated Zimbabwe is Open for Business mantra and the drive towards amendments of the Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment Act as well as the establishment and implementation of special economic zones.

The ideological departure of the First Republic from progressive policy-making in general and Marxism-Leninism, in particular, was a cumulative result of many historical factors. Key among them was the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Some scholars have indicated that the Soviet Union had severe flaws, the key of which was a marked departure from the proper ideals of Marxism. However, this view is mostly pushed by proponents of a Western neoliberal perspective of history and historical development. What is not in doubt is that for over seven decades, the Soviet Union presented a counter-narrative to the western model of industrialised, capitalistic development.

The departure of the USSR from basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism acutely mirror the departure of Robert Mugabe’s from the ideological foundations that had informed the liberation struggle against white settler rule. The departure points were highlighted in the deteriorating relationships between the state and labour, the attitudes and extravagances of the elite and close associates of the ruling establishment, privatisation and neoliberalism as well as the brutal crackdown on peoples constitutionally-protected and democratic participation in the affairs of the state. The introduction of IMF and World Bank insured austerity policies as a major policy shift at the close of the first Independence decade have been equally reported in various works and actions as well. For instance, the rise to prominence of the labour movement and personalities at the forefront of labour and student movements at the close of the 1980s was seen as a direct consequence of the introduction of right-wing, neoliberal policies and laws. University grants were suspended, and user fees were introduced for clinics and hospitals among other measures. The privatisation debate has been adequately

exhausted elsewhere (Kawewe & Dibie, 2000; Mlambo, 2013). The right-wing crackdown on dissent associated with ESAP, for instance, remains the clear evidence that exposes how the First Republic had no qualms about abandoning socialist ideals and putting on a hard right-wing mask, especially in its treatments of an increasingly disillusioned working class:

Strikes by nurses, teachers, civil servants, and builders rippled across the country. In January 1998, housewives orchestrated a “bread riot” that expanded into an uprising of the urban poor. The protests, strikes, and campaigns were often explicitly against the government’s Economic and Structural Adjustment Programs, ESAP and ESAP II, implemented since 1991, which closed factories, laid off workers, and slashed state funding to education. Discontent with the results of ESAP steadily increased throughout the 1990s and was increasingly expressed by the labour and student movements, together with a range of other civil society organisations (Dwyer & Zeilig, 2005, p. 182).

In addition to this, Moretti (2017, p. 6) points out that:

The status of paralysis in which Zimbabwe has slipped throughout the past years might be traced back to the early 1990s, with the adoption of the Economic Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) prescribed under the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank as part of the broader structural adjustment agenda adopted in the ‘80s by the Bretton Woods Institutions. Indeed, the free market economy model promoted by ESAP failed to relaunch a stunted economic growth, while growing annual inflation and rising unemployment soon gave rise to massive civil unrests. Moreover, the ESAP did not address the land inequality inherited by the colonial system, and only benefited large-scale, predominantly white farmers through a policy of agricultural export promotion, leaving behind the majority of black people trapped in the survival economy.

Thus, by the second decade of Independence, the First Republic and its policy and legal frameworks had begun to highlight both ideological quagmire and a growing affinity for the trappings of capitalism. This departure had a profound effect on the working class in both the organised and pre-organised sectors of the economy.

The State and Labour

The labour sector is a critical element in any society, and more so in a capitalist economy. The sector is also a critical part of the Marxist-Leninist ideology. Hence another departure by the Mugabe regime from classic Marxism-Leninism is reflected in the historical relations between his government and labour. Marxism as an ideology is premised upon the power of the working class. However, the Mugabe prevaricated between peasant-based Maoism. Thus there was a pointed neoliberal induced antagonism between the trade union sectors, and later the student union and civil society sectors with the ZANU PF government. The historical root of the conflict between the state and labour was in the treatment of black workers by the racist settler policies of the [receding ultra-right wing Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front government. The latter's laws and policies were openly racist and classist. Martin and Johnson (1981, p. 60-61) observe that:

In 1960, when the British Prime Minister, Sir Harold MacMillan, was making his 'wind of change' speech about decolonisation, Southern Rhodesia was moving on to new heights of legislative repression with the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act and Emergency Powers Act. These two acts superseded much of the existing labour legislation. Under Section 31 of the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act it became a criminal offence to incite strike action in 'essential services.' These essential services ranged from coal mining to the production, supply, delivery or distribution of food, fuel and coal. Under the provisions of this section African workers who went on strike could be imprisoned for life or sentenced to death. Two further pieces of labour legislation in 1973, the African (registration and Identification) Act and vagrancy amendment Act, were designed to prevent African job seekers and small traders entering the urban areas.

The crackdown on labour and informal traders during the First Republic bore a striking resemblance, if not a worse picture, to the crackdown on the black working class by the white settler state. The First Republic's legal arsenal included the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) (ITUC, 2009). David Coltart, a neoliberal legislator during the time POSA was introduced, and himself ironically a former member of the repressive white settler police force, observed that POSA was similar to the repressive laws of the white settler state:

POSA was designed to replace the draconian Rhodesian law and Order (Maintenance) Act (LOMA) but did so only in style not form. In many ways, it was a refinement on LOMA, better suited to the current conditions prevailing in Zimbabwe. The RF (Rhodesian Front) had not feared criticism of the Prime Minister in the same way as ZANU PF feared criticism of Mugabe (Coltart, 2016, p. 336).

The repressive POSA was to be used on dissenting demonstrations against the state. These groups included the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions. The rise of unemployment and retrenchments also fueled a rising informal trader class in Zimbabwe, but the sector was to face the brunt of the onslaught from both the Mugabe government and from the opposition led-urban councils, notably in Harare and Bulawayo. That such tense relations continued into Robert Mugabe's First Republic serves to confirm that the First Republic's professing of Marxism-Leninism as a farce. The only brief marriage between such diverse sectors was to take place on 22 November 2017, when multitudes of people went into the streets in solidarity with the military to demand the exit of Robert Mugabe as President of Zimbabwe.

Constricted Space for People's Democratic Participation

The state's growing clampdown on people and societal rights during the First Republic was at loggerheads with the democratic aspiration of a Marxist-Leninist state. Instances included rising violence, utilisation of the armed sectors of the state and interparty violence in Zimbabwe. The utilisation of enforced disappearances on opposition politicians and activists became one of the critical features of the later years of the First Republic. The case of opposition campaign agent Patrick Nabanyama, for instance, was well narrated in opposition politician David Coltart's biography:

At 4 pm on 19 June, some ten ZANU PF activists knocked on the door of Patrick Nabanyama's home in Nketa 6 suburb, asking for him. The child who answered the door innocently called her father that some people had come to see him. When Nabanyama came to the door, the mood changed instantly and the men grabbed him and started pulling him out of the house. Nabanyama's wife Patricia screamed for help but was powerless to prevent the men from dragging him away and bundling him into a

waiting vehicle. It was the last time she and the children saw Patrick. She did, however, recognise one of the men, as did neighbours. His name was Simon Rwodzi and he was a former ZIPRA guerrilla. The previous month, on 19 May, Nabanyama had been threatened with death by a group of five war veterans. Believing that the police wouldn't do anything, he reported the matter to the press... We never saw Nabanyama again. There are various rumours about what happened to him, the most credible being that he was taken to a CIO safe house in Bulawayo where he was severely tortured and died from his injuries (Coltart, 2016, p. 285-287).

These disappearances and the seemingly complicit involvement of lack of interest in enforcing the law by law enforcement agents had a direct impact on the participation of even the ordinary and working class Zimbabweans in the democratic governance of the state. On the legal front, there was an introduction of draconian laws that sought to limit and crush academic freedom. The period saw increased censure of student leaders like Arthur Mutambara, Munyaradzi Gwisai at the University of Zimbabwe. This trend continued until the end of the Mugabe's First Republic era. Indeed, the author was a victim of the harsh clampdown on academic freedom, during his time as a student leader at the University of Zimbabwe, circa 2012-2013.

Elite Attitudes and Capture

The behaviour of the elites in any society significantly influences state-society relations. In Zimbabwe, this had been apparent in many ways, for instance, the rabid accumulations and flaunting of wealth by Robert Mugabe and his family and insiders towards the end of the First Republic was telling (Tahir, 2017). There was also a ready entourage around the First family in the form of the nouveau rich, people and close relations with shady characters (Mushava, 2016). These occurrences took place against a background of worsening poverty in the society.

Outside the family setting, the state officials were also closely scrutinised for their outrageous allowances and travel statuses. It was rather telling that the successor to Mugabe, President Emmerson Mnangagwa in one of his first executive functions, had to cut down a rather hefty entourage meant to accompany the ex-president Mugabe on a medical check-up trip.

Conclusion

The ideological shortcomings of the First Republic pose challenges as well as learning points for public policy making in the Second Republic under President Mnangagwa. The First Republic started on a progressive note with social protection, provision of free education and health services. However, by the end of Robert Mugabe's presidency, the state was constantly criticised for brutality, flaunting of wealth, cosiness with business and capitalism and a natural enmity with the working class. To all tenets and purposes, therefore, one can safely and authoritatively conclude that Robert Mugabe's interaction with Marxism-Leninism was short-lived and opportunistic. This paradox is more aptly reflected in the flaunting of wealth by his close associates, business relations and an almost obsessive enmity with labour and radical intelligentsia.

The Second Republic has the benefit of hindsight and would do better to slow its slide into neoliberal practices such as privatisation, austerity and the elite capture and flaunting of wealth while the majority of the people suffer from economic, political and social exclusion. The apparent indications for the advancement towards privatisation of key remaining parastatals offers a worrying trend to the socialist mark of the First Republic –regardless of its pitfalls.

References

- Alexander, J and McGregor, J. (2017) 'African Soldiers in the USSR: Oral Histories of ZAPU Intelligence Cadres' Soviet Training, 1964–1979', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 43 (1), pp. 49-66.
- American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*. 5th edn. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.
- Chung, F. and Ngara, E. (1995) *Socialism, Education and Development: Challenge to Zimbabwe*. Harare: African Publishing Group.
- Chung, F. K. (2006) *Re-Living the Second Chimurenga: Memories from Zimbabwe's Liberation Struggle*. Nordic Africa Institute.
- Coltart, D. (2016) *The Struggle Continues: 50 Years of Tyranny in Zimbabwe*. Jacana.
- Constitution Of The Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front, ZANU PF, (Incorporating amendments ratified by the National People's Congress held in Harare in June 2005) Art 2 (9).
- CWP, (1980) 'Congratulations Comrade Mugabe: Letter from the Central Committee of the CWP.' *Workers Viewpoint*, 5 (9).
- Dwyer, P. and Zeilig, L. (2012) *African Struggles Today: Social Movements since Independence*. Haymarket Books, p 187.
- Holland, H. (2008) *Dinner with Mugabe*. Penguin Books.
- ITUC (2009) 'Zimbabwe: Trade Union President arrested while on tour in the Country.' International Trade Union Confederation, 09 November. Available at <https://www.ituc-csi.org/zimbabwe-trade-union-president> (Accessed 30 August 2018).
- Kanyenze, G., Kondo, T., Chitambara, P. and Martens, J. (eds) (2011) *Beyond The Enclave: Towards a Pro-Poor and Inclusive Development Strategy for Zimbabwe*. Harare: Weaver Press and LEDRIZ.
- Kawewe, S. M. and Dibie, R. (2000) 'The impact of economic structural adjustment programs on women and children: implications for social welfare in Zimbabwe', *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 27 (4) p. 79
- Kilpatrick, D.G. (2018) 'Definitions of Public Policy and the Law.' Available

at <https://mainweb-v.musc.edu/vawprevention/policy/definition.shtml>
(Accessed 08 October 2018).

Martin, D and Johnson, P. (1981) *The Struggle for Zimbabwe: the Chimurenga war*. London: Faber and Faber.

Mhanda, W. (2011) *Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter*. Weaver Press; This author reviewed the book for Heroes Day 2016, See: Chisaira, L. T. (2016) 'A Heroes' Day review of Dzino: Memories of a Freedom Fighter.' Nehanda Radio, 8 August. Available at <http://nehandaradio.com/2016/08/08/heroes-day-review-dzino-memories-freedom-fighter/> (Accessed 22 September 2018).

Mlambo, A. S. (2013) 'From Education and Health for All by 2000 to the Collapse of the Social Services Sector in Zimbabwe, 1980–2008.' *Journal of Developing Societies*, 29 (4) p. 355.

Moore-King, B. (2002) 'Mugabe's not mad: he's a Marxist with a mission.' The Telegraph, 17 March.

Moretti, V. (2017), 'Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe: the Endgame?' Notes de l'Ifri. Ifri.

Msipa, C. G. (2015) *In Pursuit of Freedom and Justice: A Memoir*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Munyoro, F and Kakore, N. (2018) 'ZANU PF redeploys former ministers.' The Herald, 11 September.

Mushava, E. (2016) 'Grace Mugabe dines with Wicknell.' The Standard, 10 April.

Mutambara, A. G.O. (2017) *In Search of the Elusive Zimbabwean Dream: An Autobiography of Thought Leadership*, Volume I. Harare: SAPES.

Nyarota, G. (2018), *The Graceless Fall of Robert Mugabe*. New York: Penguin Random House.

Saul, J. S. and Saunders, R. (2005) 'Mugabe, Gramsci and Zimbabwe at 25.' *International Journal*, 60 (4), p. 963.

Sibanda, G. (2018) 'Privatisation deadline for parastatals.' The Herald, 09 October.

Sithole, M. (1999) *Zimbabwe: Struggles Within the Struggle*. Rujeko

Publishers.

Tahir, T. (2017) '*The final straw: How film of Mugabe's shameless son drenching his £45,000 diamond watch with £200 champagne-fuelled the anger that drove Zimbabweans to demand change.*' Mail Online, 18 November. Available at <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5095399/Mugabe-s-son-filmed-pouring-200-champagne-45k-watch.html> (Accessed 10 September 2018).

Tekere, E. (2007) *A Lifetime of Struggle*. Sapes Books.

Thomas, N. E. (1985) 'Church and State in Zimbabwe', *A Journal of Church and State*, 27 (1), pp. 113-133.

Tsvangirai, M. and Bango, W. T. (2011) *At the Deep End*. Eye Books.

Wines, M. (2003) '*Corruption and Despair Choke Zimbabwe.*' New York Times, 19 October.

Asserting African Agency on the Zimbabwe Political Question: Mugabe's Philosophy and Tsvangirai's Diplomatic Failures in the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Lawrence Mhandara

Introduction

The political question in Zimbabwe during Mugabe's reign, as claimed by his key opponent Tsvangirai as well as several scholarly works was centred on the hard issue of his (mis)rule as it related to the weak institutionalisation of competitive politics. Likewise, the Mugabe era has been benchmarked in terms of contested legitimacy which has been discursively buttressed on allegations of electoral misconduct and weak economic development that followed the fast track land redistribution exercise in the early 2000. By the June 2000 general elections, the counter-Mugabe bloc represented by Tsvangirai's party was bitterly complaining of Mugabe's peddled authoritarian tendencies, forcing the internal dispute onto the international stage. Tsvangirai forcefully appealed to the international community to censure his rival (Raftopolous, 2013a). It was natural that such appeals were primarily targeted at the SADC based on the geographical propinquity of the organisation to the 'political hotspot' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). Instead, the SADC eschewed coercion and opted for suasion and engagement with Mugabe. The SADC policy on Zimbabwe represented a diplomatic failure for Tsvangirai and some career defining victories for Mugabe. What explains Mugabe's victory over his nemesis to the extent that SADC preferred a softer approach to Mugabe's alleged 'crisis-generating' rule in Zimbabwe? At least three answers to the question dominate extant literature: SADC was too bound by a sense of solidarity (brotherhood), making it a club of incumbents; SADC's approaches were ineffective and rigidly respect the principles of sovereignty and discourage intrusive policies in the affairs of member states despite the existence of peace and security protocols indicating otherwise; and that SADC structures were too feeble to implement the norms within

the conflict prevention, management and resolution frameworks that existed in the organisations at the material time.

This chapter proposes that a hitherto under researched and largely missing explanation is the absence of agency in Mugabe's philosophy that helped to shape the SADC's policy on Zimbabwe. The chapter will demonstrate that continuity in the SADC policy on the political question in Zimbabwe was based on Mugabe's effective articulation of the need to assert African agency in internal political challenges, a position that resonated with the general tenor within the SADC. Mugabe's philosophy starkly contrasted with Tsvangirai's ideological stand which appeared to express low opinion on African agency. By and large, this explains why Tsvangirai, throughout his political career, was outfoxed by Mugabe at the SADC level.

The first section of the chapter proffers a synoptic reflection into what I refer to as the 'Zimbabwe political question' tracing the antecedents of the political conundrum to the installation of Mugabe's rule in 1980, to the consolidation of his rule up to the climax in the 2000s. The section is succeeded by one which recollects the decision by Tsvangirai to internationalise the question. The SADC reaction to Tsvangirai's complains are also compressed in the same segment. The next section provides an exegesis of Tsvangirai's diplomatic endeavours to convince the SADC to forcefully push Mugabe out of office to clear the path for his ascendancy. The explanation constitutes the fulcrum of the argument by attributing Mugabe's philosophy to his diplomatic triumphalism which convinced the SADC to situate African agency as the source of the dispute, spurning Tsvangirai's philosophy of 'Westernisation of the solution' to the Mugabe problem. The last section concludes the chapter.

The Zimbabwe Political Question: Mugabe and the Democratic Debility

The challenges that are alleged to have single-handedly caused by Mugabe are kaleidoscopic. The long list of his political misdeeds is contained in countless scholarly works, all of which compete to explain how the late president of the country haemorrhaged democracy for his own political benefit (Alden, 2002; Masunungure, 2009, 2011, 2013; Mlambo, 2017; Moore, 2014; Ncube, 2013; Raftopoulos, 2013a; Rutherford, 2018; Sachikonye, 2011). A summary of the main issues that brought Mugabe's name into disrepute,

creating a perception of a crisis in what I term the 'Zimbabwe political question' suffices. While Mugabe's reputation at the helm of the political system was welcomed with headwinds in the late 1990s into the 2000s, the foundational pillars of the political question can be located right from his ascendancy in 1980.

The first decade of independence was informed by the internal pre-colonial and colonial political events as well as the realities obtaining within the Southern Africa region. There was need for Mugabe's new government to establish strong institutions that were supposed to transform the system in resonance with the liberation objectives (Mandaza & Sachikonye, 1991). Elections held in February 1980 under the 1979 Lancaster House Settlement saw Mugabe's ZANU resoundingly sweeping to victory, ushering in a free and black-led Zimbabwe (Moyo, 1992). Initially, the country became a beacon of hope for Southern Africa and Africa as a whole as it seemed to be well governed with a robust agro-based industrial economy. Mugabe won domestic and international acclaim for pronouncing and implementing a policy of racial reconciliation and was even nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize in 1980. From the onset, Mugabe made a commitment to transform the former colonial state based on social justice, reconciliation and non-racial society but the foundation for competitive politics was brittle. At that time, this was not an issue for as long as the economic interests of the imperial powers were ring-fenced from any disruption.

Sooner, Mugabe was accused of failure to make a break with the colonial government policies in both his attitude and management of the state (Mair & Sithole, 2002, p. 79). Mugabe inherited and protected a hybrid of structures from the colonial state, including the repressive machinery of Rhodesia (Muzondidya, 2011, pp. 18-22), which he used for power retention (Masunungure, 2011, p. 52). The legal frameworks, it is reasoned, that sustained the colonial state were not reconstructed to be compatible with the new political order and colonial laws such as the Presidential Emergency Powers Act and the Law and Order Maintenance Act were retained to keep critics under control (Weitzer, 1984, p. 539; Linington, 1997, pp. 34-35; Mhlaba, 1989, p. 4). Repression was the ultimo ratio of Mugabe's power, culminating in a culture of violence and intolerance of both competitive elections and multi-party politics (Krieger, 2005, pp. 11-

15; Mair & Sithole, 2002, pp. 56-60; Moyo 1993, pp. 9-13; Nkomo, 2001; Sachikonye, 2012, p. 18; Weitzer, 1984, p. 539). These were the early signs of a political challenge which later overshadowed Mugabe's achievements in his later years in politics.

The dominant neoliberal conclusion is that the conduct of elections in the first decade exposed Mugabe's intolerance for political challenge in general and multiparty politics in particular. The first two elections after uhuru, 1980 and 1985, were held in a context of violence attributed to Mugabe himself. This also extended to the undisguised desire by Mugabe to have a legislated one-party system, probably influenced by his Leninist ideological soaking, which can be rationally viewed as an antecedent to the post-Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) formation political dynamics (Raftopolous 2013b). Much of Mugabe's time in the first ten years of independence was spent on the one-party agenda. This conditioned his attitude towards political rivals. Mugabe's opponents before Tsvangirai such as Joshua Nkomo and Edgar Tekere constantly complained of his resort to violence and threats of it to crush them or undermine their existence. By the end of the first decade, Mugabe's eyes were "...focused on one thing...: conquest of power, and retention of power" (Saunders, 2000, p. 38). To further instil fear in the opposition, Mugabe's rivals were constantly subjected to public humiliation, including dismissals from government and treason charges. This fate befell politicians such as Lookout Masuku and Dumiso Dabengwa. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2003, p. 114, as cited in Mhandara and Poee, 2013, p. 8) compresses the political paradox of the first decade of independence: "...the 1980s were characterised by an ambiguous and contradictory situation whereby the powerful aspirations of the ordinary citizens for rights, democracy and human security co-existed with the strong and resilient practices of authoritarianism and violence."

The state of the political economy at the end of the first decade, reignited debate about the 'unfinished business' of transforming the post-colonial state into a liberal democratic system (Hammar, Stig & Raftopolous, 2003). Imbued by the end of the Cold War dynamics, civil society groups were at the forefront of steering this debate which forced Mugabe to dither on the legislated one-party state agenda (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2006). At the same time, the country hit a bad patch in economic terms. Mugabe capitulated to

the pressures of capitalism by liberalising the economy through the adoption of the phased neo-liberal Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). The ideological shift from welfarism to capitalism had far reaching implications on the socio-economic and political dynamics in the country (Mpfu, 2020). The adjustment programmes received financial and political support from international financial institutions (IFIs) but marked a sudden and explicit ideological shift from populist to capitalist development (Sachikonye, 2012, p. 17; Bond & Manyanya, 2002, p. 72). The first phase was implemented from 1990 to 1995. The programme was aimed at opening the economy through monetary policy and trade liberalisation, withdrawal of subsidies among other austerity measures. The austerity measures created the basis for popular alienation and widespread discontent among the consumer associations and the hard-hit low-income groups. Retrenchments and price hikes across sectors ensued, worsening economic and social security. This was worsened by social unrest in the form of stay-aways, food riots and strikes which were met with forceful responses from Mugabe. The socio-economic upheaval brought by ESAP created political opponents to which Mugabe became increasingly intolerant (Bhebhe & Ranger, 2003).

By the mid-1990s, civil society groups began to openly express their resentment to Mugabe's management of the state. Of particular notice were the activities of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) which galvanised other civil society groups into the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999, with Tsvangirai at the helm (Bond & Manyanya, 2002). With mounting pressure and panic arising from a potential loss of power, Mugabe responded in ways that resonated with his long-term goal to maintain his position (Mair & Sithole, 2002, p. 94). Mugabe was accused of being selective in addressing the growing list of grievances. For instance, he managed to buy the allegiance of the war veterans' constituency in 1997 by acceding to their demand for recognition through payment of gratuities and pensions (Blair, 2002). Since the war veterans received this favour, Tsvangirai's party sustained the allegation that war veterans have been used to intimidate, harass and threaten anyone opposed to Mugabe's rule.

The developments in the first two decades of independence provide sufficient basis for the enigmatic political dynamics that popularised what

has been described as the Zimbabwe crises. A number of scholars have extensively written on the defining moments of what they term ‘deepening authoritarianism’ in Zimbabwe since 2000 (see Chan, 2003; Campbell, 2003). The threat to Mugabe’s power was witnessed in the aftermath of the defeat of the ‘YES’ vote in the February 2000 constitutional referendum. A period of siege followed accompanied by violence-ridden elections in which the opposition claimed victimisation. Draconian laws reminiscent of repressive colonial laws were created to stifle the MDC, including the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) passed in 2002 (Chan, 2010, p. 19).

Twenty years after independence, the country was still suffering from historical economic grievances, in particular the lopsided land ownership and economy, over which the Mugabe government had failed to institute structural reforms as the white farmers and industrialists were reluctant to let go their privileges (Phimister & Raftopoulos, 2004, p. 389). The skewed economic structure also meant the exclusion of the majority blacks in the productive sectors. This historical tragedy has become the basis of the seemingly unresolvable political problem in Zimbabwe, which has also been inherited by his successor, Mnangagwa. Mugabe has been accused, both when alive and posthumously, of taking advantage of the unresolved racial inequalities in the economy, especially land ownership and economic empowerment of the people to remain in power (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2006, p. 13). As Muzondidya (2011, p. 40) has observed, “because of the unresolved colonial legacies of racial prejudice and inequalities, it was easier for the incumbent government [Mugabe] to use both land and race for political mobilisation and scapegoating when it found itself confronted with mounting popular pressure.” The land reform programme was addressed in phases, initially well-planned, but later morphed into a radical, haphazard and disjointed exercise that became a major trigger to Zimbabwe’s plunge (Matondi, 2012, p. 2).

However, several pan-Africanist scholars have submitted a counter-narrative to external representations of Mugabe’s policies, in particular the land reform. Contrary to the lopsided analyses in the literature presented in the greater part of this section, the alternative discourse places Mugabe as one of Africa’s political and economic doyens for mounting a lifetime

campaign to resist sophisticated neo-imperial designs by decolonizing and deracialising the economic land ownership structure (Mpofu, 2020, p. 11). He is thus celebrated for eradicating the colonial hangovers by correcting a constitutionally sponsored injustice that protected a racial agrarian structure. It has been argued that the land policy in Zimbabwe was about re-asserting sovereignty and transformation of the dominant settler-colonial agrarian relations towards racial and social equitable structure of access to economic and natural resources: “agrarian reforms sought to re-orient state intervention towards broader development and to redress entrenched racially-unequal political and economic relations... the structural reforms of the FTLRP promise a deeper form of substantive democracy, in a society previously pervaded by deep racial and class inequalities, than the limited demands focused on good governance reforms. Land reform has created the social and economic foundation and potential for broad-based development and democratisation” Moyo & Chambati, 2013, pp. 7 & 9). A keen reading of several works de-centred from the neoliberal discourse shows that despite the authoritarian posture towards a political opposition which provoked confrontations with the judiciary, capital, private media, Western donors and related civil society organisations opposed to Mugabe, the redistributive outcome of the land reform in as far as it empowered the excluded masses must be acknowledged (see Kinsey, 1999; Moyo, 2000; Moyo & Yeros, 2007; Moyo, 2011; Scoones, et al, 2011).

Yet the West unwisely responded to the developments through isolating and sanctioning Mugabe and his government. Thereafter, opponents of the land reform and other empowerment policies, referred to by Mugabe himself as the Third Chimurenga (a war succeeding the unfinished objectives of the armed struggle), became casualties in the confrontations that ensued such that elections held from 2000 to 2008 attracted serious contestation based on allegations of a prohibitive political environment. The partisan polarisation and antagonism worsened with each election. Just three months before the June 2000 elections, Mugabe promised to deal with the MDC warning them that they will die for attempting to cause disunity among the people (Krieger, 2005). Krieger further notes that a month later, Mugabe focused his ire directly to the opposition party leader, Morgan Tsvangirai warning him that he was playing with fire which would consume him. At the peak of the odious relations, Mugabe (2001, p. 88) attributed the MDC

to a Western conspiracy which had already imposed sanctions against his rule:

The MDC should never be judged or characterized by its black trade union face; by its youthful student face; by its salaried black suburban junior professionals; never by its rough and violent high density lumpen elements. It is much deeper than these human superficialities; for it is immovably and implacably moored in the colonial yesteryear and embraces wittingly or unwittingly the repulsive ideology of return to white settler rule. MDC is as old and as strong as the forces that control it; that converges on it and control it... It is a counter-revolutionary Trojan horse contrived and nurtured by the very inimical forces that enslaved and oppressed our people yesterday.

Meanwhile, the Tsvangirai-led MDC made incessant claims that it had won all the elections since 2000 and accused Mugabe of blocking the opposition from assuming office. Amidst the raging enmity between Mugabe and Tsvangirai, a full-blown economic apocalypse surfaced. The key productive sectors such as agriculture, industry and manufacturing operated below previous capacity. There were extreme shortages of food, energy, and foreign currency.

Resultantly, what has been attributed to as the political problem in Zimbabwe is the contested authority of Mugabe despite his successive victories over Tsvangirai and signs of economic failure. The situation betrayed two of the three dimensions of state fragility articulated by Stewart and Brown (2010, p. 6), namely service failures, where the state fails to ensure that all citizens have access to basic services (health, education, water and sanitation etc); and legitimacy failures, where the leader lacks legitimacy, and is typically not democratic. Stewart and Brown identify the following deficits on lack of legitimacy: no free, fair, and regular elections; acquisition of power by force; suppression of the opposition; absence of civil and political liberties, such as free speech and protection from arbitrary arrest. The political question in Zimbabwe is thus related to the hard issue of Mugabe's perceived undemocratic rule as it relates to the weak institutionalisation of competitive politics giving rise to contested legitimacy, electoral misconduct (Masunugure, 2011; Mhandara & Pooe, 2013), and weak economic development (Mhandara

& Murwira, 2017; Mlambo, 2017). By the time the 27 June 2008 run-off election was held, the contradictions between Mugabe and Tsvangirai had deteriorated into a twin crisis of legitimacy and efficacy for Mugabe (Masunungure, 2009), prominently emerging as a malnourished autocracy (Bassuener, 2008).

Tsvangirai Petitions the SADC to Punish Mugabe

Tsvangirai's definition of the Zimbabwe political question, indeed neoliberal scholars', was Mugabe's loathe for open political competition, outright rigging of elections and a general hatred for democracy. Tsvangirai bitterly flagged these issues each time he made reference to the former President since the 2000 Constitutional referendum and appealed to the SADC to intervene to serve a 'dying democracy' (Moore, 2014). Electoral misconduct bordered on restrictions on the campaign freedom of Tsvangirai's party and its supporters, a biased campaign environment that favoured Mugabe and his party, flaws in the casting, counting, or tabulation of ballots. To SADC, Tsvangirai insisted on the link between the political economic crisis and Mugabe's electoral chicanery: "The shoddy manner in which [elections have] been conducted and the consequent illegitimacy of the result will plunge this country into a serious crisis" (Shaw & Gatora, 2013). Local and international election observer reports exposed electoral misconduct. For example, just before the 2008 presidential election run-off, the Pan-African Parliament Observer Mission Report had concluded that the election could not promote free and fair outcomes (Badza, 2009, pp. 149-175). However, the SADC publicly ignored both the reports and Tsvangirai's very loud cries which he wanted the organisation to exploit and oust Mugabe. Contrary, the SADC applauded outcomes of the successive elections. The organisation preferred a softer approach and congratulated Mugabe for 'winning' the successive elections in the midst of heavily contested outcomes. The SADC also proceeded to support the African Union's appointment of the former President of Mozambique, Joachim Chissano, to initiate dialogue by encouraging Mugabe to engage Tsvangirai, not even mentioning any condition for him to exit office. This came against a background of spirited resistance by Mugabe to delegitimise Tsvangirai as a Western funded project to remove him from power after implementing the fast track land reform policy.

Mugabe's intransigence would continue as shown by the beatings of Tsvangirai and other opposition leaders at the Save Zimbabwe Campaign meeting on 11 March 2007. The ire which was caused by pictures of Tsvangirai's swollen face shared and sensationalised by the pro-opposition media compelled the AU to formally intervene through mandating the SADC to facilitate dialogue. Amidst dissenting calls for muscular action against Mugabe from Botswana and Zambia, the SADC generally maintained a general policy of magnanimity towards Mugabe throughout its formal engagement. The prior quasi-formal engagements with the Zimbabwe question maintained the same formula. Mugabe was never publicly humiliated as Tsvangirai had anticipated (Hove & Ndawana, 2016, p. 70; Mhandara & Poole, 2013, p. 6; Mufumadi, 2010). From the 2000 initiative by the SADC to assemble a taskforce of six states, namely, Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, and South Africa, the August 2001 attempt to facilitate dialogue between Mugabe and Tsvangirai to the 2002 Extraordinary SADC Summit in Blantyre, Mugabe was never a subject of open SADC admonition or subjected to any discussion to force his exit from office. The 2003 SADC Summit in Tanzania was preceded by a standing ovation for Mugabe despite reports of human rights abuses and the SADC urged the West to remove sanctions against Mugabe. The Summit further warned the EU to keep its aid after threats that it would not fund the SADC projects in which Mugabe was involved (Sirota, 2004, p. 344).

Formal mediation began, and the lead mediator, former President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, hailed Mugabe for fully supporting the SADC efforts and blamed the 'world powers' for failing to honour the commitments made at the 1998 donor conference on the Zimbabwe land question (Chikane, 2013). The SADC's efforts were never directed at the hard core issues of democracy and human rights as had been expected by Tsvangirai, his major backers in the form of the local civil society organisations, the European Union and the USA. Mbeki's task included everything except rebuking Mugabe. His mandate was to "... begin the process leading to the normalisation of the situation in Zimbabwe and the resumption of its development and reconstruction process intended to achieve a better life for all Zimbabweans on a sustainable basis" (former president Thabo Mbeki, as cited in Mlambo and Raftopoulos, 2010, p. 8). The mediator had three immediate tasks: to get the parties to endorse the idea that elections would

resolve the political question; to help the parties to agree to electoral reforms that would yield uncontested outcomes; and to help parties to agree on measures that would facilitate the acceptance of outcomes (Mhandara & Poore, 2013). The SADC succeeded in this mission as the March 2008 harmonised elections were held under a generally conflict-free environment between the Mugabe and Tsvangirai sides. The inconclusive presidential elections however necessitated a run-off whose outcome was heavily discredited by Tsvangirai and his Western backers who, on account of their influence, escalated the matter to the UN Security Council by July 2008.

It then became clear to the SADC that the turn of events needed a solution to create conditions that would allow Mugabe and Tsvangirai to close ranks while avoiding pleasing Tsvangirai or publicly antagonising Mugabe. A delicate balancing solution was desperately needed. This is the context which birthed the inclusive government established in 2009, after both Mugabe and Tsvangirai signed the Global Political Agreement (GPA). The GPA resonated with the lead mediator's aim for a mutually acceptable outcome that would manage the Zimbabwe question without heaping the blame on Mugabe. This goal was dissonant to Tsvangirai's plan. He internationalised his dispute with Mugabe to subject him to international opprobrium which would be followed by a forced and early exit from the office. He was looking for nothing short of action that would cripple Mugabe's political prospects. The SADC mediation under Mbeki disappointed Tsvangirai and its backers when it preferred 'quiet diplomacy'. The term 'quiet diplomacy' is a crisis containment strategy describing (a) the overall framework rooted in traditional diplomacy, rather than coercive diplomacy; and (b) the style of diplomatic engagement, that is respectful of all parties, perceived as wrong or right. Tsvangirai was convinced that the SADC has been propping a dictator (Hove & Ndawana 2016: 63; International Crisis Group 2007, as cited in Moller, 2009, p. 10). After Mbeki steered Mugabe and Tsvangirai into signing the GPA, the USA, Tsvangirai's most reliable and consistent backer, was bitter: "We think the facilitation is over, it led to [a] power sharing agreement that is flawed" (USA Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, as cited in Chikane, 2012, p. 137). One can be forgiven to speculate that the 'flawed' deal in USA's charge was based on an outcome that did not result in Mugabe being publicly criticised by the SADC or still terms that would compel Mugabe to leave his office in favour of Tsvangirai.

Earlier, a disillusioned Western diplomat accredited to Zimbabwe vented his disappointment with the process. He bitterly complained that “People at least expected some limited variation to the usual solidarity message and back-patting that African leaders have become infamous for”, adding that both the mediator and the SADC were a “big let-down” (Reliefweb, 2007).

The former President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, succeeded Mbeki in 2009 and took over the lead mediator’s position. He attempted a futile coercive diplomacy posture. Zuma’s task was to facilitate the crafting and implementation of an election roadmap, as required by the GPA to ensure the implementation of key reforms which would pave the way for the 2013 elections. He took an assertive and forceful stance and thereby became acceptable to both Tsvangirai, and his internal and external backers to the extent that the former President of the USA, Barack Obama, praised Zuma’s efforts for having presented “an opportunity... to move into a new phase where perhaps Zimbabwe can finally achieve all its promises’ (Kaarhus, et al., 2013, pp. 29-66). The opportunity referred to by Obama related to how Zuma was perceived as steering the process in a direction that his predecessor had rejected, that is, openly castigating Mugabe for not conceding ground in favour of Tsvangirai through the latter’s demands for a range of reforms. However, the objective was never achieved as the consensus system in the SADC eschewed the populist temptations to publicly demonise Mugabe. This is not to suggest that SADC meetings never reprimanded the parties in Zimbabwe as Zuma’s tenure as the mediator witnessed a departure by the SADC communiqués as they insisted on the full implementation of the GPA and electoral reforms among all the parties (Mhandara & Poore, 2013, pp. 25-26). The organisation however used non-discriminatory language choosing the phrase ‘all parties’ or ‘all leaders’ instead of aligning or blaming any.

But the bigger problem persisted as the implementation of the GPA remained a divisive subject between Mugabe and Tsvangirai. Zuma failed to convince the SADC to openly support his coercive strategy. By 2013, Mugabe had the temerity of unilaterally setting the date for the harmonised elections in utter contempt of the mediator’s opinion. He insisted on the SADC respecting the sovereignty of Zimbabwe, another position rooted in the respect of African agency, in this case Zimbabwe’s. The SADC could only watch the unfolding

events, and the mediation came to an abrupt halt as the 2013 election results which handed Mugabe a huge victory were announced. The 2013 elections were peaceful and both the SADC and the AU election observer missions declared the elections as free and fair despite the non-implementation of a number of reforms as required by the GPA. Yet allegations of technical manipulation emerged and the political question resurfaced, as Tsvangirai continued to accuse Mugabe of electoral misconduct. Throughout Mugabe's tenure a 'soft' approach was therefore used in response to Tsvangirai's pleas for strong action, indicating that the sub-regional organisation preferred suasion and engagement over coercive diplomacy. This represented a diplomatic loss to Tsvangirai's long but unsuccessful political fight to recruit external actors to help him oust Mugabe. Tsvangirai's failure to convince SADC to oust Mugabe is neatly and unambiguously captured by Bassuener (2008): "Tsvangirai and the MDC faced a brutal choice. International opprobrium didn't lead to Mugabe's forced ouster, as many had hoped. Tsvangirai swallowed the bitter pill."

The SADC handling of the Zimbabwe political question or Mugabe's 'democratic deviance' came in the context of varied mechanisms and responses to deal with threats to democracy under the broader framework of promoting peace and security in the sub-region. The principles of the SADC Treaty (amended in 2001) include peace, security, democracy, human rights and rule of law. The SADC's commitment to democracy is nonetheless clear in the SADC Treaty and the Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ. Further buttressing the normative commitments are the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections that amplify the African Union framework on the same. The norm of free and fair elections at SADC level supports the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and several AU protocols. The frameworks for the conduct of credible and peaceful democratic elections at the SADC level includes the SADC Parliamentary Forum Norms and Standards (2001), the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa Electoral Commissions' Forum (2003) and the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. The regional guidelines commit SADC member states to follow agreed best election practices. The SADC Guidelines on the Conduct of Elections, also known as the Mauritian Protocol, was adopted on 17 August 2004 during the SADC Summit in

Mauritius. The Protocol is a governance framework attempting to legitimise the conduct of elections within the region. It contains principles that member states are obligated to respect.

The logical question then is: why would a regional organisation with a clear framework to protect democracy appear to be siding with a 'dictator' (Mugabe) – 'one who frequently replaced ballots with bullets' - and frustrating a well-meaning democrat (Tsvangirai)? The next section attempts to answer this paradox by positing a link between Mugabe's philosophy and Tsvangirai's diplomatic catastrophe.

Mugabe's Philosophy outfoxes Tsvangirai

Mugabe and African Agency: Primacy of the 'African'

International politics is an arena of power relations where influence and control over processes and issues determines the agency of each actor. Agency in international politics relates to the ability to exercise political action. Agency means action to exert power (Braun et al, 2019; Wright as cited in Brown, 2012, p. 1893). It underscores the importance of each actor to represent its will upon other actors not just to be acted upon; to be a historical agent not just history's recipient. In this perspective, agency has an anthropocentric connotation closely tied to the idea of a human subject with a history, intentions and the capacity to make his or her own decisions (Braun et al, 2019). Four categories of African agency have been identified by Brown, namely, that exercised by collective international organisations such as the African Union and its regional adjuncts; that exercised by each state; that exercised by state-based actors representing states; and that exercised by non-state actors. Mugabe represented all of the manifestations of African agency with a non-ambiguous preference towards African states to decide and solve challenges emanating from within.

His timeless belief in the exercise of African agency has roots in Africa's past; a history of exploitation, injustice and marginalisation against a background of dehumanising slave trade and colonisation. Engel & Olsen 2005 (as cited in Chipaike & Matarutse, 2018, p. 2) argues that this history is also attributed to Africa's marginality in international relations. Africa's fringe role is underwritten by a common discourse emerging from, and amplified

by, the West, its media and planted civil society and academia that portrays the continent as a 'patient' in need of Western intervention to cure its dysfunctional systems of government and reverse the human rights deficits.

Africa, Mugabe believed, should not allow to be relegated into a passive actor in international relations, let alone in important events that shape its future. The continent should not be seen as peripheral to the main forces determining international relations to off-set the minnow status and assert its agency. Safeguarding sovereign decision making in domestic policy is a foundational ability in asserting this agency. Thus guarding against what Dunn (2001: 51) as cited in Chipaike and Matarutse (2018, p. 6) terms re-colonisation of Africa in the post-Cold War epoch. Mugabe believed that African agency should be exerted in more assertive ways that were multi-faceted, and extending to the domain of peace and security. In this way, Mugabe embodied an anti-imperialist and pan-African philosophy to politics. His definition of the Zimbabwe and African problems and solutions was uniform. He situated them in the paradigm of colonial historiography, in particular the injustices and exploitation suffered by Africans, and post-colonial hegemonic intentions that disfavoured the indigenous African. In contrast, Tsvangirai worked so hard to distance himself from the liberation history by constructing an image of a curator of neoliberal values of democracy and human rights which resonated with Western interests in Zimbabwe (Moyo & Yeros, 2007).

Following the fall-out with Britain on the land question, Mugabe managed to place the British and Western antagonism towards himself and the ruling party, including the imposition of sanctions, in the context of attempted return to colonialism (Phimister & Raftopoulos, 2004). The imperial intentions manifested when the British government spurred other Western countries to support the formation of the MDC as their proxy in their strategic objective of ousting Mugabe and ZANU-PF from power while providing a convenient conduit to secure their will. Contrary to analyses that Mugabe was hiding behind the rhetoric of anti-imperialism (see Phimister & Raftopoulos, 2004) to avert the parsing of his misrule rule, his anti-imperial and pan-African eminence was undoubted on the continent and in developing countries. The endorsements and ear-splitting applauses he received each time he made reference to the subject were never unnoticed.

One of his famous acerbic speeches was his address to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2002, Mugabe presented the land reform as part of a continuing struggle against colonialism and imperialism. Mugabe reminded the audience of the preparedness of Zimbabwe to shed its blood to protect its hard won independence, and roared that: “We are [Zimbabweans and Africans] not Europeans. We have not asked for any inch of Europe, any square inch of that territory. So Blair, keep your England and let me keep my Zimbabwe!” (The Star, 2 September 2002 cited in Phimister & Raftopoulos, 2004, p. 388). Mugabe maintained his position with consistency at various summits. At the Non-Aligned Movement Summit held in Kuala Lumpur at the end of February 2003, Mugabe condemned the new imperialism and castigated the United States for having “...awakened to the implications of being the sole superpower, joined by Britain as a born-again colonialist.” Thus on realising the anti-imperial agenda, both the African leaders and organisations frustrated the bullying interventions of the West on Zimbabwe by emphasising the importance of asserting Africa’s role and power on the emergent problems in Zimbabwe. The African audience was convinced that the intention to punish Mugabe through regime change was real and there was need for Africa to unite and defeat the neo-imperial scheme. All Mugabe did was to force Africa to re-encounter the history of colonial marginalisation and contextualise the conversation in problems that Zimbabwe was facing. He abhorred external interference and abuse of power by Western actors through the imposition of solutions whose outcomes served their own interests. Challenges in Africa affected Africans the most and emphasised the ability to exert influence and control over structures, processes and conflicts. Africa, he emphasised, should never be a passive bystander in conflict situations that attract outside interests but it must prove to be the arch-influencer of situations, the results of which must serve the best interest of the Africans. Mugabe believed in the ability of the collective power of Africa to dismantle the dominance of Western actors by exerting agency based on national sovereign authority. This agency had to be asserted by African leaders at various tiers of political activity. Mugabe needed to see more influence on political issues, underscoring the ‘African role’ (Brown, 2012, p. 1896), and a unified political force. His articulation of the exercise of African agency represented commitment to Afro-centrism par excellence. In the process, he won support among the

majority of Africans who shared his profound understanding of colonial and imperial history unlike Tsvangirai who had amplified an ahistorical stance that emboldened Western antagonism and external representation of the Zimbabwe problem (Mpofu, 2020). This is the context in which the African intervention in the Zimbabwe political question was framed.

The SADC Stands by Mugabe

One of Tsvangirai's key strategies was to frustrate the SADC process, primarily due to the party's discomfort with what it perceived as the organisational sympathy towards Mugabe (Mhandara & Poee, 2013, p. 13). As early as 2008, Tsvangirai was complaining that African leaders had failed to help Zimbabwe and asked the UN to intervene (Kpodo & Flynn 2008). This was done with the intention of transferring the conflict from African actors to the Western-dominated United Nations (UN) in Tsvangirai's bid to take-over from Mugabe. Tsvangirai's spokesperson expressed his principal's position on the process: "Although they [SADC leaders] talk in hushed tones about the need for change in Zimbabwe, none of them openly expresses solidarity with those fighting for that change. It is as if those opposed to Mugabe are engaged in illegal activities" (Reliefweb, 2007). This position undermined the SADC agency and strongly resonated with the position of the EU and USA who had described the SADC approach as treating Mugabe with the 'kids gloves' (News24, 2008). By attempting to side-step the SADC, Tsvangirai blundered and succeeded in alienating himself from the organisation and left the space to be fully occupied by Mugabe. Tsvangirai, like his Western backers, presented himself as a hater of Afrocentric approaches that accommodated Mugabe. He preferred coercive diplomacy, including aggressive 'disciplining' of Mugabe. This posture inadvertently exposed his low opinion on the capacity of SADC to solve his complains, choosing to align with a hegemonic voice. This unwise, manoeuvre probably stemmed from diplomatic inexperience or wrong advice. Indeed, Tsvangirai wrongly reduced the solution to his problems to the ouster of Mugabe, a position publicly endorsed by the former colonial masters and the USA, sending a wrong message to the SADC that its approach to Mugabe's 'misrule' was not only wrong but unhelpful to the cause of democracy. Tsvangirai did quite a lot to embarrass himself by promoting a discourse that the EU and the USA, not the SADC, was his "knighted saviour with unfettered capacity to

bring about a solution” to the Mugabe problem (Mufumadi, 2010, p. 628). The SADC responded in kind by downplaying Tsvangirai’s definition of the problem in Zimbabwe, while resisting the tag of implementing agents of outcomes imposed by ‘outsiders’. In the end, Tsvangirai’s Western-backed position lost favour with the SADC, and Chan (2010) observes how neither SADC leaders, nor almost any leader in Africa, saw Tsvangirai as a viable alternative to Mugabe.

On the other hand, Mugabe’s government eulogised the SADC leadership for their role in helping Zimbabwe to solve the political dispute (News24, 2008). In so doing, Mugabe succeeded in presenting Tsvangirai and his backers as ideological fundamentalists threatening both the African culture and African agency. Mugabe specifically vilified external agency and referred to any diplomatic actions taken by non-African actors as plotting by erstwhile colonizers. Mugabe’s insistence on the centrality of African agency to the Zimbabwe problems was created by his consciousness of the colonial legacy (Phimister & Raftopoulos, 2004). Tsvangirai alienated himself from the same and this limited his diplomatic assets to convince the SADC which had similar publicly expressed awareness as Mugabe. By linking Tsvangirai’s political career to a Western conspiracy, and the Western countries’ demands for tough action against him, to the indelible colonial experience, Mugabe succeeded in limiting not only the influence of hostile enemies but also Tsvangirai’s successes at the SADC. Indeed, Bassuener (2008) surmises that:

Mugabe’s casting of Western powers as neo-colonialist meddlers carried considerable weight with politicians and a public attuned to the language of liberation struggle. For some time, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and other SADC leaders eschewed open criticism of Mugabe in favour of attempts at engagement and mediation.

Mugabe successfully mounted a philosophical campaign with a strong hinge on the impressive articulation of an existential threat to African agency emanating from the ‘all’ or ‘nothing’ demands from Tsvangirai and his Western backers. He turned what everyone believed was his political problems with both Tsvangirai and the West into a SADC problem. This triggered a form of non-confrontational resistance by the SADC against Tsvangirai’s attempt to liquidate African agency in favour of the direct or

indirect Western agency. He repeatedly reminded everyone that Africa had the wisdom to deal with its own problems. This is what he meant when he reminded his enemies that 'Africa is for Africans.' Out of this philosophy, Mugabe constructed a portrait of an 'African who is not an African' (Tsvangirai) determined to oppose anything done by an African. The task of convincing the SADC to soften its position was less arduous for Mugabe given that most leaders at the material time shared common anti-imperialist ethos and a sense of obligation to safeguard Africa from outside interference (Aeby, 2017, p. 274). The West's depiction of Africa as characterised by a catalogue of deficits such as lacking democracy (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, as cited in Nyamunda, 2014, p. 18), is considered as part of a broader neo-imperial scheme that SADC had to collectively resist together with Mugabe. In the eyes of the SADC, at least from a public diplomacy perspective, Mugabe had to be treated as less a perpetrator and more as a victim of a Western plot to undermine Africa using Zimbabwe as a pilot study.

Indeed, Mugabe's insistence on African agency was heeded by the SADC, and Mbeki's devotion to the African Solutions to African Problems philosophy when asked to lead the mediation in Zimbabwe was undying. As the EU and the USA were pushing for the unconditional ouster of Mugabe (Mhandara & Poole, 2013, p. 16), they appeared to be motivated by an ideology of 'white supremacy' to impose a set of cultural preferences as a solution to the Mugabe problem. The Western solutions, which should be blindly and uncritically accepted, were intended to improve African 'barbarians' (Mill, 2001, p. 14, as cited in Odour 2019, p. 114). Mbeki's belief in the centrality of African agency was loud: "...we, as Africans [my emphasis], don't know enough about ourselves and continue to be enslaved by a narrative about ourselves told by other people" (Mbeki, as cited in Moore, 2013: 109). This was a subtle rejection of both the 'Westernisation' of the solution to Mugabe's alleged political offences and the insistence on the 'Mugabe must go' Western policy. The SADC resisted the pressure to be instrumentalised into a destabilising force in Zimbabwe by frustrating Western agency often relying on the African solutions arguments to weaken the fundamentalist position posited by the anti-Mugabe bloc. The SADC appeared to share Mbeki and Mugabe's charge that the "white community as represented by Tsvangirai's sensationalised positions [my emphasis] suffered from stubborn and arrogant mind-sets that sought to dictate the outcome

of everything” (Mbeki 2002, as cited in Mhandara & Poore, 2013, p. 19). For Mbeki, representing the SADC, it was a patriotic duty to safeguard African agency against unwarranted Western interference using proxies like Tsvangirai (Chikane, p. 2013). After all, Mbeki had been a key figure in the African Renaissance project which resonated with Mugabe’s philosophy of reasserting African dignity and its capacity to make independent decisions on challenges affecting the continent, including questions related to democracy and human rights. The SADC therefore largely demonstrated the capacity to employ its soft power through non-cooperation with both Tsvangirai and the West driving a point to them that Africa has its own unique lens of analysing and managing its own challenges. As Chipaike and Matarutse (2018, p. 6) posit, “African resistance, especially to the US policies has been evident since the beginning of the twenty-first century. This resistance by African countries has been evident in several areas.” One such area where ‘soft power’ has been employed is to forestall Western demands on the Zimbabwe political question. The generalised account that Africans are passive actors in events that shape the continent was dismantled, and the “agency-less victim of great power manipulations” (Chipaike & Matarutse) tag turned out to be fictitious.

Conclusion

The foci of the Zimbabwe political question during Mugabe’s presidency was centred on the hard issue of his (mis)rule as it related to the weak institutionalisation of competitive politics, contested legitimacy, allegations of electoral misconduct and weak economic development that followed the fast track land redistribution exercise in the early 2000. In the 2000s, the counter-Mugabe bloc represented by Tsvangirai’s was bitterly complaining of Mugabe’s firm hold onto power, consigning the internal dispute onto the international stage. Tsvangirai forcefully appealed to the international community to force his rival out of power. It was natural that such appeals were primarily targeted at the SADC based on the geographical propinquity of the organisation to the problem. The reaction of the SADC to Tsvangirai’s pleas eschewed coercion and opted for suasion and engagement with Mugabe. His ouster was never a subject of any discussion by the SADC. This SADC policy on Zimbabwe represented a diplomatic failure for Tsvangirai and some career defining victories for Mugabe as he retained power beyond

the former's expectations. The chapter has argued that the SADC's position was to some extent influenced by Mugabe's rejection of non-African agency. The SADC therefore largely demonstrated the capacity to employ its soft power through non-cooperation with both Tsvangirai and the West driving a point to them that Africa has its own unique lens of analysing and managing its own challenges. In the end, Mugabe owed his survival to the SADC diplomatic structures through successful instrumentalisation of Afrocentricism at a moment when Tsvangirai's philosophy rooted for the 'Westernisation' of the solutions to the Zimbabwe political question.

References

- Badza, S. (2009). Zimbabwe's 2008 Harmonised Elections: Regional and International Reaction. In E. V Masunungure (Ed.), *Defying the Winds of Change*. Harare; Weaver Press (pp. 149-175).
- Bassuener, K. (2008). *Zimbabwe: An African Tragedy* <http://www.democratizationpolicy.org/pdf/DiplomatsHandbookCS9.pdf>
- Bhebe, N., & Ranger, T. (2003). *Nationalism, Democracy and Human Rights, Volume Two: Colonial and Post-Colonial Legacies*. Harare; University of Zimbabwe Publications.
- Blair, D. (2002). *Degrees in violence: Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power*. London: Continuum.
- Bond, P & Manyanya, M. (2003). *Zimbabwe's Plunge: Exhausted Nationalism, Neoliberalism and the Search for Social Justice*. Kwazulu-Natal: Kwazulu-Natal Press.
- Bratton, M., & Masunungure, E. V. (2009). *The Political Economy and Governance Context of Transition and Recovery in Zimbabwe*. Harare: World Bank.
- Braun, B., Schindler, S & Wille, T. (2019). Rethinking Agency in International Relations: Performativity, Performance and Networks. *Journal of International relations and Development*, 22 (4), 787-807.
- Brown, W. (2012). A question of agency: Africa in international politics. *Third World Quarterly*, 33 (10), 1889-1908.
- Campbell, H. (2003). *Reclaiming Zimbabwe: The Exhaustion of the Patriarchal Model of Liberation*. Trenton, N.J: Africa world.
- Chan, S. (2003). *Robert Mugabe: A Life of Power and Violence*. London: I.B Tauris.
- Chan, S. (2010). *Citizen of Zimbabwe: Conversations with Morgan Tsvangirai*. Harare; Weaver Press.
- Chipaike, R., & Matarutse, H. K. (2018). The Question of African Agency in International Relations. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 4, 1-16.
- Davidow, J. (1983). Zimbabwe is a Success. *Foreign Policy*, 49, 93-106.

Hammar, A., Stig, J & Raftopoulos, B. (2003). *Zimbabwe's Unfinished Business: Rethinking Land, State and Nation in the Context of Crisis*. Harare: Weaver Press.

Kaarhus, R., Derman, B., & Sjaastad, E. (2013). Reflections on national dynamics, responses and discourses in a regional context. In B. Derman & Kaarhus, R. (Eds.), *In The Shadow Of a Conflict: Crisis in Zimbabwe And its Effects in Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia*. Zimbabwe (pp. 29-66). Harare: Weaver Press.

Kinsey, B. H. (1999). Land Reform, Growth and Equity: Emerging Evidence from Zimbabwe's Resettlement Programme. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 25 (2), 173-196.

Kpodo, K & Flynn, D. (2008, September 12). *Tsvangirai appeals for UN intervention in Zimbabwe*. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-zimbabwe-election/tsvangirai-appeals-for-u-n-intervention-in-zimbabwe-idUSL2179111120080912>

Krieger, N. (2005). ZANU-PF Strategies in General Elections, 1980-2000: Discourse and Coercion. *African Affairs*, 104 (414), 1-34.

Linington, G. (1997). To what extent are the powers of the Zimbabwean president subject to parliamentary and judicial control? *Legal Forum*, 9 (2), 33-39.

Mair, S., & Sithole, M. (2002). *Blocked Democracies in Africa: Case study of Zimbabwe*. Harare: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung.

Mandaza, I & Sachikonye, L. (1991). *The One-Party State and Democracy: The Zimbabwe debate*. Harare: Sapes.

Masunungure, E.V. (2011). Zimbabwe's Militarised, Electoral Authoritarianism. *Journal of International Affairs*, 65 (1), 47-64.

Matondi, P.B. (2012). *Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform*. London: Zed Books.

Mhlaba, L. (1989). Whither Parliamentary Democracy: A Look at recent constitutional changes in Zimbabwe. *Zimbabwe Law Review*, 7, 1-9.

Moller, B. (2009). *Africa's Sub-regional Organisations: Seamless Web or Patchwork*. Crisis States Working Paper. London School of Economics and

Political Science (LSE)

Moyo, J. (1992). *Voting for Democracy*. Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications.

Moyo, J. N. (1993). Civil society in Zimbabwe. *Zambezia*, XX (1), 9-13.

Moyo, O. (2020). *On the Shoulders of Struggle: Memoirs of a Political Insider*. Bulawayo: LAN Readers.

Moyo, S & Chambati, W. (2013). *Introduction: Roots of the Fast Track Land Reform in Zimbabwe*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/289730489_Introduction_Roots_of_the_fast_track_land_reform_in_Zimbabwe

Moyo, S & Yeros, P. (2007) The Radicalized State: Zimbabwe's Interrupted Resolution. *Review of African Political Economy*, 111, 103-121.

Moyo, S. (2000). The Political Economy of Land Acquisition and Redistribution in Zimbabwe, 1990-1999. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 26 (1), 5-28.

Moyo, S. (2011). Changing Agrarian Relations after Redistributive Land Reform in Zimbabwe. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38 (5), 939-966.

Mufumadi, S. (2010). Lessons from African Responses to the DRC, Sudan and Zimbabwe. *The Round Table*, 99 (411), 621-630.

Mugabe, R.G. (2001). *Inside the Third Chimurenga*. Harare: Government Printers.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2006). *The nativist revolution and development conundrums in Zimbabwe*. Durban: ACCORD.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2013). The African Union, SADC and the GPA in Zimbabwe. In B. Raftopoulos (Ed.), *The Hard road to reform: The politics of the Global Political Agreement* (pp. 142-170). Harare: Weaver Press

Nkomo, J. (2001). *The story of my life*. Harare: Sapes.

Nyamunda, T. (2014). Empire, Global Coloniality and African Subjectivity. *Africa Spectrum*, 2, 113-115.

Odour, R. M. J. (2019). Liberal democracy: An African Critique. *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 38 (1), 108-122.

Phimister, I., & Raftopoulos, B. (2004). Mugabe, Mbeki and the Politics

- of Anti-imperialism. *Review of African Political Economy*, 101 (4), 385-400.
- Raftopoulos, B. (2013a). The 2013 elections in Zimbabwe: The End of an Era. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39 (4), 971-988.
- Raftopoulos, B. (2013b). *An overview of the Global Political Agreement: National Conflict, Regional Agony and International Dilemma*. In *The Hard Road to Reform: The Politics of the Global Political Agreement* (pp. 1-38). Harare: Weaver Press
- Reliefweb. (2007). *Zimbabwe: SADC mediation effort has little impact*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-sadc-mediation-effort-has-little-impact>
- Sachikonye, L. (2011). *When a State Turns on its Citizens: 60 Years Of Institutionalised Violence in Zimbabwe*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Sachikonye, L. (2012). *Zimbabwe's Lost Decade: Politics, Development and Society*. Harare: Weaver Press.
- Scoones, I., Marongwe, N., Mavedzenge, B., Murimbarimba, F., Mahenehene, J., & Sukume, C. (2011). Zimbabwe's Land Reform: Challenging the Myths. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(5), 967-993.
- Shaw Angus & Gotoru Gillian. (2013). *Claims of Vote-rigging Marks Zimbabwe elections*. The Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/claims-of-vote-rigging-mark-zimbabwe-elections/2013/08/01/f07984b0-fad6-11e2-8752-b41d7ed1f685_story.html
- Sirota, B. (2004). Sovereignty and the Southern African Development Community. *Chicago Journal of International Law*, 5 (1), 343-353.
- Stewart, F., & G. Brown (2010). *Fragile States*. CRISE Overview 3.
- Weitzer, R. (1984). In Search of Regime Security: Zimbabwe since Independence. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 22 (4), 529-557.

The Fall of Robert Mugabe: From Land Reform to Operation Restore Legacy

Avoid Masiraha

Introduction

The chapter traces the fall of Robert Mugabe from the Fast track land reform to the emergence of the New Dispensation under Emmerson Mnangagwa in 2017. It posits that the fall of Mugabe was a gradual process which can be situated in the Fast track land reform, the succeeding economic crisis, and the rise of a strong opposition in the late 1990s. Many writings on the fall of Mugabe provide narrow analysis by stacking his fall to November 2017 and a few preceding years. Therefore, it is necessary to historicise his fall and make it bare that the events of 2017 were an outcome of a long history of events at both national and ZANU PF party level. This chapter identifies the Fast track land reform as an era which prompted several other factors that played against Mugabe in 2017. Of these factors are economic crisis, Western hostility, factionalism and the war veterans and, a strong opposition as key factors in the downfall of Mugabe. The chapter provides a deeper understanding of these factors from the fast track land reform and how they played together until his fall in 2017. The central proposition is that the fall of Mugabe cannot be confined to events of 2017 neither can be narrowed to one factor. His fall was rather a combination of factors that gained traction after the fast track land reform process beginning in 1998.

A Brief Background

On the 14th of November 2017 military tanks rolled into the streets of Harare in what was termed “Operation Restore Legacy”. The intention, as espoused in their news bulletin of November 17, was to deal with “criminals” and counter revolutionaries around President Mugabe (Southall, 2017). The operation came after months of political bickering in the ruling ZANU PF over the succession of Mugabe, who had been in the top echelons of the party since the 1960s. The infighting in the ruling party culminated in the

dismissal of the then Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa for allegedly leading the Lacoste faction which regarded him as the heir to Mugabe in the event of his departure either willingly or by natural causes.

The succession bedlam expressed itself through deep rooted factionalism in ZANU PF and in the government. Two major factions had arisen, one allegedly led by Emmerson Mnangagwa then vice President and the other by the former first lady Grace Mugabe. The “Lacoste faction” of Mnangagwa, as it became known, was represented as institutionally rooted in the values and ethos of the liberation struggle hence sought to counter the pro-First Lady G40 faction. The postured existence of the Lacoste camp was alleged to have been concerned with “taking Mugabe to rest” and have him succeeded by an individual with liberation war credentials, a glaring reference to Emmerson Mnangagwa (Moore, 2017). For this reason, it had the backing of the war veterans and the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) who eventually voiced their support after the dismissal of Mnangagwa in November (Southall, 2017). The Grace Mugabe led G40 faction on the other hand was viewed in the eyes of the Lacoste faction as counter revolutionaries whose agenda was to reverse the gains of the struggle. In the statement read on the eve of the operation, the former First Lady’s cronies were referred to as “...criminals surrounding the President” hence the need to deal with them decisively and return the country to normalcy where development, unity and prosperity of the people would become the focus (Rutherford, 2018).

At the national level prior to the events of November 2017, the economic challenges continued to bite and were characterised by limited access to money in the banks, unemployment and the collapse of the manufacturing sector. The introduction of the bond notes to curb the cash crisis had not helped much and the economic meltdown continued to deepen. The nation continued to face local governance service delivery, and the general fall in the standards of living. The deepening economic crisis resulted in protests which became a common phenomenon in the cities especially in Harare and Bulawayo. These protests would turn violent in most cases through heavy suppression by the police. The protests and the clash of the citizens with the police signalled an enraged citizenry that sought a redress to the economic challenges.

This chapter traces the downfall of Mugabe from the land reform to November 2017. It is the thrust of this chapter that the fall of Mugabe can be divided into sections that date to the land reform process of 1998. Such sections are the land reform and its foibles, the elections, the economic crisis, and the factionalism which eventually put a death nail to Mugabe's 37-year rule. The fall in this paper is defined as the decline in popularity, the loss of grip over national institutions, the electorate and the international community, entities that had sustained Mugabe's rule over the years. In this vein, the paper argues that the fall of Mugabe was necessitated by events that date to the fast track land reform of 1998, the loss of legitimacy through various elections and the economic woes which became more pronounced after the year 2000. Deep factionalism in ZANU PF, contested legitimacy and international isolation, all played a key role in the fall of Mugabe.

The Fast Track land Reform Programme and Democracy

There are many interpretations that have been given to the land reform process beginning in the year 2000. In some quarters the term "fast track" is used depicting the haste with which it was done compared to the past resettlement programs. In the same vein anti-land reform protagonists have dubbed it the land grab which suggests an illegal process of taking away by force. Countries like the United States of America, Britain and critical voices in the country condemned the process as haphazard and disrespectful to colonial settler property ownership hence the term land grab (Mlambo, 2005). Such a view was not supported by Mugabe and many inside and outside ZANU PF who regarded the process as the final stages of Zimbabwe's independence (Mugabe 2001). In a paper titled Land Grab or taking back stolen land, Mlambo (2005) contends that the land reform process of 2000 is oversimplified by confining it to the events of the year 2000 without casting an eye to the history of colonialism, the Lancaster house negotiations and events preceding the land grab of 2000. Mugabe and ZANU PF dubbed it the Third Chimurenga which means the third uprising, counting from the first uprising of the late 19th century and the second uprising (1976 – 1980) from which Zimbabwe's political independence was born. The term invoked nationalist and decolonial stances hence rendering the term land grab inappropriate. This paper will refer to it as the fast track land reform.

The fast track land reform began in the month of February after a period of serious political upheavals with the emergence of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the food riots due to deepening economic crisis. Sadomba (2008, p. 1) argues that the land occupations beginning in 1998 were sparked by the no vote against the constitutional referendum of 2000. The failure by the government to secure a yes vote in the referendum had deep interpretations on the part of ZANU PF. Part of the interpretation was to view the prevailing no vote as a white sponsored project to evade the land reform process (Sadomba, 2008, p. 1). This view was born out of the huge participation of the white community in the referendum and the controversial clause which legalised land occupation without compensation. Another interpretation was the loss of support by Mugabe and ZANU PF as the decline of the economy continued. These two interpretations led to the quick occupation of the land by the war veterans whose influence had grown within ZANU PF and the government.

Scholars have argued that the fast track land reform process deepened human rights abuses by the state through violence to opposition supporters and the white commercial farmers. Moyo (2001) argues that the colonial legacy of Zimbabwe made land reform an electoral political competition between the ruling ZANU PF and the MDC. The former held radical views of the land reform while the latter were moderate on implementing the land reform. Such contestations resulted in political violence which went beyond the land but state power. While the land reform process strengthened Mugabe's support in the rural areas, where the vast majority of the peasants had anticipated the process for long time, the violence associated with the process alienated Mugabe from the international community mainly Europe and the United States of America and multilateral organisations of Western origin. The alienation tainted him as an autocratic leader with detrimental impacts on his power and popularity internationally and at domestic level. The subsequent economic plunge also cost him immensely with the urban voters.

Mugabe had enjoyed support of the West from the independence period throughout the 1990s. Such support had resulted in Mugabe's hold on to power for years and in stabilising the economy, itself a key factor in power retention. Levisky & Way (2005) argue that linkages of authoritarian regimes

to the West in many countries including Zimbabwe led to silence on human rights abuses. The alleged human rights abuses during the fast track land reform tilted the balance of forces as the West took a different stance. The outcry on abuse of human rights by the opposition, gained traction during the land reform period and after, perhaps due to how it was portrayed as a racial abuse of the white commercial farmers, but notably due to the Western proliferation of human rights issues (Sachikonye, 2002). After 2000, the rule of law was deeply compromised by ZANU (PF)'s politicisation of the judiciary together with economic decline, growing corruption and the partisan distribution of resources in return for ZANU (PF) loyalty (Verheul, 2013). Various human rights organisations were formed, and the civil society became more and more vibrant in providing a critical voice to the abuse of human rights. The Western media was also alive to Zimbabwean issues which contributed to the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe by the US and its Western allies. The imposition of sanctions was a manifestation of the souring relationship between Mugabe and the Western allies.

The loss of support mainly of the urban vote and the sour relationship with the West and key lending institutions all beginning after the fast track the land reform abuses, coupled with the deepening economic crisis, had huge impacts on Mugabe's hold to power. Through isolation by the West and the sanctions imposed, the land reform deepened the economic crisis with negative impacts on Mugabe who lost the urban vote to the opposition (Masunungure & Badza, 2010). There are arguments over the impacts of sanctions on the economy. However, their imposition signified isolation by the West and ultimately by key lending financial institutions. The use of violence during elections of 2000 was arguably a stance taken to amass support lost in the urban and to keep hold of the rural vote much as it arised from the land reform process. Elections during the same year proved that Mugabe was losing grip as 57 of the 120 seats were won by the opposition (Sithole, 2001). It was a new phenomenon in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

The land reform process also augmented the influence of the war veterans in ZANU PF and in the government. From the time they through their leader Chenjerai Hunzvi succeeded in securing gratuities in 1997 from the government and being on the lead in the land reform process their influence increased. The state had bowed to their demands and it would bow to more

demands for fear of losing support. The power of the war veterans mostly after the year 2000 grew and their influence in the party decisions also grew. However, there was a change in political loyalty by the veterans of the struggle as Mugabe became old. They also became side-lined by the rise of the young leaders within the party resulting in the factions whose line of division was purely historical participation in the liberation struggle. Mhanda (2011) notes that prior to 1997, former liberation fighters had discovered that the politicians were benefitting from the war compensation fund. Such an encounter created antagonism between the ordinary war veterans and those who were part of the state, specifically with the politicians. The war veterans outside of the political echelons might have felt side-lined by the politicians while they regarded themselves as the stockholders of the country through their historical participation as ZANLA and ZIPRA cadres. The pressure they had put on the state in demanding a better welfare had given them vigour that going forward they were to be proactive and be on the lead.

War Veterans and Factionalism in ZANU PF

Bratton and Masungure (2008, p. 42), state that in post independent Zimbabwe, as the economy dwindled, and patronage resources became scarce, the boundary of the party and the state, and that of the regular military and inter-party militias became very blurred. This disappearance of the boundaries would suggest that the politics of the country came to be directed by the security forces and not the politicians. The hegemony of the party and Mugabe, seemingly, was in the hands of the army which from time to time continued to utter their disapproval for the executive to be occupied by one without liberation credentials. This clashed with the rising youth leadership in the party or rather those with no war liberation credentials but had huge stock through sustaining the party in difficult circumstances. More so, the disapproval for the executive to be occupied by one without liberation credentials had different meanings and targets at different periods. In the early 2000 and the years preceding, it clearly referred to Morgan Tsvangirai who for the first time had gained the largest support as an opposition leader since independence. As the factionalism in ZANU PF intensified and with the rise of the former First Lady Grace Mugabe in the party, the meaning referred to those without liberation credentials within the party who sought to replace Mugabe. Participation in the liberation struggle also became a point of scrutiny with a view to disqualify rivals on that basis.

Having risen through the endorsement of the military wing of ZANLA at the behest of Solomon 'Rex Nhongo' Mujuru through the Mgagao declaration, Mugabe was to rely on the military for his governance and long hegemony. As is the case in most authoritarian regimes, politicians predominantly govern through the same devices that they used to rise to power (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008, p. 42). Mugabe was not an exception; hence the military became a key component in the political trajectory of the state.

It must be noted that the war veterans played a key role in the downfall of Mugabe through the power they had amassed over the years, particularly during the fast track land reform programme. The bigger section of the war veterans declared their full support for Mnangagwa whom they identified with as a liberation hero. In a communique comparable to that of Mgagao, these veterans clearly outlined their displeasure in Mugabe leadership and that they would not support his presidential bid in the 2018 election. They clearly made their displeasure over the ambitions of Grace Mugabe to succeed his husband, a development they referred to as 'stopping Mugabe dynasty' (Chidza, 2017). Such a divorce between a key element behind Mugabe's ascension and one that had stood with Mugabe especially in the post 2000 political challenge, was informing. These were key in Mugabe's downfall and in mobilising the masses against the G40 faction.

Elections in Zimbabwe and Mugabe's loss of Political Legitimacy

In Africa the idea of elections came mostly in the post-colonial period with the establishment of electoral democracies. Gatsheni (2012, p. 12) argues that history shows that elections were alien in the precolonial era and that such societies had their own processes and systems to get legitimacy. On the other hand, there is a presumption that the colonial period ushered in elections and introduced elections in African societies. Mair and Sithole (2002) argue that far from deepening democratic processes, the colonial period rather consolidated an incipient psyche in the nationalist leaders. The end of it thereof introduced Western democracy in most African states where elections are a 'sine quo non' of good governance and the only source of drawing legitimacy. Therefore, it is a new phenomenon but one which has taken a centre stage in African politics. The freeness and fairness by standards of Western democracy has become a yardstick to measuring the

degree of democracy. Whether or not elections depict the will of the people and that the people are rational enough in their selection of leaders is a point of debate

Elections in Zimbabwe have a history of contestation, violence and intimidation which Sachikonye argues has roots in the colonial regime era and the liberation war where coercion was a common tool to achieve political ends (Sachikonye, 2011, p. 2). Such violence and coercive inclinations were carried into the post-colonial state hence their use in elections and other issues beyond elections. Simply put, violence and coercion dominates in Zimbabwe's politics including in the opposition parties. In post-colonial Africa, elections have become a ritual to mask the authoritarian nature of the state (Gatsheni, 2012). They have mutated into a competitive process of radical nationalism by revolutionary movements versus liberal movements seeking to displace them. Elections seem to be regarded as a source of legitimacy at least from Mugabe and ZANU PF's point of view, but rather as a ritual to portray a democratic presence in the face of international pressure to kowtow to the whims of Western democracy. Mugabe and ZANU PF derived less legitimacy from the elections but from liberation credentials hence Mugabe would speak largely on the superiority of the gun over the pen (Gatsheni, 2012). The contestation of elections has not showed the inexistence of democratic institutions, but rather the perception of such institutions as appendages of the state. There has been a sense that democratic institutions of the state are captured and unable to serve their purpose as they should be. Levitsky and Way (2005) described such regimes as competitive authoritarian regimes where democratic institutions are in existence but biased towards the incumbent. When such institutions turn against the captures the results are lethal. In this instance the section looks at the elections in Zimbabwe from 2000 after the land reform to 2013. It traces the fall of Mugabe in these elections through either loss of support, legitimacy, or both. Key to this analysis are the 2000, 2002, 2008 and the 2013 elections. The analysis is done in the context of both domestic and international perception (particularly hostile Western nations) on Mugabe's rule.

After the referendum and the land reform process, Zimbabwe went for parliamentary elections in the same year in which the opposition won

57 seats out of the 120 seats contested. The elections were reported to be violent and this was coupled with the violence of the fast track land reform process (Sachikonye, 2002). Mugabe used the land reform as a trump card in these elections while reinvigorating the decolonial rhetoric and anti-West political stance. The elections came on the eve of a no vote in constitutional referendum, which many scholars have come to define as the beginning of Mugabe's loss of political support. The opposition garnered support mostly in the urban areas where the economic woes had deepened and continued to sink due to a variety of factors.

Makumbe (2002, p. 87), argues that the failure by Mugabe to garner two thirds majority in the parliamentary elections of 2000 and the rise of the MDC signalled a change in the political climate of Zimbabwe which had been dominated by ZANU PF since independence. The ability by the MDC to win 57 seats in the 2000 elections had nothing to do with the democratic space in the country but that the electorate had been frustrated by Zimbabwe's economic challenges (Gatsheni, 2009). It was a moment when the citizenry utilised its constitutional right to choose its leaders based on their deliverables and/or against their omissions and commissions. In the process, Mugabe became the target of antagonism, hence the hyped "ZANU PF Must Go" mantra. The challenges emerging out of the SAPs and more importantly in the late 1990s, were a sign of the failure by the revolutionary party to deliver its promises of a flourishing economy and halving poverty. The demands of the urban and the rural populations were nevertheless different. In the rural areas, the fast track land reform had yielded much applaud hence the solid support. This was furthered by state violence and intimidation however the difference in electoral demands need not be underestimated. Mugabe's declining support as witnessed by the 2000 election introduced a new wave of politics that gave the people conviction that Mugabe was fallible. Such conviction was watered down by the violence which Mugabe resorted to in the face of stiff challenge from Tsvangirai. In the 2002 presidential elections that followed, Mugabe won by over 56 % of the vote (Raftopulous, 2002). The environment was marred with violence and restricting legal provisions like the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) which hampered MDC's campaign activities (Gatsheni, 2012, p. 10). The use of violence and crafting of legal clauses to restrict opposition activities signalled the loss of support by Mugabe domestically. The electorate had in the face of violence and

intimidation showed preparedness to vote for an alternative. Such was the genesis of Mugabe's fall.

The 2008 elections signalled the continued fall in support of Mugabe after he lost to Morgan Tsvangirai. The elections which were held in a relatively free environment signposted the loss of ZANU PF and Mugabe support both in the urban and the rural areas which traditionally were largely ZANU PF. The elections were held in a myriad of huge economic challenges and inflation. Food security had declined and the health and education sector heavily affected. In such circumstances Mugabe yielded less support compared to the past though his support in the rural areas was relatively less affected.

The loss of Mugabe in 2008 can be interpreted in various forms. Part of the interpretations look at the internal upheavals in ZANU PF while others relate to the national economic and governance challenges which compelled his traditional support to seek for alternative in the opposition. It also provides a key issue in the Mugabe liberation rhetoric and its sale to the political electorate in the face of economic challenges.

The first round of the elections was held on the 29th of March in a harmonised election which was relatively peaceful compared to the 2000 and 2002 elections. Mugabe in the elections slammed the West for the imposition of sanctions on Zimbabwe in what he perceived to be neo colonialism by the former imperialists. He also emphasised the gains of the land reform program and that it was irreversible. However, the rhetoric did not meet the economic comatose that obtained at the time. Inflation had risen to an all-time high while shortage of foreign currency and basic goods on the market was the order of the day.

The relatively peaceful elections provided space for the opposition to campaign mostly in the urban but also in the rural areas that had been dubbed no go areas in previous elections because of political violence mostly towards opposition supporters. In the first round of the elections Mugabe got 43.2% of the vote to Morgan Tsvangirai's 47.9%. The outcome invoked a legal clause which demanded a candidate to secure 50 plus one vote to form a government culminating a runoff election of 27 June. While the first round of elections was relatively peaceful, the results of the elections were

heavily contested as the opposition alleged rigging. In the parliamentary election ZANU PF also lost to the opposition with 99 seats while the MDC-T garnered 100 seats and the MDC-N ten seats. Mugabe and ZANU PF had lost the election for the first time since independence. It was also the first in history for ZANU PF to lose control over the parliament. The reasons for Mugabe loss can be situated in various factors which are internal and external to ZANU PF. The victory in the elections by Mugabe was contested and secured through violent elections and allegations of rigging. In the party divisions continued to widen as more and more loyalists began to question either the policy direction of the party or the succession issue which had been raised since the early 1990s by people like Edgar Tekere and Edison Zvobgo.

The loss in the first round of the elections to many signalled a death nail to Mugabe hegemony as it was a first loss since independence. It also came at a moment when the country was deep in economic crisis which meant Mugabe was facing two fronts. Sachikonye has argued that the withdrawal of Simba Makoni one of the heavy weights in ZANU PF contributed to Mugabe's defeat through robbing him electoral initiative. The withdrawal of Makoni signified the depth of descent in the party and seemingly loss of control by Mugabe.

His loss got relieved through the Government of National Unity (GNU) with the MDC which ran from 2009 to the election of 2013. It gave him space to rejuvenate and renew his strategies for an electoral victory which he eventually secured in the 2013 elections. He recovered from the pressures of the economy through the multi-currency regime which eventually led to a relatively thriving economy and availability of basic goods in the shops.

While he recovered electorally from the past loss, Mugabe did not recover Western allies, key lending institutions and more importantly the growing descent in the party. Economically the governance framework and policy inconsistency had not been built and hence it was likely to fall in the shortest period. The extravagance of the elite and deep corruption by state institutions and individuals continued to pose a threat to nascent economic growth. Therefore, ZANU PF's 2013 election victory continued Mugabe's hegemony; at the same time internal concerns of the party's continuity

emerged leading to the factional climax and finally the fall of Mugabe in 2017.

Economic Crisis, International Alienation, and Mass Discontentment

The economic crisis beginning in the late 1990s and worsening mostly after the land reform of the late 1990s going forward had huge impacts on Mugabe's fall. The paper argues that in the narrative of Mugabe's fall, the economic crisis played a key role and that it was more pronounced in the aftermath of the land reform. It is generally an accepted notion among scholars that the land reform came with serious negative economic outcomes and this paper argues that post land reform, the economic crisis deepened with huge impacts on Mugabe support particularly in the urban areas (Raftopulous & Phimister, 2004, p. 372). The economic crisis which worsened after the land reform process of 2000 signalled the gradual decline of Mugabe. This disposition recognizes that the economic crisis was made more possible by other factors that can be situated prior to the land reform process. However, the economic crisis deepened after the land reform with serious threats on Mugabe's hegemony.

The economic crisis born in the post-colonial Zimbabwe became more pronounced after 2000. The crisis manifested itself through political decisions by the electorate contrary to the past. The constitutional referendum of 2000 in which the people voted "no" and the subsequent loss of many parliamentary seats to the MDC was assumably a sign of an enraged citizenry due to the impacts of the economic crisis. As is in many cases, economic crisis builds public resentment and forces citizens to look for an alternative. In his analysis of Latin America in the 1980s, Remmer found out that an economic crisis in general undermines support for incumbents and increases electoral volatility (Remmer, 1991). Indeed, the electorate became very volatile with negative impacts on Mugabe's legitimacy and his traditional hegemony.

After 2000, the economy continued to dwindle while the political environment remained volatile. Between the period of 2000 and 2003 public expenditures were eroded as the inflation continued to rise. The IMF reported that inflation in Zimbabwe between the period 1997 to 2004 rose

from 20 percent to 623 percent while real GDP declined by 30 percent (IMF, 2005, p. 5). Quasi fiscal policies by the government such as printing of money and quasi fiscal spending increased the deficit with huge impacts on the population. Due to a foreign exchange constrained environment created by the economic crisis investment fell while companies closed. A greater population lost their jobs and their savings due to inflation. Once ranked the best on the Human Development index in Sub Saharan Africa, Zimbabwe fell to 144th position out of 177 (Ibid, 2005, p. 5). By 2008 the inflation had risen to such high levels that the central Bank was printing money every now and again as it lost value in just days. Companies had closed while the political environment was tense as the electorate gravitated towards the MDC as an alternative to the revolutionary party. The international community had also alienated Mugabe through withdrawals in projects while sanctions by the US remained. Mugabe had lost popularity mostly in the urban areas where the economic crisis was heavily pronounced.

In the harmonised elections that followed in 2008, Mugabe lost the elections in the first round. There are many factors behind his loss and part of the major factors was the economic crisis and the failure of the revolutionary party to deliver a functioning economy. The continued violence in the election runoff of 2008 signposted the loss of support by Mugabe and hence resorting to coercion under the guise of nationalism and fighting neo-colonialism in the form of the opposition. Sachikonye (2011) suggest that the use of cohesion was inherited from the colonial regime and hence it was not unique after 2000. He however accepts that the period between 2000 and 2008 recorded the most intense political violence with the exception of the Gukurahundi period due to the serious political change posed by the MDC (Sachikonye, 2011)

In the runoff elections, the leader of the opposition pulled out of the election citing violence however the election proceeded with Tsvangirai still on the ballot. Mugabe won by a wide margin and received a mandate for another term in office. The opposition objected the victory as a one-man race not worth to be recognised. The victory in the runoff election did not resolve deep seated political contestations over the credibility of the election and legitimacy of Mugabe, culminating in the inclusive government facilitated by SADC. The economic challenges also worsened in 2008 due to the global

financial crisis and anti-investment policies like the indigenisation policy of 2008. Such was the impact of the economy on Mugabe's hegemony that he compromised and shared power with a party he had referred to as a minion of the Western imperialism.

The inclusive government introduced the multi-currency regime and put an end to hyperinflation and the use of the Zimbabwe bearer notes. This transition resulted in availability of goods in the shops, and the wage bill gazetted in the US dollar. While the challenges on higher pricing in the US dollar and the pressure from the civil service to increase the salaries became new challenges, the dollarization improved the fiscal conditions and improved predictability by businesses. The period of the inclusive government gave Mugabe time to rejuvenate and deal with internal challenges in his party which in his view had led to his loss and the loss of ZANU PF in the 29 March elections through the anti-Mugabe *bhora musango* (Kick the ball into the bush) campaign of 2008 (Ncube, 2014). More importantly the inclusive government temporarily lifted the demand for Mugabe to resolve the economic crisis. It rather became a collective role by all parties that formed the inclusive government. Mugabe had given all service delivery Ministries to the opposition while he maintained key institutions like the Defence, Foreign Affairs and the local government.

The dollarization of the economy was however a temporary measure which demanded fiscal discipline on the part of the government. More so the confidence of the people seemed to have been won through the unity government which resolved the legitimacy issues that had arisen after the 2008 election. The IMF in 2014 identified various factors that resulted in the economic crisis which had been halved by the unity government. Among these factors are the unbudgeted spending on elections, the uncertainty created by the election period which affected investment and natural causes of 2012 in form of erratic rainfall (IMF, 2014, p. 4). Post the 2013 election, the political environment remained calm however with rising tensions within the ruling party. Deposits in the banking sector also shrunk aided by the weak economy while a cash crisis confronted the ordinary citizens. Largely the economic crisis deepened as the revenue fell while government spending increased (IMF, 2017, p. 6). The crisis unlocked a series of demonstrations mostly in Harare by various civil society groups

that demanded for the government's attention to the economic challenges while some demanded that Mugabe steps down as president. Within the ZANU PF party factionalism had taken toll on the succession of Mugabe who in most cases would sleep during meetings and was continuously going to Singapore or Malaysia for medical attention.

The economic crisis built an enraged citizenry which was prepared to see the fall of Mugabe to create a new start that would address the crisis. The opposition was both internal in ZANU PF and external through various groupings that opposed his rule. When the military in response to the dismissal of Emmerson Mnangagwa (now the President of Zimbabwe) got into the streets of Harare, the citizens joined in calling for Mugabe to step down. The mass participation of the citizens in November 2017 to call for Mugabe to step down was not necessarily an alignment of interests with the soldiers but rather a show of hope for an end to the economic crisis after the departure of Mugabe. The internal matters within ZANU PF to which the Operation Restore Legacy was premised on, was far from the wishes of citizens whose concern was more economic than internal factionalism in ZANU PF.

Conclusion

The chapter demonstrated the fall of Mugabe from the fast track land reform to November 2017 by way of loss of support in elections, loss of support by erstwhile Western allies and the fissures within the party with an objective to replace him. While the fall of Mugabe has been trammelled to events of November 2017 and the two factions within ZANU PF, the chapter demonstrated the depth of his fall beyond just the narrow narratives in the media. The economic crisis with roots in the late 1990s and worsening mostly after 2000 had key negative implications to Mugabe's hegemony. The land reform itself unlocked a myriad of factors that militated against Mugabe's hold on to power. Beyond reinforcing the economic crisis, the land reform came with sanctions from the West and basic alienation by countries that had stood with Mugabe in the past. The chapter analysed the fall of Mugabe in the context of an era between the land reform and Operation Restore Legacy. The narrative of the land reform program in this chapter is in relation to its foibles and negative implications on Mugabe.

However, the writer strongly holds that Mugabe's biggest legacy resides in his anti-imperialist stance and his belief in the empowerment of Zimbabwean people. The land reform was premised on those values and it remains so to this day.

References

- Bond, P. (2007). Competing explanations of Zimbabwe's long economic crisis. *Safundi: The Journal of South African and American Studies*, 8(2), 149-181.
- Bratton, M. & Masunungure, E. (2008) *Zimbabwe's Long Agony*. Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, Maryland.
- Chidza, R. (2017). 'Stop Mugabe Dynasty: War Vets', *Newsday*, 2 November,
- Dewa, D., Musara, E. & Mupfururi, E. (2013). Industrial decline in Zimbabwe, Gweru post 2000: Which way now. *World Journal of Arts, Commerce and Sciences*, 1(1), 1-13.
- Kararach, G. & Otieno, R.O. (Eds). (2016). *Economic Management in a Hyperinflationary Environment: The Political Economy of Zimbabwe, 1980-2008*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lemon, A. (1995). Education in post-apartheid South Africa: Some lessons from Zimbabwe. *Comparative Education*, 31(1), 101-114.
- Levitsky S. & Way, L. (2013). *The Durability of Revolutionary Regimes*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Levitsky, S. and Way, L. (2005). International linkage and democratization. *Journal of democracy*, 16(3), 20-34.
- Macleane, S.J. (2002). Mugabe at War: the Political Economy of Conflict in Zimbabwe. *Third World Quarterly*, 23(3), 513-528.
- Mair, S. & Sithole, M. (2002). *Blocked Democracies in Africa: Case Study Zimbabwe*. Konrad Adenauer Foundation.
- Makumbe, J.M. (2002). Zimbabwe's hijacked election. *Journal of Democracy*, 13(4), 87-101.
- Masunungure, E.V. & Badza, S. (2010). The Internationalization of the Zimbabwe Crisis: Multiple Actors, Competing Interests. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 26(2), 207-231.
- Mlambo, A.S. (2005). 'Land Grab 'or 'Taking Back Stolen Land': The Fast Track Land Reform Process in Zimbabwe in Historical Perspective. *History Compass*, 3(1).

- Moore, D. (2018). A Very Zimbabwean coup: November 13–24, 2017. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, 97(1), 1-29.
- Moyo, S. (2001). The Land Occupation Movement and Democratisation in Zimbabwe: Contradictions of Neoliberalism. *Millennium*, 30(2), 311-330.
- Ncube, L. (2016). 'Bhora Mugedhi versus Bhora musango': The Interface between Football Discourse and Zimbabwean Politics. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 51(2), 201-218.
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J. (2012). *Elections in Zimbabwe: a recipe for tension or a remedy for reconciliation*. Wynberg: Institute for Justice and Reconciliation.
- Raftopoulos, B. & Phimister, I. (2004). Zimbabwe Now: the Political Economy of Crisis and Coercion. *Historical Materialism*, 12(4), 355-382.
- Raftopoulos, B. (2002). Briefing: Zimbabwe's 2002 presidential election. *African Affairs*, 101(404), 413-426.
- Sachikonye, L. (2011). *When a State Turns on its Citizens: 60 years of Institutionalised Violence in Zimbabwe*. Auckland Park: Jacana Media House.
- Sachikonye, L.M. (2002). Whither Zimbabwe? Crisis & democratisation. *Review of African Political Economy*, 29(91), 13-20.
- Sadomba, W. (2008). *War Veterans in Zimbabwe's Land Occupations: Complexities of a Liberation Movement in an African Post-Colonial Settler Society*. PhD Thesis.
- Sithole, M. (1997). Zimbabwe's Eroding Authoritarianism. *Journal of Democracy*, 8(1), 127-141.
- Sithole, M. (2001). Fighting Authoritarianism in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Democracy*, 12(1), 160-169.
- Southall, R. (2018). Bob's Out, the Croc Is In: Continuity or Change in Zimbabwe? *Africa Spectrum*, 52(3), 81-94.
- The IMF <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/CR/Issues/2016/12/31/Zimbabwe-2009-Article-IV-Consultation-Staff-Report-Public-Information-Notice-on-the-22925>
- Verheul, S. (2013). 'Rebels' and 'Good Boys': Patronage, Intimidation and Resistance in Zimbabwe's Attorney General's Office after 2000. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39(4), 765-782.

Mugabe and Intra-political ‘fights’: An Evaluation of Political ‘Factional’ news in Zimbabwean Print Media

Ernest Jakaza, Isaac Mhute, Hugh Mangeya

Introduction: Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe

Mugabe has been at the centre of controversy and intra-political struggles of the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) party before and after the independence of Zimbabwe. Intra-political fighting in ZANU PF culminated in a ‘coup’ in November 2017 that ended the thirty-seven reign of Robert Mugabe - initially as a Prime Minister and later a President of Zimbabwe. We are not into the debate on whether it was a coup or not. Interest in the study is to appraise the reporting of the two ruling ZANU PF political party factions in both the state newspaper (The Herald) and the private newspaper (Daily News). We argue that news production and political news production evince evidence of subjectivity in media and augment the position that media and politics are inseparable. The chapter investigates how the print media in Zimbabwe comparatively reported on ZANU PF’s intra- political fights. The chapter examines the evaluative nature of the purposively selected news reports in The Herald and Daily News newspapers on the ‘intra-political fights’ between the two factional political groups, ‘Lacoste’ and ‘G40’. The Appraisal theory is engaged to systematically analyse discourse-linguistic devices that journalists employ in their evaluation of Mugabe and ‘controversial’ factional wrangles within ZANU PF. We argue that evaluative reporting of news results in fluid identities being created, ideological communities and confirms media-political inseparability that can be discerned from the evaluative appraisal resources realised in a news story. Projections of a new leader who is positively judged and prospects of a ‘new’ Zimbabwe can be fathomed. Further research into other representations of Mugabe in other ZANU PF intra and/or inter-political struggles can be carried out.

Background: Mugabe Politics and Zimbabwean Nation

The plurality of Mugabe's political persona has been variedly appraised in the media. While his 37 years at the helm of power can be contextually read in terms of his many facades of controversy, his depiction as an epitome of interest in internal conflict dynamics of ZANU PF is a cause for intellectual inquiry. Of note, political 'fights' and particularly intra-political struggles are news and interest the media. To this end, the chapter explores the language of evaluation in the media reporting of intra- political party factional struggles during Mugabe's rule. Studies on evaluation of news in the media are on the increase especially from the Appraisal theoretical perspective (cf. Bednarek, 2006; Jakaza, 2013, 2016; Martin & Rose, 2003; Martin & White, 2005; White, 2009; Sabao, 2013; Thompson & Hunston, 2000). However, this study is crucial in that it is not only exploring the notion of subjectivity in news reporting but it examines an important niche in the discourse-linguistic analysis of news reporting. Systematic analysis of intra-political party factionalism in the media by government and private-owned newspapers exude fluid identities, ideological dis/alignments and dis/engagements in political discourse.

Mugabe's ascendancy to ZANU PF leadership and 'overstay' on the presidency has been criticised from various quotas. There were calls from political party leaders, human rights groups and citizens for him to step down and hand over power (Jakaza, 2013). He, however, argued that he would only be removed by the people through the ballot. The same ballot has also not been spared from attack by the opposition, civic organisation among others for not being free and fair. ZANU PF members who showed interest or voiced that Mugabe must resign were castigated and labelled accordingly (Sabao & Visser, 2016). As a liberation political party, ZANU PF has been presented as ruthless in dealing with opponents (Chari, 2010). However, it should be noted that intra-political fights are not a new phenomenon in politics and ZANU PF. Notable names of people and cases in ZANU PF political fights include - Ndabaningi Sithole, Edgar Tekere, Margret Dongo, and Joyce Mujuru. Mugabe tactfully expelled these members from the party and labelled them anti-revolutionary among other negative evaluative labels. Individuals who took a contra position to the powerful in a political party are sacrificed for the 'survival' of the party (Slapin et al., 2018). Mugabe was not

only been cunning but also pitiless towards his rivals. He is widely projected as a tough and uncompromising African nationalist-cum authoritarian leader (Sabao & Visser, 2016). Pursuant to this construction, contra argumentation and divergent voices were not entertained in the Mugabe era (Makumbe, 1998). It is also argued that this constrained and threatening environment nurtured hostility and rebellion in his followers and fellow political party comrades (Tendi, 2020). Disgruntlement among ZANU PF members led to numerous in-house fighting and efforts to eliminate or silence any contender to the throne (Tekere, 2007).

In as much as there were many intra-political ‘fights’ in ZANU PF during Mugabe’s nearly four-decade rule, we focus on the evaluative reporting of intra-political struggle in ZANU PF between the ‘Lacoste’ group alleged to be led by the former Vice President and now President Emmerson Mnangagwa and the ‘G40’ (Generation 40) led by Dr Grace Mugabe, the wife of Robert Mugabe (Dube 2019). The fight has been optimised because it culminated in the events of November 2017. Lacoste is first understood as an expensive label for clothing. On the other hand, it refers to a crocodile. Mnangagwa’s history of strategic political manoeuvre against opponents within and outside ZANU PF has been likened to that of a crocodile. Mnangagwa’s sobriquet is Ngwenwa (crocodile). Thus, the group associated with Mnangagwa was referred to as ‘Team Lacoste’. The group aligned to Dr Amai (mother), Grace Mugabe, were in the average age of 40 (forty) years hence the name Generation 40 (G40). G40 was known for supporting Robert Mugabe’s continued stay in power and ultimately decide on his successor. In his memoir, Mpofu (2020) argues that this group was mainly constituted of political opportunists whose aim was to discredit the older generation whose locus of legitimacy was derived from participation liberation credentials. As a result, G40 represented a factional position of generational renewal in ZANU PF. In their autobiographic accounts, Dube (2019) and Mpofu (2020) agree that there was a deliberate position by G40 to dissuade other sections of ZANU PF from celebrating the role of senior party members particularly those with liberation credentials –especially those members who had fraternal biases to the military. It is also important to note that the submissions made by Dube (2019) and Mpofu (2020) in their autobiographies may be constructs of political correctness considering the positions of power they hold in the Mnangagwa administration. Obert

Mpofu is ZANU PF's Secretary for Administration, while Tshinga Dube is ZANU PF's Deputy Secretary for Finance. Beyond this party-centred articulation of the polarised objectives of the party's succession routes under the Lacoste and G40 factions, there is need to assess the realities of internal conflicts from a media-focused perspective. The Lacoste faction took over the arms of government and ZANU PF. Mnangagwa was appointed President and First Secretary of ZANU PF in November 2017 following the climax of ZANU PF's protracted internal power wrangles.

The study of intra-political fights is a study of political discourse. The study of political discourse is as old as politics itself, covering a wide range of subjects and analytical methods (Wilson, 2001). Thus, defining politics and political discourse is not easy. The term politics is so ambiguous. According to Wilson (2001), the term refers to a discourse that is political and also to an analysis of political discourse as an example of discourse type without explicit reference to political content or context. In the same vein, Wodak (2002) observes that discourse of any kind is a site of struggle, a terrain, a dynamic linguistic and semantic space in which social meanings are produced or challenged. This suggests that all discourse and analysis is political, hence all discourse analysis is political discourse. To avoid this generalisation, Wilson (2001) argues that the subject matter of political discourse can be limited to formal/ informal contexts and political actors, for example, politicians, political institutions, political media, governments. However, this is still problematic. Apart from analysing the contexts and actors, one has to consider the language used first as discourse and then as politics. In a more linguistic definition, Chilton (2008, p. 226) argues that political discourse is 'the use of language to do with the business of politics and includes persuasive rhetoric, the use of implied meanings, the use of euphemisms, the exclusion of language to rouse political emotions and the like.' The study of politics and political discourse focuses on the practices of rhetoric, dialectics and strategic manoeuvring with participants advancing their positions and having the same position challenged in the dialogic space.

Holly (2008) argues that 'political language has become the subject of professionally developed strategies' (p. 318) and that linguistic signs are used strategically. We appraise the in-house political struggles within a

political party, ZANU PF, critically evaluating the nature of subjectivity in news reporting. We analyze the discourse of ZANU PF politicians from the two camps, Lacoste and G40, and the reporter voice on the scheming and manoeuvring strategies engaged by Mugabe to sustain and maintain his influence. Political language in the media is realised as news reporters communicate political issues (dis)aligning the audience with certain ideological foundations. In some instances, political discourse is incorporated into media discourse through sourced evaluations (White, 2006). Direct quotations are utilised to authenticate the reporter's alignments and present them as natural (Archakis & Tsakona, 2010). We examine how political ideas were communicated and represented in the media when reporting the political 'fights'.

Studies on the language of evaluation, especially in the media, are very important. Rutten, van Belle and Gillaerts (2014, p. 5) concur with this arguing that researches of this nature are important for us 'to understand how they (journalists) frame their messages and structure their arguments, and to explore how this leads to specific actions and policy measures.' Journalists do not necessarily just report facts but they frame their messages depending on several variables that include the ideological inclination of the newspaper and the newspaper's political alignments. In the reporting of the news stories, there is argumentation. Journalists would thrive to convince the perceived audience or newsreaders, the opposition and presumed 'enemies' of the positivity of their line of argument. The process of argumentation evokes the deployment of appraisal and evaluation resources to dis/align the readers with the desired perspective. Considering the influence that the media has on the electorate and citizens, such discourses must be scrutinised.

The language of evaluation is inseparable from human behaviour and actions. Thompson and Hunston (2000) observe that evaluation is part of human behaviour and reasoning; it expresses the speaker/writer's opinion, which is manifest in the value system of his/her community and to reinforce these values. The process of news reporting does not only reflect the journalists' opinions on the intra political factions but also show the value systems resonating in that community during that period. The values of one political faction are argued for by the newspaper, making news readers perceive them as natural. These naturalised values and ideologies served to

the citizens by the media are sugar spiced to make them align with such mindsets and behaviours. Evaluation of the language of evaluation can be understood as the spicing or naturalisation of news. In the naturalisation process, a proper selection of evaluative or appraisal resources that enables the writer to achieve their purpose is done.

Exploring the concept of the language of evaluation brings to light important aspects involved in the writing of news. News goes through a 'digestion' process before it reaches the audience (Archakis & Tsakona, 2009). The 'digestion' process is realised in the selection, writing and publication of news stories. At the selection level, it is the journalist who selects what they consider news. Apart from that, the journalist also selects the sources to interview. In the writing of the story, the 'digestion' is realised in the evaluative language usage. Certain evaluative resources are utilised and others ignored. The position where the story is placed in the newspaper also plays an important role in the communication process. Apart from placement, semiotic features that accompany the story in the newspaper also reflect the digestion process involved. News reporters' 'digestion' of news is of interest from a discourse linguistic perspective (cf. Archakis & Tsakona, 2009; Bell, 1991; Jakaza, 2015). News 'digestion' invokes the debate on the notions: subjectivity and objectivity in news reporting and the blurring of boundaries in news genres (Sabao, 2013; Steensen, 2011). Studies on subjectivity and objectivity in news reporting are plenty (Jakaza 2016; White 2006). The focus of this study is not to delve into the debate on objectivity in news reporting. It has since been acknowledged that objectivity in news reporting is not only untenable but it is also a myth (Sabao 2013). By focusing on the language of evaluation, this research is arguing that it is a known fact that news reporting is subjective and evaluative. Thus, interest is on examining how reporters, through the language of evaluation, bring in subjectivity in news reporting. Focusing on the language of evaluation in the media, the research is particularly focusing on Mugabe's involvement in intra-political party factional 'wars' as published in the newspapers. News stories are dichotomised along 'hard' versus 'soft news'. Within the Anglo-Saxon typologies of news categories, the focus in this study is on hard news stories. Hard news stories are categorized under informative use and described as being characterised by 'impersonality and objective reference to information sources' (Arrese and Perucha, 2006, p. 226). However, it should be noted

that this prototypical characterisation is the opposite of reality: Hybrid genres are a case in media discourse. Studies on the blurring of genres (Sabao, 2013, p. 14) dismiss the misconception of objective news reporting and dichotomisation of news genres. The major basis for this dismissal of such characterisation of news is mainly centred on the notion of evaluation. Instead of being impersonal, impartial and reporting only facts, hard news stories are being evaluative, 'digested' according to the journalist and /or newspapers' ideological inclinations. The nature of digestion or the language of evaluation realised in the reporting of intra political party factionalism in the media is of interest in this study. The following questions are of interest to this study: How did government inclined newspapers evaluate factionalism in the ruling political party? How did the private newspapers 'digest' the internal 'struggles' in the ruling political party? The Appraisal theory informs the analysis that is carried out in this study.

Appraisal Theory

The Appraisal theory is an offshoot of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) Theory. Of the three SFL metafunctions, the Appraisal theory developed the Interpersonal metafunction (Martin and White, 2005). In developing the interpersonal metafunction, the theory focuses on the varied ways in which writers construct for themselves particular identities strategically positioning themselves and those that they will be addressing or potential readers (White, 2005; Martin and Rose, 2003, Jakaza, 2013). Authorial identities construed by the speaker/ writer dis/align them with actual and potential readers or audiences. As aptly observed by Bednarek (2006), the theory is centred on explicating the subjective presence of the writer/ speaker in texts as s/he adopts stances towards both the material they present and those with which they communicate. Thus, the theory is a tool to evaluate ways realised in news reporting of 'political fights' as news reporters exhibit certain positioning and stances in the texts. Appraisal forms of using language are realised in three interacting domains: attitude, engagement and graduation. This research engages the attitudinal domain which includes three sub-systems of affect- the characterisation of phenomena by reference to emotion; judgement- the evaluation of human behaviour with respect to social norms and appreciation- the evaluation of objects and products by reference to aesthetic principles and other systems

of social value (White, 2005; Sabao, 2013). These attitudes can be the writer's own or attributed to some other source (external voice). Apart from that, these attitudinal evaluations can also be evoked or invoked in discourse reflecting the speaker/ writer's positive or negative disposition towards a particular 'political faction' and its ideologies. Appraisal analysis reveals the reporter voice's effect, judgement and appreciation of Mugabe and ZANU PF political fights. Judgement values can be utilised to make projections of not only the capability and astuteness of the participants involved but also shed light on the probable incoming leader.

Methodological Foundations

The research employed a qualitative research methodological approach. Qualitative research methodology is an effective model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from being highly involved in the actual experiences. It is constituted by the involvement of purposeful use for describing, explaining and interpreting collected data (Rukwaru, 2015). In qualitative research, inductive reasoning is utilized to describe, explore and understand a phenomenon. The discourse- analytical design is utilised as a research design. It 'is a recent version of textual analysis which aims to study the meanings of words but within larger "chunks" of texts such as conversation or discourse' (Mouton, 2001, p. 168). A research design sets out the research plan and layout. It is a scheme or programme for the researcher. A proper layout for research is fundamental in the selection of sampling methods, data collection instruments and the analysis process. The research is an appraisal discourse analysis of news representation. Hence, the selected design aptly suits this study and is poised to guide in revealing intriguing discourse-linguistic insights on language use and practice in the media and other domains.

The population under study were newspaper articles on Mugabe and ZANU PF factionalism. There are so many stories in Zimbabwean and non- Zimbabwean media on Mugabe and intra political wars. The stories span over a long period as factionalism within ZANU PF. Mugabe and his involvement in intra-political fights can be traced back to the liberation struggle. The Lacoste-G40 struggles were purposively sampled based on the evaluative nature and 'tellability' (Bell 1991). Purposive sampling has been

argued to be the most suitable as it provides data-rich sources. In purposive sampling, respondents are selected based on whether they meet the specific needs of the study. News stories that have been selected to be representative in this study are those that are more evaluative of the two factions. Through a discourse- theoretic approach, the newspaper stories on ZANU PF infighting were analysed. The period under study is the year 2016. The period has been purposively selected as the peak of the factions that later resulted in a civil-military takeover in November 2017 and Mnangagwa was appointed as the President of Zimbabwe.

Media Evaluations of the Intra-Political ‘fights’

The section focuses on an analysis of newspaper stories on the intra-political ‘fighting’ between ‘Lacoste’ and ‘G40’. Mugabe as the leader of government and ZANU PF was supposed to resolve the ‘infighting’ amicably. Age, among other variables, has been argued to be a factor in Mugabe’s failure to quash the ‘infighting’, the centre was always shifting. Of the three Appraisal Theoretical Framework sub-divisions, the research is interested in the attitudinal evaluations in the two daily papers. The analysis is divided into two sub-sections. The first section is on Daily News evaluations of ‘Lacoste’ and ‘G40’ and the second section is on The Herald. Mugabe as the First Secretary for ZANU PF was supposed to properly manage the succession question. Appraisals of ZANU PF intra political fights are either evoked or invoked evaluations of Mugabe as a leader. The following typeface conventions have been used to mark appraisal resources: bold- judgement; italics- effect; underline- appreciation

Daily News Attitudinal Evaluations

The Daily News is a private or ‘independent’ newspaper. Independent newspapers have been anti-government or ‘oppositional’ in their reporting of news (Arrese & Perucha, 2006). The appraisal resources that are realised in such reporting have been noted to be largely negative aligning news readers against the government. Reporting on the ruling part’s factionalism calls the independent newspaper to come up with new evaluations.

Youths as the Vanguard

The youths are the future of any society. They are expected to carry forward the vision and legacy of a grouping of people or a country. Through sourced evaluations, the Daily News advocated for the sacking of two key G40 members from the ruling ZANU PF political party. This was the voice of another faction's youths. Sourced evaluations show some form of distancing or misalignment by the reporter from a certain position. Daily News records this realising so many evaluative dimensions. The first dimension is that team Lacoste had only the youth to voice their position hence attitudinally judged [-capacity, -tenacity]. The other truth that the newspaper brings out about ZANU PF was that an element or people who were no longer aligned to the leadership's ideology should have been expelled. ZANU PF was attitudinally appraised as a political party that could not properly deal with its problems, except through the expulsion of members. Again, the party was appraised negatively as [-capacity]. Team Lacoste was equated to the ZANU PF government. Daily News evaluations were pro-G40. Team Lacoste youths were negatively judged [-veracity] as they were indicted of dishonesty, deceitfulness and manipulativeness. They were imaged as negatively evaluating the G40 as factionalists, trouble causers, power mongers and opportunists among other evaluations and positively appraise the self as 'the vanguard of the party':

To the factionalists and trouble causers, we say, resign honourably and give the party a chance to survive. Stop playing the victim when you are the offenders (Daily News, 23 April 2016)

As the vanguard of the party, we want to make it clear and known to the public that despite the impression created by these factionalists and power mongers that the party president... These power mongers and opportunists are real troublemakers and architects of the problems facing our party... (Daily News, 23 April 2016)

G40 as Strategists

Political party factional battles are evaluatively realised in the media. The battles are subjectively presented in line with the paper's ideological inclinations. The newspaper's conversationalisation is intended to create

communities of shared feelings and ideologies. The media acts as the referee of the ongoing 'match' aligning and disaligning the audience with presented positions. The Daily News positively appreciated its diligent work in the reporting of news [+self appraisal]. It boasted of objectively reporting the ZANU PF factional [-brutal] battles. The newspaper prepared the reader to accept what it published or said about the infighting between Lacoste and G40. It strategically manoeuvred, presenting itself as a neutral mouthpiece only conveying the news as they were, objective reporting. It also did this by lambasting the state media for subjective reporting of news. This presented the Daily News as the sole paper that the audience should look up to if they want objective news.

The Daily News- which has reported accurately and consistently on the ruling party's brutal infighting over the past five years- learnt yesterday that contrary to the state media reports that the G40 had received a heavy shellacking, it was in fact Team Lacoste that was left with their tails between their legs after the explosive meeting (Daily News, 12 February 2016)

After dismissing the state media reports that positively appraised Lacoste, the Daily News foregrounded its positive evaluation of G40. In a meeting that has been appreciated as [+ve explosive], the Daily News metaphorically appraised Lacoste as the losers when they came out with 'their tails between their legs' (Daily News, 12 February 2016). Through metaphor usage, we can grasp something difficult to grasp. Metaphor thrives on comparing two dissimilar entities. According to Lakoff and Johnson (2003), a metaphor is an understanding of one thing in terms of the other. A spineless, afraid and defeated dog will put its tail between legs. Team Lacoste was compared to such a dog. However, metaphors and metaphor usage are grounded in a people's culture and history. Thus, a change in culture or history might result in 'dead metaphors' or a change in the types of metaphors that might be used in a particular culture.

News readers are positioned into a frame of thinking and believing through various strategies. One of these strategies is the use of direct quotations. Direct quotations sustain objectivity in news reporting. Reporters incorporate direct quotations in news narratives to authenticate their reports. The quotations are also used to communicate the various ideological and political inclinations

of a particular newspaper. Archakis and Tsakona (2009, p. 364) observe that direct speeches ‘...gives the impression of a natural and authentic word-by-word reproduction of the original words, thus, engaging in rapport and involvement between the teller and the audience, and contributing to the dramatisation of the reported words.’ Journalists are presented as wanting to present something that appeals to the audience as ‘natural’ and ‘authentic’ because readers would want objective reporting of news hence unbiased. Even though it is presented as ‘natural’ or authentic, it is still constructed more or less to serve a variety of communicative goals.

‘Rega vaite! (let them do) Very happy with how PB (politburo) meeting went... It was agreed after the brutal debate that...’ (Daily News, 12 February 2016)

However, as observed by Jakaza (2013), the moment that we have direct speech removed from its original context it will cease to have its initial meaning and interpretation and acquires the journalistic meaning coming from the new context created.

Lacoste as ‘dead and buried’

Consistent in its negation discourse and G40 inclined reporting of news, The Daily News predicted doom for Team Lacoste. Negation discourse has been argued to not only dichotomise the parties involved but also to decampaign the other. Negatively appraising Team Lacoste, the Daily News hoped to keep its audience interested and aligned to its evaluations. News reporting is greatly impacted by the audience of a particular newspaper. Bell (1991) calls this process that journalists follow as audience design. It is a process by which journalists strategically adjust their language, selection of stories and meanings to the value system and expectations of their assumed audience. In their audience adjusted evaluations, the Daily News positively appraised G40 winners.

‘In arguably the most devastating blow to befall the ZANU PF rallying behind the embattled Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa’s mooted presidential aspirations, one of the Midlands godfather’s most trusted allies, July Moyo, has now also been booted out of the warring governing party.’ (Daily News, 19 March 2016)

‘...they are dead and buried, never to rise again’ (Daily News, 19 March 2016)

The alleged Lacoste leader, Mnangagwa, was negatively judged as buried in problems and these problems continued to mount as some of his allies were being ‘booted out’. Lacoste was also metaphorically appraised as [dead buried] and the authorial voice sealed this position dialogically denying any hope of it rising again. The reader was made to believe that it was the end of Team Lacoste. Thus, the Daily News made projections towards the dismissal and firing of Mnangagwa marking the end of his political career. On the other hand, Mugabe was explicitly evaluated as having managed to silence opposition and resolve the problem [+capacity].

The Herald Attitudinal Evaluations

The Herald newspaper publishes news that is state-aligned, favourable to the government (Jakaza, 2016; Sabao, 2013; Sabao & Visser, 2016). It is a tradition that pro-government newspapers will not publish stories that are critical of the government. Of interest in this study is how the state-run newspaper subjectively assessed ZANU PF intra-party factionalism. Are there explicit appraisals in favour of one faction or the evaluations are invoked? Purposively selected news stories from The Herald are examined.

G40 as Factionalists and Successionists

Through sourced evaluations, The Herald explicitly opened up to be pro-Lacoste in one of its headlines, ‘Form own party, G40 told’ (The Herald, 03 February 2016). The headline in The Herald castigated and labelled the G40 as trouble causers. Headlines have been argued to be the synopsis of the whole story (White, 1998). In this synopsis, the reader gets to understand the inclinations of the authorial voice and made to think along the presented alignments. The narrative confirms the negative appraisal of G40 equally judging them as the [factionalists] and [successionists].

Factionalists and successionists without institutional memory and emotional attachment to the liberation struggle are behind the current disharmony in the revolutionary ZANU PF party. (The Herald, 03 February 2016).

Due to ZANU PF's historical grounding, its party members are constantly reminded of the significance of the past in shaping the nation and the party's contemporary outlook. The constant reference to the armed struggle by liberation political parties has been viewed as a strategy deployed to instil fear in the electorate (Makumbe, 1998). The contribution of one in the liberation struggle is a major contributor for one to go up the ladder in the party and country. The G40 faction within ZANU PF, as earlier pointed out, was mainly composed of non-liberation war fighters averaging 40 years. To discredit the G40 faction, their lack of war credentials became the basis upon which they were negatively evaluated. G40 was negatively associated with [dubious] histories and disqualified as [opportunists, arrivants and cowards].

“There are certain people with dubious histories who are causing divisions in the party. Like all opportunists, all these so-called G40 (Generation 40)...” (The Herald, 03 February 2016).

Charamba, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Publicity, was reported in The Herald ‘blasting’ the so-called successionists. Utilising his position, Charamba implicitly discredited those who were interested in the President's position. Emotive language strategically draws the reader to sympathise with the victim. However, the disciples of the issue have been negatively evaluated metaphorically as parrots, who just say what they do not know. They are not only castigated as parrots, but also as people who think that they have some spiritual connections and can tell someone's death.

He said it was disheartening that the issue of succession in ZANU PF was being parroted by party officials... Here are these ‘God's deputies’ who know when Mugabe will die... (The Herald, 29 January 2016).

Though implicit in its evaluations, inference shows that the faction that was negatively appraised was the G40. The judgment of the ‘blasted successionists’ as ‘little men’ and with ‘no iota of history’ explicitly pointed to the G40 faction composed of generally a young generation in ZANU PF with no liberation struggle history. Charamba could not be explicit in his evaluations because of his office and the fact that G40 was backed by

Grace Mugabe. The G40 was not only negatively evaluated as a ‘cabal’ ‘little minds’ but also as ‘fools’ and ‘big fools’. The ‘baldness’ of Jonathan Moyo, one of the G40 members, was negatively evaluated as not proof of maturity. The authorial voice, through sourced evaluations, rhetorically proclaimed, rejecting any contrary voices in support of Moyo and the G40.

“Here are little men with absolutely no iota of history behind them thinking they can one day emerge as leaders of this country with little minds thinking baldness is age, it isn’t... They are fools, get it from me, they are big fools and I hope someday they will come back to their senses.” (The Herald, 29 January 2016).

Lacoste as Revolutionary

The brains behind Team Lacoste have been shrouded in speculation for a long time. Rumours had it that Ngwenya ‘the Crocodile’, as Mnangagwa is referred to in socio-political circles, was the leader of the faction. Getting hold of such news was crucial for any journalist craving for popularity. Journalists were credited for publishing ground-breaking news. They do not ‘strive for accuracy; instead, they aim at creating a reader-friendly and reader- attractive account’ of such stories (Archakis & Tsakona, 2010, p. 919). The news of Mnangagwa coming out of his shell was topical in The Herald. His silence had stalled any hope of the factional problems being resolved. He was positively appraised as the much-awaited person who had the final say on factionalism in ZANU PF. Through sourced authorial evaluations, Mnangagwa was represented as [comfortable] and the other members in ZANU PF as his [brothers and comrades]. Strategically utilising the political pronoun ‘we’, Mnangagwa appeared shocked that there was factionalism. He dialogically denied any existence of intra-party fighting.

“In ZANU PF, we are very comfortable and we are brothers and comrades, but we read about these things you are talking about in the Press and I do not know where you get them from (The Herald, 10 February 2016).

Liberation war political cadres and governments are easily identified in their revolutionary discourse. Being a revolutionary, whether it is the government or an individual, is positively appreciated as good. The revolutionary political party is further appreciated as [progressive] and judged as [able] and [caring].

This is why as a very revolutionary government and progressive (party), we can do what we are doing to make sure we take care of the lives of our people.” (The Herald, 10 February 2016)

The ideological inclinations advanced by The Herald in its reports on Mnangagwa and Team Lacoste positively invite the reader to align with the faction and their leader. Mnangagwa was presented as a leader who was anti-factionalism and one with a sound vision. By selectively giving Mnangagwa space and voice in their newspaper, The Herald subjectively silenced the G40 and aligned with Team Lacoste. Subjectivity in news reporting is further compounded by the direct quotations by Mnangagwa; a one-sided reporting of news realised in the reporting of factionalism in The Herald.

Conclusion

Mugabe’s authority and capability were questioned in the invoked and inscribed evaluations of Lacoste and G40. The research set out to appraise attitudinal evaluations of Mugabe and intra factional battles in the ZANU PF political party. Interest was on how the media, both pro-government and ‘independent’ newspapers, appraised intra factions in the ruling party. The study found that ideologically inclined evaluation of ‘Lacoste’ and ‘G40’ (dis)aligned readers with certain ‘truths’ in the media. The Herald evaluations have been observed to be pro-Team Lacoste, positively judging its presumed leader, Mnangagwa. Thus, The Herald made projections and judged Mnangagwa as the capable and future president of Zimbabwe. Mugabe was evaluated as having been failed as a leader. Mugabe, maybe because of age and overstay, failed to thump his authority and resolve disgruntlement within ZANU PF. On the other hand, Daily News took a positive stance towards the G40. The G40 was positively appraised and judged as composed of powerful individuals who would crush Team Lacoste. The research concludes that dichotomisation and subjective appraisals were realised in intra-party factional fighting in the ruling party. The pro-government and independent newspapers adopted different stances and evaluations of the two factional groups. The research also concludes that in the subjectivity or hybridisation of news reporting, judgmental values are prevalent as compared to effectual and appreciation resources. This is in line with White’s (2005, p. 17) observation that judgement, as an attitudinal

resource, is concerned 'with language which criticises or praises, which condemns or applauds the behaviour- the actions, deeds, sayings, beliefs, motivations etc- of human individuals and groups.' The media has been positively or negatively judging the capacity, tenacity and normality of the esteem of the factional members in the eyes of the public as well as their veracity and propriety.

The chapter further concludes that attitudinal appraisals of intraparty factions in the press were based on sourced- authorial voice and the use of scare quotes. The sourced authorial voice and scare quotes authenticated and objectified news represented as neutral, factual and the truth. These strategies are evidence that journalists are aware that they are supposed to objectively report news and that the readers want objective news. However, the media's role in society is subverted by the 'happy symbiosis' relationship between the media and politics. In agreement with Lauerbach and Fetzer (2007), the research concludes that the bond between media and politics heavily impacts the objectivity of the latter. Instead of objectively reporting on intra-party factions, journalists have a 'tendency of making political discourse more entertaining by trivialising, personalising, dramatising and conversationalising' news (Jakaza, 2013, p. 53). This tendency impacts objectivity in news reporting as journalists will evaluatively report political events (dis)aligning readers with certain ideological truths.

References

- Archakis, A. & Tsakona, V. (2009). Parliamentary Discourse in Newspaper Articles: The Integration of a Critical Approach to Media Discourse into a Literacy-based Language Teaching Programme. *Journal of Language & Politics* 8 (3), 359- 385.
- Archakis, A. & Tsakona, V. (2010). The wolf wakes up inside them, grows werewolf hair and reveals all their bullying': The Representation of Parliamentary Discourse in Greek newspapers. *Journal of Pragmatics* 42, 912- 923.
- Arresse, J. & Perucha, B. (2006). Evaluation and Engagement in Journalistic Commentary and News Reportage. *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses* 19, 225 – 248.
- Bednarek, M., 2006. *Evaluation in Media Discourse: Analysis of a Newspaper Corpus*. London: Continuum International Publishing Company.
- Bell, A. (1991). *The Language of News Media*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Chari T. (2010). Salience and Silence: Representation of the Zimbabwean Crisis in the Local Press. *African Identities*. 8(2): 131-150.
- Chilton, P. A. (2008). Political terminology. In: Wodak, R., Koller, V., (Eds.), *Handbook of Communication in the Public Sphere*. Walter de Gruyter Gambit and Co. KG, Berlin, pp. 225- 242.
- Chiumbu, S., Minnie J. & Bussiek H. (2009). *Zimbabwe: A survey by the Africa Governance Monitoring and Advocacy project (AfriMAP)*. Open Society Initiative Southern Africa (OSISA) and Open Society Institute Media Programme (OSIMP). Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa.
- Dube, T. J. (2019). *Tshinga Judge Dube: Quiet Flows the Zambezi*. Amagugu Publishers, Zimbabwe.
- Gumbo, L. (2016). *Charamba blasts successionists*. The Herald, January 29.<http://www.herald.co.zw/charamba-blasts-successionists/>
- Holly, W. (2008). Tabloidization of Political Communication in the Public Sphere. In: Wodak, R., Koller, V., (Eds.), *Handbook of communication in the public sphere*. Walter de Gruyter Gambit and Co. KG, Berlin, (pp. 318-341).

Jakaza, E. (2013). *Appraisal and Evaluation in Zimbabwean Parliamentary Discourse and its Representation in Newspaper Articles*. PhD Thesis. Stellenbosch University, South Africa.

Jakaza, E. & Visser, M.W. (2015). Appraisal in Shona news reporting: A case of the Kwayedza Newspaper in Zimbabwe. In: Mugari, V., Mukaro, L., Chabata, E., (Eds.), *Current Trends in Zimbabwean Linguistics: festschrift in honour of K G Mkanganwi*. University of Zimbabwe Publishers, Harare. (pp. 141-158).

Jakaza, E. & Visser, M. W. (2016). Subjectivity in Newspaper Reports on 'Controversial' and 'Motional Debates: A Multi-theoretical Approach. *Language Matters* 47 (1), 3- 21.

Kamhungira, T. & Tafirenyika, M. (2016). *G40 outwits Team Lacoste in Poliburo*. Daily News, February 12. <https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2016/03/19/g40-finishes-off-team-lacoste>

Kwaramba, F. & Kadirire, H. (2016). *G40 finishes off Team Lacoste*. Daily News, March 19. <https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2016/03/19/g40-finishes-off-team-lacoste>

Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (2003). *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago University Press, London.

Lauerbach, G. E., Fetzer, A. (2007). *Political Discourse in the Media: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing.

Makumbe, J. (1998). *Democracy and Development in Zimbabwe: Constraints of Decentralisation*. Harare: Sapes Books.

Martin, J. R. & Rose, D. (2003). *Working with Discourse: Meaning Beyond the Clause*. London: Continuum International Publishing Company.

Martin, J. R. & White, P. R. R. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. New York: Macmillan Press, Palgrave.

Mashaya, B., & Kamhungira, T. (2016). *Expel Moyo, Kasukuwere, Team Lacoste youths say*. Daily News, April 23. <https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2016/04/22/expel-moyo-kasukuwere-team-lacoste-youths-say>

Mataire, L., (2016). *Form own party, G40 told*. The Herald, February 3. <http://www.herald.co.zw/form-own-party-g40-told/>

- Mpofu, O. (2020). *On the Shoulders of Struggle: Memoirs of a Political Insider*. Bulawayo: LAN readers.
- Mouton, J., (2001). *How to succeed in your Master's and Doctoral Studies: A South African guide and Resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Murwira, Z., & Mugabe, T. (2016). *Mnangagwa speaks out*. The Herald, February 10. (Available at: <http://www.herald.co.zw/mnangagwa-speaks-out-2/>)
- Rukwaru, M. (2015). *Social Research Methods. A Complete Guide*. Meru: Eureka Publishers.
- Rutten, K., Van Belle, H., Gillaerts, P. (2014). Let's talk politics: Introduction. In: van Belle, H., Rutten, K., Gillaerts, P., van de Mierop, D., van Gorp, B., (Eds.), *Let's talk politics: New essays on deliberative rhetoric*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam, (pp. 3- 12).
- Sabao, C. (2013). *The Reporter Voice and Objectivity in Cross Linguistic Reporting of Controversial News in Zimbabwean Newspapers*. PhD Thesis. Stellenbosch University, South Africa.
- Sabao, C. & Visser, M. (2016). Tearing up nationalist discourses? Appraisal analysis of representations of Joyce Mujuru and the ZANU PF factionalism dialectic in Zimbabwe newspapers. In: Ochieng, D. O., Oketch, O., Tunde, A. H., (Eds.), *Political Discourse in Emergent, Fragile, and Failed Democracies*. IGI Global publishers, Hershey, (pp. 88-111).
- Slapin, J. B., Kirkland J. H., Lazzaro J. A., Leslie P. A., & O'Grandy T. (2017). 'Ideology, Grandstanding and Strategic Party Disloyalty in the British Parliament'. *American political science review* 112, 15-30.
- Steensen, S. (2011). The Featurisation of Journalism. *Nordicom Review* 32 (2), 49-61.
- Tekere, E. (2007). *Edgar '2Boy' Zivanai Tekere: A lifetime of struggle*. Harare: Sapes Books.
- Tendi, B. (2020). *The Army and Politics in Zimbabwe: Mujuru, the Liberation Fighter and Kingmaker*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thompson, G., Hunston, S. (2000). Evaluation: An introduction. In: Hunston, S., Thompson, G., (Eds.), *Evaluation in text: Authorial stance and*

the construction of discourse. Oxford: Oxford University Press (pp. 1- 27).

White, P. R. R. (1998) '*Telling media tales: the news story as rhetoric*', Unpublished PhD dissertation, Sydney: University of Sydney.

White, P. R. R. (2005). *Appraisal: An overview*. Manuscript (word processor version). (www.grammar.com/appraisal accessed 2009/06/11)

White, P. (2006). Evaluative semantics and ideological positioning in journalistic discourse: A new framework for analysis. In Lassen, I., Strunck, J., and T. Vestergaard (Eds.). *Mediating Ideology in text and image*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company (pp. 37- 67).

Wilson, J. (2001). Political discourse. In: Schiffrin, D., Tannen, D., Hamilton, H. E., (Eds.), *Handbook of discourse analysis*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers (pp. 398- 415).

Wodak, R. (2002). Fragmented identities: Redefining and recontextualising national identity. In: Chilton, P. Schäffner, C., (Eds.), *Politics as Text and Talk: Analytic approaches to political discourse*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company (pp. 143- 172).

Social Media Narrations and the Dialogue on Mugabe's legacy during the Zimbabwe "Coups"

Hugh Mangeya, Isaac Mhute & Ernest Jakaza

Introduction

The chapter is a dialogic analysis of jokes on former Zimbabwe president, Robert Mugabe, during the week-long "coups" that took place from the 14th to the 21st of November 2017. It argues that the jokes can be read as a dialogic reaction to both the official narrative presented by the military and also to existing official narratives advanced by the ruling ZANU-PF party (especially through the state-controlled media). Zimbabweans instantly understood the army's political intervention as a "coups", even though the military itself presented it as nothing more than an intraparty restructuring exercise. The jokes produced by the ordinary people during this crucial turning point in the country's political development, provide an opportunity to understand the people's perceptions of the country's long-serving president. They help answer the crucial question of whether Robert Mugabe was a hero or a villain. The question was first posed by Winters (2017) following Mugabe's resignation on 21st November 2017 and was later to dominate the local and international media in September 2019 as news of his death broke out (Ahelbarra 2019; Shumba 2019; Wario 2019). It is a complex question which, as the jokes on Mugabe during the "coups" show, does not have a straight forward answer. The dialogue on Mugabe, personally and/or the office, is inherently characterised by ambivalence, multiplicity and open-endedness. Adopting the concept of *Alltagsegeschichte*, a grassroots approach to the archiving and interpretation of history, the jokes reflect a multiplicity of histories and their contested nature, largely depended on one's vantage point (Sorensen, 2008). They, therefore, provide a glimpse into the thought of the "common people" (Wozniak, 2014).

The military, through the late retired Major General S.B. Moyo, presented an official narrative that its actions were not targeted at Mugabe but the 'criminals around him' (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/zimbabwe->

tanks-harare-mugabe-1.4401336). Otherwise, he was still the country's president and Commander in Chief of the defence forces and would be restored to his position(s) as soon as that process was over. Calls made to the media to report the ongoing political process 'responsibly' were read by the media, both state and private, as a way of curtailing the dialogue to a centre (Chinaka, 2019). However, the ordinary people interpreted what was going on as a "coup" that was going to end Mugabe's 37-year rule of the country. Thus, they understood that Mugabe was on the brink of inevitable deposition as president by the military. The jokes produced during this period are critical from two salient points. On one hand, the jokes were instantaneous and spontaneous reactions to the unfolding political theatre. People were constructing them on the go in reaction to the unfolding events. They were also, on the other hand, dialogically constructed in the backdrop of the political and socio-economic environment prevailing in Zimbabwe (Makombe and Agbede, 2016). Viewed from this perspective, the jokes represent the citizens' evaluations of Mugabe's legacy. They necessarily entered into dialogue with dominant narratives that mystified Mugabe and cast him as a god who, through his selfless sacrifices, single-handedly fought both colonialism and neo-colonialism to make the country the proud nation it is. The jokes offer valuable insights into the people's evaluations of Mugabe's legacy. Jokes are, therefore, taken as a discourse reflecting specific ways in which distinct social groups discuss particular topics (du Gay, 1996), providing space to mediate contemporary issues. It is also imperative to note that attitudes are inherently ephemeral. They change over time, in response to changes in the socio-economic and political climate. As the climate changes, so do the people's attitudes and how those attitudes are packaged in jokes. The analysis of jokes produced between 14 and 21 November 2017 enables the illumination of change and continuity in the way(s) in which Mugabe's legacy was understood during the "coup".

The selected time frame, 14 to 21 November 2017, covers the start of rumours about an impending "coup" in Zimbabwe, the confirmation of military vehicles moving towards Harare, the army takeover, Robert Mugabe's house arrest, the assurances of Robert Mugabe's imminent stepping down as president, his refusal to step down, his eventual resignation, and Emmerson Mnangagwa's inauguration as interim president of the country. As can be imagined, these events created a situation where people's emotions, attitudes

and opinions were in a constant state of flux. However, Zimbabweans did not passively watch these events unfold. They actively discussed these events, making sense of them in terms of their significance to both the present moment as well as the future. Typically, as has been the case for Zimbabweans in several situations, social media humour was available as one of the many ways in which the unfolding events could be mediated.

Was it a “coup”?

Generally, research on the November 2017 events in Zimbabwe does not look at the dialogue they engendered beyond the question of whether these events constituted a coup or not. The debate on whether Zimbabwe experienced a coup or not reflected people's attitudes. Bailie (2018) and International Crisis Group (2017) opine that judging from the reactions of the ordinary Zimbabweans who were opposed Mugabe's leadership and who understood the unfolding political drama preceding Mugabe's resignation as a coup, the Zimbabweans welcomed them as a good coup. To some extent, the euphoric conceptualisation of Mugabe's fall deconstructs the notion of the coup in its orthodox sense. However, they fail to appreciate the varied and subtle attitudes permeating that 'universal' acceptance of the coup. A dialogic analysis of the jokes will reveal these subtleties inherent in the popular support of the coup. This resonates with Miller's (2011) earlier submissions that a coup is most likely Zimbabwe's only chance of re-establishing democracy and that the Zimbabweans themselves would welcome the development. Miller's (2011) assertion was also based on the tendency of the international community to half-heartedly if at all, condemn coups in countries where these are seen as deserving. He identifies the 1996 Burundi coup that reestablished the country's deteriorated state structures as a case in point.

Another line of research on the 2017 November ouster of Mugabe focuses on how the military explicitly or implicitly closed dialogue in so far as the characterisation of what it was that was taking place on the ground. Developing on Asuelime's (2018) and Beardsworth Cheeseman and Tinhu (2019) observation that the army was presenting an official picture of a military that was carrying out its legally mandated military constitutionalism, Chinaka (2018) and Ncube (2018) emphasise the conformity of the

Zimbabwean media practitioners to the official discourse set by the multi-sectoral actors of the November event particularly the military and other arms of the state.

Moore (2018) does not necessarily wade into the semantic debate or the attitudes of various players. He nevertheless acknowledges that there was indeed something special about the processes which culminated in Mugabe's exit; in terms of how all developed and the centrality of Zimbabwe's political history; especially the history of conflict. Moore locates the origins of Mugabe's fall to previous futile attempts to persuade him to retire and its catalyst in the factional battles that hogged Mugabe's ruling party in the months preceding the final November blow. Mugabe himself has always argued that he had the mandate from the people and will only step down when people no longer want him to lead. However, this stance has been largely seen from Mugabe's 'stubbornness'

Social media, WhatsApp and political engagement

Marima (2019) notes the growing popularity of social media platforms in Zimbabwe. With more than 6 million users making use of the instant messaging nature of social media and the cover of anonymity it gives, it has also grown to become a crucial tool in citizens' political engagements. Most of these are usually targeted at public figures. Marima argues that as a country, Zimbabwe is sharply divided along political lines. That is, it is split between supporters of the ruling ZANU-PF party and supporters of the opposition, key among them the MDC-T. He traces this polarisation on partisan grounds back to Mugabe's desires to create a one-party state and its narrative of singularity – which he had justified as an African philosophy. However, such a superficial characterisation of people's political participation on social media presupposes a monolithic engagement with political issues and discourses. It does not acknowledge the ambivalence, polyphony and simultaneity inherent in political engagements. The jokes on Mugabe show that despite the predominant dislike of Mugabe, there also contained/showed a healthy dose of respect, or fear, of the man.

Mungwari and Ndhlebe (2019) observe how the emergence of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and the private

media, such as the Daily News and Joy TV, challenged ZANU PF hegemony by dialogically engaging with its “controlled, censored, manipulated and state-based narratives. They argue that, in the face of an oppressive socio-political environment that does not tolerate dissent, social media has been an instrument in providing spaces to social movements to engage dominant ideological positions advanced by the state in the conventional media. They characterise social media as a political public sphere – an alternative counter-public sphere or a subaltern sphere – where the constraints and surveillance of an authoritarian state are circumvented. They go on to reveal how social movements, specifically the #ThisFlag, #ThisGown, #ThisFlower and #TajamukaSesijikile, have used social media in challenging official state narratives. They show how social media is critical in levelling the expressive political space thereby enabling citizens to speak back to power. A dialogic analysis of the viral jokes on Mugabe circulated through WhatsApp groups, therefore, extend this line of research on the ways the social media is appropriated and used to engage existing discourses constructed in the state-controlled media spaces. The dialogic analysis of jokes reveals the multiple ways in which counter-discourses in the mainstream public sphere are produced, reproduced and articulated through social media.

Musarurwa (2016) argues that the sustained use of both cultural and structural violence has led to a socio-political environment in which the people of Zimbabwe have internalised these forms of violence; accepting them to be a normal way of life. He argues that this state of negative peace is characterised by hushed and unexpressed anger. The bottled-up discontent can only be heard through murmurings behind closed doors and in corridors but is never publicly expressed. In such an environment marked by heavy-handed and iron-clad political repression, non-violent reactions are regarded as the best/appropriate since the freedom of expression through public events such as demonstrations, marches or mere community discussions are hampered by draconian laws such as the POSA. Civic activities are carried out in an atmosphere of intimidation and fear. Social media, therefore, becomes a significant tool in political participation. In this context, jokes circulated about Mugabe during the military-led transition, are regarded as ‘weapons of the weak’ (Siziba and Ncube, 2015).

Dendere (2019) states that social media is a low-cost way to engage in political discussions, especially in a country with limited financial resources. In countries like Zimbabwe, citizens' political engagements are heavily policed by the state, engaging on social media away from the watchful eyes of the state, enables and ensures secure political engagements. As such, there is only freedom before speech, as human rights are not guaranteed after it. The recent arrests of Hopewell Chin'ono, an investigative journalist, and Jacob Ngarivhume, an activist who called for the 31 July demonstrations, are a clear testimony of the state's intolerance of political dissent (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/07/zimbabwe-authorities-continue-their-crackdown-on-dissent-with-arrest-of-investigative-journalist-and-activist/>). Access to the internet has thereby opened up political communication, enabling citizens to circulate media about the president, pictures or jokes have demystified political leaders. State media's iron-clad control of the news narrative. Memes on the president's fall also humanized Robert Mugabe, who has since independence represented as a colossus, a towering figure that cannot be challenged or mocked. Social media provide access to marginalised groups who cannot openly participate in Zim politics.

The subversive nature of humour constructed on social media spaces is acknowledged in several studies (Al-Rawi, 2016; Sorensen 2008). Willems (2010; 2011; 2015), in particular, emphasises this aspect of humour in Zimbabwe. Willems (2010) reacts to how popular and academic accounts on Zimbabwe's crisis have largely characterised ordinary Zimbabweans as docile and unable to resist Mugabe's tight grip on power by pointing out the significance of popular humour and rumour as everyday resistant forms used to contest the state's attempt to "interpellate them as loyal ruling party supporters". Willems (2011) traces the use of political jokes and rumour in Zimbabwe to ZANU PF's monopoly of news through Zimbabwe's only television news broadcaster the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC). For Zimbabweans unable to afford alternative sources of news, political jokes and rumour became a medium through which they could challenge the government's monolithic narrative of the Zimbabwean economic and political crises. Viral jokes on Mugabe, therefore, responded to state propaganda and the government's censorship of alternative views.

Willems (2011) demonstrates this through comic strips which were used

to reveal the different ways in which ordinary Zimbabweans negotiate various socioeconomic and political crises that impact their lives. The humour employed in cartoons is read as a hidden script in that it subtly and implicitly speaks to power in an environment riddled with legal and extra-legal restrictions imposed by the government to curtail freedom of expression thereby turning the country into “a strong ‘Big Brother’ police state” (Willems, 2011, p. 128). Humour, particularly shared on WhatsApp, can therefore be taken as an alternative digital public sphere offering “democratic means for democratic communication to people who are normally excluded from media production” (Willems 2015, p. 88). Willems suggests the terms alternative mediation and mediated civic agency to capture the various modes of citizens’ political participation through a broad range of both formal and non-formal media, is thereby able to capture a wider range of actions aimed at different forms of power.

Musangi (2012) uses the example of Nazi Germany to argue the case of the subversive nature of jokes in oppressive societies. The fact that jokes about Hitler invited a death penalty is proof that jokes are not taken lightly by tyrannical governments. In Zimbabwe, internet humour serves as commentary “on the ubiquitous struggle of Zimbabweans through a reconfiguration of the president” (Musangi 2012, p. 162). It captures and conveys the prevailing mood among those denied space to air their views. This is even truer in the case of Zimbabweans whose use of the internet seems to have this key purpose amidst an economic and political crisis. While Musangi draws most of her examples from a website dedicated to making fun of Robert Mugabe, her point about the use of humour to challenge the status quo equally applies to social media humour.

Siziba and Ncube (2015) and Makombe and Agbede (2016) point to the use of social media memes to challenge power. They see, in the memes on Mugabe’s collapse at the Harare International airport on 4 February 2015, the use of humour to undermine state authority. Their research challenge narratives on Mugabe’s infallibility and presumed eternal youth. They point out that Mugabe was cast as a god who, of necessity, has to punish the people around him for his ‘fails’. Ncube and Chinouriri (2016) add labelling, through funny nicknames attached to politicians, to the list of humour’s non-conformist character. Similarly, Khumalo (2017) argues

this point in her study of social media memes around proposed reforms by Zimbabwe's Education Minister in 2017. The memes were predominantly designed to ridicule the Minister's suggestion that goats can be used as currency in transactions between schools and parents. Khumalo concludes that Zimbabweans create and circulate jokes around reforms because they are not given the platform to express their resistance directly. Jokes, therefore become an alternative discourse challenging dominant views.

While it cannot be doubted that jokes offer a means to challenge authority, as far as the November 2017 "coup" jokes are concerned, we have every reason to be cautious. The association of jokes with subversion alone, which happens to be the common view in the existing literature on Zimbabwe, is based on a monologic reading which does not consider the dialogic character of jokes. A dialogic approach makes it possible to see the contradictions and grey areas regarding the use of humour. Put differently, were the November 2017 jokes subversive? To whom were they subversive? As can be imagined, the answers are not straightforward. The November 2017 "coup" jokes on Mugabe provide an opportunity to see the pliability of jokes and their susceptibility to multiple readings. As the analysis which follows shows, because jokes were dialogic, they tended to simultaneously celebrate and challenge the ouster of Mugabe through the said coup. They expressed confidence and fear, hope and despair, as well as other forms of ambivalence.

WhatsApp Jokes as Dialogic

At first sight, it would appear that the jokes that circulated during the period towards the end of Mugabe's reign reflected an uncritical and naïve celebration of the "coup". Nevertheless, an examination of a selection of the jokes which circulated during this period will demonstrate that the tone, content and often, attitudes the jokes carried were not monolithic. They owed a lot to the past and were thus indebted to already existing texts and sought to negotiate new spaces amidst that heteroglot political world built over decades of Mugabe's rule. In their variety, they traded a fine line between hope and despair, euphoria and doubt, etc. Therefore, it is important to interrogate how the jokes seek to offer alternative readings of the discoured coup and how such readings offer other realities that either challenge or add on to the preferred understanding of the coup.

The WhatsApp jokes that circulated on the Zimbabwean “coup” constituted a dialogue, in the Bakhtinian sense, where every utterance entered into dialogue with other utterances and the context in which it emerged. Bakhtin (1981) defines this phenomenon as dialogism. The text is not considered the sum of the author’s views. It comprises other voices with which it enters into dialogue. Explaining how this works, Bakhtin notes that texts or discourses are inherently dialogic. In this study, dialogism is a notion that refutes a one-dimensional interpretation and understanding of what the military’s intervention in politics was and whether it was a good or bad thing for the country. Asuelime (2018) and Beardsworth et al (2019) argue that there was more to what was going on than the dominant narrative that the military was carrying out an internal house-keeping process aimed at removing ‘criminals around Mugabe’, as was put forward by the then national army spokesperson, the late retired Major General Sibusiso Moyo. This implies that, on a broader level, within the narrative of Zimbabwe’s November 2017 military intervention, there existed a multiplicity of ideological positions. On the one hand was the military’s attempt to unify perspectives towards the interpretation of the event as constitutional. On the other hand, were the voices that insisted on calling the military actions a “coup”. There is, however, need to acknowledge the existence of voices outside this macro-dialogue.

It is critical to analyse individual jokes as a dialogue among various voices, meanings and ideological positions; an attribute of discourse that Bakhtin refers to as polyphony. To regard the jokes as polyphonic necessarily entails unbundling them to enable a holistic understanding of the political process the army was undertaking or setting in motion and the already existing texts against which it was considered. Bakhtin recognises the existence of infinite possibilities for responding to the same event in all utterances. Every instantiation of an utterance, the jokes in this instance, can serve to both align and misalign with the military’s official position. It also does much more than that. It is therefore not enough to acknowledge the multiplicity of voices brought to bear by the jokes. A close reading of the selected jokes will demonstrate the need to understand them as inherently dialogic. It will be seen that the coup represented a “dynamism, instability, variability, multiplicity and simultaneity” characteristic of dialogue (Tagwirei, 2014, p. 18).

Jokes for the research were collected from informal WhatsApp groups using online observation. Kozinets (2010) identifies online observation as one of a variety of data collection method in netnography. The method uses online or virtual communications as the main source of data to arrive at “an ethnographic understanding and representation of a cultural or communal phenomenon” (Kozinets, 2010, p. 58). As such, ethnographic participant observation was employed to cover the breadth of political conversation on Mugabe among Zimbabweans on WhatsApp groups. This enabled an appreciation of the “coup” jokes that circulated between 14 and 21 November 2017 in various WhatsApp groups. This period covers the start of rumours about an impending military takeover in Zimbabwe, the confirmation of military vehicles moving towards Harare, the army takeover, Robert Mugabe’s house arrest, the assurances of Robert Mugabe’s imminent stepping down as president, his refusal to step down, and his eventual resignation. Several jokes on the military intervention to the factional stalemate in ZANU PF were shared during this period. Viral WhatsApp jokes were selected. These were easy to identify because they bore a “forward” icon and, as happens with most viral social media texts, some jokes made their way to several WhatsApp groups with no alteration whatsoever. Jokes in Shona and English were chosen.

Analysis

A close look at the selected viral jokes on Mugabe reveals a deliberate attentiveness to existing discourses on Mugabe. These existing discourses are mainly constructed through several spaces. These include the mainstream government-controlled media, popular culture (such as in music) and political gatherings (such as ruling party rallies and national celebrations), among others. These spaces were critical in constructing and reinforcing idealized images of Mugabe to the people. Mbembe (1992) notes the general tendency by autocratic leaders to project them in specific ways in the eyes of the citizens they rule. In most cases, the leader is a fetish and a semblance of perfection. It is these narratives that the viral jokes on Mugabe circulated during the ongoing 14-21 November 2017 entered into dialogue.

Mugabe's massive popular support

Mugabe was, before his ouster in November 2017, the world's oldest and longest-serving head of state. At 93 years of age, Mugabe had served as the head of state for 37 years. Mugabe believed that he was a man of the people who would continue leading the country and only step down when he no longer had the mandate to do so from the people. He is quoted to have given his assurances of stepping down when beaten in presidential elections. He gave these on the eve of the 2013 elections and would repeat the same sentiments in an interview on his 93rd birthday in February 2017, where he is quoted by Cowell as saying:

They want me to stand for elections everywhere in the party ... The majority of the people feel that there is no replacement, successor, who to them is acceptable, as acceptable as I am ... The people, you know, would want to judge everyone else based on President Mugabe as the criteria (The New York Times, 6 September 2019)

As such, he was the only leader Zimbabweans had known since the country attained its independence in 1980. The jokes that were circulated through WhatsApp groups went into dialogue with this narrative, as is shown by Jokes 1-3 below:

BREAKING NEWS: Mugabe joins the March

Ka feeling kacho kunge carnival musi wechristmas riri last day reku show tirikubrai festival iri first day at work apa Zimbabwe irikuma world cup finals

#GAYA CHI FEELING CHACHO

I CAN'T EXPLAIN

#Zimbabwe

(It feels like a carnival, on Christmas, on the last day of the [Harare Agricultural] show, at a braai festival, on your first day at work, with Zimbabwe at the [soccer] world cup finals)

Uyu murume anoziva kufadza vanhu. When he took over in 1980 *vanhu vakafara*, when he left in 2017 *vanhu vakafara futi*.

(This man really knows how to make people happy. When he took over in 1980 people were happy. When he left in 2017, people were also happy)

Jokes 1-3 appear in the order in which they were posted in the WhatsApp groups, in reactions to the political realities happening on the ground at that particular moment. Joke 1 was posted on the 18th of November during the Anti-Mugabe March held in Harare to force Mugabe out of office. The 'breaking news' alluded to in the joke refers to the absurdity of Mugabe himself joining in the march being held against him. However, it suggests that Mugabe knew that he had lost the support of the people, hence the 'joining in' in the march served to underline this 'fact' that Mugabe also saw himself so unfit to continue his rule that he decided to march against himself. Joke 2 circulated on the 19th of November 2017, when the announcement of Mugabe's much-anticipated resignation was expected to take place at 2000hrs. The joke circulated a few hours before the press conference scheduled to take place from the State House. It captures the feeling of euphoria that people had as they waited for confirmation of Mugabe's resignation on national TV. Again, it challenges the narrative that Mugabe still enjoyed massive popular support. Suffice to say that Mugabe did not announce his resignation on that day. He proceeded to intimate that he was still President of the country, fully in control and would preside over the ZANU-PF annual conference scheduled for December. Joke 3 circulated on the 21st of November 2017, after Mugabe had finally tendered his resignation. It also captures the joy that people had when they finally knew that Mugabe had finally left the office. In the joke, the story of Zimbabwe's happiness is the story of Robert Mugabe's entrance and exit from Zimbabwe's postcolonial scene. The first is when he emerges the triumphant anti-colonial leader of independent Zimbabwe in 1980. The second is his humiliating exit from the scene during the November drama. However, Joke 3 highlights an apparent paradox in which both his entrance and exit into Zimbabwe politics is liberating. The idea that Mugabe's resignation was welcomed by the people as they saw it as liberating is also underscored in Joke 7 (celebrating the ouster of the First Family), below. Read in this way, the joke then serves to emphasise the extent to which he had lost the massive popular support that state narratives claimed he still had.

Stubborn

Developing on the narrative that Mugabe will still contest in every election because he still had the people's mandate, as another narrative that stems largely from disputes from the legitimacy of the electoral process in Zimbabwe (Baker, 2002; Dzinesa, 2013; Hove and Harris, 2015). The opposition, mainly the MDC-T, and the West have over the years claimed that elections in the country are not free and fair. As a result, a narrative emanating from this debate is that doubts over the credibility of the polls derive from a regime-change agenda pushed by the west, through its 'stooge' the MDC-T, to push both Mugabe and ZANU-PF out of office (Onslow, 2011; Munemo, 2012). As such, Mugabe has vowed never to be forced out by elements who allege election irregularities such as rigging and violence. He is quoted to have told off Morgan Tsvangirai, the then leader of the MDC-T, and 'his western allies', in a Heroes Day commemoration speech made soon after a ZANU PF landslide victory in the 2013 election. VOA's Chiripasi quotes him as saying:

...never will we go back on our victory ... Those who were hurt by defeat can go hang if they wish (www.voazimbabwe.com, August 12 2013)

It is against this backdrop that Jokes 4 and 5, below, are read:

Journalist: Cde Mugabe, when are you going to say goodbye to the people of Zimbabwe?

Cde Mugabe: Where are they going?

Chinoz: *ko kana Mugabe wacho asingade kubuda mu office vadii kungotsvaga imwe office voshandisa iyiyo vongomusiya arimo maarikurambira*

(Chinoz: If Mugabe is refusing to vacate the office why don't they just look for another one, use that one and just leave Mugabe in the office where is refusing to move out from)

Again, Jokes 4 and 5 appear in chronological order according to the occurrence of the coup-related events they are dialogically linked to. Joke 4 circulated on the 19th of November 2017 immediately after Mugabe had 'refused' to resign on national TV. The joke, therefore, dialogically refers to the march that had occurred the previous day and takes the people's actions as synonymous to bidding him farewell. As such, the journalist is asking

when Mugabe, after having failed to acknowledge the people's goodbyes, is going to take heed of their wishes, if not demands, and finally step down as president. Mugabe's response, of asking where the people are going, resonates with his stance over the years. That is, he still sees himself as the legitimate leader of the country and, if the people have any problems with that, they can 'go hang' and leave him with his country to lead. Thus, the joke exhibits a fear that things may never change. Joke 5 circulated on the 21st of November soon after his resignation was read in parliament. It brings to bear narratives relating to how power is at the centre of Mugabe's clinging onto power. That is, it is not that the people still love him to continue or that he still has their interests at heart. Rather, it is the idea of remaining in office that appeals to him. Hence, Chinoz's suggestion of just letting him keep 'the office' and let the country move on politically. At another level, the joke also is a tacit resignation to the familiar. In the two jokes lies a palpable fear, that Mugabe was going nowhere, and a perverse admiration of Mugabe's perceived invincibility. The fears have a basis in Mugabe's notoriety for refusing to step down and clinging to power at all costs. They also fed on the propaganda around Mugabe's invincibility both from state media and praise-singing from his loyal supporters who reminded Zimbabweans at every opportunity that Mugabe was going nowhere.

The sly fox

Another dominant narrative emerging from the mainstream media relates to Robert Mugabe's exceptional intellect as well as academic and political skills. This is reflected in how he was dubbed the 'old fox of African politics' and constant reminders of how he was easily the most educated president in the world, having earned seven degrees in five disciplines (English, History, Administration, Economics, Science and Law). Siundu (2017) notes how Mugabe has constantly used his impressive academic and intellectual prowess to outwit and subdue political opponents (both within ZANU PF and the opposition) as well as fellow presidents and nosy newsmen who pose hard questions. The research notes the existence of two categories of jokes constructed along with the game-of-wits narrative. The first relates to how Mugabe made a huge blunder in starting something that he was not equipped to finish and the second relates to how Mugabe temporarily got the better of his political opponents. Jokes 6 and 7, below, belong to the first category:

Wakambotiuchitamba ma cards munhu obvaakuti pick 2 bha then wobvawanhonga joker, wobva wati kumunhu pick 5 no mess [sic], no luck card, no pick and play, achingopedza kunhonga wobva wamutimamwe five right then your turn to play womuti kepele, kepele, juvhe, skip, carry on, close. Ndiyoyakatambwa mudharabhobho akasara aine guchu.

(Have you experienced a situation where during a card game [Crazy 8] you are made to pick 2 cards. You then pick a joker and say to them pick 5, no mercy, no lucky card, no pick and play. As he finishes picking the cards you make him pick another five and when it's your turn to play you close the game. That is what was done to old man Bob leaving him with plenty of cards)

Hello ku ZBC here ndokumbira kukwazisa Sekuru vangu Mugabe vari kwazvimba ndozokwazisa mbuya Gire vasikuzikanwa kwavari ndodakuvatenda nekusunungura nyika kwavakaita muvaridzireo kambo kubva kuna Macheso kanonzi Waitangirei Musindo (Hello is that ZBC? I'd like to greet my Uncle Mugabe in Zvimba and my aunt Gire whose whereabouts are unknown. I'd like to thank them for liberating the country. Can you please play them a song from Macheso titled 'Waitangirei Musindo'?)

Jokes 6 and 7 conceptualise the political drama unfolding in Zimbabwe as a game of wits where Mugabe had pitted his intellectual and political skills against his political adversaries. Joke 6 and 7 suggest that Mugabe miscalculated and ended up losing everything. On the one hand, Joke 6 is intertextually based on a popular card game, Crazy 8, played in Zimbabwe. The game can be played by any number of players. However, in the case of 6 above, the game is between two players. In this joke, Mugabe is the first to make the offensive move, by making his opponent 'pick 2' cards. However, the opponent whom he made to pick 2 cards then happened to pick a Joker and makes Mugabe pick 5 cards himself. In this case, Mugabe is given no reprieve as he is not given a chance to defend himself, through either picking a lucky card or playing a card that he might find useful in retaking the initiative. As if that is not enough, he is also made to pick another 5 cards, presumably by the playing of another Joker, and as he is still trying to gather his wits, the opponent makes 'his' move and plays to close the game leaving Mugabe with a heap of cards. This game of Crazy 8,

analogy captures what happened when Mugabe fired Mnangagwa, who in turn ended up getting ‘Jokers’ of his own and it was Mugabe who ended up losing the game. The same motif comes out in Joke 7. It is intertextually constructed on a radio show that enables callers to greet their friends and relatives around the country and allows them to choose a song that they want the DJ to play for them. In this instance, the caller ‘is’ a relative of the deposed First family. Of interest is how the caller especially loves their politically estranged family because of how the ‘liberated’ the country. The title of the song selected, Alick Macheso’s *Waitangirei Musindo* (Why did you start the fight/war), aptly captures Mugabe fate. That is his fatal mistake of starting a fight that he was not equipped to finish. It is apparent that this particular joke refers to how the Mugabes had picked a fight with, and publicly, attacked Mnangagwa, especially during political gatherings, in speeches and in the mainstream media. Unfortunately, they lost out badly and the people are laughing at them.

Some jokes belonged to the second category in which Mugabe had the better of his political opponents and got the better of them. These are represented by Jokes 8 and 9 below:

[10:41, 11/20/2017] +27 62 688 7...: *ASANTE SANA*

[10:43, 11/20/2017] +263 77 8 ...: *Zvinorei* (What does it mean)

[10:59, 11/20/2017] +263 77 4 ...: ... it means *A’n’satinasaina* (I haven’t signed yet)

Round 1 goes to Mugabe

The jokes refer to the events to Mugabe’s resignation that was never tendered on national television as widely expected by the people. The joke in 8 refers what has come to be the (in)famous ‘asante sana’ (‘thank you’ in KiSwahili) uttered by Mugabe after his speech on the day. So 8 mimics a WhatsApp group conversation where the participants are trying to make sense of what asante sana could mean, particularly in the context of the unfolding political duel between Mugabe and his opponents. It is in this context that it is read as meaning ‘A’n’satinasain’. It is read by the participant as a contracted form of ‘handisatindasaina’ (I haven’t signed yet). Thus, Mugabe who the military had thought had put in a corner on public television, and had no choice

but to resign, still found a way out of that corner. It was the military who were left with egg on their face on national TV. Thus, Joke 9 is read as being constructed out of the military's public humiliation and awards the round to him. On the one hand, it shows the people's admiration of Mugabe's cunning in managing to successfully get out of a corner in which no one expected him to get out of. On the other hand, the fact that it is only 'round 1', shows that this was only seen as only the beginning of the battle. That is the proverbial battle in a war. Thus, the political drama was far from over, largely because of Mugabe's wit and intellect.

Other jokes drew on Mugabe's much celebrated good oratory skills and lauded superior proficiency in the English language. The people of Zimbabwe regarded him as probably the best English speaker not only in Zimbabwe but in the whole of Africa (Moyo, 2017). The local media was not shy to constantly remind Zimbabweans of Mugabe's superior oratory skills. *The Chronicle's* Thandeka Moyo confesses that:

I used to listen to many of his [Mugabe] presentations during my childhood days and honestly his English accent made me want to grow up fast and start speaking as he does (www.chronicle.co.zw, 21 February 2017)

It is within the narrative of Mugabe's linguistic superiority that Joke 10, below, is constructed:

Chete chirungu cha Mugabe chiri deep maybe a resigner ipopaya

(Mugabe's English is deep, maybe he has already resigned)

The joke refers to the speech that Mugabe read on the 19th of November 2017. It refers to Mugabe's 'deep' English which was apparently beyond the linguistic competence of the ordinary Zimbabweans who were, at the end of the speech, not sure whether he had resigned or not. Whilst there is little chance that it could happen, there is an open admiration of the man. This is particularly significant in a country whereby high linguistic competence in English is equated with high intellectual and academic abilities. This resonates with Onslow's (2011) observation that even at an advanced age, Zimbabweans, as well as the African body (African Union), still held him in high esteem because of his exceptional linguistic abilities. So, not only does

the Joke 10 discourse with the narrative of Mugabe's oratory superiority, it also is an implicit comparison of the two political adversaries. Mugabe's opponents are not cast in a good light in this comparison.

Located within the sly fox narrative, were fears that even after Mugabe's much-awaited resignation was finally given, he would still find a way, or a loophole perhaps, to bounce back and reclaim his rightful position, as president. The discourse of a massive intellect and a stubbornness streak were rife with genuine fears that Mugabe would somehow find ways to bounce back. These fears are captured in Joke 11, below:

*Ndapepuka ndanzwa vanhu vachideedzera kuti adzoka hana yangu yarova
ndichiti ndiMugabe ndazofara ndanzwa kuti MAGETSI*

(I woke up when I heard people shouting he's back and I panicked thinking it was Mugabe. I was happy when I heard it's [in fact] electricity)

Joke 11 is framed in the context of two critical factors. The first pertains to the 'linguistic ambiguity' of the pronoun marker {a-}, which can be used to refer both to human and non-human nouns. As such, on first reading of the joke, it is not obvious whether it refers to a person or electricity. The second factor pertains to the acute electricity shortage that has bedevilled the country for almost a decade up to that point. It was normal for electricity to be shed the whole day and only switched on in the middle of the night when most of the people were asleep. So, people would go to sleep without electricity and only wake in the middle of the night to find that the electricity 'is back'. In the same vein, the joke suggests that people would go to sleep with Mugabe out of office and wake up to find him back. Apart from showing that things had not changed even after Mugabe's ouster, as evidenced by the continued acute excessive load shedding, it also captures the people's anxiety and fears that the battle was far from over. It was an open admission that despite his alleged incapacitation due to old age, Mugabe still had the arsenal to fight and successfully regain his power. It suggests a trauma of sorts that people needed to address to properly move on from the Mugabe era. Therefore, it reveals the nagging doubt and nagging feeling that they had yet seen the end of the political drama.

Religiously Ordained to Lead the Country

Within the grand narrative of Mugabe as the only suitable candidate to lead the country as its president is a religious one that casts him as having been religiously chosen to lead the country for a very long time. ZANU PF has historically pushed for its hegemony based on this narrative which has come to equate Mugabe with Jesus Christ. Mugabe believed that he was ordained by God to lead the country. He famously declared that “Only God, who appointed me, will remove me, not the MDC, not the British. Only God will remove me!” in the wake of his victory in the June 2008 run-off Presidential elections (another incident is when posters promoting Mugabe’s 92nd birthday in 2016 proclaimed “Mugabe’s birthday is like that of Jesus Christ”. In the same year, at an African Union Summit, Mugabe himself is said to have declared that he would remain at the helm of the country “until God says, ‘Come’” (Maseko, 2019). In 2017, Kudzai Chipanga, the then ZANU PF Youth League Chairman famously equated Mugabe with Jesus when he said:

Yes, President Mugabe’s middle name is Gabriel. He was given that name by the prophets after realising that he has some resemblance [with Jesus Christ]. He is our Messiah, just like Jesus Christ when he liberated the world. Jesus, when he came, liberated the world and when president Mugabe came, he liberated us in this age ... we honour God, then Jesus Christ and President Mugabe (Jena, NewsDay, 05 July 2017).

The viral jokes on Mugabe circulated during this period also entered into dialogue with this religious narrative that casts Mugabe as Zimbabwe’s Jesus Christ as represented by Joke 12 below:

Mugabe *kudzingwa musi we Sunday semadhimon* (Mugabe was cast out on Sunday like a demon)

This joke was circulated on the 19th of November 2017, a few hours before the much-anticipated announcement of his resignation on the national broadcaster. As already pointed out above, the resignation was never to be on that day. Be that as it may, the focus is that the people challenged the narrative that Mugabe was like Jesus Christ. Rather, it subverted that religious narrative and recast it within the prism of bad spirits. A demon is never good for anyone, hence the need to have it cast out. In the same vein,

Mugabe is re-cast as a bad, demonic spirit that necessarily has to be exorcised from the political landscape.

The Grace Problem

Another narrative that dominated Zimbabwe's socio-political landscape is how Mugabe made a huge blunder by marrying Grace, his former secretary. The former first lady has ever since her marriage to Mugabe been negatively compared to the late Sally Mugabe, Mugabe's first wife. Infamously nicknamed 'Gucci Grace', Grace Mugabe was disliked for her lavish lifestyle and constant shopping sprees abroad. However, it was her introduction into the political arena where she was allegedly in line to be named the country's vice president that led to everything unravelling politically (Pollitt, 2017; Asuelime, 2018; Beardsworth et al, 2019). Jokes 13 and 14, below, enter into dialogue with this narrative.

Ukaona mai vakafa ukasara naStep mother unochiona... ask Zimbabweans mai vavo Sally vakafa ikozvino vana Stepmother Dr. Amai Stop it... baba vanobva waitwa saskum kutadza kana kumiririra vana vavo

(If your mother dies and you are left in the care of a stepmother you will suffer ... ask Zimbabweans who lost their mother, Sally. They have a stepmother now, Dr *Amai* Stop it. The father has been turned into an idiot, failing even to fight for his children)

Bob left with no dignity but we're glad he left with Grace

A first lady becomes the automatic mother of the nation, marked by the honorific title '*Amai*' (Mother). In the case of Joke 13, there is a conscious refusal to see her as 'real' mother. Instead, it cast her within the prism of the evil stepmother who turns her husband against his own children from the previous marriage. Resultantly, the father is turned into an idiot (*saskum*) who cannot protect the children (who, in turn, end up being neglected). The joke suggests that Mugabe's big mistake was marrying Grace and as such, things have turned out for the worst for the Zimbabweans (the nation's children). Joke 14 is meant to be a pan. It suggests that whilst Mugabe's departure from the political arena was undignified, he did the country a huge favour by taking his wife away with him. The jokes imply that Mugabe had been emasculated by Grace and was therefore no longer fit to be the

country's president as Grace had greatly compromised him to a point where he no longer had the interests of the people.

Conclusion

The events of November 2017, provided ample opportunities to reflect on Zimbabwean politics. Top among this was the question of his political legacy in Zimbabwe; whether he is a hero or a villain. While it did not appear so at the time, viral WhatsApp jokes that circulated about the army's hand in the transition during that period enable the answering of this question from a popular perspective. Though the jokes had the primary goal of soliciting laughter, they also tended to carry important political insights about Mugabe's political status in the country. In this regard, the jokes were in conversation with other, already-existing, texts/subtexts and contexts that conditioned how a coup could be understood. A study of selected "coup" jokes explicitly referring to Mugabe's political contribution has demonstrated a certain degree of ambivalence in that, whilst they mostly cast him as a villain he did more harm than good, they still retained a certain measure of healthy respect for the long-serving former president of the country. They were thus amenable to a dialogic reading which revealed underlying conflicts, ambivalences and dualities. Even jokes which appeared straightforward and monolithic tended to dialogically discourse with already existing texts which made possible an understanding of the traits that have dominated the Zimbabwean socio-political landscape.

References

- Al-Rawi, A. (2016). Anti-ISIS Humor: Cultural Resistance of Radical Ideology. *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 17:1, 52-68.
- Alhelbarra, H. (2019). *Robert Mugabe: Hero or villain?* Aljazeera, 6 September.
- Amnesty International. (2020). *Zimbabwe: Authorities continue their crackdown on dissent with arrest of investigative journalist and activist*. July 20. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/07/zimbabwe-authorities-continue-their-crackdown-on-dissent-with-arrest-of-investigative-journalist-and-activist/>.
- Asuelime, T. L. (2018). A Coup or not a Coup: That is the Question in Zimbabwe. *Journal of African Foreign Affairs*, 5(1): 5-24.
- Bailie, C. (2018). *The African Military in a Democratic Age*. <http://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/the-african-military-in-a-democratic-age>.
- Baker, B. (2002). When to call black white: Zimbabwe's electoral reports. *Third World Quarterly*, 23(6): 1145-1158.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Beardsworth N., Cheeseman, N. & Tinhu, S. (2019). Zimbabwe: The Coup that Never Was, and the Election that Could Have Been. *African Affairs*, DOI: 10.1093/afraf/adz009.
- CBC NEWS, *Zimbabwe army launches takeover against 'criminals' around Mugabe, says president 'safe'*. November 15, 2017. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/zimbabwe-tanks-harare-mugabe-1.4401336>.
- Chinaka, C. (Ed). (2018). *Change of Guard, Zimbabwe Media: Mugabe to Mnangagwa Transition*. Harare: Media Monitors.
- Chiripasi, T. (2013). *Mugabe Tells Tsvangirai 'Go Hang' in First Speech After Poll*. VOA, 12 August.
- Cowell, A. (2019). *Robert Mugabe, strongman who cried, 'Zimbabwe is Mine' dies at 95*. The New York Times, 6 September.
- Dzinesa, G.A. (2013). *Towards Delivering Credible Polls in Zimbabwe*. Institute for Security Studies, Policy Brief 41.

- du Gay, P. (1996). *Consumption and Identity at Work*. London: Sage.
- Hove, M. and Harris, G. 2015. *Free and Fair Elections: Mugabe and the Challenges Facing Elections in Zimbabwe*.
- International Crisis Group (ICG). (2017). *Zimbabwe's "Military-assisted Transition" and Prospects for Recovery*, Briefing, 20 December, www.crisisgroup.org/africa/souther-africa/zimbabwe/b134-zimbabwe-military-assisted-trsansion-and-prospects-recvery
- Jena, N. (2017). *Mugabe equal to Jesus: Chipanga*. NewsDay, 5 July.
- Kozinets, R.V. (2010). *Netnography Doing Ethnographic Research Online*. London: Sage.
- Liang, A. (2013). *Robert Mugabe will 'surrender' power if he loses Zimbabwe elections but predicts victory for ZANU PF*. The Telegraph, July 30.
- Makombe, R. & Agbede, G.T. (2016). Challenging Power through Social Media: A Review of Selected Memes of Robert Mugabe's fall. *Communicare* Volume 35 (2), 39-54.
- Marima, T. (2019). Social Media in Zimbabwe: A Toxic Tool or a Future Bridge to Peace? *Toda Peace Institute, Policy Brief* No. 51, October.
- Maseko, N. (2013). *Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe vows to step down if defeated*. BBC News, 30 July.
- Miller, A. A. (2011). Debunking the Myth of the "Good" Coup d'État. Africa. *African Studies Quarterly*, 12(2): 45-70.
- Moore, D. (2018). A Very Zimbabwean Coup: November 13-24, 2017. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa Transformation*, 97: 1-29, 10.1353/tm.2018.0009.
- Munemo, D. (2011). *The Regime Change Agenda in Zimbabwe in the 21st Century: Challenges and Prospects*. Harare: Lambert.
- Mungwari, T. & Ndhlebe, A. (2019). Social media and political narratives: A case of Zimbabwe. *Social International Journal*, 3(3): 277-287.
- Musangi, J. (2012). 'A Zimbabwean Joke Is No Laughing Matter': *E-Humour and Versions of Subversion*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 161-175
- Musarurwa, H.J. (2016). *The Rise of Youth Activism, and Non-violent Action*

in Addressing Zimbabwe's crisis. Conflict Trends, 3.

Ncube, N. (2018). Reflections on Reportage during the Transitional Period: Factors that Influenced Journalists' and editors' Stance on Issues. In Chinaka, C. (ed) *Change of Guard, Zimbabwe media: Mugabe to Mnangagwa transition* (p. 4-7). Harare: Media Monitors.

Ncube, G. & Chinouriri, B. (2016). Humour as Support and/or Opposition: Nicknaming Political Personalities and Movements in Post-independent Zimbabwe. *IGAMA: African Journal of Onomastics*, 1(1): 1–12.

Onslow, S. (2011). *Zimbabwe Political Transition*. London: The London School of Economics and Political Science.

Pollitt, R. (2017). *An interview with the Zimbabwean Jesuit who mediated Mugabe's fall from power*. *America: The Jesuit Review*, December 4.

Sorensen, M.J. (2008). Humour as a Serious Strategy of Nonviolent Resistance to Oppression. *Peace & Change*, 33(2): 167-190.

Siundu, G. (2017). *Mugabe, a sly, old fox whose wit just won't fade with age*. Daily Nation, February 24.

Shumba, Z. (2019). *Mugabe: Hero or villain?* The Independent. 13 September.

Tagwirei, C. (2014). *Should I Stay or Should I Go? Zimbabwe's White Writing, 1980 to 2011*. PhD Thesis, Stellenbosch University.

Tooley, H. (2016). *Mugabe birthday "like that of Christ!" says Zimbabwe state-run newspapers*. Christian News, 22 February.

Wario, H. (2019). *Robert Mugabe: Hero or villain*. The Star, 11 September.

Willems, W. (2010). Beyond Dramatic Revolutions and Grand Rebellions: Everyday Forms of Resistance during the 'Zimbabwe Crisis'. *Communicare*, 29: 1-17.

Willems, W. (2011). *Political Jokes in Zimbabwe*. In Downing J. (ed) *Encyclopedia of Social Movement Media* (pp. 410-412). Los Angeles: Sage.

Willems, W. (2015). Alternative Mediation, Power and Civic Agency in Africa. In Alton, C. (Ed) *The Routledge Companion to Alternative Community Media* (pp. 88-99). London: Routledge.

Winter, J. (2017). *Robert Mugabe: Is Zimbabwe's ex-president a hero or a villain?* BBC News, 21 November

Wozniak, M. (2014). Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: Political Cartoons of the Arab Spring. *Hemispheres*, 29(2): 5-22.

Death of a Tyrant? From Liberation Fighter to Deposed Leader? Frames of Robert Mugabe's Death in Selected Zimbabwean and British Media

Collen Sabao, Moses Magadza & Tendai O. Chikara

Introduction

The death of Robert Gabriel Mugabe, Zimbabwean President for nearly four decades, on 6 September 2019 birthed a miscellany of frames and reactions in world news media. From glorification to vilification, news reports on his death, largely anchored on his 'legacy' evince a variety of frames regards both his person and legacy. Examining news reports from selected Zimbabwean and British newspapers announcing his death, we here examine and discuss the frames (Entman, 1993) through which the news reports anchor themselves ideologically. In further understanding re/presentations of Mugabe in the news reports, the analysis is couched within the constructionist approach (Hall, 2003). Two important ideological frames emerge as influencing the framing of Mugabe – British Zimbabwe colonial history and the aftermath as well as the political transition of November 2017 that ended Mugabe's reign. Mugabe, once a celebrated nationalist freedom fighter, educationist, Pan Africanist and role model for many emerging nations – at the time of the events in November 2017 and the aftermath of his death was largely viewed as a tyrant, despot and enemy of fundamental human rights. His foreign policies (or lack of them thereof) also cast a shadow on him through which the world viewed him. Employing Entman's (1993, 2007) Framing Theory and Hall's (2013) Constructionist Approach to Representation the chapters discusses the frames employed in the reporting of Robert Mugabe's death in two Zimbabwean dailies (*The Herald* and *NewsDay*) and two British media outlets (*BBC* and *The Sun*).

By focusing on 'news breaking' newspaper reports announcing the death of Mugabe and news reports on the subsequent developments culminating from his death in Zimbabwean English language newspapers (*The Herald* and *NewsDay*), and the British news media (*BBC* and *The Sun*), the analyses

in this chapter seek to raise, in line with the set objectives, the questions: What is the notion of ‘framing’ and how is it realised in these news reports? How do journalistic realities arise? Do journalists simply record events or are they inevitably active participants who report influenced by established variables within the context they report in? Is journalistic objectivity a useful myth or just an idea? How do we discern the ‘frames’ in the supposedly factual news? How is such an examination of the ‘frames’ relevant to the analysis of ‘objectivity’ in ‘factual’ news reports? To what extent are ‘hard news’ reports influenced by the ‘framing’ configuration? Lastly, how does the notion of ‘framing’ assist us theoretically in understanding ‘objectivity’ and/or ‘neutrality’ in news?

Robert Mugabe: A Brief Historical Biography

Robert Gabriel Mugabe (21 February 1924 – 6 September 2019) ruled over Zimbabwe for nearly four decades in the capacities of both Prime Minister (1980 – 1987) and President (1987 – 2017) through the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) political party. He was eventually ousted from power by his once-trusted lieutenant and deposed former Vice President and current President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa with the backing of the military through what has been considered a ‘soft coup’ (Moore, 2018). It is reported that Mugabe died a bitter man because of what he considered a betrayal by people in his inner circles. Several studies have sought to understand him as both a man and a ‘psychological phenomenon. Meredith (2007, p. 20), describes Mugabe as a “secretive and solitary bookish person” while Chan (2007) views him as a ‘philosopher-intellectual’. Mugabe’s rise to power, like his deposing, was also shrouded in controversy. Imprisoned for 10 years (1964 – 1974) by the colonial administration and never having seen the battlefield, Mugabe was unaccepted by the guerrillas when Solomon Mujuru (ZANLA commander) suggested him. Mujuru, also known for having actively participated in the escape of Mugabe from Rhodesia into Mozambique soon after his release from prison, is credited as having been the ‘Kingmaker’ to Mugabe ascendancy to the leadership of the Zimbabwe National African Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) and subsequently the presidency of the newly independent Zimbabwe. Mugabe was allegedly not popular with the guerrillas, most of him had never seen him. “It is

universally accepted in ZANU PF that without Solomon's active support, Mugabe would have been a nobody. Solomon and the late Josiah Tongogara led the ZANLA forces"¹. Following the assassination of the party chairman, Herbert Chitepo, in Lusaka and the detention of most of the ZANLA High Command by the Zambian government, Rex Nhongo [Mujuru] slipped out through Malawi to Tanzania and was the top-ranking commander outside of prison. He rebuilt a temporary command structure, maintained close contact with the imprisoned leaders, and put his signature to the document that emerged from the Zambian prison and the training camps in Tanzania, known as the Mgagao Declaration, that announced the support of the young freedom fighters for Robert Mugabe as leader of the armed struggle for independence. The leaders of the War Council (*Dare reChimurenga*) in Zambia's Mpima prison subsequently issued a "Declaration formally pledging support to Comrade Robert Mugabe's leadership of the Zimbabwe African National African National Union (ZANU)", which was distributed to the guerrilla camps and party branches."²

Mugabe's reign over Zimbabwe was very colourful, characterised by allegations of vote-rigging, despotism, gross human violations, allegations of genocide on the Ndebele population in Midlands and Matabeleland (Gukurahundi), violent retribution on opposition political parties (especially their leadership), running down the Zimbabwean economy into the ground among other objectionable characterisations. Tendi (2011) cites Gurukahundi as one of the instances that illustrate the fallacy of imagining Mugabe as a selfless revolutionary and an independence war hero. Tendi (2011, p. 309) argues thus, "one clear illustration of this is the violent 1980s campaign Mugabe ordered in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces" which culminated in the deaths of tens of thousands of people – largely of Ndebele descent and allied to a parallel political party to Mugabe's ZANU PF, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). Kriger (2003, p. 307) for example argues that "Mugabe, like many other durable African leaders, has been associated with large-scale violence against opponents, which has contributed to the population's impoverishment."

1 Sunday Tribune, Sunday January 9, 2005.

2 "Mujuru: His courage in the struggle for independence" - The Herald, Thursday 18 August 2011

Described in vast literature as initially African Nationalist in outlook, developing later into a Leninist-Marxist form of governance (Kriger, 2003; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015; Tendi, 2001), Mugabe's policies and ideology have been summated as Mugabeism (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015). Tendi (2001) observes the shifting imaginaries explaining that "Robert Mugabe is often presented in the international media as the epitome of the popular leader gone awry: the independence struggle hero who seemed initially a progressive egalitarian, but has gradually been corrupted through his attachment to power during a long and increasingly repressive spell in office" (p. 308). In his earlier days at the helm of newly independent Zimbabwe, Mugabe was a darling to all and sundry – considered progressive, conciliatory and a uniting factor – and was among other glorifications, knighted by Queen Elizabeth II. In the later years of his rule, however, especially after the forced land grabs of the late 1990s (ratified later by Mugabe's government as the Fast Track Land Reform Programme), Mugabe become less popular especially with Europe and America resulting in a barrage of sanctions/embargoes imposed on the country. As Kriger (2003, p. 308) explains, "The Marxist-Leninist [Mugabe] who had promised to confiscate white land and hold war crimes trials called for reconciliation. He guaranteed white farmers that they had nothing to fear, he reappointed the heads of the Central Intelligence Organization, the police, and the army; and he appointed ZAPU leaders and whites to his cabinet. Mugabe won praise and international donor money. But he soon manifested his penchant for violence to attain total power."

The West, especially Britain have over the years continuously taken jibes and swipes at Mugabe accusing him of practising what Lai and Slater (2006) describe as "strongman politics". In describing this phenomenon and being critical of it, Kehinde (2019) attacks strongmen politics thus:

Strong men have been ruling Africa since the departure of the colonial masters and individual countries have varied results to show for it. An example of a popular strong man and the effects of his "strength" in ruling a nation would be the former president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, who strongly held on to power for almost four decades. The aftermath of his years in power has been presented as closely aligned to gross economic mismanagement leading to the country attaining two world records for hyperinflation. The regime was further characterised by several human

rights violations as well as anti-white racism. Some may argue that there can be no strong institutions without strong men, but the above example shows that strong men are capable of stifling democracy. Rather than strong men, Africa needs visionary leaders.

Such perceptions of Mugabe and his capacity to lead a nation are very critical in also understanding the frames that news reports about him utilise.

The Typical Communicative Role of the Media

To understand the manners in which Zimbabwean and British media frame their news reports of/on issues and events in Zimbabwe, it is important to understand the context that frames these stories. This can be understood through an understanding of historical developments of bilateral relations between the two countries. Also important in understanding the frames is an appreciation of the perceived roles of the media. The media is not apolitical. It operates within localised socio-political contexts which in turn shape how they re/construct reality. The major communicative role of the mass media can be imagined as that of reporting news in a factual and non-opinionated manner devoid of subjective attitudinal evaluations (Sabao, 2013). White (1998) proposes that the communicative functions of mass media and the importance of the media, in general, can be subsumed in the following four major functions: (a) it presents a forum for the political, economic and cultural debate, (b) it is a site for contestation between political groupings, ideological positioning, media theorists and text linguistics analysts (c) it is a vital tool for the distribution of information through which informed and meaningful discourse can be established and sustained and (d) it upholds the truth and defends the rights of the people against the excesses of government and vested interests.

These roles, however, are only realised if the media is unbiased and impartial and/or balanced in their coverage of, and reporting of news in the media – with no fear or favour. This pre-assumes that “the communicative role of the media is to disseminate information and news on issues and events that affect society and help society develop” (Share, 2011 p. 1). This communicative function of the mass media is evinced by their potential to reach huge communities of people. Therefore, because of this ability,

it has can be opined that the mass media has the potential to shape and condition mass public perceptions through the ways they present issues in the news. Of course, this is so because, of the fact that “while the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.” (Bernard Cohen cited in Rodgers, 1996 p. 1)

The media, and by extension newspapers, as communicative tools have the proclivity to craft (re)versions of reality and compel readership to view the world through these eyes that they create for them. Conceptualising the media as representing reality and facticity presupposes an adherence to one of the fundamental ethics of journalistic practice – objectivity. But such an adherence to the ethical practice of objectivity is not always realized because of a multiplicity of reasons - including but not limited to the nature of the audience, the political economy of the media, social and socio-cultural principles/issues as well as political influence. Accordingly, Herman and Chomsky (1988) believe, as a theory of media, the political economy approach submits that the mass media, while ideally expected to execute an independent and adversarial purpose in communities, also actively “frame” news and issues and also propagate news reports that fulfil the information requirements and/or concerns of their readership.

One of the prominent reasons is the un/receptive nature of the target audience to particular topics and discourses. These can be due to cultural, political or social restraints within the environment in which the media operates. Scannell (1991) underscores the criticality of the audience to the communicative intention of newspapers, through what he terms the ‘cardinal importance of context and audiences’ – a concern that can summarily be described as “frames” (Entman, 1993). The argument here is that there is very little, if anything, within the discourses of news media and news reports that are not motivated. Magadza (2015 p. 35) explains this audience imperative perspective to media consumption by observing that, it is important to ‘acknowledge the fact that the consumers of media messages do not sheepishly and uncritically take in media messages because they are thinking beings with agency.’ Despite this being the case, Magadza (2015 p. 35) also acknowledges how ‘the media can influence public discourse on various issues through the manner in which they portray those

issues.” Furthermore, the target audience or readership often tend to buy news publications because of their political sympathies and affiliations irrespective of which publication (re)presents a more factual narrative of a similar reported incident.

Framing and Ideological Bias/Stance Taking in News Reporting

Framing Theory (Entman, 1993; 2007), in which framing is defined “as the process of culling a few elements of perceived reality and assembling a narrative that highlights connections among them to promote a particular interpretation” (Entman, 2007, p. 167) is important in explaining how the media subjectively chooses which news items to report and the factors – cultural, political or otherwise that shape the ‘framing’ of such news. In discussing framing and its manifestation in news reporting and journalistic practice, many scholars (Arowolo, 2017; Entman, 1993; Sabao, 2016; Weaver, 2007) have expressed their affinity to the agenda-setting approach. Framing Theory is useful to examine how the media selectively, deliberately and intentionally pays particular “attention to certain events and then places them within a field of meaning” (Arowolo, 2017, p. 3). The significance of framing theory in this study and studies on the media, in general, is that it helps us identify and understand the choices news reporters and by extension, the media make in news reporting and the conditions and contexts that shape the “frames” of the news reports.

Framing theory believes that how a message (in our case, a news report) is presented to the audience indicating a particular angle (called “the frame”) influences the opinions and reactions that the audience makes regarding how they process the message - information. Some have noted that “frames are intellections that function to regulate or structure a reality or meaning of message” (Sabao, Magadza & Mhiripiri, n.d). First proposed by Gregory Bateson around 1972 (Arowolo, 2017), and developed by Ervin Goffman in 1974, Framing Theory assumes that journalists and ultimately a newspaper’s selection of news stories to report on and/or publish is influenced by a multiplicity of factors such as news values, political interference, cultural values, religious values, editorial policies, the race, class and gender of journalists, editors, owners and audiences, and the interaction with the supposed upper classes of the society who ideally influence views and

concerns of the day (Sabao, Magadza & Mhiripiri, n.d). The identified factors are then responsible for building the “frame” through which events and news is potentially made sense of by the audience.

It has been noted that “framing describes the practice of thinking about news items and story content within familiar context” (Arowolo, 2017, p. 2). Framing is important to explain how a particular issue is presented to the audience and how such ‘framing’ (presentation) shapes how they perceive it. Frames are thought of as having the proclivity to influence the ideological positions assumed by the audience after reading a news report because they (frames) are capable of conditioning such views of news by the public (Entman, 1993). Because of this effect frames are imagined to possess on the audiences, framing is often perceived as “a form of second-level agenda-setting – they not only tell the audience what to think about (agenda-setting theory) but also how to think about that issue (second-level agenda setting, framing theory)” (Tewkbury & Scheufele, 2009, p. 19)

It [framing] can regulate the audience’s perception and also the acceptance of a particular meaning. As media plays an important role in people’s perceptions, the negative framing can create a huge impact upon the people. For example, the sensitive issues that are coming in the media have been framed diplomatically by not supporting any principles and thus the people can make their own decisions. But a biased media can frame an issue negatively and can influence the mass. Intuition and careful interpretation of the audience is inevitable when it comes to framing. Media is a powerful tool and so the content must be framed with values as it influences and controls the audience.

Framing within the media thus implies the representation of a particular issue, individual, social group or event in a manner that invites people to prefer a particular reading of a text thereby influencing the audience to accept a reality constructed in the text and/or one meaning over another. Framing “persuades” the readership/audience’s decision-making process by crafting news reports in a manner that foregrounds particular aspects/ views of an event in the process eliminating others. It thus translates into the newspapers “framing” the news within a particular viewpoint and deliberately neglecting the others. The “frames” in this case are imagined as

the ‘spectacles’ through which we are ‘forced’ to visualize and see the world (Goffman, 1974) of the news report and what the news report is reporting on or about. As such, “the basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and then places them within a field of meaning” (Arowolo, 2017, p. 1).

Media framing can thus simply be thought of as the view or standpoint from which a news story is reported (Arowolo, 2017). Framing as a theory seeks to debunk the old age journalistic myth that news reporting is an objective enterprise. While perceived as objective and value and opinion free, this is rarely, if ever the case, with news (Sabao, Magadza & Mhiripiri, n.d). Research points to a situation in which the larger corpus of news stories are characterized by authorial subjectivities and are thus value-laden – a characteristic that is influenced by a diverse number of contextual reasons (Arowolo, 2017; Sabao, 2013). Such subjectivities and values evince themselves in both the production and content of news (Jullian, 2011). In other words, “news is not an exact representation of reality but rather a reconstruction from various angles of a small section of reality” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 132). This means that “creating frames for stories is commonly a mindful choice by sources, reporters, journalists and/or editors. This, in a way, justifies [the description of] the media as gatekeepers who mindfully collect, select, organize and present the ideas, events, and topics they cover” (Arowolo, 2017, p. 5).

Zimbabwe and Britain Historical Relations and Mugabe’s 2017 Exit as Context for Framing

Bilateral relations between Zimbabwe and Britain historically are important in explaining and foregrounding the context in which news reports about his death are framed. In analysing the framing of news on Mugabe’s death in mainstream English media like the *BBC* and *The Sun*, one may want to contextualise such analyses within Tendi’s (2014) characterisation of the British-Zimbabwe relations which are argued to “have been highly charged since 2000” (p. 1251) with British animosity at bilateral and multilateral levels. Diplomatic ties between Harare and London can be traced back to the last decade of the 19th century period of colonial encounter and settlement. Since the occupation of Zimbabwe by the British colonialist around 1893,

relations between the two countries are at best described as disconcertingly a mixture of cordiality and hostility.

These stormy relations were shaped in part by the British consistently and continuously painting Mugabe negatively through British mainstream media channels that happen to have wide international reach. It is Tendi's (2014) submission that the collapse of relations between the two countries was because of Britain's opposition to the violent land reform initiated by Mugabe in Zimbabwe, beginning around 1998, in which white commercial farmers lost their land in Zimbabwe in what has come to be known as the 'Fast Track Land Reform' – and known in "Zimbabwean and ZANU PF discourses as the Third Chimurenga" (Sabao, 2019, p. 68). Further to this, the British media felt that Mugabe's politics tended to suppress opposition voices in Zimbabwe around the same time. More critically Tendi (2014, p. 1251) observes that "...in 2002 PM Blair led a successful campaign for the imposition of European Union (EU) sanctions on Mugabe and key members of ZANU (PF)." In response Mugabe, at the 2002 Earth Summit in South Africa quipped back and exclaimed:

We have fought for our own land, we have fought for our own sovereignty, small as we are we have won our independence and we are prepared to shed our blood...So Blair keep your England, and let me keep my Zimbabwe." (News24, 2017)

Once considered a liberator and academic of repute by the West, especially immediately after 1980's Zimbabwe's independence from Britain, because of his conciliatory tone towards the former colonial masters in which he even went on to encourage the white population in Zimbabwe to stay after independence saying at a 1980 rally, "...stay with us, please remain in this country and constitute a nation based on national unity", Mugabe was admired for his policies he and was in 1994 knighted by Queen Elizabeth II of England "for his significant contributions to relations between Britain and Zimbabwe" (Musila & Moyo, 2012 p. 217). Mugabe's knighthood was, however, in June 2007, revoked based on alleged human rights abuses and disregard to democratic processes in Zimbabwe. Fascinating is how the same British government "ironically...had turned a blind eye to the atrocities perpetrated by Mugabe against the people of Matabeleland in the early

1980s” (Musila & Moyo, 2012, p. 221). It is no surprise that the rescinding of Mugabe’s knighthood was retribution for the killings of British farmers during the Fast Track Land Reform Programme.

It becomes clear why British mainstream media went on a spree, demonising Mugabe and his government from that point till his ouster and was understandably negative towards Mugabe in his death in September 2019. The British anger with the land issue in Zimbabwe is perceived to be due to the racial ties between the white landowners in Africa and the Europeans. Paraphrasing Linn Normand, Tendi (2014, p. 1254) argues that “demonisation occurs when one actor portrays his enemy as devil or demon, or in league with them. Once rooted in the religious belief of literal diabolic possession, the demonic charge today retains a figurative force: it is a metaphor, a figure of speech, an externally imposed and symbolic characterisation of one’s adversary.” It becomes apparent that this demonisation birthed a lack of meaningful engagement between Mugabe’s government and the British system as well as the rest of the EU community up to the time that Mugabe was deposed in November 2017.

Critical to note is that by the time Mugabe passed on, there had been a civil-military takeover over in Zimbabwe in 2017, led and orchestrated by Mugabe’s close allies including the new President Emmerson Mnangagwa and the then Army General of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces, General Constantino Guvheya Chiwenga. November 2017, the British and the rest of Europe appeared not to condemn it as customary of the democratic West. If anything, they condoned it. For example, when the coup occurs the Telegraph reports that the then British Foreign Secretary, Boris Johnson “called for calm...and also criticised Mugabe’s legacy and suggested that a transition may provide a moment of hope for Zimbabweans” (Reuters, 2018).

A few months later in March, he is quoted by Reuters as hoping that Mnangagwa would initiate Zimbabwe’s return to democratic ways which would eventually see the return of Zimbabwe to the Commonwealth. More importantly, “Johnson praised Mnangagwa’s record in office in the past 150 days but said a bellwether for the direction of a new Zimbabwe would be the election in July” (Reuters, 2018). This general warming up of the British to

November 2017 events brings justification to the demonization of Mugabe in the mainstream British media up to the time of his death. With that background, one could see that Mugabe's death would be opportunity for western media, particularly British mainstream media to put a final nail on Mugabe's coffin.

Zimbabwe's Media Landscape as a Context For Framing

In undertaking the current analysis, a very important observation from documented scholarship on the Zimbabwean media environment evinces a high level of polarity along political lines, a phenomenon tracing roots to the pre and post 2000 harmonised presidential and parliamentary plebiscite in the country. During this period the then Robert Mugabe led ZANU PF faced its toughest opposition in the history of its existence as well as the short existence of the nation from Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), led then by the late Morgan Tsvangirai. The proliferation of polarity in the media culminating from these events, which arguably exists still, saw the state-owned publications developing ideological leanings and editorial sympathies with Mugabe and ZANU PF whereas the private-owned media became mouthpieces of opposition political parties, the MDC in particular.

The Herald is a government-owned daily newspaper published in Harare. The government bought *The Herald* and other papers from The Argus group in 1981 soon after independence and established the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust (ZMMT) to operate them. More forthright commentators like Robert Powell (2011:38) have even said about *The Herald*: *The Herald* forms part of the government-controlled Zimpapers publishing group. It has traditionally been a government mouthpiece. *The Herald* has reflected only ZANU-PF views, not those of the entire government. The *NewsDay* is a subsidiary of the privately-owned Zimbabwean company Alpha Media Holding (AMH). It is a daily newspaper which runs in print and online. The organisation pledges to its readers that it seeks the truth and offers relevant contexts and analyses. During this period, it was also seen to side with the Tsvangirai led MDC and was critical of Mugabe and ZANU PF.

Scholarship well argues (see, for example, Chiumbu, 1997: MMPZ, 2002: Hondora, 2003: Mano, 2005: Wadahl, 2005), that in Zimbabwean

private-owned press, news reports are “deeply influenced by the editorial lines of the publications whereas in the government-owned press, by the ‘government’” (Sabao, 2013, p. 84). The ‘public’ press thus, still postulates ZANU PF rhetoric, lauding the party on whatever pretext while the private-owned press continues on the anti-ZANU PF path. “This has resulted in a very ‘toxic’ and ‘contaminated’ media landscape” (Sabao, 2013, p. 84). It is in this context in which the current analyses of frames also need to be understood. In its investigation of the media treatment of political issues in Zimbabwe, the Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe (MMPZ) (2002, p. 11), concludes that;

...the epithetic nature of language used in the public press, especially *The Sunday Mail* was thoroughly and unacceptably biased in favour of the incumbent Government. No longer is it adequate to say their language is politically biased or that they are failing to scrutinize adequately the shortcomings of the Government. They have become more or less active accomplices in the theft of a national democratic right, the right to objective news.

In line with the same conclusion, the Media Institute of Southern Africa - Zimbabwe (MISA) added that this kind of biased reporting and hate reporting has become more apparent and the readership no longer believes in the press.

The language games in the press today have meant that journalists write biased stories and this has resulted in some of the stories being dismissed by the readers, the majority of which are elite and seem to have a better understanding of the situation on the ground. This ultimately results in the loss of credibility on the part of the newspapers. Political stories accordingly become superficial and haphazard and in some cases distorted.

It is thus critical that any comparative analyses of news reporting in Zimbabwean news media also considers this context in which such news reports are made.

Comparative Analyses of the Frames of News Breaking Reports of Mugabe's death

In line with the established contexts for framing, the following constitutes analyses of the four news reports:

BBC news report: “Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe’s strongman ex-president, dies aged 95.”

On 9 September 2019 *BBC* online broke the news about Mugabe’s death with “Robert Mugabe, Zimbabwe’s strongman ex-president, dies aged 95.” The phrase “Zimbabwe’s strongman ex-President” is an oxymoron in that the reader wonders why somebody could be a strongman whilst being a president. That only meant the *BBC* was continuing with its assault on Mugabe as an individual. Suggested by the term ‘strongman’ is the existence of individualised power instead of the existence of a system. This is in line with the western view of African politics and politicians as being “of strongman politics” (Lai & Slater, 2006). Such characterisations are reflective of a leader who does not act on behalf of his people but only for his benefit and the purposes of his ego. Lai and Slater (2006) describe “strongman politics” as “a form of authoritarian rule characterized by autocratic military dictatorships...”

In the same news report, the accompanying election campaign picture of Mugabe on the walls of a house supposedly in a Zimbabwean slam, confirms that image of a strongman, who can run a country on his whims and is prepared to ruthlessly crush any opponent with his indomitable fist. In another image the *BBC* displays Mugabe, once more raising a menacing fist in defiance as his mouth is open, most probably giving chanting a slogan of his party. The few opening lines of the *BBC* report read:

Robert Mugabe, the Zimbabwean independence icon turned authoritarian leader, has died aged 95. Mr Mugabe had been receiving treatment in a hospital in Singapore since April. He was ousted in a military coup in 2017 after 37 years in power.

“...independence icon turned authoritarian” is in keeping with the British perception as discussed earlier on that once upon a time, Mugabe was a

diligent man and had actually to turn “authoritarian” later on. The overt offering of direct commentary by the journalist also suggests that they are no longer neutral as is expected of writers in the genre. This judgement of Mugabe keeps in line with the British government and the *BBC*’s perception of Mugabe and is self-serving in that for as long as Mugabe was not interfering with the skewed land ownership patterns in Zimbabwe, he was an “independence icon.” Simple but leading questions may be asked here: Why was the condemnation of Mugabe hottest around the land reform? Why was Mugabe not sanctioned for Gukurahundi disturbances of the 1980s? Interestingly, in 1994 he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II. “Mugabe was created an honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath in 1994.” (The Guardian, 25 June, 2008). It would seem therefore that what the *BBC* is doing is to desperately reinforce the British foreign policy.

The news report above also attacks Mugabe in two instances; first that despite his entire nationalist pride he “had been receiving treatment in a hospital in Singapore since April.” This shows that Mugabe had not strengthened his health system in his home country and had the humiliation of dying abroad. The second attack is contained when it is suggested that “he was ousted in a military coup in 2017 after 37 years in power.” The 37 years are meant to rub in the fact that Mugabe had overstayed in power and was, therefore, a clear extremist who was not worthy to be mourned.

The *BBC* is acutely aware that it is always addressing an international audience and it sets out to put Mugabe into perspective by giving a rundown of his history. His story is given a positive slant before independence, portraying him as a brave man and a skilled negotiator. Once more a spin is made:

But over his decades in power, international perceptions soured. Mr Mugabe assumed the reputation of a “strongman” leader - all-powerful, ruling by threats and violence but with a strong base of support. An increasing number of critics labelled him a dictator.

The news report shields attitudinal evaluations by stating that “international perceptions soured...” without objectively indicating that the British government and the *BBC* themselves were at the forefront of this. The critics mentioned are also largely western and the *BBC* ignores this by appearing to

occupy a distant neutral pedestal. Then the *BBC* throws in a racist statement: “Robert Mugabe embodied Africa’s struggle against colonialism - in all its fury and its failings.” This suggests that Africans needed not have fought colonialism as they tended to fail to strike a balance in their body politic.

Arguably, a half-truth is also told in the *BBC* report: “The country he finally led to independence was one of the continent’s most promising, and for years Zimbabwe more or less flourished.” History will prove that at independence in 1980, black people had little or no control of the means of production and the idea that the economy flourished at independence could be countered with questions such as: Whose economy in Zimbabwe flourished at independence, black or white? Was it sustainable to allow the minority whites to be happy amidst misery? In other words, who was drawing the biggest benefits of independence in the early days?

The report utilises another image of Mugabe raising his fist even in the presence of his wife, Grace Mugabe which puts paid to the view that he is a very violent leader even in the home and he does not deserve to be mourned. It is also interesting to pursue voices in and out of Zimbabwe quoted by the *BBC* on Mugabe’s death and carefully examine what the voices say. First to be quoted is a ZANU PF member, Energy Mutodi. Mutodi talks about Mugabe being “a good man.” If Mutodi is picked so that he comes in to represent a ZANU PF voice, then this is problematic because Mutodi was in bad books with Mugabe in the events towards the expulsion of Mnangagwa from the government and ZANU PF by Mugabe in 2017. The media in Zimbabwe in 2017 was awash with reports that suggested that Mutodi had attended or was dining and wining with Mnangagwa, discussing how Mnangagwa could best hoodwink Mugabe. It is strange therefore that even Mutodi describes Mugabe positively.

The *BBC* also quotes George Walden, one of the British negotiators at the Lancaster House Agreement in 1979 which ended white-minority rule in Zimbabwe, who says Mr Mugabe was a “true monster.” This is meant to be credible since it is assumed that Walden would be credible because he is expected to have had a very ‘close-up’ with Mugabe during the said Lancaster Negotiations for Zimbabwe’s independence from Britain enough to see that “monster.” Such a technique shows more the machinations of the *BBC* than

the true reality of Mugabe himself. The *BBC* further quotes Zimbabwean Senator David Coltart, once labelled “an enemy of the state” by Mugabe. Coltart describes Mugabe’s legacy as having “been marred by his adherence to violence as a political tool.” Coltart also says, “He (Mugabe) was always committed to violence, going back to the 1960s... he was no Martin Luther King,” and that Mugabe “never changed in that regard.” Coltart has the right to all his words but it is baffling that the *BBC* did not find irony in choosing Coltart to comment on Mugabe’s violence dating back to the 1960s. This is mainly because Coltart may have an equal if not a more violent history than that of Mugabe. The Patriot of 15 January 2016 in another different case expresses surprise that Coltart dares to say Mugabe has a violent past considering that:

Coltart is a former Selous Scout, a Rhodesian military unit that was responsible for massacres during the liberation war. He belonged to the British South Africa Police Anti-Terrorist Unit, the notorious police who went around killing innocent people in trying to coerce them to denounce freedom fighters. Where does Coltart get the moral authority to say that against the background of his own bloody past? (The Patriot, 2016)

One can argue that the *BBC* is under pressure to find a credible white face in Zimbabwe that is meant to conveniently give what could be a convincing side of Mugabe’s story from the inside of Zimbabwe. And they picked on Coltart who would be believed by the unsuspecting international followers of the *BBC*.

Kenya’s President Uhuru Kenyatta is also quoted as having said Mugabe had “played a major role in shaping the interests of the African continent” and was “a man of courage who was never afraid to fight for what he believed in even when it was not popular.” Most likely this was the only real positive comment on Mugabe in this report. Immediately below that, is a black and white image of Mugabe looking much younger and healthy in the early 1980s, supposedly a period when he was good in the eyes of the British. This picture projects Mugabe’s broad shoulder as if to say he was positively carrying or shouldering a wholly newly independent country, Zimbabwe.

Equally denigrating and opinion laden was The Guardian’s announcement

of Mugabe's death. Mugabe was framed as "deeply divisive" and the resources of appraisal in the form of a judgement show the writers' position of loathing towards Mugabe. In the same opening line of their report, The Guardian reporters, Jason Burke and David Smith use attributive quotation marks to inform their readers that Mugabe had been declared a "national hero". The use of this attribution suggests that their view is not of Mugabe as a hero hence they see a need to attribute the decision to an external source. The writers again make a judgement regarding how Mugabe conducted government business as he is said to have "ruled" Zimbabwe with "an iron fist". The diction employed by the two writers is suggestive. In diplomacy speak one is either a ruler or a statesman depending on how they are viewed by the party describing them. Mugabe's fallout with the British is reflected in this report through the description as being a "ruler". The term evokes perceptions of a tyrant and this picture is augmented by the rhyme, "...with an iron fist..."

Throughout the rest of the story, the news report presented a negative picture of Mugabe. The only positive light that shone on Mugabe in the story was of his earlier years as he championed the struggle for an independent Africa. This celebration is blurred through a linguistic foregrounding of a contrastive as the reporters write, "Though initially admired as a hero..." The report is framed to suit the foreign policy of Downing Street at that particular period in Zimbabwe and Britain diplomatic relations history which was reflected in the report through a quotation where the British prime minister said Mugabe was a "barrier to a better future".

***The Sun* news report: "DEATH OF A TYRANT"**

In breaking the news of the death of Mugabe, an independent British newspaper, *The Sun*, has the headline: "DEATH OF A TYRANT." In that one fell swoop, they persuade their readers to a one-sided reading of Mugabe as a tyrant. The subtitle of the same article reads: "Robert Mugabe dead – Brutal Zimbabwe president whose bloody reign of terror crippled his country dies aged 95." Reading this, one would not believe that the same Mugabe had been knighted by the British system and that he had come to the Lancaster Talks to liberate his country in 1979. The story also hints at the fact that Mugabe died "in a five-star hospital in Singapore" to draw

a contrast with what is known about the poor health delivery system of Zimbabwe – and thus cast him as a failure and extravagant leader who has no care for those he leads.

As in the case of the *BBC* news report, *The Sun* report contains a suggestion that Mugabe was initially a promising leader who transformed into evil. The report lists Mugabe's sins and these are: "a tyrant with a penchant for luxury", "bizarre and boastful outbursts which were often puzzling and disturbing" and that Mugabe "ruled like a medieval king who rewarded his favourites but punished others." Then in a list of who loved him and who did not, the paper goes:

Confirming the news of Mugabe's death this morning, his successor President Mnangagwa shared a tone-deaf tweet, writing: "It is with the utmost sadness that I announce the passing on of Zimbabwe's founding father and former President, Cde Robert Mugabe. Cde Mugabe was an icon of liberation, a pan-Africanist who dedicated his life to the emancipation and empowerment of his people. His contribution to the history of our nation and continent will never be forgotten. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

The African National Congress also remembered Mugabe as a "friend, statesman and revolutionary". Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta said it was a "moment of sorrow". He said:

Words cannot convey the magnitude of the loss as former President Mugabe was an elder statesman, a freedom fighter and a Pan-Africanist who played a major role in shaping the interests of the African continent. Indeed, we will remember former President Mugabe as a man of courage who was never afraid to fight for what he believed in even when it was not popular.

In a narration of Mugabe's history, *The Sun* states:

It was while studying from 1950-1952 that the future tyrant decided to be a politician - returning to Southern Rhodesia in 1960 and abandoning teaching to become a leader in the freedom fight.

This gives the impression that Mugabe was born a tyrant or to be a tyrant is a black thing. This description of Mugabe puts across and supports the claim that European media about non-Europeans in general and particularly *The Sun* typifies how Europe and European media have developed a systemic way of viewing other people depending on real social, political and economic relations. *The Sun* continues by referring to “Lord Peter Hain - who worked as the African Minister and met with Mugabe in 1999 — and who told Good Morning Britain that Mugabe had transformed from a “freedom fighter to a corrupt, repressive dictator”. *The Sun* says:

Lord Hain, an anti-apartheid campaigner, said Mugabe’s legacy will be “very two-sided”, with the early promise of his leadership outweighed by the “corrupt, repressive, dictatorial” approach he adopted.

Further characterising Mugabe as:

He is a tragic case study of a liberation hero who then betrayed every one of the values of the freedom struggle. (He) became corrupt, repressive, dictatorial, self-serving and ruthless in eliminating opposition and becoming increasingly interested in enriching himself and impoverishing his own people.

To those who are discerning, Western European Media on Africa above could be used as a reference point to the magnitude of which the media can relate with the ideas of its day. It is also a pointer at how subtle ideology can be, blending with the news until one does not immediately identify ideology for what it is.

***NewsDay* news report: “Breaking: Mugabe Dies”**

During the decade in which media polarity was at its peak in Zimbabwe (2000 – 2010), the *NewsDay*, which began publishing in 2010 also largely aligned itself with other private-owned newspapers in terms of ideological positioning. This means that it evinced inherent biases towards opposition politics (which enjoyed editorial sympathy) and evince negative editorial biases against Mugabe and ZANU PF. However, there are suggestions that in the period leading to the fall of Mugabe (2014 – 2017), characterised by factional infighting within the ZANU PF party, The *NewsDay* and

its leadership became skewed towards and aligned with the incumbent president, Emmerson Mnangagwa's Lacoste faction while the other privately owned daily, *The Daily News*, became aligned to the G40 faction aligned to Grace Mugabe. Mungwari (2017, p. 5) characterises the two independent dailies in Zimbabwe - the *Newsday* and the *Daily News* as follows:

The *NewsDay* presented the Lacoste faction as victims and G40 as villains, while *The Daily News* viewed the G40 faction as the victims and the Lacoste faction as villains. The two papers capitalised on the succession story in the ruling party to boost copy sells and the factionalism was good for pushing volumes at a time when the economy was struggling and readers could not afford to buy two newspapers.

At the time of Mugabe's death, the *Newsday* was still aligned to Mnangagwa and the supposed new projects that he was setting up in the country and had stopped being very critical of the government in Zimbabwe like it used to be before the November 2017.

On Mugabe's death, the *NewsDay* breaks with "Breaking: Mugabe dies". This is very concise and effective because of all the Mugabes in Zimbabwe the late ex-President was the most popular and it had also been known for a while that he had been unwell. The *NewsDay* is aware that it is sensitive to break such news and immediately cites the President (Mnangagwa) as the source: "The death was announced by his successor Emmerson Mnangagwa who mourned him as an "icon of liberation." The language is neuter because they do not know as yet the official line – which in the aftermath becomes confusing and tumultuous.

The *NewsDay* presents a profile picture of a joyful Mugabe at a podium. The paper gives no history of Mugabe except to signal: "Mugabe, the world's oldest head of state before his resignation in 2017, was the only leader Zimbabweans knew since independence in 1980". Such a statement is very consistent with the slant that the *NewsDay* had carried about Mugabe during the ZANU PF factional fights leading to his November demise – that he was too old and had overstayed.

***The Herald* news report: “Ex-President Mugabe dies”**

The Herald forms part of the government-controlled Zimpapers publishing group. It has traditionally been a government mouthpiece. It follows that *the Herald's* breaking and coverage of Mugabe's death would be heavily leaned in support of Mnangagwa who first came into power through the 2017 'coup'. Their view would also be the official line. *The Herald* headline reads: “Ex-President Mugabe dies”. This is cold and factual, consciously aware that Mugabe supporters are still around the country and that Mugabe still commands general support within Zimbabwe and the ruling party.

The Herald respectfully continues: “Former President of Zimbabwe, Cde Robert Gabriel Mugabe has died.” One notices the respect through the use of the title ‘Cde’ which is revered within ZANU PF political discourses and ideology. This title, the state papers had stopped using on Mugabe since the end of his tenure in November 2017 and the subsequent elections when it appeared that Mugabe was ostensibly now supporting the MDC against his former party ZANU PF. The respectable title could have been used here to try and cool the tempers that may normally flare when such an important figure passes on as well as playing neutral to allow other possible processes. They are also explainable by how Mnangagwa tried to vindicate himself by ‘making peace’ with a dead Mugabe through burying him at the National Heroes Acre – a process that ended sourly when the Mugabe family snubbed that offer and buried Mugabe at his rural home.

The Herald further insists that Mugabe's successor, President Mnangagwa himself had confirmed the news about Mugabe's passing on: “Former President of Zimbabwe, Cde Robert Gabriel Mugabe has died. President Mnangagwa first confirmed the sad news on his Twitter handle.”

As you read, you felt that those at *The Herald* were keen not to take a stance on Mugabe's death other than that of Mnangagwa himself. The paper proceeds to quote from Mnangagwa's very own Twitter handle verbatim: “It is with utmost sadness that I announce the passing of Zimbabwe's founding father and former president Cde Robert Mugabe,” he said.

Contrary to the known fact that Mnangagwa had deposed Mugabe in 2017, the whole report from *The Herald* is keen to suggest that President

Mnangagwa is a caring and kind man to Mugabe and that he has been doing all he can for the welfare of the late President. While giving an update on the former President's health on August 5, 2019, President Mnangagwa said:

Unlike in the past when the former President would require just about a month for this, his physicians this time around determined that he be kept under observation for much longer, from early April this year when he left for his latest routine check-up.

Mnangagwa is further quoted as saying:

Last week on 30th July, I sent on my behalf a high-powered team of officials led by Chief Secretary to the President and Cabinet Dr Misheck Sibanda to Singapore to check on the former President and to get an update on his progress from the medical team attending to him, including any additional requirements towards his full care and speedy recovery.

Instead of quickly quoting people, an unemotional statement goes: "He (Mugabe) is credited for empowering citizens through education, indigenisation and the Land Reform Programme, which has benefited many citizens."

From the above, one would like to agree with Happer and Philo (2013) that,

The information that people are given in media accounts can both legitimise the actions of the powerful, and facilitate change at the collective level, but can also limit and shape the behaviours of individuals...The media are in essence a contested space in which the most powerful groups can establish the dominance of specific messages [although] the complexity of the reception process then creates the possibility of variations in attitudinal and behavioural response.

The Herald news report is thus crafted in a manner that creates space for Mnangagwa to be a protagonist, through this reporting his humane side is subtly underscored. He is presented as one 'honouring' Mugabe regardless of all the drama which had ensued since the pronounced factional fights between the late former President and the incumbent.

Conclusion

Based on the arguments and discussion above, this chapter concludes that news reports are never neutral as they cannot escape the frames around them. The prejudices, ideas and ideologies of reporters always permeate into the news report. The narratives in the media are always characterised by posturing as well self-censorship by the writers. Political reports are especially susceptible to these elements. The reportage around the death of Robert Mugabe is a good case for this argument as has been shown in this chapter. The British media went all out to portray a Mugabe who started off well but later went off tangent which is the narrative of the British governments of Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair and Boris Johnson. Zimbabwean media on the other hand simply went with the narrative of the ruling elites of the day and there was very little (if any) use of evaluative language. Reportage on the death of Mugabe assumed a semblance of genre expectations with reporters mainly limiting themselves to reportage of facts of Mugabe's death. This neutered approach while looking like professionalism was a way of avoiding stirring the waters for the media in Zimbabwe. As such the narrative remains open-ended and Mugabe comes across as both a tyrant and a hero, the answer regarding which of the two depictions best suits him depends on the frame of time and all other frames when this question is raised such as "who and why"?; such a question is being posed.

References

- Arowolo, O. (2017). *Understanding Framing. Unpublished Lecture Notes: Advanced Theories in Communication.*
- Catholic Commission for Justice, Peace in Zimbabwe, and Legal Resources Foundation (Zimbabwe). (1997). *Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988.* Harare: Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe.
- Chan, S. (2007). *Nietzsche in Harare.* Prospect, 134 May.
- Chigora, P. (2006). On Crossroads: Reflections on Zimbabwe's Relations with Britain at the New Millennium Alternatives: *Turkish Journal of International Relations* 5(3), 61 – 76.
- Chiumbu, S. H. (2004). *Redefining the National Agenda: Media and Identity - Challenges of building a new Zimbabwe.* In *Media Public Discourse and Political Contestation in Zimbabwe.* Current African Issues 27. Uppsala, Sweden: Nordic African Institute.
- Du Bois, J. W. (2007). *The Stance Triangle.* In R. Englebretson. (Ed.) *Stancetaking in discourse: Subjectivity, evaluation, interaction* (pp. 139-182). Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.
- Entman, R. M. (1993) Framing: Towards Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm. *Journal of Communication* 43(4), 1993, 51-58.
- Entman, R.M. (2007). Framing Bias: Media in the Distribution of Power. *Journal of Communication*, 57(1), 163–173.
- Finn, J. and Jacobson, M. (2017). *What is social justice?* Retrieved from <https://blog.oup.com/2017/03/what-is-social-justice/>.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Media Discourse.* London: Edward Arnold.
- Gales, T. A. (2010). *Ideologies of violence: A Corpus and Discourse Analytic Approach to Stance in Threatening Communications.* (Unpublished PhD Thesis) University of California.
- Hall, S. (Ed). (2003). *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.* London: Sage Publications.
- Happer, C., & Philo, G. (2013). *The Role of the Media in the Construction*

of Public Belief and Social Change. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, 1(1), 321-336.

Hondora, T. (2003). *Media laws in Zimbabwe*. Harare: Konrad Adenauer.

Jullian, P.M. (2011). Appraising through someone else's word: The evaluative power of quotations in news reports. *Discourse and Society* 22(6): 766–780.

Kehinde, O. (2019). *Strong Men vs Strong Institutions: Strengthening Democracy In Africa*. Retrieved on 29 August 2020 from: <https://www.mondaq.com/nigeria/constitutional-administrative-law/819780/strong-men-vs-strong-institutions-strengthening-democracy-in-africa>

Kruger, N. J. (2003). Robert Mugabe: Another Too-Long-Serving African Ruler: A Review Essay. *Political Science Quarterly*, 118 (2), 307-313.

Lai, B & Slater, D. (2006). Institutions of the Offensive: Domestic Sources of Dispute Initiation in Authoritarian Regimes, 1950-1992. *American Journal of Political Science*. 50 (1): 113–126. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5907.2006.00173.x

Mano, W. (2005). *Press Freedom, Professionalism, Proprietorship: Behind the Zimbabwean Divide*. London: University of Westminster.

Martin, J. R., & Rose, D. (2003). *Working with Discourse: Meaning beyond the Clause*. London, England: Continuum.

Martin, J. R., & White, P. R. R. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English*. Palgrave Macmillan.

McCombs, M.E. and D.L. Shaw. (1972). The Agenda-setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36(2): 176–187.

Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe (MMPZ). (2002). *Media Under Siege: Report on the 2002 Presidential and Mayoral Elections in Zimbabwe*. Harare: MMPZ Publications.

Meredith, M. (2007). *Mugabe: Power, Plunder and Struggle for Zimbabwe*. New York: Public Affairs.

Moore, D. (2018). A Very Zimbabwean Coup: November 13 – 24, 2017. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa* 97, 1 – 29. DOI: 10.3533/tm.2018.0009

Mungwari, T. (2017). *Representation of Political Conflict in the Zimbabwean Press: The Case of the Herald, The Sunday Mail, Daily News and The Standard*,

1999-2016. Unpublished PhD Thesis. South Africa: UNISA.

Musila, G. A., & Moyo, D. (2012). Subterranean Faultlines: Representations of Robert Mugabe in South African Press Cartoons. In Chiumbu, S. and Musemwa M. (eds). *Crisis! What Crisis? The Multiple Dimensions of the Zimbabwean Crisis*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 199–224.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J., (ed). (2015). *Mugabeism: History, Politics and Power in Zimbabwe*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. DOI: 10.1057/9781137543462.

Sabao, C. (2013). *The 'Reporter' Voice and 'Objectivity' in Cross-Linguistic Reporting of 'Controversial' News in Zimbabwean Newspapers: An Appraisal Approach*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Stellenbosch University: South Africa.

Sabao, C. (2016). Arguments for an Appraisal Linguistic Discourse Approach to the Analysis of 'Objectivity' in 'hard' news reports. *African Journalism Studies* 37(1): 40 – 63.

Sabao, C. and Visser, M. (2013). (Un)Patriotic nuances? Evaluating the nature of the 'Reporter Voice' in Hard News Reports on the Renewal of 'Sanctions' in Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Linguistics* 5 (3): 198 – 217.

Sabao, C. and Visser, M. (2015). Evaluating Authorial 'Objectivity' and 'Stancetaking' in Reporting the Making of a New Constitution in Zimbabwean Newspapers. *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research* 41(1): 44 – 62.

Sabao, C., Magadza, E. D. & Mhiripiri, N. A. (n.d). *Framing homosexuality in Namibian Newspapers in the Context of HIV and AIDS Discourses*. Unpublished Paper.

Sameer, I. H. (2017). Analysis of Speech Act Patterns in two Egyptian Inaugural Speeches. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 4(2), 134-147.

Share, F. (2011). *The Communicative Role of the Media. A Comparative Analysis of the Media Discourse in the Reportage of Political Issues regarding the Government of National Unity in two Zimbabwean national weekly newspapers (The Standard and Sunday Mail) in the period February 2009 – June 2010*. Unpublished Honours Dissertation. Gweru: Midlands State University.

Tendi, B.M. (2011). Robert Mugabe and Toxicity: History and Context Matter.

Representation, (47) 3: 307-318, DOI: 10.1080/00344893.2011.596439.

Tendi, B. M. (2014). The Origins and Functions of Demonisation Discourses in Britain–Zimbabwe Relations (2000–). *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 40 (6): 1251-1269. DOI: 10.1080/03057070.2014.933646.

Waldahl, R. (2005). *Political Journalism the Zimbabwean Way, Experiences from the 2000 Election Campaign*. London: University of Westminster.

Ward, S.J. (2005). *The Invention of Journalism Ethics: The Path to Objectivity and Beyond*. Montreal, QC, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Ward, S.J. (2010). Inventing objectivity: New philosophical foundations. In: Meyers C (ed.) *Journalism Ethics: A Philosophical Approach*. New York: Oxford University, pp. 137–152.

Weaver, D. (2007). Thought on Agenda Setting, Framing and Priming. *Journal of Communication*: 142 – 147.

White, P. R. R. (1998). *Telling Media Tales: News story as rhetoric*. Unpublished PhD thesis: University of Sydney.

Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. New York: Harper & Row.

Notes on Contributors

Collen Sabao holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics (African Languages) from Stellenbosch University and is a Senior Lecturer of Linguistics, Literature and Communication in the Languages and Literature Department at the University of Namibia. He is also an American Council of Learned Societies Fellow '14 and an African Humanities Fellow '14. Sabao's research interests are in Pan Africanism, Afrocentricity, Phonetics and Phonology, Political Discourse, Media Discourse, Appraisal Theory, Argumentation, World Literatures and Rhetoric. He has published extensively in these areas in internationally refereed journals and books - with over two dozen publications.

Lawrence Mhandara holds the DPhil in Peace Studies, MSc in International Relations and the BSc in Politics & Administration (Hons) degrees. He is a lecturer of political science at the University of Zimbabwe. He researches and publishes on politics, security and conflict issues.

Richard Runyararo Mahomva is a Political Scientist with an avid interest in Pan-Africanism and is the Executive Coordinator of Leaders for Africa Network-LAN. Mahomva holds an MSc in International Relations from the University of Zimbabwe (UZ), MSc in Public Policy and Governance from the Africa University (AU) and a BSc in Politics and Public Management from the Midlands State University (MSU).

Jairos Kangira is a professor of English and Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Namibia. He earned his doctoral degree in rhetoric studies from the University of Cape, South Africa. His study focused on presidential rhetoric in Zimbabwe. Kangira is one of a very small group of renowned scholars in rhetoric in Africa. He has presented rhetoric papers at international rhetoric conferences, among them the Rhetoric in Society, the International Rhetoric Workshop and the African Association Rhetoric of which he is a founder member. He has produced a number of disciples in rhetoric at a postgraduate level.

Ernest Jakaza, PhD, is a Senior lecturer in the Department of English and Communication at Midlands State University, Zimbabwe. He has published articles in international Journals like Language Matters, Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, African Journal of Rhetoric among many and book chapters in Political Discourse in Emergent, Fragile, and Failed Democracies (IGI Global Publishers), Let's talk politics. New essays on deliberative rhetoric (John Benjamin). His research interests are in appraisal theoretical discourse analysis, argumentation discourse, pragmatics, and sociolinguistics.

Isaac Mhute is a Doctor of Literature and Philosophy in Linguistics graduate, is an Associate Professor with Zimbabwe's Midlands State University department of English and Communication specialising in Linguistics and Strategic Communication

courses. He has vast lecturing experience and has supervised and examined researches for undergraduates and postgraduates from universities in and outside Zimbabwe. His research interests are in language policy and development, syntax and onomastics among others. He is chief examiner for Shona language and literature with an international examining board, professional editor and translator/ back translator (English and Shona).

Hugh Mangeya (PhD) is a Linguistics and Communication Lecturer in the Department of English and Communication at Midlands State University, Zimbabwe. Major research interests lie in alternative mediation in the context of Zimbabwe's constricted freedom of expression in sociocultural and political institutions. Working within the critical and dialogic frameworks, he interrogates how various alternative mediascapes have provided spaces for engaging and speaking back to the various instantiations of power in Zimbabwe. Mediascapes explored include graffiti, music and social media humor.

Nelson Mlambo (PhD) has degrees from the University of Zimbabwe, University of Namibia and Stellenbosch University. He is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Languages and Literature Studies at the University of Namibia where he teaches literature, rhetoric and research modules. His research interests are in African literature and contemporary literary theory, health communication and intercultural communication.

Obert Moses Mpofu is a ZPRA-trained military cadre and a former Cabinet Minister in the Government of Zimbabwe. He is ZANU PF's Secretary for Administration in the Politburo. He is a public policy PhD holder from the Zimbabwe Open University and is the author of *On the Shoulders of Struggle: Memoirs of a Political Insider*.

Chipo Chirimuuta holds a PhD (UNISA), an MA in African Languages and Literature (UZ), a BA Special Honours degree in Ndebele (UZ), a BA General degree (English, Ndebele, and History) (UZ), a Post-Graduate Diploma in Media and Society Studies (MSU), and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (UZ). She is an Associate Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Culture and Heritage Studies at the Zimbabwe Open University. Her research work is centred on indigenous knowledge systems, indigenous languages, culture and gender, culture and heritage, language and the media vis-à-vis their contribution to the development of the people's understanding of themselves, their historical experience, and their spaces on the global world as well as their self-identity.

Richard Muranda has a PhD (Musicology) from UNISA, he lectures Music Technology and Music production, Audio Post-production and Studio Design at MSU, Zimbabwe. Richard holds Master's and Honour's degrees in Music Technology from the University of Pretoria and a Bachelor of Arts (Music) from Africa University. He has presented conferences papers in Botswana, China, Finland, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Richard is a mbira, keyboard and guitar performer. His research interests include audio recording, African music, live sound, audio production music in the digital era to date he has 6 publications in refereed journals.

Wonder Maguraushe is a Senior Lecturer who holds a PhD in Musicology from the University of South Africa. He teaches Ethnomusicology, popular music and Marimba at MSU's Music Department in Zimbabwe. He holds a master's degree and a bachelor's degree from the University of Zimbabwe. He has presented Papers at conferences in Wuhan, Shanghai, Durban, Pretoria, Accra, Victoria Falls and Harare. He has six publications in refereed journals and one in the CIMCIM Bulletin. Wonder is also a mbira performer with Zvirimudeze Mbira Ensemble and the Founder of Gweru based Marimba band Rimba Resonance Vibes.

Emaculate Mvundura is currently a PhD candidate at Rhodes University's Department of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies. She is also a lecturer at Africa University, Zimbabwe in the Department of Humanities – (Intensive English Unit). Her areas of research include among others, Diplomatic discourses and media discourses, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Legitimation Code Theory, English as a Second Language and Phonology.

Tendai Owen Chikara teaches Communication at the Midlands State University, Zimbabwe and has previously taught the same at two other leading Zimbabwean universities. His research interests lie in Academic discourses, Social Media, Political discourses and Onomastics. Currently, Tendai is a PhD candidate at University of Fort Hare, South Africa. He has published several book chapters and acted as reviewer for a few journals.

Lenin Tinashe Chisaira is a lawyer and researcher based in Harare, Zimbabwe. He holds a Bachelor of Laws (LLBS) Hons degree from the University of Zimbabwe; a Postgraduate Certificate in Environmental and Natural Resource's Law, and LLMs in Economic Regulation and International Human Rights and Public Policy. He is the founder of Advocates4Earth, a non-profit environmental justice group. His research interests are in economic regulation, environmental and climate justice as well as public policy and Marxism-Leninism. He has published academic and non-academic papers on the subjects. His latest research work is a book chapter on "Human Rights and Energy in a Neoliberal Southern Africa" published in *Human Rights and the Environment under African Union Law* (Edited by Addaney and Jegede, Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

Moses Magadza is a multiple award-winning journalist, editor, musician and communications practitioner. With more than 20 years of industry experience, Magadza has held senior media positions while his articles have appeared in more than 50 reputable newspapers in Africa and beyond. He worked as Communications and Advocacy Specialist for the SADC Parliamentary Forum and more recently, as Regional Communications Officer for United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). He is a PhD student in Media Studies with research interests in agenda setting, framing and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

Avoid Masiraha is a Zimbabwean scholar with interests in Peace and conflict studies. He is a former student leader with the Zimbabwe National Students Union and was selected under the Students at Risk Program (StAR) to study in Norway in 2016. He has worked as an advisor to the Rector at the University of Agder in its collaboration with African Universities. He has also done research in South Sudan focusing on Food Security and armed conflict. He is currently teaching Political Ecology at the University of Agder.

Weston Chimbudzi is an Assistant Lecturer in Music at Midlands State University (MSU). He holds a First class Honours Degree in Music and Musicology from MSU Zimbabwe. He is currently studying for a Masters of Philosophy in music at MSU. He has more than 20 years of experience in the performative arts as a music theory specialist, recording musician, guitarist composer/arranger/tutor. He is a researcher who thrives to combine music theory with practical knowledge at high level. His research interests cover performative arts, jazz, the music industry, live sound, music production, instrument construction and innovation.

Oiva Sikwaya Nauyoma holds a Bachelor of Arts in English Studies from the University of Namibia. His research interests lie in the areas of Multiculturalism, Rukwangwali Linguistics, Namibian Literature, Masculinities and Femininities, Communication Theory and African Literature. He is currently reading for a Masters of Arts in English Studies at the University of Namibia.

