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*The Cornucopia of Theory, Praxis and
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Edited by

Munyaradzi Mawere and
Tapuwa R. Mubaya



‘The Tarnished Jewel?’ Post- Independent Zimbabwe Tag under the Reign of Robert Gabriel Mugabe

Ephraim Matanda & Nyasha Madzokere

Introduction

The Zimbabwean dollar first came into being in 1980-the year our country got its independence from its colonial power, Great Britain, and substituted its predecessor, the Rhodesian dollar at equal value. At the time of its introduction, the Zimbabwe dollar was worth more than the United States dollar with the Zimbabwe dollar valued at 0.68 to the United States dollar. It was against this backdrop coupled with euphoria of independence that the late highly honourable statesman, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, former President of Tanzania warned his ally, Robert Mugabe, at his inauguration as the new Prime Minister of Zimbabwe on the 18th of April, 1980 at Rufaro Stadium in Harare, *‘You have inherited the jewel in Africa, but never tarnish it’* (Good, 2002; Madzokere & Matanda, 2015; Madzokere, 2017). A chronicle of the events that characterised the post-independent Zimbabwe depicts a doom-cum gloomy picture of the rhetoric envisaged inheritance as was prophetically purported at independence by Julius Mwalimu Nyerere at the birth of the Zimbabwean nation.

Over the years, the ‘jewel’ was getting ruined mainly due to political instability, policy inconsistencies, economic meltdown, health hazards, dilapidated infrastructure, cultural and religious erosion, crippled and constrained education system, a chaotic-haphazard-violent and politically motivated Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) coupled with massive mismanagement of resources which saw the economy gradually moving away from the jewel dispensation to a tarnished status. However, literature in existence on the research area at hand depicts two formidable schools of thought pertaining to the appropriate designation of Zimbabwe in

the post-independent era, namely the progressive and retrogressive. It was against this background that the present chapter sought to examine the post-independent Zimbabwe experience that culminated into the 'tarnished jewel' status of a once prosperous and promising emerging nation. Firstly, the chapter analyses the country's policy on health which sounded a promising dream but which turned a nightmare. Secondly, the chapter assesses the education sector to show that it has drastically deteriorated from 'glory to gloom'. Thirdly, the chapter assesses the country's policy on land redistribution which instead of boosting food security has dwindled food production. Fourthly, the chapter evaluates the economy of Zimbabwe which in 1980 was in its economic 'boom' but now in its economic 'doom'. Fifthly, the chapter examines the politics of Zimbabwe which fits the emblem, 'political turbulence'. Sixthly, the chapter interrogates religion in Zimbabwe which has been infected by the bacteria tagged, 'religio-social erosion'. Seventhly, the chapter examines the housing crisis in the country from 1980 till now. Eighthly, the chapter discusses the unemployment nightmare in the country since independence. Last but not least, the chapter examines the human rights abuses in Zimbabwe in the post-independent era.

Health for All Policy by the Year 2000

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 1981) argues that the country had targeted health for all by the year 2000. The health sector before the attainment of independence in 1980 was poorly funded and had very few distant clinics and hospitals nationwide with at least one health centre per communal area. Most of the people in rural areas had to walk an average of about 15km to get to a health centre for services when need arose whilst there were very few health centres in towns. At the attainment of independence, the number of health centres increased and generally people had to walk at least 10km to get to a health centre. On this note, credit should be accorded to massive health funding that was availed by the former colonisers-Great Britain together with additional funding from the European Union (E.U) and the rest of the world. The Policy to have 'health for all people by the year 2000' was immensely pursued

between 1980 and 1989 when the government was still following the socialist ideology of development, led by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and China (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015; Matanda & Madzokere, 2015).

However, when the socialist ideology collapsed in 1989/90 after its defeat by capitalism led by United States of America (USA) and Great Britain, the health ideology adopted in 1980 tumbled. The country in 1990/1991 adopted the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which was a capitalist ideology that saw health facilities becoming very expensive and unaffordable by the majority of the citizens. For a detailed analysis of the consequences of ESAP check Matanda and Madzokere (2015). This development led to most vulnerable citizens falling victims to pandemics such as HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, cancer and water-borne diseases. According to Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey (ZIMSTATS, 2005/06), HIV and AIDS saw the number of child/female-headed households in urban areas and rural areas shoot from 23% to 29% and 39% to 43% respectively between 1996 and 1999. This was enough testimony that the 'health for all Policy by the year 2000' had turned out to be a nightmare.

The Zimbabwean Education System

The pre-independence education in Rhodesia was a bottle-neck education system mainly between 1960 and 1980 which saw only children from well-to-do families getting into the secondary school sector after a rigorous primary education. The system operated as a two-tier education system made up of the F1 and F2 secondary school sector. A discriminatory selection for the F1 (academic) system was used, with children in a number of primary schools writing a series of vetting examinations to qualify for entry into the system. Only those children who were very strong in English Language and Mathematics in particular proceeded to the F1 education system, was purely academic. Those who had bias towards practical subjects were fed into the F2 secondary education system (ZIMSTATS, 2005/6). However, places were very limited in secondary schools, year in year out and hence the name 'bottle-neck

education'. This education system was totally colonial, discriminatory and biased in nature. The Zimbabwean government at independence in 1980 advocated for 'free education and education for all' regardless of people's race and ethnic origin (Matanda & Madzokere, 2015; Madzokere & Matanda, 2015). This was a welcome development and the country's education was massively boosted. Therefore, through *funding by Great Britain, E.U and multi-lateral institutions* such as United Nations and United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF), upper tops (rural-day secondary schools) were built nation-wide mainly between 1980 and 1990. These rural-day secondary schools saw most children above school-going age being accorded an opportunity to access both primary and secondary education. The government went a step further to provide science, agriculture and home economics equipment to these rural-day secondary schools nationwide. This development also led to massive secondary school teacher-training programmes which saw the construction of quite a number of secondary school teachers' training colleges. Initially, these upper tops were manned mainly by qualified primary trained school teachers together with some Ordinary Level certificate holders, referred to as temporary teachers. However, the majority of the temporary teachers employed by the government did not hold the minimum five subjects needed to constitute a complete Ordinary Level certificate.

The major weaknesses of this education policy were that the pioneer products of such a development included very high failure rates, massive expenditures of resources on the part of both the government and parents. This quantitative approach to education compromised the quality of the product which has had long term effects on the growth and development of the economy. The concept of 'education for all' was also manifested through massive investment in tertiary education which led to the establishment of at least a polytechnic college per province by the year 2000. Before independence in 1980, the country had a single state university namely-the University of Zimbabwe. By the year 2000, the government had established five more state universities, a development that also attracted private players such as Africa University (AU), Solusi University (SU) and of late Catholic

University of Zimbabwe (CUZ), Reformed Church University (RCU) and Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University (ZEGU). The government has taken the policy further to the extent that at least one state university should be established per province. As the tertiary education sector was greatly expanding, the industry and commerce sector of the economy was folding at an incredible rate, a scenario that created massive unemployment in the country. This is the time when 'certificates are losing glory' hence the caption, 'glory to gloom' better explains the post-independent education system (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015). The end result of such an economic meltdown was a serious 'brain-drain' which saw an exodus of skilled and specialized personnel living the country for greener pastures in the SADC region and beyond.

Breeding and Fast-tracking Food Crisis

The pre-independence food production was massive as early as 1970. The land allocation for agriculture activities had 555 493 square km under large scale and 5579 square km under small scale farming. This followed the division of the country into five farming regions according to the nature of the agriculture activity that best suited the geographical area in question. Regions 1,2 and 3 were mainly for crop production while regions 4 and 5 were reserved for animal husbandry. The land allocation for agriculture increased from 55 493 to 664 884 square km by 1979. At independence in 1980, commercial agriculture occupied 574 832 down from 590 595 square km mainly due to the Resettlement of small scale farmers (ZIMSTATS, 2005/6). The country was given the Food Security portfolio in the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980, and hence Zimbabwe came to be known as the 'bread basket' of Southern Africa because of its capacity to produce food for itself and other SADCC countries. The government at attainment of independence in 1980 massively funded the agriculture sector and resettled small-scale farmers with the hope of industrialising it, so that in its growth strategy it was going to pull other economic sectors alongside it. However, the poor resettlement programme pursued by the government saw large scale agriculture decrease further down to

494 981 square km while small scale agriculture dropped from 74 289 in 1975 to 70 409 square km in 1990 (Ibid). This post-independence land re-distribution affected commercial crop production in regions 1, 2 and 3 as well as cattle ranching in regions 4 and 5. This development culminated into reduced exportation of agriculture products such as tobacco(green leaf) ,cotton, sugar, fruits, tea and beef which used to be the country's 'cash cows'.

On the other hand, agriculture funding rose from \$59.55 million in 1970 through \$164.075 million in 1980 to \$3 414.611 million in 1995 and \$8 866.303 million in 1999 but production was retrogressive, following an undulating curve especially between 1970 and 1980, rising in 1985 and falling gradually again from 1770kg per hectare in 1990 to 1087 kg per hectare by 1999 (ZIMSTATS, 2005/6). The factors attributable to this dwindling pattern of production included: lack of expertise and capacity building, excessive droughts experienced in 1982, 1987, 1992 compounded by some floods in certain seasons. The year 2000's chaotic Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) generally called *Jambanja* (Sachikonye, 2003, Sachikonye, 2005) coupled with the absence of the Rule of Law on the land (lawlessness) saw the war veterans and associates violently displaced the productive white commercial farmers strongly backed by the government. The majority of the displaced white commercial farmers left the country for neighbouring countries such as Mozambique and Zambia where they are performing wonders in food production. The bread basket nation has now turned into a bread case, what a nightmare! The FTLRP of 2000 was then followed by 2007-08 economic meltdown which totally crippled and paralysed the whole economy, hence in Allan Paton's language Zimbabweans are crying for their 'beloved country' (Paton, 1948). The situation in the country during this dire, turbulent and politically volatile period culminated into serious starvation of the masses, massive displacements, deaths mainly due to malnutrition and politically motivated violence. Paradoxically, the Government of Zimbabwe is following up on the same commercial farmers in countries such as Zambia and Mozambique that they violently removed from the farms to buy grain for feeding the nation.

From Economic Boom to Economic Doom

Before independence in 1980, the country's economy had a good network system, stable currency, good foreign policy, high employment levels, and well-regulated property rights as well as a reliable source of foreign currency from exports of estate plantation products and commodities such as tea, coffee, citrus fruits, sugar, tobacco (green leaf), cotton and maize (Good, 2002). Foreign currency was also generated from minerals and beef which were sold to United Kingdom and other European Union (EU) countries (ZIMSTATS, 2005/6). At the attainment of independence in 1980, the Rhodesian dollar was replaced by the new Zimbabwean dollar on a one-to-one basis, a new currency that traded at 68cents to the US dollar and was only second to the British pound in value the world-over, as noted in our introduction. The Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) accorded Zimbabwe the region's Food Security Portfolio as it had the capacity to produce food for its own consumption as well as excess for neighbouring countries in the region. The country operated on the basis of five agricultural regions such that Regions 1, 2 and 3, mainly with alluvial soils which were reserved for crop and fruit production and Regions 4 and 5 were for cattle ranching (Ibid). This land allocation guaranteed the country a reliable source of foreign currency for economic growth and development from sales of beef, fruits, cotton, tobacco and agricultural commodities such as tea, coffee and sugar developed countries, as earlier on alluded to.

The period 1980-90 saw the government pursuing a socialist ideology of development that was led by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and China as once noted above. The areas that were targeted for initial development included the national road network, clinics and hospitals, schools, dams and irrigation schemes, tourism and hospitality industry, industry and commerce sector as well as instituting critical government parastatals. The funding of the above economic factors was by the Eastern Block led by Russia, China and Western countries such as former colonial master Great Britain, and EU, USA and foreign direct investment by multinational corporations (MNCs) transnational corporations (TNCs). Before

long thereafter, socialism was defeated by capitalism in 1989/90 and the country had no option except to reverse back to capitalism (the case of neo-capitalism). Hence, in 1990/91 the government dumped the socialist ideology and adopted neo-capitalism in the form of Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), followed by Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Structural Transformation (ZIMPREST). The major parameters on which these programmes were premised were market and trade liberalisation, rationalisation of the civil service and enhancing protection and preservation of property rights (ownership of the means of production), among other things (Ibid). The programmes were funded by African Development Bank (ADB), World Bank (WB), Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) by MNCs (multinational corporations) and TNCs (transnational corporations), domestic financiers, foreign aid and credit lines from bilateral and multilateral relationships (Matanda & Madzokere, 2015). The government instead of putting the financial resources attained into good use, engaged in corruption, nepotism, misallocation of resources, self-enrichment of leaders and theft by conversion, as well as ballooning government expenditures through buying ministers and senior government employees luxury cars, hefty salaries and regular travels abroad at the expense of funding the programmes that were intended to take the economy a leap forward. The impact of such government actions on the economy was in the form of high cost of living among the general populace in the form of high school and tertiary tuition fees, unaffordable health facilities, disease pandemics-HIV & AIDS, cholera, typhoid and skyrocketing general price levels in the economy (Ibid).

The Food Security Portfolio accorded the country at independence became a nightmare. The industries crowded out of the country in the period 1994-1999, fuel shortages became a serious cause for concern and the black/parallel market emerged leading to nose-diving of the formal financial sector. The situation was made more compounded when in November, 1997, the government was forced by the war veterans to pay them a compensation gratuities for services rendered before 1980 to liberate the country (Ibid). The government ended up making a once-off payment of \$50 000 and \$2 000 each month for each of the beneficiaries. Genuine and 'bogus'

war veterans gobbled the nation of such huge amounts of money to the total ruin of the country's economy a scenario which saw the Boka Merchant Bank exiting the market after it had been directed to finance the gratuities hoping to be reimbursed later. In the period 2000-2008, the economy of the once jewel nation went through turbulent times. The precipitating factor was the Fast Track Land Redistribution Programme (FTLRP) which saw the war veterans invade white commercial farmers. This is generally referred to as *Hondo yeMinda/Third Chimurenga* or *Jambanja* (Sachikonye, 2005). It was designated so because of the violent nature of the programme which displaced most of these white commercial farmers. Most displaced farmers sought refuge in the neighbouring Zambia and Mozambique. Ironically, we are currently buying (importing) food from these two countries which were once relying on Zimbabwe for food during the 'glory times' of 1980s.

The financial sector tumbled astronomically and saw a number of banks close down (surrender their licences) or be placed under curatorship, by the Central Bank in the period (RBZ, MPS, 2012). The banks failed to meet minimum capital requirements and the labour market became over-flooded with skilled and specialised personnel from local poly-technical colleges and universities. The political landscape saw most vulnerable people die of starvation, kwashiorkor, and other mal-nutrition related diseases in the period 2007/8. Some perished because of political victimisation and violence especially before, during and after elections. Zimbabwe held a series of violent and flawed elections from years 2000, 2002, 2005, 2008 and the most recent 2013. People were massacred mercilessly to render the country a 'wounded' society typical of *Gukurahundi* in 1981-7 (Todd, *ibid*; Coltart, *ibid*). The political violence, hate speech, tyranny and cruelty were very detrimental to a once 'beloved country' to render it a typically polarized state (Paton, *ibid*). The state of economy collapsed-roads, clinics, hospitals and schools failed to operate totally implying signs of a typically 'crippled and dilapidated' society. Those residing in cosmopolitan cities (urban dwellers) could not access water, food, and electricity and health facilities nor sent their children to crèches, schools, colleges or universities. Everything was beyond the reach of many citizens so many resorted to travel by

night to Musina, the border town of Republic of South Africa to buy foodstuffs hence Zimbabwe lost most of its skilled and specialized workforce to the neighbouring countries in particular (Botswana now a 'beggar' in another country. Brain-drain became rampant and the economy lost most of its skilled workforce to neighbouring South Africa and Botswana and even abroad to countries such as United Kingdom and United States of America- a scenario which may take generations to correct.

Political Turbulence

Before the attainment of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe was ruled by the European colonial race headed by Ian Douglas Smith of the Rhodesian Front Party. The Zimbabwean nationalists initially formed Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) led by Joshua Nkomo (Father Zimbabwe) of the Ndebele clan (Msipa, 2015). Some years later a splinter group was formed by the Shona clan which then formed the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) under the leadership of Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole in 1963. The splinter group then undertook an uprising against the Smith regime so as to liberate their motherland from colonial rule. This uprising was called "Second Chimurenga" and was massively supported by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), China and other African countries such as Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique. Another Shona splinter group which came to be known as ZANU Patriotic Front (PF) was formed in 1975 led by Robert Mugabe. This group was an offshoot from ZANU and the remainder was renamed ZANU-Ndonga and remained under the leadership of Rev Ndabaningi Sithole. Because of the pressure from various angles, Smith then called for a general election in early 1979 and his party-the Rhodesia Front (RF) contested against the United African National Congress (UANC) headed by Bishop Abel Tendekai Muzorewa. The UANC won the election and hence Bishop Muzorewa became the new Prime Minister of the newly named country, Zimbabwe Rhodesia (Msipa, 2015). The three major parties on the land namely ZAPU, ZANU-PF and ZANU-Ndonga which did not participate in the early 1979 election because of disgruntlement of the union between UANC &

RF kept their fighting stance on against the new regime. This led to the calling of the December 1979 Lancaster House meeting in United Kingdom chaired by the colonial masters. The main parties namely RF, UANC, ZAPU, ZANU-PF and ZANU-Ndonga were represented at this meeting which came up with the Lancaster House Constitution for the nation. A new election was called on the 27th March, 1980 which was supervised by United Nations and was won by Robert Gabriel Mugabe of ZANU-PF who became the executive Prime Minister supported by a ceremonial President in the person of Reverend Canaan Sodindo Banana (Msipa, 2015).

The nation welcomed the political transition with a lot of ululation and jubilation which however was short-lived because of political blunders which followed (Madzokere, 2017). The period 1981-7 saw the Mugabe regime committing some series of political disasters namely *Gukurahundi*, advocating for One-Party state, chewing the leadership code, massive amendment of the Lancaster House Constitution and creating executive powers for the President. Immediately after independence in 1980, there were some great political disturbances due to *Gukurahundi* (*the rain that washes away the chaff*) which led to the massacre of more than twenty thousand civilians in Matabeleland and Midlands regions by the Fifth Brigade trained by the notorious North Korean soldiers under the instruction of the Mugabe regime (Msipa, 2015, Todd, 2007, Madzokere, 2017). There are two schools of thought to this development which are: the *pro & anti-Mugabe*. The *pro-Mugabe* school argues that the *Gukurahundi* was instituted to quell the dissidents who were mercilessly killing the civilians in the Matabeleland region. The same school has it that the Joshua Nkomo camp planted some ammunition on the farm in Matobo in 1982 in order to topple Mugabe from power. The anti-Mugabe school argues that *Gukurahundi* was instituted by the Mugabe regime as a political strategic move to totally silence Joshua Nkomo and his party-ZAPU which was at this time the strongest opposition on the land. This way then Mugabe was alleged to have killed innocent civilians for political survival but used the dissident argument as a scapegoat measure (Madzokere, 2017). This was how the concept of One-Party State was born thereby destroying ZAPU; ZANU-PF would continue to declare the country a One-Party State.

However, the above concept was resisted by the dissenting voices both from inside and outside the ZANU-PF party. An insider worth to mention in this study is the fearless Eddison Mudadirwa Jonas Zvobgo who strongly opposed his own colleague Robert Mugabe. This was immediately followed by massive amendments to the Constitution which gave rise to chewing of the leadership code, the according of executive powers to the President (Mugabe) and abolishment of the post of Prime Minister (Madzokere, *ibid*). On the 22nd December, 1987 ZAPU was forced into a Unity Accord with ZANU-PF and the new nomenclature of the united party was ZANU-PF. This development therefore marked the total demise of ZAPU and total dominance of ZANU-PF. The above political disasters created a lot of polarization and instability in the country which had negative long term effects on the social, economic and political development of the nation hence the caption, '*tarnished jewel*' (Madzokere, 2017).

The period 1988-2008 marked a continuation of the political mess of the jewel as a result of the recurrent disasters. These included the enactment of repressive pieces of legislation such as: Public Order and Security Act (POSA) and Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) which meant to infringe the rights and freedoms of the citizens. There was a persistent mushrooming of political parties as a counter measure to the ZANU-PF concept of One-Party State and the enactment of suppressive laws which saw parties like Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) led by Edgar 'Two-boy' Tekere and National Democratic Party (NDP) led by Dr Magoche being born. The efforts of these political parties were complemented by Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) led by its President Mr Gibson Sibanda and its Secretary General, Mr Morgan Tsvangirai through calling for some 'sit-ins', 'stay-aways', demonstrations and street marches by workers nationwide (Madzokere, 2017). In addition to worsening the political situation of the country, the Mugabe regime sent troops to the troubled Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in 1998 which were funded by the domestic fiscus while citizens were living in conditions of abject poverty and fell victims to pandemics such as dysentery, diarrhoea, tuberculosis, cholera and HIV & AIDS.

Some urban dwellers were made worse off by retrenchments due to harsh economic conditions which were prevailing as of then coupled with the politically motivated demolition of the housing units in cities and growth points under an operation tagged *Murambatsvina* (Sibanda et.al,2008). The war veterans also demanded gratuities for participation in the liberation struggle and were paid a lump-sum of \$50 000 each and an additional \$2 000 per month which funds did not come from the national budget (Tofa, 2010). The ZCTU after series of confrontations with the Mugabe regime ended up forming a political party in February, 1999 in Harare which came to be known as the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by its President-Mr Morgan Tsvangirai. The party was formally launched in September 1999 in Masvingo and worked with ZCTU and the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) to convince people to vote 'NO' in the Referendum for a new Draft Constitution in the year 2000 which had been drafted by the government through a Commission. After rejection of the Draft Constitution, it was alleged that the Mugabe regime survived the new political dispensation by rigging elections through the assistance of war veterans, police, army, Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) and the green uniformed militias (generally called *Border Gezi*) in the years 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2008. The 29 March, 2008 the harmonised elections saw MDC party led by Morgan Tsvangirai win the majority of the 210 Parliamentary seats contested but the Presidential poll was stolen (Madzokere, 2017). The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) then declared that there was no winner and hence called for a re-run of the poll within three months from the date of announcement of the result. In the post-2008 election era, people were mercilessly killed in the name of politics which led to the formation of the Government of National Unity-GNU after the sham 27 June, 2008 Presidential Run-off. This election was contested by Robert Mugabe against himself after Morgan Tsvangirai had withdrawn citing worst political violence against the electorate. The political turmoil landscape was closed by the alleged '*Nikwed*' harmonized elections of 31 July, 2013 which saw Mugabe at 89 being declared the winner. This political development marked total erosion of the marginal gains that had been attained by the Government of National Unity (GNU) in the period 2009-2013

hence Zimbabwe remained in designation a *'tarnished jewel'* (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015).

The Religio-Social Erosion

The socio-religious scenario of the pre-independent, independent and post-independent era in Zimbabwe was characterised by a quagmire similar to those observed on the health, education, food, economic and political variables above. The period before the attainment of independence of Zimbabwe in 1980 saw the missionaries with their western religion called Christianity arriving in 1890 in Southern Rhodesia. It is argued that Christianity was meant to be used to suppress the religion of the indigenous Africans called African Traditional Religion (Ray, 1976). The suppression was possible because when these missionaries came to preach their religion armed with a Bible to the Zimbabweans they were working in cohorts with the white colonialists who were armed with a gun. This way then the Bible and a gun conquered Southern Rhodesia not only religiously but also economically, politically and socially. The missionaries and the imperialists were working hand in glove to politically, socially, economically and religiously oppress the indigenous people in Zimbabwe. For the missionaries and their counterparts in the mission of colonialism, the indigenous people were religion-less. Their religion was fetish, ancestor-worship, animistic, backward, witchcraft-oriented, inferior, evil and polytheistic in nature (Bourdillon, 1990). The missionaries used derogatory language to describe African Traditional Religion (ATR) but this created a religious crisis. They believed that the indigenous people were supposed to do away with their traditional practices and beliefs before embracing Christianity. This scenario saw a tug of war between these two contesting religions-Christianity and African Traditional Religion (ATR). Some of the indigenous people resisted but others later grudgingly accepted Christianity. However, for many this was the gradual eradication of ATR and the paving way for Christianity to dominate the religious sphere of Zimbabwe.

The colonisation of Southern Rhodesia also meant the colonization of the culture of the indigenous people hence a religious

crisis was bred. This meant not only cultural domination but political domination as well. The missionaries were supposed to preach the gospel to the people for conversion but this also meant that through the abuse of the Bible white dominance was championed. This way religion was used as 'an opiate of the people' (Villa Vicencio, 1989). It legitimated political tyranny, oppression, discrimination, segregation and racism. There was no fine line between missionary Christianity and colonialism for both perpetuated the colonial ideology which was suppressive to political, social, religious and economic freedom. The post-independent era saw the church taking an ambivalent role as observed by Madzokere (2013) who identified two parallel schools of thought on the role of the Church in post-colonial Zimbabwe. For him, there are the *pro-state* and *anti-state* schools respectively. These schools play opposing roles in the religio-social sphere of the country. Chitando & Togarasei (2009) shared the same sentiments with Madzokere (2013) on the subject of debate. For them, the Church was lacking unity in addressing the political crisis that befell the nation after the shocking defeat of Robert Mugabe by Morgan Tsvangirai in the Presidential election of 31 March, 2008 which gave rise to the deadly Presidential Run-off election of 27 June, 2013. The Church was divided in such a way that there arose on one hand the 'party-affiliated pastors' and on another 'non-partisan' ones (Chitando, 2005). The Church was facing a crisis of disunity which saw the other wing supporting the perpetrators of violence whilst the other condemning the violence. The Church was taking an ambivalent role in such a crisis that gripped the nation.

National Housing Dilemma

The physical characteristics and access to basic household facilities were important in assessing the general welfare and socio-economic conditions of a country's population. Before the attainment of independence in 1980, there was massive rural-urban migration as school leavers and men who were getting married sought employment in towns and cities, a development that created serious housing shortages (ZIMSTATS, 2005/6). The government undertook the construction of low-income housing units which were

put in place to benefit such accommodation seeking people. At independence in 1980, the housing waiting list across the country's towns and cities meant a lot to the new government led by the then Prime Minister Robert Gabriel Mugabe. Between 1980 and 1995, there were a number of dubious housing schemes that were instituted by individuals and government wings which were politically motivated. The majority of such housing schemes instead of meeting their mandate of providing housing to the needy masses fleeced them of their hard earned cash and never saw them acquire any such stands and houses for example Obadiah Musindo's Destiny for Africa Network, December 12 and Zimbabwe Government Employees' Union (ZIGEU) check (*southerneye.co.zw-2014*). The situation went unabated even though the government knew of such bogus housing schemes. In the period 1996 to 2008, the housing environment in both rural and urban centres continued to be in a deplorable state due to economic meltdown (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015).

This above development was manifested in the form of lack of toilets by most rural households and waste from industries in towns and cities into rivers leading to environmental and water pollution, coupled with failure to collect refuse in growth points, towns and cities making most of the centres smelly and producing a pungent odour and habitat for flies and worms to the detriment of the people's health and environment. The situation was worse in rural areas as compared to cosmopolitan centres as most people used the same water sources with livestock and wild animals. Most of the water used in rural households came from contaminated rivers, unprotected and protected wells. It was a shame to note that eighty-seven percent of rural households lived on unprotected water mostly fetched directly from dirty rivers (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015). In the post 2000 era, most households in growth points, towns and cities survived with no water running in tapes and or had boreholes sunk in their suburbs to alleviate their situation. An estimated seventy-eight percent urban households did not access treated water while about ninety-one percent of the rural dwellers also did not, rendering such citizens vulnerable to attacks by water-borne diseases such as cholera, dysentery, diarrhoea and typhoid (ZIMSTATS, 2005/6). The housing dilemma was aggravated by the government Operation

nicknamed *Murambatsvina/ Zimbabwe tsunami (Operation Restore Order)* as once alluded to (Sibanda *et.al* 2008). The socio-economic status of a nation was measured by ownership of housing units, means of transportation, agriculture land, mining and manufacturing space as well as farm animals(livestock) hence a country that does not enable its citizens to access the above measures of socio-economic status cannot talk of growth towards sustainable development.

Unemployment Quagmire

The pre- independent era saw almost all men in the labour-force age limit of 16-65 years leaving rural areas for urban centres and white commercial farms to seek for employment. The rate of employment in the country was very high although the wages were pathetic .This was due to the colonial hegemony which was characterised by racial discrimination, segregation, suppression, domination and oppression of the indigenous people by the colonial masters, a scenario that was muted by Cecil John Rhodes in the 1890s right through to the Ian Douglas Smith regime. In 1980, all indigenous citizens ululated and jubilated hoping the attainment of independence symbolized the total burial of the colonial system and birth of the freedom and liberation of the African race (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015). There was massive drive towards industrialization of the economy which saw the establishment of factories and industries by both public and private sectors. The public sector was characterized by public organizations such as Rhodesia Iron and Steel Company (RISCO), Cold Storage Commission (CSC), LONRHO, and Gatooma Textiles. On the other hand, the private sector was dominated by international private players such as Bata Shoe Company, Rio-Tinto, Delta Group of Companies, British American Tobacco (BAT) and Anglo-American Corporation (ZIMSTATS, 2009). These were large entities that employed people in their numbers and therefore there was no unemployment to talk about in the economy. The Prime Minister of Zimbabwe Robert Gabriel Mugabe at his installation in 1980 had assured the nation that his government was going to be guided by the concepts of socialism and reconciliation for the country's growth and development. With these remarks the former colonial masters and

the people at large looked forward for an accommodative and progressive Zimbabwean society. The ululation and jubilation euphoria was short-lived for the glory moments of independence were quickly overshadowed by the gloomy moments that followed suit (Madzokere, 2017). The period 1980-90 was characterized by a paradigm shift from the promises made by the Prime Minister at his inauguration to pursue an anti-Western rhetoric stance which was detrimental to growth and development of the nation.

The worst move by the government was to amend certain sections of the Lancaster House Constitution in such a way that it allowed the high ranking authorities to amass wealth. This development created antagonism between the government of the day and the majority of former colonial masters who were the major investors in agriculture and industry. The period 1991-2000 was the most dramatic one in the history of independent Zimbabwe which saw high levels of unemployment in both public and private sectors of the economy. The adoption of the capitalist ideology in 1991 after the collapse of socialism in 1989-90, saw the government take up the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015, Matanda & Madzokere, 2015). One of the major tenets of ESAP was to reduce the government wage bill and the overall government expenditure and hence retrenchments were brought up by the government. This was also the same time that the Fast Track Land Redistribution Programme (FTRLP) was resuscitated and it massively impacted on the employment level in the economy. Some of the white commercial farmers were harassed, tortured and maimed as a way of forcibly driving them away from their farms (Sachikonye, 2005). The indigenous people who were employed as menial labourers by such white commercial farmers were seriously affected socially, economically, physically and politically and had no option except to pack their bags back to their rural communities. The government owned parastatals such as Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company (ZISCO), CSC, Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO), National Railways Zimbabwe (NRZ) and Grain Marketing Board (GMB) were made to operate at a loss for political mileage which gave rise to liquidity challenges and total collapse of their operations. The indigenous people who were

employed in these public entities like those who were employed in white owned farms faced the same predicament of unemployment that automatically led to urban-rural migration. By the year 2007-08, the unemployment rate in Zimbabwe had risen to eighty-five percent and of late it has hovered above ninety percent (Madzokere, 2017).

Human Rights Violations

The period 1890-1980 was mainly characterized by worst human rights abuses of the indigenous people by the white colonizers. The major forms of human rights abuses were racism, segregation, suppression, discrimination, oppression, and torture and *corvee* kind of employment (Sachikonye, 2003). The human rights abuses took various dimensions which included: social, political, economic and religious. Socially, the indigenous people were clustered in marginalized zones especially regions 4 and 5 where the maize plant could hardly reach the height of an average man. These regions suited very well cattle ranching business hence in this respect the indigenous people were socially marginalized and so were forced to settle in impoverished and secluded areas such as *Gwai* and *Shangani* reserves. The colonial masters (the British) were privileged to allocate themselves prime and fertile land mainly in regions 1, 2 and 3 which was very suitable for productive agriculture and therefore the colonial masters were socially advantaged (Sachikonye, 2005). Politically, the indigenous people were governed by the colonizers and were made to behave in accordance with foreign pieces of dictates and precepts which were alien to African norms, values, standards, customs, traditions and beliefs. The people were deprived of their political rights while the white masters were privileged to enjoy their own rights away from their country of origin. This way the indigenous people were politically suppressed and oppressed. Economically, the citizens' labour power was exploited by the colonial masters and the output of such labour was enjoyed by people other than themselves. The British built themselves empires and wealth on foreign soil at the expense of both local, human and natural resource endowments which they repatriated back to their country of origin, Great Britain (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015). The domestic economy and its native

citizens were economically crippled and were made to operate on a very poorly developed infrastructure despite having a rich resource endowment base hence the indigenous people were economically deprived and abused. The song by the late celebrated Zimbabwean artist (Simon 'Chopper' Chimbetu, 1988) entitled, '*Kuipa Chete Kumeso Nokuti Ndachembera Nourombo*' which translates to mean, 'I look shrugged and aged because of impoverishment', summarises it all.

On the religious front, the indigenous people were made to embrace a foreign religion at the expense of their traditional religion and beliefs. For the colonial white masters, the African Religion was fetish, satanic, backward, witchcraft-oriented, ancestor venerated and polytheistic (worship of many deities) in nature (Bourdillon, 1990). The colonial masters and their foreign religion used derogatory rhetoric to describe the African Religion and in this dimension the indigenous people's Traditional Religion was undermined. The major weakness of the imposition of the Western Religion by the colonial masters on the Africans was the eradication of African Religion and Culture hence the indigenous people suffered from religious domination (Ray 1976). The indigenous people had highest hopes that post-independent era would address the human rights abuses that characterized the pre-independent era namely: social, political, economic, religious and cultural. However, the post-independent African government, instead of curbing the above human rights abuses, made the situation more horrible and unbearable for its own indigenous people than before. By 1985 the country's infrastructure and development strategy were shot down by the civil war in Matabeleland and Midlands regions that claimed about twenty thousand lives known as *Gukurahundi* (Coltart, 2016). Such a politically motivated disaster was very detrimental to the political, social, economic and religious fabric of the nation. This remains a haunting and traumatic documentary in the political history of Zimbabwe. Because of this, the country is totally failing to bring home healing and reconciliation. The civil war in question was brought to an end after the signing of the Unity Accord on 22 December, 1987 between ZANU-PF and PF -ZAPU but the damage on the land and the living standards of the citizenry was great (Todd, 2007).

On the social front, the indigenous people were optimistic that they would be relocated from the marginalized and impoverished areas to the prime and fertile regions suitable for agrarian production. However this expectation turned out to be a nightmare for most of the poor peasant Zimbabwean populace. The prime land which was grabbed from the white commercial farmers through the FTLRP was shared among the high ranking political elites who now own multiple farms which are massively under-utilized. The short, medium and long term consequences of the FTLRP manifested themselves in the form of starvation, hunger, vulnerability to diseases, poverty and after deaths respectively (Sachikonye, 2003; Sachikonye, 2005). The social human rights abuses of the indigenous Zimbabweans reached unprecedented levels, which were worse than what they were during the colonial era. The political scenario at the attainment of independence was anticipated to bring peace, harmony and tranquillity to all Zimbabweans irrespective of their race, origin and nationality. However, shortly after 1980, the government under the directive of Robert Mugabe championed the *Gukurahundi* (*the rain that washes away the chaff*) in which more than twenty thousand civilians mainly in Matabeleland and Midlands regions were innocently butchered by the joint operation of the Fifth Brigade which was trained by the North Koreans (Madzokere, 2017).

In 2005, the government masterminded *Murambatsvina* in cities, towns and growth points in which housing units and properties were demolished by the uniformed forces and the war veterans. The urban civilian population was left homeless purely because they were suspected of being supporters of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) led by Morgan Tsvangirai instead of the ruling party. The period 2007-08 was characterized by serious political violence before, during and after the Harmonized March and June 2008 Run-off elections in which many people were massacred, maimed, tortured and displaced (Madzokere & Matanda, 2015). Economically, most Zimbabweans are unemployed, living in abject poverty and financial doldrums in which most households are operated on less than US\$1 a day. The majority of both urban and rural households are failing to fend for their children and cannot provide them with education, clothing, food and shelter just to mention a few. The

economic status of ordinary Zimbabweans has been compromised seriously as compared to what it was before attainment of independence in 1980. On the religious front, there was liberalisation of religion which allowed all Zimbabweans to exercise freedom of worship. There was mushrooming of church denominations from both mainline and African initiated and let alone African Traditional Religion (ATR). The danger however of the liberalisation of religion was that people replaced the worshipping of God with the gold spelling that is the abuse of church congregations' contributions by church leaders and founders who unscrupulously convert them to their personal wealth (Madzokere forthcoming).

Conclusion

The prophetic words uttered by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere (the former President of Tanzania) in 1980 on the birth of Zimbabwe, were not taken heed of by the Government of Zimbabwe leading the nation to becoming a failed state therefore a 'tarnished jewel'. The failure of the nation over the past three and half decades of independence was manifested in the form of a collapsed infrastructure system, ailing health and education systems, a ruined political, industrial and economic sector, a violent and partisan agrarian reform system as well as a deliberately eroded religio-social system. Had the Government of Zimbabwe since the attainment of independence from Great Britain in 1980 taken heed of Julius Nyerere's prophetic words alluded to earlier on, the country could have taken giant strides towards the preservation of the 'jewel' status. The country could also have gone a step forward towards the attainment of sustainable development and/or even the rejuvenation of the status to greater heights, political stability, sound and well-maintained infrastructure systems, growing and affordable national housing schemes, well-funded, accessible and manageable health and education systems, a non-discriminatory, democratic and non-partisan agrarian and economic development process as well as a morally upright socio-cum religious integral society. The study therefore recommends that the Government of Zimbabwe should adopt an all-inclusive, accommodative and non-partisan-cum

tolerant development path if it were to reclaim its 'jewel status' of the independence time and use it to grow the economy towards sustainable development levels to match the developed nations.

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For a long time, African Studies as a discipline has been spearheaded by academics and institutions in the Global North. This puts African Studies on the continent at a crossroads of making choices on whether such a discipline can be legitimately accepted as an epistemological discipline seeking objectivity and truth about Africa and the African peoples or a discipline meant to perpetuate the North's hegemonic socio-economic, political and epistemic control over Africa. The compound question that immediately arises is: Who should produce what and which space should African Studies occupy in the academy both of the North and of the South? Confronted by such a question, one wonders whether the existence of African Studies Centres in the Global North academies open opportunities for critical thinking on Africa or it opens possibilities for the emergence of the same discipline in Africa as a fertile space for trans-disciplinary debate. While approaches critical for the development of African Studies are pervasive in African universities through fields such as cultural studies, social anthropology, history, sociology, indigenous knowledge studies and African philosophy, the discipline of African Studies though critical to Africa is rarely practised as such in the African academy and its future on the continent remains bleak. African Studies in the Academy is a testimony that if honestly and objectively practised, the crossroads position of African Studies as a discipline makes it a fertile ground for generating and testing new approaches critical for researching and understanding Africa. It also challenges Africa to seriously consider assuming its legitimate position to champion African Studies from within. These issues are at the heart of the present volume.

MUNYARADZI MAWERE is currently professor at Great Zimbabwe University. He is an author of more than 50 books and holds a PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Cape Town.

TAPUWA RAYMOND MUBAYA is a Lecturer at Great Zimbabwe University and a PhD candidate at Tilburg University, The Netherlands. Mubaya is author of 5 books and more than fourteen articles in internationally esteemed scholarly journals.



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