

**CONSTRAINTS ON MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY IN ZIMBABWE: OPPOSITION  
POLITICS AND ZANU-PF (1980-2015).**

**BY**

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## ABSTRACT

This study is informed by Gramsci's hegemony theory complemented by instrumentalism to analyse the constraints on multiparty democracy under the Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government. Zimbabwe since independence in 1980 was led by President Robert Gabriel Mugabe for 37 years up to 2017 when the military edifice deposed him. Electoral contests between the Mugabe-led ZANU-PF and pro-democratic opposition parties, inclusive of those that were formed out of ZANU-PF, gave the opposition no chance of gaining power. The closest the opposition came to winning was the March 2008 harmonised elections when the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) broke ZANU-PF parliamentary hegemony, and when Morgan Tsvangirai beat Mugabe for president, only to be prevented from forming a government on grounds of electoral technicalities. This dissertation is premised on the constraints on the institutionalisation of multiparty democracy in Zimbabwe. It analyses the efficacy of the growing opposition to ZANU-PF rule and how the liberation narrative espoused by ZANU-PF critically hampered the development of democratic traditions. This dissertation contributes to our understanding of attendant challenges to effective multiparty democracy in Zimbabwe in view of the military takeover in 2017. It is a study that transcends the narrow confines of analysing ZANU-PF alone and blaming it for mayhem in the country. Rather, the research posits that the governance crisis in Zimbabwe is a shared responsibility. The shortcomings in the objectives, strategies and modus operandi of opposition political parties in Zimbabwe and the strength of ZANU-PF are analysed. The extent to which opposition parties were sponsored by western countries to effect regime change, and the extent to which their political programmes were largely driven and shaped by internal considerations and reflected the 'will of the people', were evaluated. The thesis considers ethnic divisions and post-independence inheritances in making conflict inevitable. It argues that ZANU-PF built up strong liberation narratives designed to entrench its hegemony, with media portrayal of opposition parties and ZANU-PF to serve different ends. Finally, the role of the military in Zimbabwean politics, oftentimes characterised by unremitting violence, is considered as militating against peaceful democratic politics and a smooth political transition after the 2018 elections.

## **PREFACE**

The findings presented in this thesis are a result of a research that was carried out in the School of Social Sciences (Historical Studies), Howard Campus, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, from August 2015 to June 2018 under the supervision of Professor Goolam Vahed. This study is my original research and has not been submitted to any other tertiary institution.

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## DECLARATION

This research has not been previously accepted for any degree and is not being currently considered for any other degree at any other university. I declare that this thesis contains my own work except where specifically acknowledged.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Goolam Vahed', written in a cursive style.

Date 30 June 2018

Supervisor: Professor Goolam Vahed

## **DEDICATION**

In memory of my father, Stephen Tongesayi Rwodzi and mother, Maud Chenzira Rwodzi.

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Thanks also go to Dr. Fay King Chung with whom I had an interview that lasted over an hour. She always showed interest in the progress I was making in my research by making direct calls on my cell phone and through emails. She laid the foundation of my research as the first person to be interviewed by me.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ACP	Africa-Caribbean Partnership
AG	Attorney General
AIPPA	Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act
AJP	American Journal of Psychology
ANC	African National Congress
ASTRAG	Agrarian Sector Technical Review Group
AU	African Union
AWVA	African Workers Voice Association
BSAC	British South Africa Company
BUILD	Blueprint to Unlock Investment and Leverage for Development
CBCZ	Catholic Bishops Conference of Zimbabwe
CCJPZ	Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe
CCR	Christian Council of Rhodesia
CEOs	Chief Executive Officers
CFU	Commercial Farmers Union
CIBD	Coercion, intimidation, beating, displacement
CIO	Central Intelligence Organisation
COSATU	Confederation of South African Trade Unions
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
ESC	Electoral Supervisory Commission
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FBAWU	Federation of Bulawayo African Workers Union
FES	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front
FTLRP	Fast Track Land Reform Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product

GMB	Grain Marketing Board
GNU	Government of National Unity
GPA	Global Political Agreement
ICA	Industrial Conciliation Act
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JOC	Joint Operations Command
JOMIC	Joint Operations and Monitoring Committee
LAA	Land Apportionment Act
LOMA	Law and Order Maintenance Act
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-M	Movement for Democratic Change (Mutambara)
MDC-T	Movement for Democratic Change (Tsvangirai)
MDK	Mavambo Dawn Kusile
MMD	Movement for Multiparty Democracy
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
MZWP	Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NDU	National Democratic Union
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NORDEM	Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights
NPP	National People's Party
NRZ	National Railways of Zimbabwe
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.
ORL	Operation Restore Legacy
PF	Patriotic Front
PFP	People First Party
PM	Prime Minister
POSA	Public Order and Security Act

PR	Proportional Representation
RF	Rhodesian Front
RG	Registrar General
RGE	Registrar of General Elections
SADC	Southern Africa Development Committee
SADCC	Southern Africa Development and Coordination Conference
SAPES	Southern Africa Political Economy Series
SEOM	SADC Election Observer Mission
SOCCOM	Social Communications Commission
TANU	Tanganyika African National Union
TNT	Trinitrotoluene
UANC	United African National Council
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UN	United Nations
UNIP	United Independence Party
UNO	United Nations Organisation
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US	United States
USA	United States of America
UZ	University of Zimbabwe
VOA	Voice of America
WB	World Bank
WCC	World Council of Churches
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation
ZCBC	Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference
ZCC	Zimbabwe Council of Churches
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

ZDF	Zimbabwe Defence Forces
ZDP	Zimbabwe Democratic Party
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZESN	Zimbabwe Election Support Network
ZFTU	Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions
ZIANA	Zimbabwe Inter-Africa News Agency
ZIDERA	Zimbabwe Democracy Recovery Act
ZiFM	Zimbabwe Frequency Modulation
ZINASU	Zimbabwe National Students Union
ZIPA	Zimbabwe People's Army
ZIPRA	Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army
ZNA	Zimbabwe National Army
ZPF	Zimbabwe People First
ZRP	Zimbabwe Republic Police
ZTV	Zimbabwe Television
ZUD	Zimbabwe Union of Democrats
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement

Figure 1.1: Administrative Divisions of Zimbabwe



Source: <https://www.google.com/search?q=maps+of+zimbabwe>



## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Zimbabwe, formerly Southern Rhodesia under colonial rule and subsequently Rhodesia under white minority rule, was colonised by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) in 1890. Six years after colonial occupation, Africans rose in resistance against this foreign invasion. The common grievances that the Shona and the Ndebele people had against the new arrivals included their loss of independence, forced labour, general ill-treatment, loss of land, the prevalence of diseases such as rinderpest that attacked their cattle, and natural disasters that they associated with the coming of the white intruders.<sup>1</sup> This resistance against colonial invasion became popularly known as the First Chimurenga, a Shona word that refers to an uprising or revolt.<sup>2</sup>

Africans in Zimbabwe were subjugated in 1897. Influential religious leaders of the resistance such as Nehanda, a woman spirit medium operating in the Mazoe area of Mashonaland, and Kaguvi, were among several religious leaders who were arrested and executed. The country was named Southern Rhodesia in honour of Cecil John Rhodes who founded the BSAC that effectively occupied this territory as part of the settlement reached at the 1884-5 Berlin Conference that endorsed the principle of ‘effective occupation’<sup>3</sup> to regularise and regulate colonial acquisitions on the continent of Africa by European countries.

In 1923, the BSAC surrendered its authority to a substantial white settler community that was composed of people from Britain and other parts of the world who had heeded the call to come to the country to be rewarded with 3 000 acres of land and fifteen gold claims each.<sup>4</sup> There was high speculation of large gold deposits across the Limpopo after the discovery of gold on the

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<sup>1</sup> S. Dawson, (2011). The First Chimurenga: 1896-1897 Uprising in Matabeleland and Mashonaland and the Continued Conflicts in Academia. *Constellations*, 2(2): 144-153.

<sup>2</sup> Murenga Sororenzou was the leading personality and religious leader who fearlessly challenged colonial occupation and organized resistance in both Matabeleland and Mashonaland. His name became important in future struggles with the colonial system, hence the First, Second and Third Chimurenga which all signaled the fight against colonial oppression and African marginalisation.

<sup>3</sup> The Berlin/Congo Conference held in Germany during 1884 and 1885 put the brakes on uncontrolled European expansion in Africa. It also sought to prevent imminent colonial conflicts among imperialist forces such as Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Belgium over what they claimed as their ‘spheres of influence.’ One of the resolutions of the conference was that a power’s claim to a specific territory had to be supported by the hoisting of the colonisers’ flag and the physical presence of colonialists in the hope that this would prevent conflicts between European powers over spheres of influence.

<sup>4</sup> A.S. Mlambo, (2010). This is our land: The racialisation of land in the context of the current Zimbabwe crisis. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 26(1), p. 52.

Witwatersrand in the Transvaal in the 1880s. It is important to highlight that the white settlers had come to the country to stay permanently; hence, it was a settler colony. The country was given Responsible Government status by the British government, which meant that white settlers were in control of the country. Huge investments in infrastructure, including roads and railways, industrial and other capital-generating national projects were made on the understanding that the settlers were developing their 'home.'

African nationalism developed as a response to white oppression and racial discrimination and was regarded as a continuation of the post-pacification struggle that characterised the mid-1890s. It was realised by some African leaders that the oppressive system could be dislodged only if Africans ignored their ethnic differences and united towards the achievement of political liberation. The initiative to lead in this liberation campaign came from educated Africans such as Ndabaningi Sithole, Henry Hamadziripi, Mukudzei Mudzi, Herbert Chitepo and Robert Mugabe among others, most of whom had been privileged to attend mission schools. The colonial struggle for control of territory north of the Limpopo river was represented by the Boers, as the descendants of Dutch and other European settlers to the Cape from the 17<sup>th</sup> century were known, and the British, both of whom had long established themselves in what was to be the future South Africa. To counter Boer manoeuvres, the British created a dominion in 1953 in the form of a federation that included Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

In Southern Rhodesia, the interests of the whites were paramount whereas in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, African interests were paramount. The issue of paramountcy eventually affected Southern Rhodesia in the sense that the white economic and political interests took precedence over African interests. This setup was conducive for the declaration of white independence in Southern Rhodesia after the dissolution of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1963. Precisely because of African nationalism in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland where the African and white partnership gave paramountcy to African interests, the Rhodesian Front (RF) party elected Ian Smith who refused to compromise with African nationalists. He summarily imprisoned leading nationalist leaders such as Robert Mugabe, Edgar Tekere, Maurice Nyagumbo and

Ndabaningi Sithole in 1964 before passing the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in 1965, which declared the territory independent under white minority rule.<sup>5</sup>

The country became known as Rhodesia. A brief analysis of the UDI and the consequent birth of a racist Rhodesia is significant in that it allows for a reinterpretation of the post-independence discourses with reference to the transition from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe. One may argue that the UDI era was, paradoxically, a “blessing” for the nationalist leaders who finally took the reins of power in 1980 because it taught them the art of suppressing civil liberties and abrogating the rights of citizens. The UDI administration under Ian Smith provided a governance model that the ZANU-PF government appears to have replicated. The modus operandi of the Smith Government was analogous to the leadership style of the Mugabe regime when it sought to thwart political opposition to its rule.

Anti-communism was the major Rhodesian ideology and African nationalist formations such as ZAPU and ZANU were alleged to have been sponsored by communist countries to undermine white capitalist privilege.<sup>6</sup> The communist threat<sup>7</sup> was blown out of proportion to gain the support of sympathetic right-wing elements in the USA and the Conservative Party in Britain for Smith’s regime. This culminated in the establishment of a ‘Friends of Rhodesia’ and the Candour League of Rhodesia both of which were organisations set up by white Rhodesian hardliners in 1966 as part of the world anti-communist league<sup>8</sup> and whose aim was to come up with a government-controlled African newspaper, *The African Times*, to become the medium through which to disseminate propaganda against communism and nationalism, and to counter the *Daily News* that had a

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<sup>5</sup> J. Hlongwana, R.S. Maposa & T. Moyo, (2013). Sithole, Nkomo, Muzorewa, and the birth of Zimbabwe: A reconsideration of autobiography as a literary mode of national history. *Matatu Journal for African Culture and Society*, 41, p. 322.

<sup>6</sup> D. Lowry, (2007). The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian political culture, ca. 1920s-1980. *Cold War History*, 7(2), p. 170.

<sup>7</sup> Communism required political emancipation, elimination of the capitalist state, and a conscious emancipation of man from alienation induced by capitalism. Communism required the transcendence of private property so that wealth generated, and the means of production such as mines, land, factories, and industries, would be communally owned. That way, society would be classless. The propertied (white capitalists) and propertiless (African labourers) classes created by the western capitalist mode of production would lead to serious contradictions to be resolved by means of a struggle/conflict based on class. The Rhodesian stance on the threat posed by communism was in concert with international reactions towards Marxism especially during the Cold War after 1945 between the Soviet Union and the USA in their superpower rivalry, and over control of African countries undergoing decolonisation once the British and the French began gradually pulling out.

<sup>8</sup> Rhodesia and World Report, (1967). Salisbury: Candour League of Rhodesia. *African Pamphlet Collection*, 2 (2), <http://www.indiana.edu/~afrcol/items/show/11467> Accessed 5 February 2018.

significant African readership.<sup>9</sup> Control of the media was achieved when Smith appointed Piet van der Byl, a propagandist and an anti-communist Rhodesian hardliner from apartheid South Africa, to take charge of the new office of Parliamentary Secretary of Information.<sup>10</sup>

Lowry makes a further interesting remark on the ascendancy of the RF to power in 1964. He argues that it was not based on popular support among the whites, but the party with greater white support internally and from the British government, the Rhodesian Party, failed to renew itself resulting in a leadership vacuum which left the electorate unsure as to what to do.<sup>11</sup> The RF opportunistically exploited the political apathy of the confused electorate, and weakening the opposition became the major pre-occupation of the RF, involving underhand tactics such as shouting invectives against opposition leaders, blocking their campaigns, and organising mobs to heckle them, and labeling them sell-outs.<sup>12</sup> The propaganda was so strong that the former Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Edgar Whitehead, was labeled an arch-enemy trying to hand over Rhodesia to African nationalists for his proclivity towards supporting a constitutional dispensation that proffered concessions to nationalist parties.<sup>13</sup>

Newspapers such as *Newsfront* and the *Daily News*, representing white and African readership respectively, competed against each other. Later, it was felt that a government-controlled newspaper for Africans, to be known as *The African Times*, could best be used to churn out state propaganda to beat the *Daily News*, which was owned by a white liberal named Thomson, and was attracting a significant readership among Africans because it criticised the government. As the opposition Member of Parliament (MP) Brelsford opined, ‘*The African Times* had to be made more attractive for Africans to absorb the propaganda to attack communism and nationalism.’<sup>14</sup> Harvey Ward and Ivor Benson, among other right-wing journalists of the Candour League, were part of

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<sup>9</sup> E. Msindo, (2009). ‘Winning hearts and minds’: Crisis and propaganda in colonial Zimbabwe, 1962–1970. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 35, p. 674. Africans and liberal whites relied for news on the Daily News with a readership of 20 000 of which 5000 were Europeans,

<sup>10</sup> D. Lowry, (2007). The impact of anti-communism on White Rhodesian political culture, , p. 179.

<sup>11</sup> F. Clements, (1969). *Rhodesia: The course to collision*, London, Pall Mall Press, p. 243.

<sup>12</sup> M. Hirsch, (1973). *A decade of crisis: Ten years of Rhodesian front rule, 1962–1972*. P. Dearlove, Salisbury, p. 33.

<sup>13</sup> E. Msindo, (2009). ‘Winning hearts and minds’, p. 671.

<sup>14</sup> *Rhodesia legislative assembly debates*, (1964). 57, Col. 1,845, 4 September 1964. Cory Library, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.

the propaganda machine that worked to help transform Smith's image into a resolute iron man and an indomitably cold warrior.<sup>15</sup>

These traits in Smith and the Rhodesian regime were antithetical to democratic governance. African political parties such as the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) were outlawed in 1964 to pave the way for a one-party state, thereby creating white hegemony. The Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), formerly the Christian Council of Rhodesia (CCR), emerged because of a largely African-inspired movement to create a forum where Christian leaders from different denominations could tackle matters of mutual concern in an increasingly tense political atmosphere.<sup>16</sup> The first president of the ZCC was Bishop Skelton of the Anglican Diocese of Matabeleland who later resigned from his post as Bishop in protest against the Rhodesian racism.<sup>17</sup> These tensions within the church suggest that even the predominantly white Christian Council operating in the country at that time condemned the UDI as defying multiparty democracy. It is interesting to note that nationalist leaders like Joshua Nkomo, Ndabaningi Sithole, Canaan Banana, and Robert Mugabe emerged from a Christian background<sup>18</sup> to become serious threats to white dominance in the country. As they saw it, the UDI represented a travesty of justice, the "bastardisation" of civilization, and an irreversible erosion of Christian values and traditions<sup>19</sup> as it gave legitimacy to the exploitation of Africans in a white-dominated political space.

The decision to take up arms and fight the white regime by military means came because diplomatic efforts to convince the Smith government to follow peaceful constitutional processes to non-racial democracy that had been launched in Zambia and Malawi in 1964 had come to nothing. ZANU, largely composed of a youthful leadership in Edgar Tekere, Mugabe as Secretary-

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<sup>15</sup> D. Lowry, (2007). The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian political culture, p.180.

<sup>16</sup> M. Ruzivo, (2008). A mapping of the church groups in Zimbabwe. *The Role of the Church in the Struggle for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe*, p. 4.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ndabaningi Sithole was a Black minister of the American Board in the Mission Congregational Church; Abel Muzorewa was a bishop in the American Methodist Church; Joshua Nkomo was a lay preacher in the British-based Methodist Church branch; Robert Mugabe was a member of the Roman Catholic Church; Canaan Banana was a reverend in the American Methodist Church.

Matikiti, R. (2008). The church and the struggle for multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe. In *The Role of the Church in the Struggle for Democratic Change in Zimbabwe*. Zimbabwe Institute Publications, Harare, p. 27.

<sup>19</sup> C.S. Banana, (1996). *The church in the struggle for Zimbabwe: from the programme to combat racism to combat theology*: Swedish Institute of Missionary Research [Svenska institutet för missionsforskning] in conjunction with Zimbabwe Centre of Research and Peace Studies, Mutare, p. 115.

General, Ndabaningi Sithole as president, Henry Hamadziripi, Mukudzei Mudzi, Herbert Chitepo, Leopold Takawira and Enos Nkala<sup>20</sup> sent out young men to neighbouring countries for guerrilla training and this culminated in the Second Chimurenga. This phase was the decisive one in the struggle for liberation that led to the Lancaster Constitutional Conference in 1979 and the holding of multiparty elections in 1980 that were won by Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).<sup>21</sup>

Since independence in 1980 until the time of the writing of this thesis in 2018, ZANU-PF has formed the government of Zimbabwe, as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Voter turnout in post-independence elections: 1980-2000

<b>Year</b>	<b>Potential voting population</b>	<b>Registered voters</b>	<b>Voter turnout</b>	<b>As % of potential voters</b>	<b>As % of registered voters</b>
1980	2 900 000	2 900 000	2 702 275	93	93
1985	4 000 000	3 500 000	2 972 146	74	85
1990	5 300 000	4 800 000	2 237 524	42	47
1995	6 000 000	2 600 000	1 482 660	25	57
2000	5 500 000	5 049 815	2 552 844	46	50
<b>Presidential</b>					
1995	6 000 000	4 902 244	1 557 651	26	32
2002	7 110 403	5 611 335	3 046 891	43	54

Source: UNDP/Poverty Reduction Forum/IDS, 2000: 65; SAPES Data Bank

This dissertation examines why opposition movements have been unable to wrest political power from the ZANU-PF, despite the downward economic spiral under its government over the past two decades. This research acknowledges that there has been substantial work carried out on ZANU-PF and thus attempts a reconstruction of Zimbabwean history that transcends the narrow confines of analysing ZANU-PF alone. Investigating and analysing the activities of the opposition will help to minimise the historical gaps and provide an alternative and more comprehensive

<sup>20</sup> P. Chigora, T. Guzura, & J. Ndimande, (2015). The Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) regime in power in the 21st Century: A question of popular support or preserving power by undemocratic means. *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance*, 6(3), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> The words ‘Patriotic Front’ (PF) was added to the party’s name after the Lancaster Conference in 1979 as clear indication that it had broken links with ZAPU and that it was going to campaign in the 1980 elections as a separate party. PF also differentiated it from the original ZANU party formed in 1963 of which Ndabaningi Sithole was still president.

history as well as insights that can be applied in home-grown political transition processes relevant for Africa. One of the key issues that this dissertation examines is the extent to which foreign influence and a western “regime change” agenda have been determining factors in opposition party politics in post-independence Zimbabwe. The dissertation examines the extent to which political opposition can meaningfully participate in elections in the face of ZANU-PF’s relentless rhetoric on preserving the country’s political sovereignty amidst western-imposed economic sanctions since 2001. The centrality of “war veterans” in buttressing the ZANU-PF government against pro-democratic civil organisations, creation of liberation history by ZANU-PF intellectuals, and the influence of spirit mediums in marshalling support for ZANU-PF are examined. What emerges is a new theory predicated on military power that undercuts opposition politics in Zimbabwe. Analysing the continuity in approach by ZANU-PF from the Smith government, even though it is for different reasons and in a different context, is useful in understanding the ruling party government’s behaviour and strategies, and refusal to change, even in the wake of widespread condemnation in western circles.

Two phases in the development of opposition politics can be discerned in Zimbabwe: those opposition political parties that existed before the 1991 Land Acquisition Act, such as ZAPU, ZANU Ndonga and the UANC which contested the independence elections of 1980; and opposition formations in the post-1991 period, such as the MDC, which differed markedly from the earlier opposition parties in terms of ideological leanings, economic interests, and support base. Emphasis in the latter was on democracy, accountable governance, transparency and the rule of law, ideals which liberal western countries such as Britain, USA and France were ready to support because of extensive human rights abuses that accompanied the 2000, 2002, 2005, 2008 elections and the Operation Murambatsvina (Restore Order) of 2005.<sup>22</sup>

ZAPU won all 27 seats at stake in Matabeleland in the 1980 elections as evidence of the polarisation of the Zimbabwean society along ethnic categories broadly defined as Shona and Ndebele. ZAPU also had sufficient background knowledge of the ruling ZANU-PF party members who defected from it to form ZANU in 1963. For ZAPU, a struggle for existence had begun not only as a party, but also as an ethnic group that felt excluded by the reconciliation policy

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<sup>22</sup> S. Moyo, (2014). The manifestation of regime change in Zimbabwe in the 21st century. *Journal of Advances in Political Science*, 1(1), p.38.

pronounced by the Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe, just after independence. The study makes an evaluation of the principles of democracy and the rule of law and their applicability to a state riddled with political conflict and organisational barriers for the opposition with a view to proposing a genuine political transition for Zimbabwe. The link between the Land Acquisition Bill and Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) introduced in 1991<sup>23</sup> suggests how political events and economic policies shaped political opposition.

ZANU-PF viewed sovereignty as the converse of colonialism and appeared determined to preserve it by resisting opposition attempts to unseat it. For ZANU-PF, regime change connoted the forced removal of a legitimate government with a view to substituting it with one more compliant with western influence. Furthermore, ZANU-PF viewed sanctions as part of this regime change strategy.<sup>24</sup> Factional fights within the MDC after the disastrous MDC-T party primaries in 2013, which will be discussed later in the dissertation, suggest the existence of a linkage between the failure of sanctions to cause popular uprisings against the government and the discordant nature of opposition politics thereafter. Democracy and the rule of law are abstract concepts that were hardly understood by the less-educated in rural areas where most of the population resides. This made it difficult for the opposition to make inroads into rural constituencies during elections and the ruling party took advantage of incumbency to use patronage in allocating state resources in predominantly ZANU-PF rural strongholds.<sup>25</sup> This thesis explores how the sanctions discourse hardened ZANU-PF's resolve to stay in power and how it watered down the opposition's argument for a democratic political dispensation

## **1.2 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE STUDY, AND REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE TOPIC**

The underlying hypothesis in this research is that meaningful political competition among political parties in a country with a vindictive colonial legacy of violence and divide-and-rule, is hard to fathom. When groups compete for position and power, it is difficult to achieve free, fair and

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<sup>23</sup> This is discussed in chapter 4 to show how the Land Acquisition Bill and ESAP in 1991 provided a groundswell for strong anti-government opposition.

<sup>24</sup> D. Masaka, (2012). Paradoxes in the 'sanctions discourse' in Zimbabwe: A critical reflection. *African Study Monographs*, 33(1), p. 49.

<sup>25</sup> T. Marima and E. Essa, (2013). Qatar/Aljazeera, Zimbabwean opposition living in denial: Those opposed to Mugabe's victory continue to reject the idea that his victory may have been legitimate, <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013> Accessed 13 March 2013.



transparent election outcomes. This is particularly so in a postcolonial state where the ruling elite is preoccupied with safeguarding its vested interests, often by coercive means. This research work undertakes a reconstruction of Zimbabwean history since 1980. Existing literature on Zimbabwean politics tends to focus more on the history, policies and make-up of ZANU-PF than on opposition parties. This dissertation seeks to transcend the narrow confines of analysing ZANU-PF alone and blaming it for all the country's political and economic challenges and posits that the crisis in Zimbabwe is a shared responsibility. The political transition dilemma that was fueled by bitter electoral competition, intimidation and disappearances of political activists hinged on ZANU-PF's assumption that opposition in the country has always been created by western powers to undermine it. Rwodzi and Chigora<sup>26</sup> in their analysis of the Lancaster House Talks held in London in 1979 conclude that the agreement was a victory for those who stood for the status quo, and that meant that the inherited capitalist system operative in Rhodesia had to be maintained and adapted after independence. Tony Blair's Labour government revoked the United Kingdom's commitment to sponsor Zimbabwe's land reform, making whites in Zimbabwe the number one enemy of the state as most of them joined the opposition MDC party in criticising ZANU-PF. Therefore, an empirical study of the opposition parties is key to an understanding of the ZANU-PF perceptions. Makumbe (2003), Martin, Johnson and Mugabe (1981), Masaka (2011), Mashiri (2011), Moyo (1992) and Raftopoulos and Sachikonye (2001) have documented the government's behaviour negatively. Coltart<sup>27</sup> also produced publications that were critical of ZANU-PF. This research attempts to situate itself within this community of writers of Zimbabwean political history, seeking both to examine what they say and fill in gaps where these exist.

In an early study, Raftopoulos<sup>28</sup> discusses how ZANU-PF drew Zimbabwe into the ambit of international capital by introducing ESAP. Government pursued inherited economic policies that sought to protect domestic industry and manufacture from foreign competition after independence despite its dilemma to reconcile growth with more equitable distribution, and initiate change without serious destabilisation. The welfare strategy to please supporters of the war of liberation

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<sup>26</sup> A. Rwodzi, & F. Chigora, (2016). Addressing socialism and capitalism in gender balance: economic effect to households and workplaces in Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Advanced Research, Management and Social Sciences*, p. 131.

<sup>27</sup> D. Coltart, (2008). *A decade of suffering in Zimbabwe: Economic collapse and political repression under Robert Mugabe*. [www.cato.org/...tions/development-policy-analysis/...](http://www.cato.org/...tions/development-policy-analysis/...) Accessed 30 October 2014.

<sup>28</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (1992). Beyond the house of hunger: Democratic struggle in Zimbabwe. *Review of African Political Economy*, 19(54), p. 64.

was dropped as government adopted the IMF and World Bank programme .This Economic reform strategy represented neo-liberal ideals such as transparency, accountability, trade liberalisation, elimination of government subsidies on basic commodities with a view to cushioning the poor, promoting private investment, privatisation of government parastatals such as the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) and the National Railways of Zimbabwe (NRZ), reduction in government spending and shedding of redundant employees to reduce the government deficit.<sup>29</sup>

The effects of the implementation of these policies was disastrous. The resultant decline in social service delivery due to ESAP destroyed the welfarist strategy and that also eliminated ZANU-PF's platform for support mobilisation as inflation skyrocketed at a time when many workers had been retrenched. The formulation of the programme marginalised the ordinary people and a wide range of party and ministry officials, it having been imposed by the state and the [white] business elite.<sup>30</sup> The adoption of ESAP was a death knell to socialism in Zimbabwe, which had ceased to be a viable economic philosophy throughout the world after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1989. President Mugabe admitted: "We do not as a party have clear definition of socialism...the sheer weight of capitalism could very well set us off course, though our socialist commitment might in theory continue."<sup>31</sup> The ESAP era created social and economic conditions through which the ordinary people, workers who had been retrenched, women and civil society at large could vent their frustration at the declining standards of living, politically. The era also represents the loci of the Zimbabwean crisis when the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) was embroiled in the protection of workers from unjustified job dismissals before it decided to become the political opposition, MDC, in 1999 under the leadership of Morgan Tsvangirai. Moyo links the political marginalisation that incensed whites after the constitutional withdrawal of the twenty seats originally reserved for them, with white pressure for economic reforms.<sup>32</sup> These debates illuminated race relations when the government decided, in 2000 through an amended Act of Parliament, to pass legislation aimed at confiscating white farms without compensation.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> R. Chattopadhyay, R. (2000). Zimbabwe: structural adjustment, destitution & food insecurity. *Review of African Political Economy*, 27, p. 310.

<sup>30</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (1992). Beyond the house of hunger, p. 65.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 49.

<sup>32</sup> J. N. Moyo, (1992). State politics and social domination in Zimbabwe. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30(02), 305-330.

<sup>33</sup> T. A. S. Bowyer-Bower, & C. Stoneman, (2000). *Land reform in Zimbabwe: Constraints and prospects*. Routledge, New York, p. 12.

The land issue enabled Mugabe to use the liberation war rhetoric, colonialism and imperialism to brand the MDC as a ‘puppet’ party at the behest of white farmers according to Reeler.<sup>34</sup> ZANU-PF’s creation of ‘enemy concepts’ through the ideology of ‘patriotic history’ succeeded in stifling pro-democracy movements and sustaining ZANU-PF hegemony.<sup>35</sup> Mugabe’s political skills and charisma need consideration in explaining the ruling party’s continued stay in power<sup>36</sup>

Ranger, like Shubin, supported ZAPU during the liberation struggle. His findings can proffer the democratic forces’ appropriate strategies in their fight for democracy, especially when dealing with the character of Mugabe as portrayed by Barclays.<sup>37</sup> Tichaenzana Manyawu analyses ZANU-PF’s promotional jingles on state media by the Mbare Chimurenga Choir and links this practice to ZANU-PF’s appropriation of the national heritage while alienating rival parties from that heritage.<sup>38</sup> ZANU-PF-backed nationalist narrative, or ‘patriotic history’, drew distinctions between those who could and could not legitimately lay claim to Zimbabwe’s nationalist history.<sup>39</sup> This elevated and valorized the anti-colonial guerrilla war and the roles of ex-guerrillas, while at the same time marginalising other historical subjects in Zimbabwe’s nationalist past. According to Meredith,<sup>40</sup> Mugabe treated Zimbabwe’s wealth and resources as spoils of war for his inner circle. Meredith was a British correspondent for *The London Observer* and *Sunday Times*, and became a research fellow at St. Antony’s College, Oxford, before becoming an independent author and commentator.<sup>41</sup> He spent many years as a writer of African history and some of his conclusions in his book about the political history of Zimbabwe might have been coloured by the historical

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<sup>34</sup> A. P. Reeler, (2003). The role of militia groups in maintaining Zanu PF’s political power. <http://archive.niza.nl/docs/200303171414038719.pdf> Accessed 9 February 2017.

<sup>35</sup> Tendi, B.-M. (2010). Making History in Mugabe’s Zimbabwe: Politics, Intellectuals, and the Media, Peter Lang., p. 40. ZANU-PF appropriated the history of Zimbabwe and re-organised it into a single narrow narrative. This kind of history became known as ‘patriotic history’, repeated endlessly in the state-controlled media and state-sanctioned political rallies throughout the country in order to gain monopoly. Any history that was not embedded in the liberation struggle, particularly at the height of the political crisis after the 2000 referendum, was discarded as irrelevant.

<sup>36</sup> P. Barclays (2010). Years of hope and despair, cited in S. Onslow, 2011. *Zimbabwe and political transition*. The London School of Economics and Political Science, London, p. 3.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> A. T. Manyawu, 2013. The promotional discourse of liberation movements in Zimbabwe: A textual analysis of political jingles. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 31, p. 71.

<sup>39</sup> M. B. Munochiveyi, (2011). Becoming zimbabwe from below. Multiple narratives of Zimbabwean nationalism. *Critical African Studies*, 4(6), p.91.

<sup>40</sup> M. Meredith, (2007). *Mugabe: power, plunder, and the struggle for Zimbabwe*. Public Affairs, New York, n.p.

<sup>41</sup> Meredith’s book: *Mugabe: Power, Plunder, and the Struggle for Zimbabwe’s Future* chronicles Mugabe’s transformation from political visionary to violent dictator. It was for that reason that Meredith was deported from Zimbabwe by the government.

struggle of the British against Mugabe which may have made him too pessimistic about ZANU-PF and Mugabe. This study takes up this point.

Autobiographical accounts by Ndabaningi Sithole, Joshua Nkomo and Abel Muzorewa, who were founder members of ZANU, ZAPU and UANC respectively, offer an alternative history to the narrow patriotic version provided by ZANU-PF.<sup>42</sup> This research focuses on the knowledge gap about the broad constraints on multiparty democracy, foreign influence on opposition build-up, and the role of internal factors. This should provide insights into the philosophy of opposition formations and their relations with the white constituency and ZANU-PF. Zimbabwe had no experience in multiracial opposition politics as symbolised by the MDC at its inception in 1999. The land issue was engaged from two different paradigms. The first was that land reform or the redistribution exercise was, to ZANU-PF, democracy at work, as it strove to bring development by empowering the historically marginalised blacks in terms of land ownership.<sup>43</sup> The second perspective from the neo-liberal school was that the programme involved violent, racialised attacks on white farmers and the seizure of their property without compensation, which did not align well with western democratic norms.

Disillusionment with the government's economic mismanagement, and in particular, taxation levels and escalating prices, gave rise to the MDC.<sup>44</sup> Raftopoulos and Sachikonye<sup>45</sup> focus on the exclusivity of ZANU-PF nationalism and sees the emergence of the MDC as an anti-Mugabe reaction without positive alternatives. The 1999 MDC strategy paper envisaged democracy and the rule of law as its weapons in the fight against ZANU-PF.<sup>46</sup> Tendi (2010), Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012) and Compagnon (2011) trace ZANU-PF's claims of a western regime change agenda to the British comments on the nature of the crisis in Zimbabwe which smacked of interference. Missing from all these works are official opposition narratives to counter ZANU-PF's patriotic history.

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<sup>42</sup> W. Willems, (2013). 'Zimbabwe will never be a colony again': changing celebratory styles and meanings of independence. *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 36, p. 15.

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Chung. She argues that ZANU-PF used food as a democratic tool and that sharing land is democracy.

<sup>44</sup> B. Raftopoulos & L. Sachikonye, (2001). *Striking back: The labour movement and the post-colonial state in Zimbabwe 1980-2000*. Weaver Press, Harare, p. 272.

<sup>45</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (2006). Reflections on the opposition in Zimbabwe: The politics of the movement for democratic change (MDC), In S. Chan and R. Primorac (Eds.), *Zimbabwe in Crisis. The International Response and the Space of Silence*. Taylor and Francis, London, p. 6.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

According to Shubin,<sup>47</sup> the British government was responsible for the failure of decolonisation in Southern Rhodesia. His political involvement in supporting liberation movements in Southern Africa from the 1960s<sup>48</sup> suggests his sympathy with the liberation movements. Shubin articulates the position of ZANU-PF over land and arguably over-emphasises the Zimbabwean political crisis as having started when ZANU-PF embarked on a land reform programme after 2000,<sup>49</sup> though it can be argued that the country's economic crisis had its origins at independence in 1980, and progressively intensified under ESAP.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Muzondidya analyse ZANU-PF's version of repackaged history to relive the Second Chimurenga.<sup>50</sup> They analyse the economic meltdown since 1990. However, they tend to peripheralise how opposition politics, strategies and philosophical underpinnings evolved and changed since 1980. They largely ignore opposition agency in the political violence in Zimbabwe, yet, in some cases, ZANU-PF and opposition perpetrators of violence were indistinguishable, particularly during the 2008 election violence throughout the country. Coltart, an opposition MDC politician, admits that by 2005 his party had split over the decision by the less-educated in the party to use violence to take over power in Zimbabwe. As founding secretary for legal affairs in the MDC, he revealed how the split in the original party came about because of Tsvangirai's bent towards violence.<sup>51</sup> This view is shared by Bracking, who writes about British spies training MDC youths in South Africa to form an advanced invasion party to unleash violence.<sup>52</sup> This could quickly be dismissed as ZANU-PF propaganda as this appeared in a state-controlled newspaper, but Coltart insists, in his book, that Tsvangirai trained bandits in South Africa in 2006 in

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<sup>47</sup> V. Shubin, (2013). Zimbabwe's choice. *Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society*, 1(1), p. 42.

<sup>48</sup> V. Shubin (2009). The Hot "Cold War": The USSR in Southern Africa, *Scientia Militaria, South African Journal of Military Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2, p. 135.

<sup>49</sup> Shubin, V. 2012. Zimbabwe: Myths and realities. *Africa Review*, 4(1), p. 75.

<sup>50</sup> T. Ranger, (2004). Nationalist historiography, patriotic history and the history of the nation: The struggle over the past in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 30, p. 215.

<sup>51</sup> B. Zulu, (2015). VOA Special Report, *Ominous signs Zimbabwe headed for violent 2018 election*, n.p. <https://www.voazimbabwe.com/a/zimbabwe-politics-violence-mdc-tsvangirai-zanu-pf/3050524.html> Accessed 25 January 2017.

<sup>52</sup> S. Bracking, (2005). Development denied: autocratic militarism in post-election Zimbabwe. *Review of African Political Economy*, 32, p. 351.

preparation for a violent takeover of power in Zimbabwe and that what remains to be established was whether the trained bandits were to be used for offensive or defensive purposes.<sup>53</sup>

From the 1985 elections when ‘strategic killings’ of ZAPU organisers, councillors and officials was primarily aimed at undermining and incapacitating the opposition, to subsequent elections held in 1990, 2000, 2002 and 2008, retributive violence was unleashed by the ruling party to broadcast a wider lesson, namely, that its hegemony should not be challenged at all.<sup>54</sup> Sachikonye further argues that any explanation of the recurrence of political violence in Zimbabwe over the past three decades should include state-conferred impunity which did not criminalise attacks by regime loyalists on institutions and individuals belonging to the opposition.<sup>55</sup> This research was predicated on the struggle for multiparty democracy from an earlier period, roughly from 1980, highlighting the use of violence that became the trademark of the country’s elections up to 2015.

The African Union (AU) secretary, Takirambudde, in 2002, argued that MDC insisted on people-driven land reform, yet its operations were financed by whites who stood to lose, and that was the reason for ZANU-PF to ascribe a sense of victimhood to white identities.<sup>56</sup> The paradox of a people-driven programme benefiting white land victims became crucial. This research analysed the MDC’s political ambivalence and its multiracial composition as major constraints on multiparty democracy in the country. It failed to justify convincingly the reasons for its existence as a political party and as an alternative to the ZANU-PF government because rural constituencies were sealed off and impenetrable for the opposition. Instead, MDC became a convenient scapegoat for all the malaise of the rural communities for supposedly fraternising with western countries, and for its lack of a clear official party policy position about equitable land redistribution and reform.

The idea of sanctions when first mooted after World War II was based on the belief that if peace-loving states agreed on certain restrictions as a mechanism of control, potential aggressor states would learn their lessons and thereby abide by the universally agreed political conduct in pursuit

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<sup>53</sup> *The Herald*, (2016). ‘Provide evidence of MDC-T banditry, Coltart told’, <https://www.herald.co.zw/provide-evidence-of-mdc-t-banditry-coltart-told/> Accessed 25 March 2016.

<sup>54</sup> L. Sachikonye, (2011). *When a state turns on its citizens: Institutionalized violence and political culture*. Jacana Media, Johannesburg, p. 31.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* p. 42.

<sup>56</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (2009). ‘The crisis in Zimbabwe, 1998-2008’, cited in B. Raftopoulos, & A. Mlambo, (Eds.), *Becoming Zimbabwe: A History from the Pre-colonial Period to 2008*. Weaver Press, Harare, p. 216.

of peace. Emphasis was on conformity with human rights norms as opposed to regime change.<sup>57</sup> Western sanctions laid primacy on democracy and good governance as means to gain control of African politics and economics by linking aid to development.<sup>58</sup> European Union sanctions, some argue, were responsible for political violence in Zimbabwe as a means to maintain political power.<sup>59</sup> ZANU-PF, in response, promulgated the concept of ‘patriotic history’ epitomised by *Inside the Third Chimurenga*, now regarded as the official interpretation of patriotic history.<sup>60</sup> It depicts human rights as a form of moral imperialism similar to historical justifications for the colonisation of Africa.<sup>61</sup>

The purported economic sanctions against the ZANU-PF government in Zimbabwe met with very stiff resistance from the target, and coincidentally equipped it with an equal determination to sacrifice economic principles for political expediency. The panic of recolonisation<sup>62</sup> from and by the west predictably galvanised the regime, which opportunistically used it to strengthen its relevant pillars of power, such as the war veterans, state functionaries, and the military. Given the deep-seated hatred generated from the failure by either the British or the Mugabe government to address the finer and yet very crucial details of a comprehensive reconciliation plan soon after independence in 1980, this dissertation assumes that EU and USA sanctions on Zimbabwe, in spite

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<sup>57</sup> R. A. Murphy, (2011). *The development of economic sanctions in the practice of the United Nations Security Council*. University of Nottingham, Nottingham, p. 202.

<sup>58</sup> H. Chingono, (2010). Zimbabwe sanctions: An analysis of the “Lingo” guiding the perceptions of the sanctioners and the sanctionees. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 4(2), p. 66.

<sup>59</sup> J. Grebe, (2010). And they are still targeting: Assessing the effectiveness of targeted sanctions against Zimbabwe/Und Sie Sanktionieren Weiter: Zur Wirksamkeit Zielgerichteter Sanktionen Gegen Simbabwe. Africa Spectrum, Hamburg, p. 8.

<sup>60</sup> D. Coltart, (2008). *A decade of suffering in Zimbabwe: Economic collapse and political repression under Robert Mugabe*. [www.cato.org/...tions/development-policy-analysis/...](http://www.cato.org/...tions/development-policy-analysis/...) Accessed 30 October 2014.

<sup>61</sup> B.-M. Tendi, (2010). *How intellectuals made history in Zimbabwe*. p. 3. <http://www.africaresearchinstitute.org/...> Accessed 13 December 2016.

<sup>62</sup> Interviews with Fay Chung, Maziriri, David Coltart allude to the panic that ZANU-PF created at the height of political opposition after the 2000 referendum, when indications were that its support base, both in rural and urban areas, was diminishing and when its legitimacy was constantly being challenged by civil organisations and Human Rights groups. It was a carefully orchestrated strategy to win back its lost glory by appealing to the rural populace to remain resilient against renewed forces of imperialism masquerading under cover of the opposition MDC. The ruling party, by deploying the war veterans of the Second Chimurenga to revive liberation institutions such as ‘pungwes’ and ‘bases’, threatened to go back to fight another bush war should the opposition be voted into power in the elections set for 2002. ZANU-PF capitalised on the traumatic experiences. The rural populace, who would not want a repetition of such a phenomenon, committed themselves through coercion, to voting ‘correctly’ in future elections. The most popular advertisement in the National Television and state-controlled Radio Stations was ‘Zimbabwe will never be a colony again’ in D. Compagnon, (2000). Briefing Zimbabwe: Life after ZANU-PF. *African Affairs*, 99, 449-453.

of the different names given to them,<sup>63</sup> were punishment-oriented and therefore negative in terms of finding a lasting solution to the Zimbabwean political conflict. From 1980 to 1991, the conflict was racialised, but when the enemy concept shifted after whites were no longer politically relevant<sup>64</sup> and had become less of a threat to the political status quo, the growing black opposition in the country fitted the definition of ‘enemy’.

Though relevant to the sanctions debate, much of the literature on sanctions is politically driven and empirical research is required to argue the case both for and against sanctions, including its motivation and impact. Opposition parties’ complicity in the imposition of sanctions and their role in focusing international attention on Zimbabwe required fresh interpretation. For example, media were awash with provocative statements such as ‘Go and tell Mugabe today that if he does not want to go peacefully, we will remove him violently. This country cannot afford Mugabe to rule a day longer than is necessary’,<sup>65</sup> which the state viewed as treasonous. The state could pin Tsvangirai down using the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) that was passed before the 2002 elections for ‘terrorism’ against a popularly-elected government. POSA contained a clause that related to insurgency and banditry. Tsvangirai was charged of treason on the grounds that he wanted to subvert the government.<sup>66</sup> It affirmed for the government, the extent to which Tsvangirai and the MDC party were committed to using violent means to unseat ZANU-PF. ZANU-PF’s behaviour was analysed in the context of ‘defending’ a nation state under immense foreign siege, hence the popular axioms invoked by Jonathan Moyo, Minister of Information: ‘Zimbabwe will never be a colony again,’<sup>67</sup> and ‘So Blair, keep your England and let me keep my

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<sup>63</sup> These sanctions have been known variously as ‘smart sanctions’ by Britain, USA and the EU in the sense that they ‘targeted’ ZANU-PF leaders and organisations affiliated to it; or ‘restrictive measures’ in the sense that they were not comprehensive sanctions aimed at affecting the economic development of the whole country as trade was allowed to continue. Only the leaders were constrained in their dealings as individuals with the outside world and global institutions until the rule of law was restored. To ZANU-PF, these sanctions were ‘illegal sanctions because they were imposed on the ‘state’ and not on individuals, without United Nations Security Council approval. See D. Masaka, (2012). ‘Paradoxes in the ‘sanctions discourse’ in Zimbabwe’: A critical reflection. *African Study Monographs*, 33(1), p. 55.

<sup>64</sup> The twenty seats reserved for whites were removed in 1987 after the Unity Accord between PF-ZAPU and ZANU-PF to pave way for a one-party state in Zimbabwe. Whites were relegated to the fringes of Zimbabwean politics thereafter.

<sup>65</sup> *Reuters*, Police might charge Zimbabwean opposition leader, 2 October 2000 <https://www.zimbabwesituation.com/oct3pm.html> Accessed 19 June 2017.

<sup>66</sup> CCJPZ. (2002). *The Presidential elections*; March 9, 10, 11 2002.

<sup>67</sup> W. Willems, 2013. "Zimbabwe will never be a colony again": changing celebratory styles and meanings of independence." *Anthropology Southern Africa* 36(1-2), p. 27.



Zimbabwe'.<sup>68</sup> This dissertation considers how impracticable it was for a ZANU-PF government operating under sanctions to adhere to democratic principles and analyses the limitations in terms of practical modalities necessary for that to happen.

ZANU-PF viewed itself as mandated to rule forever because of its liberation war credentials and by viewing all political activity outside the realm of ZANU-PF orthodoxy as illegitimate.<sup>69</sup> Much of the current literature on political communication in Zimbabwe relies on western theories such as postcolonial essentialism<sup>70</sup> and situational crisis communications theory<sup>71</sup> to interpret ZANU-PF discourses. The latter perspective seeks to protect the image of an organisation in times of crisis. Western media coverage of Zimbabwe after the land reform requires cross-examination. Ranger<sup>72</sup> criticises what he terms 'patriotic journalism' practised by Jonathan Moyo's Ministry of Information and Publicity from 2000 to 2005, because it was narrowly defined and adopted the same propagandist and 'under siege' approach that the white minority regime in Rhodesia had applied against the African nationalist struggle. Dombo's comparative analysis of state control of *The African Daily News* (1956-1964) and *The Daily News* (1999-2003) focused on private print media, the state, and democratic governance.<sup>73</sup> These works were useful in that they portrayed media, both private and public, as means of mental reproduction which could be deployed to generate and propagate specific political standpoints, beliefs, and value systems. The struggle for the control of information disseminated via the newspapers put serious constraints on multiparty practice in Zimbabwe because the party in power had monopoly over the media.

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<sup>68</sup> R. G. Mugabe, R. G. 2015. "Blair, keep your England and let me keep my Zimbabwe." The World Summit on Sustainable Development *Journal of Pan African Studies* 8(8), p. 7.

<sup>69</sup> B-M. Tendi, (2010a). *How intellectuals made history in Zimbabwe* <https://www.africaresearchinstitute.org/newsite/publications/counterpoints/how-intellectuals-made-history-in-zimbabwe/> Accessed 14 July 2012.

<sup>70</sup> A. Chibuwe, (2013). *A research agenda for advertising in Africa: The case of Zimbabwe*, p. 116. [www.academia.edu/...](http://www.academia.edu/...) Accessed 13 October 2015.

<sup>71</sup> W. T. Coombs, (2007). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 10(3), p. 165.

<sup>72</sup> T. Ranger, (2004). Nationalist historiography, patriotic history and the history of the nation, p. 8.

<sup>73</sup> S. Dombo, (2014). *Daily struggles: Private print media, the state, and democratic governance in Zimbabwe in the case of the African Daily News (1956-1964) and the Daily News (1999-2003)*. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, p. 1.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES: KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED**

ZANU-PF views all political opposition in Zimbabwe as a regime-changing, neo-colonial initiative with western sponsorship. One of the key objectives of this research was to establish the extent to which Zimbabwe is or is not a functioning multiparty democracy in practice. Key questions include the following:

#### **1.3.1 Opposition politics:**

Opposition politics by both blacks and whites started during the heydays of colonial rule. The Unity Government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia in 1979 was an attempt by the white minority government to placate black opposition. No opposition party, after the 1980 multiparty elections, succeeded to the helm of political power despite clear evidence that the ruling ZANU-PF did not formally declare a one-party state. Why has this been the case? Was this because of shortcomings in the objectives, strategies and modus operandi of opposition political parties in Zimbabwe since independence, or it was because of the strengths of ZANU-PF, or a combination of both?

#### **1.3.2 External and internal factors:**

Political opposition is officially tolerated in Zimbabwe and yet the opposition has failed to exploit ZANU-PF authoritarianism to make electoral gains. Opposition parties failed to shake off ZANU-PF's propaganda, which labeled them as puppets of western countries. This dissertation examines the extent to which opposition parties were sponsored by western countries to effect regime change, and the extent to which their political programmes were largely driven by internal considerations and reflected the 'will of the people'.

#### **1.3.3 Political Transition:**

Zimbabwean politics has sometimes been characterised by a war-like atmosphere due to unremitting violence. What factors militated against peaceful democratic politics in the period since 1980 and what were the factors generating conflict? Was this conflict inevitable because of ethnic divisions or was it the outcome of specific post-independence factors?

#### **1.3.4 Party narratives:**

ZANU-PF built up strong liberation narratives designed to entrench its hegemony. Whenever observers and opposition parties felt that the ruling party would lose an election, ZANU-PF always

easily romped to victory. Why have the opposition parties ultimately been so ineffective and unable to influence voting trends in their favour?

#### 1.3.5 Propaganda:

Some observers of Zimbabwean post-independence politics believe that media propaganda has ensured the survival of the ruling party. What role has media played in the portrayal of opposition parties and ZANU-PF? How has this affected them politically and organisationally? Why were the opposition's counter-narratives unable to match ZANU-PF media propaganda?

#### 1.3.6 Post-GNU opposition:

Opposition parties after the expiry of the GNU in 2013 were in disarray. Why was the opposition unable to maintain its upward trajectory after the expiry of the GNU? Was this due to weak leadership? Policy differences? Personality clashes?

### **1.4 RESEARCH PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES: BROADER ISSUES TO BE INVESTIGATED**

Sovereignty is a concept widely used in historical and political contexts and has its origins in the ideas of the philosophers of ancient Greece and the Roman Empire.<sup>74</sup> In this thesis, emphasis is on its meaning rather than its historical origins. It is important to show the variables of sovereignty and especially those that are pertinent to my area of study. Sovereignty can be absolute, de facto, de jure, external, internal, legal and popular. This study uses absolute sovereignty in the sense of unrestricted or unlimited sovereignty that is the source of all laws and is above them,<sup>75</sup> whereas legal sovereignty defines sovereignty in terms of the law and also in terms of equality of all nations; and political sovereignty means the supremacy of coercive power,<sup>76</sup> in which case power refers to enforcing compliance by means ranging from influence to coercion.<sup>77</sup>

The issue of political sovereignty in Zimbabwe, and the significance ZANU-PF attached to it, is important to explore. This is because of the country's long history of the fifteen-year liberation

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<sup>74</sup> C. G. Bateman,(2017). *The hermeneutics of sovereignty: The written word, state sovereignty, and freedom of religion in the late antiquity Roman Empire. The Journal Jurisprudence*, 34, p. 311

<sup>75</sup> P. Eleftheriadis, (2010). Law and sovereignty. *Law and Philosophy*, 29(5), p. 539.

<sup>76</sup> S. Botha, D. Kotze, A. G. Pittius & P. Labuschagne (1997). *Introduction to politics*. University of South Africa, Pretoria, p. 55.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

struggle (1964-1979), the independence of which was achieved at the expense of human losses unprecedented in the history of armed struggles in the southern region of Africa at the hands of the Smith military regime. This long history of armed struggle enabled the ZANU-PF leadership to claim exclusive ownership of the state. Because of this reason, presidential elections from the time of independence were often characterised by political violence.<sup>78</sup> After the 2002 presidential elections, violence was wanton, symbolic and punitive, signifying ZANU-PF's determination to maintain power and social control in the face of a population in urban areas throughout the country that voted for the opposition MDC ahead of the 2005 elections.<sup>79</sup> The lesson learned by African nationalists from the Rhodesian administration was that force and violence could be skillfully applied to achieve desired ends. What made the Zimbabwean case more intriguing was that the guerrilla armed struggle was waged not against the British, but against white "rebels" who had defied British orders not to declare the UDI as that would affect Britain's decolonisation agenda for all its former colonies as well as destroy its eminence in the eyes of the former colonial world.

The nationalists were nurtured in an environment that was replete with repression and violence against voices of dissension. From another perspective, the guerilla experience in the violent bush war from 1966 to 1979 affected the way the leadership behaved and shaped their perceptions about political opposition after independence. In areas where ZANLA forces, the military wing of ZANU, operated, people belonging to other parties were murdered in public during night meetings referred to as *pungwes* (rallies).<sup>80</sup> It is important, therefore, to investigate the extent to which guerrillas who assumed the mandate to rule the country in 1980 were able to transform ZANU-PF from being a revolutionary party into a political party that was amenable to the politics of genuine reconciliation, nation-building and multipartyism. Rhodesia was conceived in violence and that could have been a logical response first, to international pressure and second, to the guerrilla

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<sup>78</sup> O. B. Mlambo, J. D. McClymont & E. Zvoma, (2017). Land, political power, and violence in Republican Rome and contemporary Zimbabwe: A comparative view. *Journal of Pan African Studies*, 11(1), p. 154.

<sup>79</sup> S. Bracking, (2005). Development denied: autocratic militarism in post-election Zimbabwe. *Review of African Political Economy*, 32(104-105), p. 342.

<sup>80</sup> Girl collaborators known as 'chimbwidos' and boy collaborators known as 'mujibhas' called nearby communities for night meetings where ZANLA guerrillas gave political education to the masses. The word 'pungwe' is derived from the Shona language with the prefix 'pu' referring to the setting of the sun and the suffix 'ngwe' referring to the rising sun to herald the beginning of a new day. Precisely, it referred to an all-night gathering between guerrillas and the wanachi (ordinary masses) where witches and sell-outs were murdered in full view of the people to discourage potential enemies of the armed struggle from siding with imperialist forces. That was the ZANLA discipline that is addressed in G. Chikozho Mazarire, (2011). Discipline and punishment in ZANLA: 1964-1979. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 37, p. 581.

insurgence that was wreaking havoc in the countryside. Similarly, violent election campaigns since the defeat of ZANU-PF in the 2000 referendum are argued to have been caused by its declining popularity. There is need to either determine the extent to which a regime facing a legitimacy crisis at home can resort to violence and excessive authoritarianism to cover up its weaknesses, or whether state violence is a sign of strength.

The usefulness of the 2000/ 2001 USA and EU targeted sanctions on the ZANU-PF leadership due to government's slide into authoritarianism, lawlessness, misgovernance and human rights violations<sup>81</sup> needs to be problematised. The sanctions debate generated considerable scholarly interest because, amidst the economic decline that these sanctions caused in the country, they worsened the situation by hardening the targeted ZANU-PF government. Central to the debate is whether sanctions worked as originally planned by those who imposed them, and how they could be compatible with international globalisation efforts to create a single village that knows no trade boundaries. This research took cognizance of the leadership and governance styles in Africa, which have a lot in common. State institutions have been systematically destroyed, politics have been militarised, and police states, where potential enemies of the state are arrested before they can commit 'crimes', have mushroomed on the continent. A concept like 'state security' resulted in the criminalisation of people's exercise of their civil liberties as happened in Kenya in the 1969 elections when the opposition was controlled through legalistic innovations which reflected a general cynicism about constitutionalism,<sup>82</sup> and in Tanzania from 1965 to 1970 when MPs in the Bunge (Parliament) were expected to be factually correct and truthful in their parliamentary statements<sup>83</sup> so that there was [imposed] political unanimity. It is also argued that some elderly national leaders found that colonial ways of doing things were admirably suited to the retention of political power and that was a legacy bequeathed to nationalists which provided the government with a monopoly of coercive sanctions and resources for purposes of maintaining law and order, repressing opponents and discouraging dissent or the practice of politics itself.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> D. Masaka, (2012). *Paradoxes in the 'sanctions discourse' in Zimbabwe*, p. 54.

<sup>82</sup> S.D. Mueller, (1984). Government and opposition in Kenya, 1966–9. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 22(3), p. 417.

<sup>83</sup> H. Kjekshus, (1974). Parliament in a one-party state—the Bunge of Tanzania, 1965–70. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 12(1), p. 27.

<sup>84</sup> S. D. Mueller, (1984). *Government and opposition in Kenya, 1966–9*, p. 401.

Zimbabwe stands out distinctly from all African countries in that the only president the country has known since independence in 1980 up to November 2017 when a military coup deposed him is Mugabe who fearlessly made several bold statements in international fora that directly accused western powers of complicity in attempts to remove him from power. The Zimbabwean scenario captures how electoral manipulation allowed incumbent leaders to maintain power and how opposition parties have fared under strict surveillance from the state machinery.

Most African states responded by means of force to the struggle for democracy and people have not been able to hold their governments to account. The struggles for democracy, in the cases of Zimbabwe and Kenya in 2008, turned bloody and that negatively impacted on political stability and economic development. From Africa's point of view, it remains to be evaluated whether the prevalence of many political parties in a country is synonymous with democracy, or whether a one-party system is an aspect of democracy. This case study of Zimbabwe points to the challenges of achieving multiparty democracy in situations of poverty, weak institutional structures and communal tensions that are rooted in history. Although the challenges are not confined to Zimbabwe on the African continent, the need to understand the uniqueness of the leadership of President Mugabe and why he continued to be supported by sections of society at his advanced age becomes intriguing.

From the foregoing, Zimbabwe meets the standard for international recognition as a sovereign state in that it has a government with legitimate claim and exclusive jurisdiction over territory and people. Because of globalisation efforts, every state is compelled to forego some of its sovereign rights when it enters bilateral and multinational treaties that must be honoured, or if it becomes a member of a supranational authority such as the United Nations Organisation (UN). In practical terms, no absolute state sovereignty is realisable in the world today given the factual inequalities between states. In Zimbabwe, the term has become synonymous with safeguarding Zimbabwe's freedom from unwarranted outside interference in matters of domestic politics and economic development. It has been argued that the prison experiences of ZANU-PF seniors and their background as guerillas, it has been argued, explain why political power is so essential for its elite.<sup>85</sup> This background helps in determining the centrality of war veterans in marshalling support

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<sup>85</sup> B. Schlee, (2014). The wounds of the perpetrators: The legacy of the liberation war on the belligerent face of ZANU-PF politics in Zimbabwe. *Populism within Europe and Beyond its Borders. International Studies on Populism*, 2, p.1.

for the regime. The question is: were western sanctions compatible with state sovereignty, democracy and globalisation efforts? Or did they not produce the reverse results of hardening the target and preventing a smooth political transition? The main thrust of this dissertation is on how Zimbabwe could create peaceful political transition mechanisms which are crucial for economic development in a wider sense.

## **1.5 PRINCIPAL THEORIES UPON WHICH THE RESEARCH PROJECT WAS CONSTRUCTED**

This study is informed by Gramsci's hegemony theory complemented by instrumentalism. Antonio Gramsci was the General Secretary of the Communist Party in Italy during the era of the Italian movement for independence known as the Risorgimento.<sup>86</sup> He secured his release from prison after serving twenty years and the notes he compiled while in prison formed the foundation of the theory of hegemony, a post-modernist construction by historians who identified hegemony as a unifying thread of his prison notes.<sup>87</sup> The theory is predicated on the state and its interaction with the ruled civil and political societies, affirming the fact that man is not ruled by force alone, but also by ideas.<sup>88</sup> Gramsci made a clear distinction between the two groups: civil society was composed of private organisms such as schools, churches, clubs and parties; political society was composed of public institutions such as governments, courts, police and the army, which indeed exercise direct control.<sup>89</sup> Gramsci also saw the Risorgimento controlled by the Moderates in Italy doing everything in its power to prevent outbursts of excessive popular enthusiasm and concluded that hegemony and dictatorship were mutually dependent on each other and that dictatorship could be the only means to create hegemony.<sup>90</sup>

Gramsci highlights the important role of intellectuals in extending the world view of the rulers to the ruled in order to secure the latter's consent and posits that when they fail to create hegemony, the ruling class resorts to using the state coercive apparatuses to discipline people.<sup>91</sup> Using the

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<sup>86</sup> T. R. Bates, (1975). Gramsci and the theory of hegemony. *Journal of the History of Ideas*, p. 351.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> T. Reinold, (2013). *Sovereignty and the responsibility to protect: The power of norms and the norms of the powerful*. Routledge, Taylor and Francis, London, p. 28.

<sup>89</sup> T. R. Bates, (1975). Gramsci and the theory of hegemony, p. 353.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 356.

<sup>91</sup> A. El Aidi, & Y. Yahya, (2017). Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony in Edward Said's orientalism. *Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 6(V), p.2.

institution of the Risorgimento as reference to his argument, Gramsci also intimates that it wanted to dominate, not to lead, and to put its interests above everything else.<sup>92</sup> The theory, therefore, puts emphasis on ideological consensus within the confines of the state to achieve hegemonic control.

In their *Communist Manifesto*, Marx and Engels argued that the state is characteristically a form of organisation which the bourgeoisie adopt for internal and external purposes for the mutual benefit of their property and interests<sup>93</sup> Gramsci reformulated the Marxist definition of the state to include institutions and practices that the ruling class uses to construct societal values, impose moral, cultural and political homogeneity, and to maintain its supremacy over its subordinates.

Hay focuses on contemporary theorising on the state by exploring orthodox Marxism and its variants, pluralism, elitism, post-structuralism and institutionalism, among other theories, and suggests that state theories today cannot be viewed as completely divergent.<sup>94</sup> In his other works, the state in Marxist terms is viewed as an instrument in the hands of the ruling class that exercises power either directly through the manipulation of state policies or indirectly through the exercise of pressure on the state.<sup>95</sup> According to Hay and Lister, an ideologically endangered ‘common sense’<sup>96</sup>, which is the way a subordinate class endures its subordination by accepting it as natural,<sup>97</sup> is constructed. This is the approach, I argue, that the ruling ZANU-PF government has used for people to view it as indispensable, and for it to become commonplace and ‘natural’ for the electorate to vote for it. In extreme cases, where opposition candidates dared to stand, the tendency was that ZANU-PF candidates were officially elected unopposed as if no opposition existed.

Miliband posits that hegemony requires that the subordinate class is compelled to acknowledge the futility of its desire to change the status quo in which it is politically and economically alienated, and that there is no alternative.<sup>98</sup> Therefore, hegemony depends not so much on consent as on resignation.<sup>99</sup> Put more simply, hegemony in Africa connotes the imposition of political and

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<sup>92</sup> T. R. Bates, (1975). Gramsci and the theory of hegemony, p. 353.

<sup>93</sup> K. Marx, & F. Engels, (1967). The communist manifesto (1848). *Trans. AJP Taylor*. Penguin, London, p. 82.

<sup>94</sup> C. Hay, M. Lister and D. Marsh (eds) *The State: Theories and Issues*, (2006). Macmillan Press, London, p. 862.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>96</sup> C. Hay & M. Lister, (2006). Introduction: theories of the state. *The State: Theories and issues*, 1, p. 862.

<sup>97</sup> G. Nowell-Smith (1992). Hegemony and discourse discussion. In M. Alvarado and & O. Boyd-Barrett. *Media Education: An Introduction*. British Film Institute, London. p. 51.

<sup>98</sup> R. Miliband, (1969). The state in capitalist society. <https://www.amazon.com/State-Capitalist-Society-Ralph-Miliband/dp/0850366887> Accessed 18 October 2016.

<sup>99</sup> R. Miliband cited in A. D. Gamble, D. Marsh & T. Tant, (Eds.). (1999). *Marxism and social science*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.



ideological unanimity on different people with diverse histories and cultures by a black elite class that seeks to advance its own agenda. On the other hand, the state alone is not the object of this study, but should be understood together with the processes comprising it, which involves analysing state institutions such as the government, judiciary, parliaments, the executive, the military and other security services.<sup>100</sup> However, globalisation has had the effect of limiting the power and authority of states, yet Zimbabwe, under ZANU-PF hegemonic control, conflicts with pro-democracy organisations for its ever-increasing grip on power.

Instrumentalism views the state as a neutral instrument manipulated and steered in its interests by the dominant class.<sup>101</sup> Put more precisely, it is a theory that focuses on how the state apparatus relates to the ruling or dominant class. This state-agency debate presents an interesting scenario in Zimbabwe because of lack of a clear distinction between the ZANU-PF party and institutions of the state. In fact, government derives its policies from those of the ruling party, and the government is subordinated to the interests of the party. Instrumentalism, therefore, allows one to test the assumed neutrality of identifiable structures that represent state power in Zimbabwe. It also enables the establishment of linkages and relationships between the apparatus of the state and the political heavyweights and illuminates how state institutions become the object of manipulation by the political actors wielding economic power.

The theory of instrumentalism is premised on the argument that the modern state serves the interests of the bourgeoisie who dominate as an African capitalist class. Given the fact that socialism failed to work in the country, the new black elite put structures in place that would safeguard their own capitalist interests because they had become a class in itself and for itself, with some getting even more daunting and daring than the settler capitalists that they replaced. The two selected state theories – hegemony and instrumentalism – are complementary rather than divergent and are relevant in the bid to understanding the conscious actions of political bourgeoisies in Zimbabwe in mobilising the executive, parliament, judiciary, mass media, religion and education to subvert political transition processes.

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<sup>100</sup> C. Hay & M. Lister, (2006). Introduction: theories of the state, p. 862.

<sup>101</sup> Earlham Sociology, (s.a.). *Introducing Marxist theories of the state*. PowerPoint.  
<http://www.earlhamsociologypages.co.uk/marxclintrod.html> Accessed 27 August 2017.

Cheeseman<sup>102</sup> posits that political scientists have identified certain requirements for achieving democracy, which include a strong civil society, a coherent political identity, independent and robust political institutions, rule of law and a vibrant economy. It can be argued that Zimbabwe and many other African countries for that matter do not meet these criteria. Throughout Africa, democracy's challenges are the structural inequalities that are characteristic of all the states despite their claim to sovereign statehood based on the political independence attained through European decolonisation. Most African states assume their juridical statehood at the UNO when in real terms they continue to depend on development assistance from outside the continent. The Third World status accorded to the continent of Africa is based on the rate at which the countries on various continents are developing and Africa is last in the hierarchy by most objective measures. Ethnic heterogeneity and the absence of a clear sense of nationhood retard development as most parts of the continent have not known peace due to ethnically-organised political parties that fight each other relentlessly under the guise of democracy. Development and democracy, both of which are difficult to realise in a context of communal conflicts over power which challenge the legitimacy of incumbent regimes, are dependent on each other. These are the pitfalls that affect the process of achieving a robust multiparty democracy.

Linked to the above debate on a robust multiparty democracy, Cheeseman<sup>103</sup> employed a different paradigm that admits that government defeats are extremely rare in multiparty Africa. He analysed the conditions under which ruling parties lose power as was the case with Zambia in the 1992 multiparty elections when Kenneth Kaunda's UNIP party lost to the opposition Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) led by Fredrick Chiluba who belonged to the Labour Movement. According to Cheeseman,<sup>104</sup> opposition parties throughout Africa are four times more likely to win elections when the sitting president does not stand. He referred to these elections as 'open seat' elections, and further argued that these elections are more likely to lead to political change than elections in which the sitting president participates.<sup>105</sup> What makes the Zimbabwean case unique, even if it shares a lot in common with other states in Africa, is the manner in which President Mugabe indeed managed to use his eloquence and possibly anti-colonial credentials to divide the

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<sup>102</sup> N. Cheeseman, (Ed.), (2010). African elections as vehicles of change. *Journal of Democracy*, 21(4), p. 151.

<sup>103</sup> C. Baylies, & M. Szeftel, (1992). The fall and rise of multi-party politics in Zambia. *Review of African Political Economy*, 19(54), p. 75.

<sup>104</sup> N. Cheeseman, (Ed.), (2010). African elections as vehicles of change. *Journal of Democracy*, 21(4), p. 142.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

world at UN sessions. Another uniqueness is how ZANU-PF made use of the liberation struggle as a pivot around which the history of Zimbabwe, and the sovereignty that it goes with, have been popularised to the extent that the drive towards people's democratic participation in the affairs of the state was circumscribed oftentimes through electoral manipulation, intimidation and disenfranchisement.

Consolidation of democracy, or building democratic institutions and traditions in any state, is related to the term limits of the incumbent president. Basing on African leadership experiences on the continent, the shorter the term of office, the greater the consolidation of democratic practices such as transparency, accountability, civil liberties, multipartyism, and free and fair elections that are devoid of intimidation, torture and electoral manipulation. Cheeseman's theory of democratisation addresses the leadership crisis in Zimbabwe, because the country had known only one leader from 1987 until 2017 when former president Mugabe was ousted from power through a coup engineered by the army.

The government led by ZANU-PF resisted popular demands for a change of government during the 1992 ESAP period and when the opposition MDC was formed in 1999 to pressurise it to acknowledge its responsibility for the economic downturn in the country. Mugabe, with army support, refused to give in to opposition and international demands, preferring instead to sacrifice the electorate on the altar of sovereignty. Rather than seeking to contribute to change the Zimbabwean situation, many African Commonwealth leaders sought effectively to support Mugabe.<sup>106</sup> The discovery of huge diamond deposits at Chiadzwa in the south-eastern part of the country around 2005 brought a sigh of relief not only to the ordinary Zimbabwean who anticipated better lifestyles thereafter, but also to the government due to the revenue and the resultant economic stability that the mining operations would bring to the country. Diamond mining activities were tendered to the Mbada and Canadile companies on 50% partnership with the government.<sup>107</sup> The State established two joint ventures, Mbada Mining which was in a Public-Private Partnership with a Chinese company, Anhui, and Canadile Mining company also partnered

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<sup>106</sup> I. Taylor & P. Williams, (2002). The limits of engagement: British foreign policy and the crisis in Zimbabwe. *International Affairs*, 78(3), p. 557.

<sup>107</sup> C. Madebwe, et al., (2011). Involuntary displacement and resettlement to make way for diamond mining: the case of Chiadzwa villagers in Marange, Zimbabwe. *Journal of Research in Peace, Gender and Development*, 1(10), p. 293.

with Pure Diam company from Dubai.<sup>108</sup> Mbada Mining was chaired by Mugabe's former helicopter pilot, Robert Mhlanga, who emerged from Zimbabwe's adventure in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as a millionaire while Mugabe's wife, Grace, was a shareholder.<sup>109</sup> More licenses were granted to a Chinese company, Anjin, and not transparently to other companies.<sup>110</sup> The heavy military presence around Chiadzwa mining sites<sup>111</sup>, together with serious though unproven allegations of corruption, coincided with the 2008 elections in which the state exploited the diamonds unmonitored, to outdo its rival MDC.<sup>112</sup> The fact that the state deployed soldiers in full military paraphernalia to represent the state in guarding and controlling the diamond mining area meant that any of their illegal dealings that amounted to 'corruption and concealment' had the full blessings of the state.<sup>113</sup>

'Regime' and 'state' are distinctly conceptualised. Chazan intimates that while the state must do with the structural and organisational embodiment of power, regime is more concerned with how this power is actually exercised and legitimated.<sup>114</sup> Krasner defines a regime as "implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations."<sup>115</sup> This presupposes that a ruling political party

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<sup>108</sup> T. Gumbo, (2013). Public-private partnerships (PPPs) and sustainable natural resources exploitation in Africa: Lessons from diamond mining in Chiadzwa, Zimbabwe. Africa Institute of South Africa, Cape Town, p. 4.

<sup>109</sup> M. Dawson, & T. Kelsall, (2012). Anti-developmental patrimonialism in Zimbabwe, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 30(1), p. 57. See also 'Grace Mugabe Fingering in Diamonds Looting', Radio VOP, 30 July 2010.

<sup>110</sup> C. Madebwe, et al., (2011). Involuntary displacement and resettlement to make way for diamond mining, p. 293.

<sup>111</sup> Huge diamond deposits were discovered in the mountainous areas of Chiadzwa, south east of Zimbabwe, in 2004-5 and that led to the 'diamond rush.' Initially, the mining was not formalised and prospectors from all parts of Zimbabwe and others from the southern region of Africa tried their luck. Later, the government formalised mining activities, leading to the heavy military presence at the mining sites, accompanied by serious clashes amongst the illegal miners themselves, and in most cases, between the illegal miners and the army. The discovery brought some respite to the suffering people in the country who had hoped that 'God' had heard their pleas because the mineral would raise the national fiscus and transform their lives significantly. Unfortunately, the mining proceeds were seldom put into the national coffers as all mining operations were politicised and allegations of corruption by the ZANU-PF leadership were documented.

<sup>112</sup> Dewa, D. 2009. 'Factors affecting voting behaviour and voting patterns in Zimbabwe's 2008 harmonized elections'. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations*, 3, p. 492. ZANU-PF campaign material for the presidential re-run in June 2008 came from China, giving it the monopoly over the use of state resources to finance party projects in the absence of any monitoring mechanisms. The re-run was a do or die election for president Mugabe, after having been beaten by the opposition leader, Tsvangirai by 43 percent against 47.9 percent in the first round in March 2008,

<sup>113</sup> G. Maringira, T. & Nyamunda, (2016). Duty versus agency in the security state of Zimbabwe: Soldiers' deployment in Chiadzwa diamond mining, *The Extractive Industries and Society*, 4(1), p. 176.

<sup>114</sup> N. Chazan, (1988). *State and society in Africa: images and challenges*: Hebrew University of Jerusalem in K. O'Malley and P. Mtimkulu (1994), *African Politics: Only Study Guide for African Politics 201-P*, University of South Africa, Pretoria, p. 17.

<sup>115</sup> S. Haggard & B. A. Simmons. (1987). Theories of international regimes. *International Organization* 41(3), p. 493.

is an institution in itself, which, under circumstances of war, serious opposition or political disturbances in a country, can act unconstitutionally. Collier views regimes as approaches that a party uses to cushion itself from its political rivals and to gain legitimacy.<sup>116</sup> Chazan identifies administrative hegemonial; pluralist; party-mobilising; party-centralist; personal-coercive; populist and ambiguous as regime typologies.<sup>117</sup> These typologies are debated later on in the thesis since ZANU -PF employed all the above interactive models at different times. These are relevant frameworks within which to evaluate MDC's response of using the Voice of America (VOA) broadcaster to propagate its counter-narrative.

In the 'introduction' to *Becoming Zimbabwe*, the editors<sup>118</sup> express an interest in following up Morgan Tsvangirai's call for a "more open and critical process of writing history in Zimbabwe", and more importantly, to "remind the victors [ZANU-PF] in the political arena that the struggle for independence was a broad, uneven process, with many unsung heroes...." There were multiple sites of the Zimbabwean anti-colonial struggle, beyond the drama of the predominantly rural 'guerrilla war.' Such sites of the struggle included the urban townships, Rhodesian prisons and detention centres and university campus.<sup>119</sup>

## **1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

This research was based on mixed methodology. As such, it relied on interviews and documentary sources. With a population of about 6,7 million<sup>120</sup>, Harare was chosen as the site of study, and the findings were extrapolated as representing the political views of the country of 15 million people. The researcher obtained permission obtained from the Clerk of Parliament of the Republic of Zimbabwe, MDC-T and the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), which allowed the researcher to conduct interviews with members of parliament from the political divide. Admittedly, the sensitivity of the area of study in Zimbabwe, and the intra-party polarisation in the major parties themselves, posed problems in having respondents in official capacities speak on

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<sup>116</sup> R. B. Collier, (1982). *Regimes in tropical Africa: Changing forms of supremacy, 1945-1975*. University of California Press, Berkley, p. 9.

<sup>117</sup> N. Chazan, R. Mortimer, J. Ravenhill & D. Rothchild, (1992). *Politics and society in contemporary Africa*. Macmillan, London, p.131.

<sup>118</sup> M. B. Munochiveyi, (2011). *Becoming Zimbabwe from below: Multiple narratives of Zimbabwean Nationalism*. *Critical African Studies*, 4(6), p.89.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p.89.

<sup>120</sup> Research & Advocacy Unit, (2013). *An audit of Zimbabwe's 2013 voters' roll*, p. 6

[http://archive.kubatana.net/docs/demgg/rau\\_audit\\_of\\_june\\_2013\\_voters\\_roll\\_130716.pdf](http://archive.kubatana.net/docs/demgg/rau_audit_of_june_2013_voters_roll_130716.pdf) Accessed 21 June 2018.

behalf of their parties, unless otherwise instructed to do so. For example, it took the researcher close to one month before he could get the right people in MDC Harvest House offices to interview as a matter of protocol.

Purposive sampling was used to select informants in leadership positions. Snowballing, which is respondent-driven in very hard-to-reach populations, was used to identify politicians from smaller political parties and influential party members in positions of authority who wanted to remain anonymous out of fear of being victimised. I had a representative sample of 15 participants drawn from the following target population: ZANU-PF, ZAPU, MDC-T, MDC-M, Zimbabwe People First (ZPF), war veterans, war collaborators, church leaders, women's organisations, and academics. Women in influential positions both in party and government were chosen to get their views on the role of the womenfolk in regime change initiatives.<sup>121</sup> It was not easy to identify women in ZANU-PF to interview until a Catholic University of Zimbabwe student who also worked in the President's office assisted in linking me to Monica Mutsvangwa. Although interviews assisted a great deal in data collection, the respondents in most cases were hard to reach and agreed dates originally set for the interviews frequently shifted unpredictably. One other challenge the researcher experienced in the use of the interview schedule was the lack of preparedness on some of the interviewees who, despite having the questionnaire with them beforehand, did not have time to study the questions until the interview day. This somehow affected the quality of the responses that the researcher received.

Archival material from the various political parties in the first decade after independence, such as UANC, ZAPU, and ZANU (Ndonga), was also examined. Although UANC is almost extinct, and ZAPU has since merged with ZANU to form the broader ZANU-PF, opposition historiographical records up to 1990 were accessed through their party archives. However, the Mafela Trust, the board that manages the ZAPU / ZIPRA archive, is sceptical of researchers seeking access to its files. Cognisant of the dearth of archival material on opposition parties, especially those that emerged in the 1990s, such as MDC and Mavambo, the researcher examined Hansard records,

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<sup>121</sup> F. Chung, (2007). *Re-living the second chimurenga. Memories from Zimbabwe's liberation struggle*. Weaver Press, Harare, p. 89. Also J. Nhongo-Simbanegavi, (2000). *For better or worse? Women and ZANLA in Zimbabwe's liberation struggle*. Weaver Press, Harare. She is quoted in a Book Review by T. Mashingaidze (25 June 2003) arguing that the war perpetuated the peripheralisation and domestication of women who were never co-opted into the decision-making process, [www.accord.org.za/.../for-better-or-worse-women-and-zanla-in-zimbabwes-liberation](http://www.accord.org.za/.../for-better-or-worse-women-and-zanla-in-zimbabwes-liberation) Accessed 9 July 2016.

which are regular compilations of parliamentary debates. Admittedly, archival material that spans the whole period under study was inadequate because of the contemporariness of some of the political developments, or because of the fear among competing political parties of releasing sensitive or classified information to the public.

To make up for the knowledge gap created by the archival material, printed sources such as periodicals and contemporary newspapers such as *The Herald*, *The Sunday Mail*, *The Chronicle*, *The Zimbabwean*, *Daily News* and *The Standard*, as well as published and unpublished sources, local, regional and international newspapers, were examined. The researcher is aware that newspapers reflect partisan perspectives and cognisance was therefore taken of this. Contemporary writers of Zimbabwean history highlighted earlier on, together with media houses, have presented the political crisis in the country from divergent perspectives, depending on the interests they represent. The element of bias can therefore not be discounted in secondary sources, most of which articulate a specific political stance.

This study took cognisance of the importance of a “history from below” approach to complement the data collected from secondary sources and purposive sampling. Oral traditions are verbal messages which are reported statements from the past beyond the present generation.<sup>122</sup> Though sometimes unreliable due to lapse in memory, oral traditions have a place in reconstructing Zimbabwean history. Oral history included personal or group reminiscences and differs from oral tradition in that reported accounts are not transferrable from one generation to another because of their contemporariness. In using the oral history research material, some respondents were cited. However, it was also used even if it tended to be subjective due to heightened political emotionality by participants who partook the armed struggle or are directly affected by the political economy obtaining in the country.<sup>123</sup> Political tension in the country meant that oral interviewees from diverse political parties were so emotionally charged that they did not hold back their feelings about matters of democracy and the perceived governance crisis in Zimbabwe.

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<sup>122</sup> J. M. Vansina, (1985). *Oral tradition as history*. University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, p. 27.

<sup>123</sup> The interview with Monica Mutsvangwa, a ZANLA ex-combatant, is evidence to this. Her husband, also an ex-combatant, reflects his heightened emotionality when he narrated how he alone, among other liberation fighters, survived experimental biological warfare by the Rhodesian forces when it used napalm and laced jeans destined for the freedom fighters with cyanide. *National Assembly Debate*, 42 (19).

Fieldwork involved direct contact with the subjects through personal observation and participation.<sup>124</sup> The researcher attended political party rallies organised at different times in Harare. These included the one in Chitungwiza near Harare organised by Joice Mujuru in June 2017 and another one organised by the ZANU-PF youths in the town of Marondera in June of the same year, with president Mugabe as guest speaker, as well as other low-key ones. The research would have wanted to attend one more political rally organised by the main opposition MDC but was unable to do so due to time constraints. That could have given me a more representative sample of meetings of main political parties in Zimbabwe. However, the *Youtube* platform was used to fill this void. Focus group discussions with three History staff members at Catholic University of Zimbabwe and two History lecturers from the University of Zimbabwe were helpful in exploring the relationships between the opposition and ZANU-PF over time.

This research was conducted at a time when political polarisation, inter-party struggles and intra-party factionalism reached unprecedented levels in Zimbabwe in the light of the anticipated 2018 elections. On occasions, the researcher was asked to respond to a party slogan before he could be entertained. Although carrying out this research using interviews was very challenging, I found that parties were ready to welcome researchers to position themselves ahead of elections and to discredit their opposition. However, with the rare preponderance of political parties [they were over 100] registered to participate in the 2018 elections, it was difficult to identify party members and to conduct interviews with them. Therefore, parties that existed before 2018 were singled out for interviews. A separate questionnaire was distributed to five students and five lecturers at Catholic University of Zimbabwe who were old enough to provide reminiscences of the post-1980 era. The response rate was 100%.

Despite the challenges associated with this research, I am convinced that it was worth pursuing as it is a building block for Zimbabwe's future multiparty democracy, post the presidency of Robert Mugabe.

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<sup>124</sup> M. Buchler, & C. Puttergill, (1997). *Understanding social change and research: Theory and method*. University of South Africa, Pretoria, p. 223.



## **1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The study of constraints on opposition politics in Zimbabwe required a chronological approach. This chapter, which is the introduction, captures the underlying hypothesis that meaningful political competition among political parties in a country with a long and painful colonial legacy of violence that was perpetuated in the postcolonial state is hard to fathom when the ruling elite is preoccupied with safeguarding its vested interests by coercive means. The chapter provides the aims, objectives, and justification for this dissertation, analyses relevant existing literature on the subject to identify knowledge gaps and shows what new knowledge to contribute, and discusses the theoretical framework, key questions, and research methodology.

### **Chapter 2: Reconciliation: A false start? 1980-1990**

This chapter analyses the elusive post-war reconciliation which resulted in turbulence in Matabeleland. The emphasis is on racial reconciliation which excluded other black political rivals. ZANU-PF's manoeuvres towards a one-party state after the 1987 Unity Accord and the enfeeblement of ZANU Ndonga and UANC is also discussed. The question of why the one-party strategy failed, forms a key aspect of the chapter which seeks to answer such questions as: Was reconciliation an ideal political transition strategy for the country's take-off from Zimbabwe-Rhodesia to Zimbabwe? How can the Gukurahundi, state-sponsored violence (1982-1987) in Matabeleland and the Midlands Provinces against the Ndebele be explained when the reconciliation policy was barely two years old? Could guerrillas acclimatised to violent support mobilisation tactics during the liberation struggle be trusted and could they transform into politicians amenable to the politics of genuine reconciliation and enduring compromise?

### **Chapter 3: Urban power politics and the quest for regime change**

In this chapter, focus is on the philosophical basis of new opposition parties against the background of ZANU-PF's revolutionary credentials. Urban politics during the colonial era are briefly analysed to establish changes and continuities which related to organisation, strategies, changing demands and the political spaces available for confronting government for change in people's living standards. This chapter also focuses on how workers' demands turned political, and the

implications that this had on the stability and legitimacy of the state. An assessment of objectives and modus operandi of opposition formations is made to determine their credibility as driving home-grown political agendas.

#### **Chapter 4: The sanctions discourse: Agenda setting and structural constraints**

This chapter examines ZANU-PF's resilience against the combined pressures of western governments and 'push politics'<sup>125</sup> of the MDC at home within the broader framework of sanctions and relentless struggle with the West. It interrogates ZANU-PF's version of history by engaging the sanctions discourse. The two parties, ZANU-PF and MDC, used sanctions differently as an excuse to advance their agendas of staying in power and assuming power respectively.

#### **Chapter 5: The Third Chimurenga (2000-2015) and political deadlock.**

Chapter 5 starts by first examining the seizure of white-owned land by the Svosve people in Marondera and how this pioneering act triggered the Third Chimurenga in 2000. The role of the state apparatus in politicising economic issues is discussed. The chapter also includes a discussion of the GNU (2008-2013) and how the GNU interregnum indeed neutralised the drive towards democracy as the opposition, in a spirit of self-denial, participated in the governance of the country and lost the plot.

#### **Chapter 6: Opposition forces within ZANU(PF) (1980-2015)**

Chapter 6 analyses how opposition within ZANU-PF itself evolved. It examines the salience of ethnicity that emerged after the Unity Accord and the concept of two vice presidents. The impact of the death of Joshua Nkomo and the revival of the old ZAPU was discussed. Simba Makoni, the former Minister of Finance, was dismissed from ZANU-PF in 2008 for proposing economic

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<sup>125</sup> The MDC in 2003 organised what was code-named 'The Final Push.' It was a campaign that involved people of all occupations-touts, vendors, workers, political activists and the broader anti-Mugabe movement. They felt that time had come for them to forcibly remove President Mugabe from power. Marches were organised from all corners of Harare's high-density suburbs where they were supposed to gather in the Central Business District in readiness for the final march to the State House, the official residence of the president. The campaign was not well coordinated, and it degenerated into chaos because of participants who saw it as an opportunity to ransack shops thus destroying the original motive. The MDC under-estimated the strength of the regime and the campaign flopped as the army was engaged to disperse the crowds. People scurried in a confused retreat and the organisers from the MDC party were arrested.

policies that appeared eventually to discredit the ruling party. His newly formed Mavambo Party drew support from both ZANU-PF and MDC as political re-alignments emerged against the backdrop of the dwindling legitimacy of the government. Recent political purges in ZANU-PF and the subsequent dismissal of Vice President Joice Mujuru in 2014 and later, Emmerson Mnangagwa in 2017 before his political comeback through military support late in the same year, are also analysed in the context of regime change.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations**

The conclusion summarises the research findings, results and recommendations. The chapter acknowledges the political changes in Zimbabwe that occurred at the time of writing this dissertation, the most notable being the ousting of former president Mugabe, and his replacement by his former vice president Emmerson Mnangagwa in what critics have described as a coup. Military involvement in the political dispensation following the November 2017 coup that terminated Mugabe's uninterrupted 37 years as the country's leader raised another question about the feasibility of free and fair elections under a quasi-military ZANU-PF government. Can the military be trusted to lead a democratic process? In trying to answer the question, the chapter also suggests theories constructed around the military edifice, to be tested against future elections in the country, before it finally making recommendations suitable for the development and sustenance of genuine multiparty democracy in Zimbabwe.

## CHAPTER TWO: RECONCILIATION: A FALSE START, 1980-2000

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses the elusive search for post-war reconciliation between ZAPU and ZANU-PF and the antagonistic relations of the pre-independence era that carried over into the post-independence era, resulting in the dissident menace and the Gukurahundi phenomenon in Matabeleland and the Midlands regions. It addresses how the African parties narrowly defined reconciliation to mean mending strained relations between ZANU and the Rhodesia Front led by Ian Smith. It, indeed, excluded other African nationalist parties that rivalled ZANU-PF prior to 1980, such as the UANC led by Bishop Abel Muzorewa and ZANU Ndonga, and trivialised their significance in postcolonial reconstruction endeavours. ZAPU was also ignored, till 1987, thus giving rise to the agitations in Matabeleland in the pre-1987 period.

This chapter therefore analyses how party rivalries in the 1980 general elections won by ZANU-PF were illuminated in the post-independence discourses primarily because the reconciliation policy focused on black-white relations to the exclusion of other black political rivals. ZANU-PF manoeuvres towards a one-party state after co-opting ZAPU in the 1987 Unity Accord and the enfeeblement of ZANU Ndonga and UANC are also discussed. This chapter also considers the quest for a one-party state that seemed more likely after the co-option of ZAPU and the reasons for the failure of the accord.

The term democracy operates at two levels: behavioural and structural. At a behavioural level it means meaningful competition, [popular] participation, and the existence of civil liberties, whereas at a structural level it entails a functional or credible electoral system, multiparty organs and an independent legislature.<sup>126</sup> For purposes of this dissertation, the accepted description of a democratic state is one in which there is political pluralism, existence of multiple parties and trades unions, fair, open, free and democratic elections held at regular periods, and where the populace can choose their leaders freely.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> M. Bratton & E. Masunungure, (2008). Zimbabwe's long agony. *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 19, No 4., 43.

<sup>127</sup> C. I. Obi, (2001). Reconstructing Africa's development in the new millennium through NEPAD: Can African Leaders deliver the goods? *African Journal of International Affairs*, 4. p, 164.

Table 2.1: National assembly election results in Zimbabwe 1980 – 2000<sup>128</sup>

Party	Candidates	Registered	Votes	% Valid Votes	Seats
2000	ZANU (PF)	120	1 220 951	48.83	62
	MDC	120	1 150 793	46.03	57
	UP	59	29 677	1.19	0
	ZAPU	21	10 824	0.43	0
	ZUD	16	6100	0.24	0
	ZANU	12	16493	0.66	1
	LP	8	753	0.03	0
	LPZ	14	10 449	0.42	0
	ZIP	4	473	0.02	0
	NDU	1	164	0.01	0
	ZPP	1	62	0	0
	ZCP	1	16	0	0
	PDF	1	90	0	0
	ANP N	1	862	0.03	0
	PA	1	617	0.02	0
	Independents Spoilt?	89	51 971	2.08	0
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>2 552844</b>	<b>99.99</b>
1995	ZANU (PF)	120	1126822	76	117
	ZANU-Ndonga	?	93546	6	2
	FPZ	?	88223	6	-
	Independents (Margaret Dongo)	?	62085	-	1
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1370676</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>120</b>
1990	ZANU (PF)	120	1 690 071	81	117
	ZUM	120	369 031	18	2
	ZANU-Ndonga	120	19 448	1	1
	LIANG	120	9667	1	-
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2 088 217</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>120</b>
1985	ZANU (PF)	80	2 233 320	77	64
	PF-ZAPU	80	558 771	19	15
	ZANU-Ndonga	?	36054	1	1
	UANC	?	64 764	2	-
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2892 909</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>80</b>
1980	ZANU (PF)	80	1668992	63	57
	PF-ZAPU	80	638 879	24	20
	UANC	?	219 307	8	3
	ZANU-Ndonga	?	53 343	2	-
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2 580 521</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>80</b>

<sup>128</sup> K. Matlosa, (2000). Election monitoring and observation in Zimbabwe: Hegemony versus sovereignty. *African Journal of Political Science*, 7(1), p. 142.

In Zimbabwe, multiparty elections have always been viewed as an instrument to effect political change. Bratton and Masunungure's<sup>129</sup> characterisation of democracy where ordinary citizens find it difficult to hold their leaders to account is employed to problematise the operation of democracy since independence in 1980. The definition of democracy from above by Obi,<sup>130</sup> which gives people the right to vote but not to choose, hence 'choiceless democracies, is useful in highlighting the African argument about African democracy which is often at variance, or conflictual, with the conception of democracy in western countries. According to Held,<sup>131</sup> democracy is failing in Africa because it is essentially a Western project lacking in universal significance. Another difference is that in Africa, those in power do not govern-which means they are accountable to citizens-rather, they rule.<sup>132</sup> Democracy in Africa is premised on elections, and if elections take place in a state, then that state is supposedly democratic. The colonially inspired historical background of Zimbabwe, the protracted liberation struggle, its colonial inheritance and the implementation of colonial institutions informed the postcolonial political practices and the degree of open political competition that ZANU-PF allowed in the country.

## **2.2 BACKGROUND AND RECONCILIATION CHALLENGES**

The Patriotic Front (PF) alliance was formed by ZAPU and ZANU on 10 October 1976.<sup>133</sup> The stakeholders believed that the alliance would work towards diffusing sources of tension arising from the different ideological orientation and wartime strategic considerations between the two parties and that the revolutionary wings of ZANLA and ZIPRA would be united so that they could join forces to fight for a common purpose. Joshua Nkomo, who had been the ZAPU president since its formation in 1961, was convinced that this was not going to be a marriage of convenience, but that it was a reality of people who once worked together and so had realised that working separately

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<sup>129</sup> M. Bratton and E. Masunungure, (2011). *The anatomy of political predation: Leaders, elites and coalitions in Zimbabwe 1980 – 2010*. UKZN Press, Durban, p. 46.

<sup>130</sup> C. I. Obi, (2001). *Reconstructing Africa's development ...*, p. 159.

<sup>131</sup> D. Held, (1987). *Models of democracy*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, p. 12.

<sup>132</sup> W. Gumede, (2015). *Africa style democracy?* [www.publicseminar.org/2015/02/african-style-democracy](http://www.publicseminar.org/2015/02/african-style-democracy) Accessed 17 February 2018.

<sup>133</sup> P. Preston, (2004). Stalemate and the termination of civil war. Rhodesia reassessed. *Journal of Peace Research*, 41(1), p. 67.

to fight British colonialism could not produce sufficient TNT to crack this rock<sup>134135</sup>. ZANLA and ZIPRA were placed under a single military command known as Zimbabwe People's Army (ZIPA). However, the union of the two parties was short-lived as cooperation during 1975 to 1976 ceased when ZANLA fighters massacred ZIPRA fighters at Mhorogoro and Mgagao in Tanzania.<sup>136</sup> Official statistics of ZIPRA guerrillas killed are not available since records at that time were either difficult to maintain due to high mobility between training camps, or the ZANLA forces may have hidden them from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) that wanted to see a single liberation movement, as opposed to the two in existence. These unhealthy developments were an expression of the ZAPU/ZANU conflicts in the 1960s that exhibited the tribal or ethnic character of mass political parties in the country. Between 1975 and 1976, ZIPRA and ZANLA guerillas also fought and killed each other when they were placed in the same training camps in Libya and in Mhorogoro and Mgagao in Tanzania.<sup>137</sup>

It must be remembered that ZANU had split from ZAPU in 1963 when the ZAPU youths that included Ndabaningi Sithole, Enos Nkala, Robert Mugabe, Leopold Takawira and Edgar Tekere were all high-ranking personalities of the Shona ethnic group except Enos Nkala.<sup>138</sup> They protested against Joshua Nkomo's leadership, and in particular, his persistent inclination towards constitutional talks with the white settler regime led by Edgar Whitehead that did not yield substantial and positive results. Possible reasons for the split had much to do with leadership wrangles, the best ideology and strategy to pursue against a recalcitrant white minority

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<sup>134</sup> J. K. Spiker, D. Crawford & R. L. Crawford, (1992). Influence of 2, 4, 6-trinitrotoluene (TNT) concentration on the degradation of TNT in explosive-contaminated soils by the white rot fungus *Phanerochaete chrysosporium*. *Applied and Environmental Microbiology*, 58(9), p. 3199. TNT is an acronym for 'trinitrotoluene,' a term used to describe rock mass damage induced by underground explosions.

<sup>135</sup> G. Ma, H. Hao & Y. Zhou, (1998). Modeling of wave propagation induced by underground explosion. *Computers and Geotechnics*, 22(3), p. 283.

<sup>136</sup> F. Chung, (2007). *Re-living the second chimurenga. Memories from Zimbabwe's liberation struggle*, p. 147. ZIPRA and ZANLA guerillas were placed into two locations by the Tanzanian authorities to destroy the potential rift between ZAPU and ZANU, but ZANLA guerillas undertook to exterminate ZIPRA fighters on the pretext that their leader, Joshua Nkomo, was collaborating with Ian Smith in endless negotiations. Key figures from both parties at Morogoro and Mgagao were from the ZANU side, Constantino Chiwenga, Perence Shiri and Augustine Chihuri (Stephen Chocha). From the ZIPRA side were Eddie Mlotshwa, Phillip Valerio Sibanda (Annianias Gwenzi) and Sam Fakazi. T. Ntungakwa, (2016). *Chronicles of Chimurenga II: How ZIPA was buried in Tanzania*. <http://www.sundaymail.co.zw/chronicles-of-chimurenga-ii-how-zipa-was-buried-in-tanzania/> Accessed 23 March 2017.

<sup>137</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe looking east*. Directory Publishers, Bulawayo, pp. 83-94.

<sup>138</sup> M. Sithole, (1987). State power consolidation in Zimbabwe: Party and ideological development. In E. J. Keller and D. Rothchild (Eds.). *Afro-Marxist Regimes: Ideology and Public Policy*. Lynne Rienner, Boulder, p. 86.

government, and possibly ethnic cleavages within the party.<sup>139</sup> Maurice Nyagumbo remarked that Enos Chikowore and Nyamupingidza as youth members of the breakaway ZANU party, made conditions impossible for Joshua Nkomo and his deputy, James Chikerema, to remain in Salisbury (Harare) even for a hour.<sup>140</sup> The reason that Salisbury was in Mashonaland compelled Nkomo to establish ZAPU headquarters in Matabeleland. Therefore, after 1963, ZAPU and ZANU operated as two separate liberation movements, each with its own liberation army. Right from its inception, ZANU comprising youths, resolved to engage the settler regime by military means because of failed negotiation processes that had happened in the past, whereas ZAPU believed in constitutional negotiations to bring majority rule to Zimbabwe, and that the armed struggle would be the last resort.

This was the position of the two parties before the hardline Ian Smith, representing the Rhodesia Front that was racist and exclusivist, came to power in 1964. The ZAPU vice president, James Chikerema, in response to observations on the struggle, intimated that the decision to undertake the armed struggle did not start in 1964 following the detention of nationalist leaders, but rather after the collapse of the 1963 Constitutional Conference. To weaken and silence African nationalism, all key members of ZAPU and ZANU were put into detention camps in Gonakudzingwa and Sikombela. The move did not deter meaningful correspondence between and among people in detention and those who remained outside to coordinate clandestine nationalist activities. Chikerema stated that the objectives of the party in sending cadres to neighbouring and sympathetic socialist countries for military training was not for waging a guerilla warfare, but for carrying out acts of sabotage considered relevant to engender fear and despondency among the white minority regime in Rhodesia. Information could reach Nkomo in Gonakudzingwa restriction area through the agency of white liberals<sup>141</sup> who regarded him and his party as less hardline and African nationalist (“racist” as interpreted by whites), than ZANU.<sup>142</sup>

The split between ZAPU and ZANU resulted in sporadic factional fights particularly in Salisbury, renamed Harare after independence. A distinguished journalist, Stanlake Samkange, who was also

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<sup>139</sup> Masipula Sithole, “State Power Consolidation in Zimbabwe: Party and Ideological Development”, p. 87.

<sup>140</sup> M. Nyagumbo, (1980). *With the people: An autobiography from the Zimbabwe struggle*. Allison & Busby, London, p. 184.

<sup>141</sup> T. Ranger, (2005). The rise of patriotic journalism in Zimbabwe and its possible implications. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, 2, p. 11.

<sup>142</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Directory Publishers, Bulawayo, p. 94.



chairman of the Highfields high-density suburb ZANU branch in 1964, expressed dismay at the absence of love of one's fellow countrymen demonstrated by the youths which he regarded as the number one principle of his party because Africans were murdering Africans and boasting about it.<sup>143</sup> Each of the two parties sought to portray itself as truly representing African nationalism by outbidding the other. The support base for the nationalist cause was found mainly in urban areas like Salisbury where the contest for support took on ruthless forms. This was also because ZAPU was strongest in Matabeleland and Salisbury.<sup>144</sup>

A distinctive depiction of ZANU's aggressive nationalism was its attempt to obliterate all political rivals and to position itself as the sole guarantor of national goals by labeling ZAPU a party of traitors seeking to betray the attainment of the so-called national goals. Nkomo was caricatured as recanting, revisionist and recoiling whereas Sithole, the ZANU leader, was hailed as the leader of all patriots before he, too, became a "traitor" in the eyes of many after renouncing the use of violence as a precondition for his release from detention.<sup>145</sup> This kind of patriotic journalism of the 1960s and 1970s had a direct bearing on ZANU-PF's media influence, control, and manipulation in Zimbabwean modern politics after 1980. In the above periods, ZANU arrogated to itself the role of a true defender of African nationalism and there was always fierce contestation with ZAPU for that role.

ZANU attacks on ZAPU supporters in 1965 provided a good example of what it called patriotism, where ZAPU was demonised and ZANU was exalted for its love of the country.<sup>146</sup> In ZANU's booklet, *Traitors do much damage to National Goals*, ZAPU was portrayed as a club of traitors and ZANU, as the true representative of African black people in the country.<sup>147</sup> The decision by ZAPU to fight a guerilla war could have been necessitated by the realisation that ZANU's use of demonising propaganda stifled its organisational capacity in terms of recruitment, visibility and legitimacy. It was suicidal for Nkomo's ZAPU to harp on the language of negotiation and peaceful

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<sup>143</sup> T. Ranger, (2005). *The rise of patriotic journalism in Zimbabwe*, p. 11.

<sup>144</sup> M. O. West, (2002). *The rise of an African middle class: Colonial Zimbabwe, 1898-1965*. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, p. 234.

<sup>145</sup> T. Ranger, (2005). *The rise of patriotic journalism in Zimbabwe*, p. 11.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> G. Marawanyika, **Zanu PF issues 'traitors' list**, *The Independent*, 18 February 2005

<https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2005/02/18/zanu-pf-issues-traitors-list> Accessed 2 July 2016.

transition at a time when its rival, ZANU, had already embraced the idea of guerilla war as a practical necessity, and when its members in urban areas especially, were being killed, physically attacked and assaulted by the ZANU urban youths for belonging to ZAPU. ZANU as a liberation movement stated that it was engaged in a Manichean struggle which ought to end in an absolute victory, freedom or death, and proclaimed the certainty of military victory.<sup>148</sup> The need for ZAPU's military engagement was further reinforced by the failure of the Geneva Constitutional Conference in 1976 during which time it was brought to the attention of detained nationalists that their fellow comrades were being hanged by Smith's regime at the rate of five people every Monday.<sup>149</sup> The futility of negotiating made Nkomo consider negotiating with the British in the context of war "...as the only way to eject a thief that had broken into the house".<sup>150</sup>

On the other hand, the release of Mugabe from prison in 1974 as a result of the détente initiative led by John Vorster, the South African president, and Kenneth Kaunda, the Zambian president, coincided with a leadership struggle within ZANU. Ndabaningi Sithole, as president of ZANU and under compelling prison conditions, renounced the use of violence in order to obtain his release from prison and this translated to ZANU abandoning its military strategy altogether. The renunciation of violence by the ZANU president, Ndabaningi Sithole in 1970, and his subsequent release from prison, met with such mixed feelings that made him unpopular within the party that he had presided over since its formative years.<sup>151</sup>

The election of Robert Mugabe to replace Sithole as president of ZANU has been debated in political circles. Some members were not convinced that Sithole had sold out by renouncing the use of violence and so continued to regard him as their legitimate leader. The military leadership, not the ordinary guerillas, on the other hand, discarded Sithole as a sell-out and elected Mugabe instead. As Chung postulates, the importance of the military in fulfilling the role of 'kingmaker' was associated with Solomon Mujuru, whose war name was Rex Nhongo, who threw his weight behind Mugabe rather than Sithole during the 1974-75 power struggle.<sup>152</sup> The controversies

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<sup>148</sup> M. Ottaway, (1991). Liberation movements and transition to democracy: The case of the ANC. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29, p. 67.

<sup>149</sup> National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ), (1979). *Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo; 'Down with colonialism: Down with Fascism'* Political Editions. Information and Publicity Department, ZAPU, Lusaka, n.p.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> L. Laakso, (2003). Opposition politics in independent Zimbabwe. *African Studies Quarterly*, 7, p. 2

<sup>152</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Bulawayo: Directory Publishers, p. 94.

surrounding Mugabe's election as ZANU president in Mozambique informed military influence on decisions relating to democracy and power after ZANU-PF's election victory in 1980.

According to Laakso, thousands of guerrillas in ZANU camps in Mozambique were detained for allegedly plotting to overthrow Mugabe in 1977.<sup>153</sup> This suggests that a substantial number in ZANU and its military wing, ZANLA, did not support Mugabe's leadership from the start and continued to view his leadership as an imposition from the party revolutionary leadership. The leadership wrangles in ZANU around 1978 have been linked to the mysterious death of the ZANLA High Commander, Josiah Tongogara, in a car crash on Boxing Day in 1979. Although no documented sources exist to shed light on the circumstances that led to his sudden death, he is understood to have mobilised ZANLA guerrillas against the idea mooted by ZANU to break away from PF and to campaign in the 1980 elections as a separate party from ZAPU. It is suspected that psychological warfare and manipulation of views and perceptions became part of ZANU-PF's political culture and the inclusion of the military in the voting for leadership led to the dominance of militarists within ZANU during the war.<sup>154</sup> A precedent was set that the army in future would determine who should lead the country and who should not. From the support that Mugabe got from a war general who was only second-in-command to Josiah Tongogara, it is not surprising that the revolutionary solidarity between Mugabe and Mujuru continued in government until the latter's retirement from the army. It is therefore imperative to analyse the role of the military in sustaining ZANU-PF's hegemonic powers in post-independence Zimbabwe and in creating conditions that were not conducive to democratic participation of all citizens regardless of political affiliation.

The British government did not take Smith's UDI lightly and the regime was under pressure from the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to make him conform with British decolonisation policy at the time. It was for that reason that the UNSC imposed its first ever economic sanctions on Rhodesia in 1965.<sup>155</sup> In a bid to establish what blacks felt about the political dispensation that was ushered in by the UDI declared by the white minority, Britain later set up a commission known as the Pearce Commission in 1970-1. The Commission's task was to investigate, through

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<sup>153</sup> L. Laakso, (2003). *Opposition politics in independent Zimbabwe*, p. 2.

<sup>154</sup> F. Chung, F. (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Directory Publishers, Bulawayo, p. 88.

<sup>155</sup> M. Hove, & H. Chingono, (2013). National interests and the sanctions strategy 1959-2013. *Review of History and Political Science*, 1, p. 6.

conducting a referendum, whether Africans in Rhodesia consented to the constitutional proposals that were calculated to legitimise Smith's UDI and entrench white economic and political superiority. The ZANU president at the time, Ndabaningi Sithole, and other incarcerated nationalists, denounced the commission from prison as another fraudulent constitutional proposal requiring African decision.<sup>156</sup> To voice their condemnation of the commission, ZAPU and ZANU, both of which were almost paralysed and politically obscure, temporarily re-emerged as the African National Congress (ANC) under Bishop Abel Muzorewa. The ANC successfully mobilised Africans in urban townships throughout the country to condemn the Pearce Commission, a name given to the team selected by the British and led by Lord Pearce to conduct a plebiscite on the proposed constitution. Ndabaningi Sithole wrote two letters while in prison, one to the British Prime Minister, Edward Heath, in 1971, and another to British Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec in 1972, condemning the Pearce Commission as fraudulent. Sithole indicated that the two letters would serve as reference material for the Zimbabwean people if they were in future presented with another fraudulent constitutional proposal requiring their decision.<sup>157</sup>

This last point above serves as background to the 1976 Geneva Conference and more importantly, to the Lancaster Constitutional Conference of 1979, the latter of which exhibited the fraudulence that Sithole alluded to in as far back as 1972. The nationalists in Zimbabwe, through experiences in negotiated processes involving the British lost trust in them for their negotiating in bad faith and for flouting agreed positions with impunity. The Lancaster Conference produced a constitution that was not only typically flawed right from the start, but also fundamentally lacking in moral validity. Negotiations revolved around designing an undemocratic constitution – to protect white privilege and maintain the economic status quo. Any attempts at reconciliation, in this case, between blacks and whites after independence, had to reckon with a long history of chicanery by the whites that impoverished the Africans and robbed them of their dignity as proper human beings.

A few cases need mentioning to emphasise the point above. The Rudd Concession of 1888 signed between king Lobengula, and Cecil, John Rhodes' men Charles Rudd, Rotchford Maguire and Francis Thompson, became the legal document that the BSAC used to march into Zimbabwe on a colonising mission after cheating on the Ndebele king, Lobengula, to sign on a document written

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<sup>156</sup> NAZ, No. 39874, Zimbabwe must be free now, Zimbabwe African National Union, Salisbury, Letter by ZANU President Ndabaningi Sithole to the British Prime Minister, Douglas Home, December 1972.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

in very strong legal language about which he knew nothing. Lobengula later realised that he had been cheated and sought to annul the Concession when it was already too late to amend. It must be noted that it was this document that the BSAC, on behalf of the British government, effectively used to justify its colonisation of the country in 1890.

Another case of what Africans consider to be white treachery involved constitutional proposals in the early 1970s. The Pearce Commission in 1971/72 was rejected upon the realisation that the Rhodesians wanted to cheat the Africans and hoodwink them into uncritically endorsing constitutional proposals that were meant to deprive them of their rights. A third case leading to the deepening of black distrust of whites was the Internal Settlement of 1978. The government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia under the premiership of Bishop Muzorewa after his election victory, was no less compromised than the Smith Administration that it replaced in that Smith retained all the powers, thus rendering Muzorewa a ceremonial Prime Minister. The Lancaster Agreement preserved white political and economic interests by giving them 20 uncontested seats in parliament so that they remained relevant in the new dispensation. It bore the seeds of its own destruction and became pivotal in the long-drawn out political and economic crises in Zimbabwe thereafter.

Carrying out aerial bombardments on ZANLA and ZIPRA bases when negotiations were underway at Lancaster in 1979 showed to Africans the extent to which whites in the country could not be trusted. Memories of the developments highlighted above were transposed into the new era of compromise politics and inter-racial conciliation and reconciliation after the multiparty elections of 1980. It means that comprehensive reconciliation was not going to be easy unless past injustices, instead of being wished away and forgotten, were addressed holistically to pave the way for unity of purpose, progress, development and common identification with Zimbabwe to which everybody belonged regardless of creed, race, ethnic origin or any other criteria.

With regard to the Pearce Commission, it can be inferred that the letters that Sithole wrote to the Imperial Crown in England were delivered by white liberals. The letters attacked the unfairness of using a commission to test the collective opinion of the Zimbabwean people. Such sentiments from the president of ZANU came in the wake of massive intimidation by the white Rhodesian establishment aimed at coercing Africans into voting 'yes.' Sithole warned Sir Alec Douglas Home: "... before the ink in which the proposals are written is dry, the Anglo-Rhodesian

Agreement has already been dishonoured".<sup>158</sup> The Smith regime, contrary to the anticipated peaceful conditions under which the plebiscite was to be held, violated the standards proposed by the Anglo-British Agreement so that it could rig the process and register a constitutional victory. The campaign by Africans produced a resounding 'no' to the Anglo-Rhodesian proposals because they failed to pass the test of acceptability unless the one-person one-vote principle was used.<sup>159</sup>

From the foregoing, Muzorewa had his part to play during the struggle in the sense that he united traditionally hostile groups under the name ANC which later became UANC when both the ZANU and ZAPU leadership could not do so from inside detention camps. Muzorewa was responsible for the recruitment of military cadres, particularly in Manicaland, around 1975 who would be trained for guerilla warfare in Mozambique, Tanzania and eastern socialist countries such as Yugoslavia and Romania. He became an asset not to be dispensed with in the objective reinterpretation of the anti-colonial struggle and post-independence discourses in Zimbabwe. Chung<sup>160</sup> intimates that Muzorewa was included in the first ANC that was formed in 1957. When ZAPU and ZANU were banned, they chose Muzorewa to lead an internal wing called the ANC comprising ZAPU and ZANU leadership. She also indicates that they chose Muzorewa to lead the ANC as an internal representation of nationalism not because they admired him for being a religious person, but because he had no understanding of politics and that he was in a way, another Tsvangirai. This sounds like an unfair assessment of Tsvangirai given by Chung. This is because Muzorewa was a man of the cloth and politically a moderate, whereas Tsvangirai had comprehensive reading of the economic crisis that not only gave rise to the MDC. Tsvangirai's party also eroded ZANU-PF legitimacy, except that he operated in a militarised environment which political opposition was a risky area to tread.

The armed liberation struggle intensified in the late 1970s and forced Smith to launch air raids into Mozambique and Zambia where freedom fighters were being trained. The Rhodesian forces launched air raids against ZAPU's Westland Farm headquarters in Zambia and against Patriotic

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<sup>158</sup> NAZ. N. Sithole. (1972). Zimbabwe must be free now, December 1972.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. Also see T. Kirk, (1973). Rhodesia's "pro-settlement groups" and the Anglo-Rhodesian constitutional dispute. *A Journal of Opinion*, 3(1), p. 2.

<sup>160</sup> Interview with Chung.

Front arms dumps in Mozambique in 1978.<sup>161</sup> The raids into ZANLA guerrilla training and refugee camps continued even when the Lancaster Conference of 1979 was underway in London, arguably as a strategy to pressurise the PF leadership into conceding to the demands by the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia delegation. The loss of a Bell Huey helicopter to a surface-to-air missile inside Mozambique at Chimoio in September 1979 was the single greatest disaster in terms of casualties suffered by the Rhodesians during the war.<sup>162</sup> Under the circumstances, Smith elected to cooperate with moderate African leaders such as Ndabaningi Sithole and Bishop Muzorewa who were within the country. He hoped by this to have the sanctions imposed on Rhodesia removed and recognition internationally granted to Rhodesia through an internal settlement in which black parties inside the country would be participants in the 1979 elections, to the exclusion of ZAPU and ZANU.

The Internal Settlement by its very nature excluded the PF alliance because it was external in the sense that the two parties, ZAPU and ZANU, had established governments in exile. Elections were conducted in urban areas only because rural areas, especially those in Mashonaland and Manicaland provinces, had been sealed off to Rhodesian forces and had become semi-liberated zones. This 1979 “internal settlement” introduced a new constitution for “Zimbabwe-Rhodesia” and a complicated system of commissions ensured white control over important appointments in the administration, the judiciary, police and army.<sup>163</sup> Muzorewa did not therefore exercise full executive powers as Prime Minister of the country. The results of the Internal Settlement elections gave UANC 51 seats, ZANU Ndonga 12 seats, and Ndiweni’s UNFP 9 seats.<sup>164</sup> The government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia had two chambers: the Senate comprising forty members with fourteen Africans, ten whites and six presidential appointees and the House of Assembly made up of 100 members - 72 Africans and 28 whites. The PF, conspicuous by its absence from the internal arrangement, did not recognise Muzorewa’s government and so continued the armed guerrilla struggle.

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<sup>161</sup> P. Preston, (2004). Stalemate and the termination of civil war. Rhodesia reassessed. *Journal of Peace Research*, 41(1), p. 68.

<sup>162</sup> I. E. Beckett, (1985). The Rhodesian army: counter-insurgency, 1972-1979. *Armed Forces & Modern Counter Insurgency*, p. 163.

<sup>163</sup> L.. Laakso, (2003). Opposition politics in independent Zimbabwe, p. 2.

<sup>164</sup> M. Sithole, & J. Makumbe, (1997). Elections in Zimbabwe: The ZANU (PF) hegemony and its incipient decline. *African Journal of Political Science/Revue Africaine de Science Politique*, p. 126.

The international community as represented by the UNSC and the OAU did not give legitimacy to the new creation either, but instead piled pressure on both Smith and Muzorewa, compelling them to accept the inclusion, in the all-party elections, of the fighting parties of the PF as a precondition for finality on the constitutional crisis in Rhodesia. The two organisations appealed for the annulment of the elections and that meant that sanctions would remain in force unless there was international recognition of the new government. The Boyd Report on the 1979 elections, which was biased in favour of the elections, attempted to justify the claim to legitimacy by the Smith-Muzorewa government by utilising statistics based on official Rhodesian figures which stood at 62% voter turnout.<sup>165</sup> Mick Delap, a member of the British Broadcasting Corporation (African Service), claimed that the reports were fictitious and that the election was neither free nor fair by any electoral standards used by western democracies because of violence and intimidation which left the Africans without any choice.<sup>166</sup> The sixty-two percent voter turnout could have been based on the urban voters' rolls that also disenfranchised potential voters because of property qualification and other requirements for eligibility as voters. The Conservative Government that took office in 1979 in Britain had sent a team of observers to witness these elections with a view to reaching a lasting solution to the Rhodesian crisis based on a majority decision of the people in the country.<sup>167</sup>

The Lusaka Talks organised by the British government and the Frontline States culminated in the Lusaka Agreement signed by the PF led jointly by Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo and Muzorewa representing Zimbabwe- Rhodesia in August 1979.<sup>168</sup> The Lusaka Agreement fully accepted not only Britain's constitutional responsibility to grant legal independence to Zimbabwe, but also that free and fair elections should be 'properly supervised' under British authority.<sup>169</sup> These talks were a precursor to the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979 in which all the warring parties in the Rhodesian conflict met to discuss the ongoing political and constitutional crisis. Lord Carrington brokered in two very powerful capacities: as British secretary of the Commonwealth leading the British delegation, and as advisor to the PF delegation of ZAPU and ZANU. The Smith-

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<sup>165</sup> R. Hodder-Williams, (1980). Political scenarios and their economic implications. *Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 18(1), p. 55.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> M. Gregory, (1980a). From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe. *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)*, 56(3), p. 406.

<sup>168</sup> M. Gregory, (1980b). Rhodesia: from Lusaka to Lancaster House. *The World Today*, 36(1), p. 14.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.



Muzorewa delegation represented the government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia that was constituted after the 1978 Internal Settlement, and that Ian Smith held with moderate African nationalist leaders such as Abel Muzorewa, Ndabaningi Sithole, Chief Jeremiah Chirau and Chief Ndiweni.

The historiography of violence in Zimbabwe began to be seriously documented when the ruling ZANU-PF unleashed a violent and conflictual nation-building campaign between 1982 and 1987 as part of its efforts to make politics the preserve of war participants on its side during the liberation struggle.<sup>170</sup> As Matikiti argues, provided an opportunity for ZANU-PF to destroy PF-ZAPU and establish a one-party state and that obscured the philosophy of multiparty democracy as effective opposition disappeared.<sup>171</sup> Ironically, and based on the preceding discussion, the perpetrators of violence then were once victims of the orgies of violence carried out by the Rhodesian army when they captured and killed guerrillas to discourage Africans from joining the war on the side of nationalists.

The government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia was founded on violence and lawlessness caused by the militia groups that each of the coalition parties had assembled in 1978.<sup>172</sup> Muzorewa had a militia force called 'Pfumo Revanhu' (Spear of the Nation), Ndabaningi Sithole had *Masikuzu Apo*, a derogatory term for an undisciplined army band, Chief Jeremiah Chirau had an auxiliary force and the coalition government had Operation Favour. These militias combined with Smith's army to become the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia army. The violence inherent in the army of the coalition of 1978, when drafted into the Zimbabwe National Army at independence together with the equally violent ZANLA and ZIPRA force, was refined to make it more effective. This background violence, from the perspective of the researcher, militated against free political activity and the state's appeal for reconciliation could very well have been anchored on an unstable political, linguistic, and ethnic terrain that produced unity at a superficial level.

The decisions reached at the Lancaster House Conference must serve as a reference point in any analysis of postcolonial crises in Zimbabwe because they were flawed in several respects. White

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<sup>170</sup> S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2006). The nativist revolution and development conundrums in Zimbabwe. *ACCORD Occasional Paper*, p. 64.

<sup>171</sup> R. Matikiti, (2008). The church and the struggle for multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe, p. 31. [http://www.zimbabweinstitute.org/File\\_Uploads/file/Role%20of%20the%20church%20book%20Projects.pdf](http://www.zimbabweinstitute.org/File_Uploads/file/Role%20of%20the%20church%20book%20Projects.pdf) Accessed 7 April 2017.

<sup>172</sup> L. Sachikonye, (2011). *When a state turns on its citizens*, p. 13.

settlers in Rhodesia were cushioned from the wrath of a vengeful African nationalist government that was likely to take over political power after the elections set for 1980. The PF delegation was negotiating from a position of weakness because several factors militated against it. Lancaster House was not a neutral venue and having been in socialist guerrilla combat and spending so many years in the bush, they possibly lacked negotiation skills and may have been forced into submission. Nkrumah's often quoted dictum: "Seek ye first the political kingdom and all else will be added unto you"<sup>173</sup> aptly explains the decision by the PF to surrender to conciliation at Lancaster immediately after signing the Lusaka Agreement. The PF's optimal strategy was to gain political independence first, to be followed by a more comprehensive and thorough liberation struggle when they held state power. That was the best option they could settle for under the prevailing and compelling environment characterised by diplomatic initiatives to bring finality to the Rhodesian constitutional crisis. President Samora Machel of Mozambique also exerted pressure on Mugabe's ZANU to agree to some settlement with the other political players at the Lancaster House talks because he claimed that Mozambique had borne the brunt of military attacks from the Smith regime in its pursuit of guerrillas, and that this situation could not continue indefinitely. Once in power, they could do as they pleased over time. To argue that the PF did not think they could defeat the government militarily at that stage would be to belittle the military successes that ZANLA guerrillas had scored throughout Manicaland and Mashonaland Provinces which sealed off these areas to Rhodesian forces before the Lancaster Conference.<sup>174</sup>

The Smith-Muzorewa delegation participated in the negotiations from a position of strength because they were representing a government. Muzorewa was still enjoying the euphoria of his electoral victory of 1979 under the Internal Settlement agreement that created Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. He was the Prime Minister representing his country and challenged the British government to find out why the PF insisted on fighting even when the country had long since attained majority rule under his stewardship. He argued that the conference should centre around considering lifting economic sanctions that he felt were inconsistent with the new dispensation, and that it should acknowledge his legitimacy as a democratically-elected Prime Minister of the

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<sup>173</sup> P. Nugent, (2009). Nkrumah and Rawlings: political lives in parallel? *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana* (12), p. 43.

<sup>174</sup> G. C. Mazarire, (2011). Discipline and punishment in ZANLA: 1964-1979, p. 587.

coalition government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia on the basis of the multiparty elections of 1979.<sup>175</sup> It was easy for Lord Carrington to threaten the PF delegation, but difficult for him to negotiate with a guerrilla delegation. Except for Nkomo and Mugabe who had gained considerable experience in the art of negotiation at the 1976 Geneva Talks, the rest of the PF delegation lacked these negotiation skills. It is significant to note that the proceedings of the three months' conference that lasted from September to November 1979 were in accordance with Lord Carrington's constitutional proposals which he successfully defended to secure white settler political and economic interests in a black-ruled Zimbabwe after 1980.

It can be argued that the Lancaster House Agreement victimised the PF into submission as Mugabe admitted that he was forced by Carrington's arm-twisting and Frontline States' pressure and that he would have preferred an outright military victory over the Rhodesian forces on the ground in order to dictate his terms without interference.<sup>176</sup> Based on the knock-out military strategy envisaged by the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) in Mozambique in the struggle against Portuguese imperialism, it was anticipated that ZANLA had the military capacity to induce surrender on the Rhodesian military force. Indeed, the greater parts of Mashonaland, which form the bulk of the country, had been declared semi-liberated or liberated zones by the time the Lancaster Conference convened in 1979. These areas were firmly under ZANLA control and were also no-go areas for the Rhodesian military.<sup>177</sup>

ZIPRA military operations were confined to Wankie and their campaigns proved disastrous<sup>178</sup> after failing to match the Rhodesian military might. Internationally, ZAPU was the only party recognised as truly revolutionary and its members such as Rex Nhongo and others got their military training in the Soviet Union in 1968.<sup>179</sup> The Wankie debacle, which saw the annihilation of ZIPRA forces in the late 1960s, led to Rex Nhongo's defection from ZAPU to ZANU.<sup>180</sup> It is very important to note that ZAPU, after the Wankie fiasco, realised the futility of escalating an armed struggle against a visibly invincible Rhodesian force. It was not equipped with guerilla tactics but

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<sup>175</sup> M Gregory, (1980a). *From Rhodesia to Zimbabwe*, p. 406.

<sup>176</sup> D. Compagnon, (2000). *Briefing Zimbabwe: Life after ZANU-PF*. *African Affairs*, 99, p. 450.

<sup>177</sup> Kriger, N. J. (2003b). *Guerrilla veterans in post-war Zimbabwe: Symbolic and violent politics, 1980–1987*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 105, p. 221.

<sup>178</sup> C. C. Chimhanda, (2003). *Zapu and the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe 1957-1980*. Faculty of Humanities, Historical Studies, University of Cape Town, Cape Town, p. 3.

<sup>179</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Directory Publishers, Bulawayo, p. 78.

<sup>180</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*, p. 78.

its cadres had mastered the art of conventional warfare, a situation that made it to husband Soviet-made military ware for future use against ZANU in 1979 in what was to be code-named ‘Operation Zero Hour.’<sup>181</sup> According to this plan, ZAPU was to wait for ZANU to defeat the Rhodesian army through guerilla warfare, because of its own inability to execute that kind of warfare, and then march to take over the country with a strong Soviet-backed conventional army.<sup>182</sup>

The following observations must be made at this stage. Electoral politics in Zimbabwe, inclusive of the majority population, can be said to have begun in 1979 when blacks for the first time were accorded the opportunity to vote for candidates of their choice in the internal settlement elections that brought about Zimbabwe-Rhodesia under Bishop Muzorewa. Even if the PF of ZAPU and ZANU lambasted the elections, at least the ordinary urban citizenry who participated exercised their democratic right to vote which had been denied them since colonisation in 1890. The Lancaster Conference resolved that ZAPU and ZANU would campaign as a single party under the banner of the Patriotic Front, but ZANU decided to dishonour the arrangement and proceeded to do so as ZANU-PF.

The most plausible reason for ZANU’s decision to flout the agreement was that it was clearly visible on the ground in the greater part of the country, and its freedom fighters, ZANLA, had scored many military successes using Maoist fighting tactics. ZANU had succeeded in making the struggle ‘a people’s war’ as the support it garnered throughout the country far outstripped that of ZAPU. ZANU-PF’s superior support base over all other parties, coupled with a massive guerilla recruitment drive, influenced the decision not to want to partner with ZAPU because it was confident of an electoral victory. The idea for separation, in defiance of the agreed position at Lancaster, signaled to ZAPU that ZANU-PF could not be trusted as it continued to exhibit its traits of the 1960s which made cooperation between the two parties to hang precariously in the balance. Nkomo’s party became known as PF-ZAPU. This development confirmed earlier fears played down by Nkomo in 1976 that the PF would degenerate into a marriage of inconvenience.

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<sup>181</sup> E. M. Sibanda, (2005). *The Zimbabwean African People's Union 1961-87: A political history of insurgency in Southern Rhodesia*. Africa World Press, Trenton, p. 197.

<sup>182</sup> CIA, (1983). Zimbabwe: the ZANU-ZAPU rivalry. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/.../CIA-RDP84S00552R000200030002-4.pdf> Accessed 9 February 2018.

The multiparty elections of 1980 quickly succeeded the 1979 Internal Settlement elections and PF-ZAPU and ZANU-PF undertook extensive campaigns before the election date. Other registered parties in the electoral contest included The National Democratic Union (NDU) under Chiota. United National Federal Party (UNFP) under Chief Ndiweni, Zimbabwe Democratic Party (ZDP) under James Chikerema, National Front of Zimbabwe (NFZ) under Mandaza and UANC under Muzorewa. PF-ZAPU was not permitted by ZANU-PF during the time to freely campaign in Mashonaland for the reason that it did not operate in the area during the liberation struggle.<sup>183</sup> The results of the 1980 general multiparty elections were as follows:

Table 2.2: Results of the 1980 general multiparty elections<sup>184</sup>

<b>Party</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Seats</b>		<b>Party</b>	<b>Leader</b>	<b>Seats</b>
ZANU-PF	Mugabe	57		ZANU	Sithole	0
PF-ZAPU	Nkomo	20		ZDP	Chikerema	0
UANC	Muzorewa	3		NFZ	Mandaza	0
				UNFP	Ndiweni	0

Elite cohesion within ZANU-PF came mechanically in a desperate bid to win the 1980 elections but cloaked the deep-seated ethnic and other latent philosophical considerations that had the potential to expose the inherent cleavages of its party leadership. ZANU-PF was also able to sustain its cohesion in the first few years after independence because of its deep distrust of the white political elite and African participants in the internal settlement of 1979.<sup>185</sup>

In terms of the British decolonisation tradition, Rhodesia had to be placed in the hands of Britain in order for it to facilitate a peaceful political transition from white minority rule to black majority rule and Lord Soames was sent as the last British Governor of the country to oversee the process. This move was an acknowledgement that Smith had erred in declaring white independence just at a time when African nationalists in neighbouring Zambia and Malawi had attained majority rule after the dissolution of the Central African Federation in 1963, thus plunging the whole country into a protracted 15-year war that could have been avoided. The United Nations (UN) also sent its

<sup>183</sup> M. Ndakaripa, (2014a). Ethnicity, narrative, and the 1980s violence in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces of Zimbabwe. <http://www.oralhistoryforum.ca/index.php/ohf/article/viewFile/546/624>, p. 26. Accessed 16 June 2018.

<sup>184</sup> N. Kriger, (2005). ZANU (PF) strategies in general elections, 1980–2000: Discourse and coercion. *African Affairs*, 104(414), p. 3.

<sup>185</sup> M. Sithole & J. Makumbe, (1997). Elections in Zimbabwe, p. 123.

troops to ensure that the electoral campaign would go smoothly and that there was no political intimidation across all contesting parties. The election was characterised by sporadic violence and mutual accusations of intimidation<sup>186</sup> reminiscent of the era of the 1960s. The Rhodesian crisis was internationalised, and it was fitting that observation and supervision of the 1980 elections would bestow international acclaim on the victor, such that the losers would not dispute the results of the elections. Another important consideration was that the original Westminster model, from which the Lancaster House Constitution was drawn, bestowed tremendous or concentrated power in the hands of the Prime Minister.<sup>187</sup>

From the foregoing, it can be seen that the 1980 elections ushered in a unity or coalition government that was predominantly ZANU-PF, although a few other members from PF-ZAPU and the Rhodesia Front were allocated posts in the new government. Many political parties were formed to contest the elections and that was indicative of the country's espousal of democratic practices and participation. It should be noted that it appears that only the PF parties and the UANC appeared to have been representing the aspirations of the African people, probably because of their liberation credentials, because all other parties failed to secure even a single seat. Another reading of it is that the masses voted strongly along ethnic lines, which did not bode well for the post-independence period. In terms of the Lancaster Agreement, the white minority community had twenty reserved seats that were not contested by the majority as a result of the determined effort by the British to preserve a special position for the minority white group in the new political dispensation.<sup>188</sup>

The political transition process from Zimbabwe-Rhodesia to Zimbabwe was essentially cosmetic. Comparatively, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia echoed the Internal Settlement coalition between Africans as represented by 'Zimbabwe' and whites as represented by 'Rhodesia' and the nexus was maintained and modified in the independent Zimbabwe. Reconciliation was, indeed, an acknowledgement of this reality in a new dispensation under black tutelage. The firm commitment by the PF delegation at Lancaster to the letter and spirit of the British constitutional proposals eased the political transfer

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<sup>186</sup> K. Smith & F. J. Nothling, (1993). *North of the Limpopo: Africa since 1800*, UNISA, Pretoria, p. 404.

<sup>187</sup> D. Compagnon, (2000). *Briefing Zimbabwe*, p.449.

<sup>188</sup> Her Majesty's Stationery Office, (1979). Southern Rhodesia constitutional conference held at Lancaster House, London September - December 1979 Report. [https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ZW\\_791221\\_LancasterHouseAgreement.pdf](https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/ZW_791221_LancasterHouseAgreement.pdf) Accessed 16 April 2017.

of power in Zimbabwe through the 1980 elections, without which independence might have been prolonged, and at great cost. The promise of white personal protection and guarantees of security of property also generated government trust both locally and internationally. Chances are that the whites may have objected to change if their privileged position was completely wiped away.

However, the Lancaster House Agreement that had made the PF concede to a multiparty political strategy had to contend with the political, ideological, ethnic and factional permutations now underpinning a new era of African majority rule. Under a system of proportional representation, all the parties that won seats in the 1980 elections combined to form a coalition government in the spirit of multiparty democracy. Proportional representation worked well for the UANC and the former Rhodesian whites because it guaranteed their participation in the new government. Whites were comfortable in the sense that their political and economic interests were protected.

Although Zimbabwe became a multiparty state after the 1980 elections, the tendency by ZANU-PF to emulate successful socialist revolutions in countries such as Cuba and Mozambique clashed head-on with political and economic realities on the ground. Implementing socialism or radically transforming an economy that had remained substantially capitalist would impact negatively on the transition process and raise white suspicion with the intentions of ZANU-PF. As Francois, Rainer and Trebbi<sup>189</sup> noted, in Africa, political power assumes a winner-takes-all from respect to wealth and resources, patronage, prestige and prerogative of office. This observation was soon to find expression and meaning in Zimbabwe's inter-party postcolonial historiography. The government had to grapple with the dilemma of balancing its populist strategies, for example, its promise to redistribute land equally and equitably to the landless blacks, against those of whites<sup>190</sup> who had chosen to remain in the country after Mugabe's pronouncement of a policy of reconciliation.

There was also need for the placement of divergent national and self-interests of the new ruling elite, in principle, guided by the socialist philosophy that ZANU-PF had espoused at the height of the armed struggle in 1977.<sup>191</sup> The Western capitalist countries expected Muzorewa to win the

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<sup>189</sup> P. Francois, I. Rainer & F. Trebbi, (2015). How is power shared in Africa? *Econometrica*, 83, p. 466.

<sup>190</sup> J. N. Moyo, (1992). State politics and social domination in Zimbabwe, p. 305.

<sup>191</sup> T. Meisenhelder, (1994). "The Decline of Socialism in Zimbabwe." *Social Justice*, 21(4 (58)), p. 84.

1980 elections and Mugabe’s election victory was the least expected outcome.<sup>192</sup> This was based on a complete misreading of the support ZANU-PF enjoyed in the bulk of the countryside where the peasant majority resided. Multiparty voting that gave birth to Zimbabwe-Rhodesia in 1979 did not involve the rural communities and this made the UANC a less credible party in the eyes of these rural people. Equally significant to consider was the reality that ZANU-PF had liberated the greater part of the country before the Lancaster House negotiations took place.

The 1980 elections smacked of ethnic voting. Lord Soames noted that Nkomo unavailingly tried to cast himself as a national leader but tribalism proved too strong for him.<sup>193</sup> Rich highlights the salience of ethnicity during the 1980 elections when he articulates the sentiments echoed by Stanlake Samkange, who was then a ZDP candidate, that the elections were a clear reflection of tribalism and there was no other way of interpreting the election results.<sup>194</sup> He further posited that the Mashonaland people would never have Nkomo and the Matabeleland people would never have a Shona. This ethnic component needs to be problematised in the context of postcolonial Zimbabwean political history. Reference should be made to the patterns of National Assembly and Presidential voting over the years as indicated below.

Table 2.3: Presidential Elections in Zimbabwe: 1990-2002<sup>195</sup>

<b>Year</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Number of votes</b>	<b>Votes (% of total)</b>
<b>1990</b>	Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF)	Robert Mugabe	2 026 976	83.0
	Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM)	Edgar Tekere	413 840	17.0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>2 440 816</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>1996</b>	ZANU-PF	Robert Mugabe	1 404 501	92.8
	United Parties	Abel Muzorewa	72 600	4.8
	Zimbabwe African National Union - ZANU (Ndonga)	Ndabaningi Sithole	36 960	2.4
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1 514 061</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>192</sup> K. Smith & F. J. Nothling, (1993). *North of the Limpopo*, p. 404.

<sup>193</sup> *The Chronicle*, (1980), “Bases: No change likely, says Soames”, 7 July 1980, Accessed 27 March 2017.

<sup>194</sup> M. Ndakaripa, (2014a). Ethnicity, narrative, and the 1980s violence in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces of Zimbabwe, p. 26.

<sup>195</sup> K. Matlosa, (2000). Election monitoring and observation in Zimbabwe, p. 141.



<b>2002</b>	ZANU-PF	Robert Mugabe	1 685 212	56.2
	ZANU-Ndonga	Wilson Kumbula	31 368	1.0
	Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)	Morgan Tsvangirai	1 258 401	42.0
	Independent member of Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU)	Paul Siwela	11 871	0.4
	National Alliance for Good Governance (NAGG)	Shakespeare Maya	11 906	0.4
		<b>Total</b>		<b>2 998 758</b>

### 2.2.1 The 1980 unity government: Challenges to the sustenance of the Lancaster Constitution

The negotiations that took place for three months from September 1979 are known variously as the Lancaster House Constitution, Lancaster House Agreement and Lancaster House Negotiations. The naming of the historic event posed problems in the identification of the driving force behind it. The nationalist PF parties that were waging the liberation struggle wanted an end to minority rule initially, from ZANU-PF standpoint, by outright military victory though they found it insurmountable. The question of land restitution was a key mass-mobilising grievance that earned the revolutionary parties substantial support during the war. Yet the land issue was tangentially discussed and resolved based on the 'willing-seller willing-buyer' principle as foundation for reconciliation, suggesting that the agreement was historically specific in terms of the period the arrangement could be altered. An agreement requires goodwill on the part of the parties to it and it can easily be dishonoured and broken. That in a way explains why the British preferred the word 'Constitution' to 'Agreement.' Calling the 'Agreement' a Constitution gave the entrenched proposals, in British eyes, greater respectability and inviolability. The negotiations at Lancaster, it could be argued, were skewed in favour of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, and the PF delegation could give their views based only on Lord Carrington's list of constitutional proposals. At the time though, the PF delegation appeared to have no alternative to push for a harder bargain.

Having said that, for a constitution to have a human face, it must be the product of popular participation when the people make decisions and create binding value systems because they will have designed them. A constitution that predictably shapes and determines the destiny of a given society. The 1979 deliberations at Lancaster involved politicians, guerrillas and strategists who connived to undertake a reductionist approach to the Rhodesian crisis, making it a constitutional

as opposed to a political crisis. Constitutions throughout the world take on board the collective desires and value systems of the people for posterity without being historically specific in terms of their life span. Constitution making, in effect, should not be a hegemonic agenda but a shared enterprise. It can be argued that even if the Lancaster Constitution imposed liberal ideals on the country, it was not a people's project. The researcher argues that the Agreement reached at Lancaster did not warrant being called a constitution. The explanation for this argument is that it was historically specific in terms of how and when the new black government under the Patriotic Front could proceed to amend certain provisions that were unfavourable to it. Clauses on property rights and the entrenchment of white settler privilege presented a lot of problems because they were given timeframe within which they could be amended. The use of the word 'constitution' was meant to give the settlement some legality and to bind the black government to it. Constitution-making is a process that should be free of political manipulation and be predicated on disinterestedness as well as representativeness as criteria for constitutional supremacy. The Lancaster Agreement was not conducted in good spirit, with the British threatening the PF delegation that the negotiations would proceed and be finalised without them should they pull out due the unresolved land issue.<sup>196</sup> There was no viable alternative and Mugabe and Nkomo leading the PF delegation seemed to have accepted the concession of a constitution with a view to changing things once in power.

The Lancaster House Constitution provided for a Prime Minister (PM) wielding executive powers and a President with ceremonial powers. Mugabe, the PM, was in favour of a one-party state upon assuming power in 1980 on the premise that his party had liberated the country because the majority of Africans supported it but was constrained to declare it by the Lancaster Agreement which entrenched a liberal democratic framework around multipartyism.<sup>197</sup> The unity government retained the inherited capitalist economic, political and security institutions and this made the political transition peaceful. Land redistribution, which had been the rallying point during the

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<sup>196</sup> Constitutional Conference. (1979, September-December). *Paper presented at the Lancaster House, London.*

<sup>197</sup> T. Skålnes, (1993). The state, interest groups and structural adjustment in Zimbabwe. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 29, p. 400.

liberation struggle, remained on the drawing board because government had to honour property rights as enshrined in the Lancaster House Constitution.<sup>198</sup>

It must be noted that Smith's regime had strong state control of the economy to counteract UN sanctions, and this was more akin to the socialist policy of the ruling party government of controlling the means of production on behalf of the historically marginalised black people. Characteristically, the inherited economy was robust, dualistic and primarily designed to serve the minority white segment.<sup>199</sup> Above all, the major proponents of a socialist transformation of the inherited economy had to reckon with the incompatibility of socialism co-existing with capitalism when no radical changes had been made to the economy that remained substantially capitalist. It was for this reason that the socialist transformation had to be compromised, leaving whites in control of a functioning capitalist agrarian economy.<sup>200</sup> It can therefore be argued that the reconciliation policy that Mugabe announced had its origins in the Lancaster Agreement, which clearly safeguarded white privilege by reserving 20 parliamentary seats for them. Reconciliation is defined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, as:

... a process of addressing the legacy of the past violence ... rebuilding the broken relationships... addressing the pain and suffering of the victim...bringing back estranged communities... to find a path to justice, truth and peace... is a process that redesigns our relationships so that a society can move from a divided past to a shared future.<sup>201</sup>

Mandaza describes reconciliation as “the mourn of the weak”, even when pronounced from positions of apparent moral and political superiority over exploiters and oppressors of yesterday.<sup>202</sup> The basis of Mandaza's argument was that the government embraced reconciliation as a policy towards nation-building because it did not have the capacity to go it alone but required the support services of the whites in the early stages of independence. The new black elite in the echelons of

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<sup>198</sup> B. M. Mupfuvi, (2014). *Land to the people: Peasants and nationalism in the development of land ownership structure in Zimbabwe from pre-colonialism to the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) period*. University of Salford, Greater Manchester, p. 221.

<sup>199</sup> Z. Muranda, (2015). *Annals of social and behavioural sciences*. Chinhoyi University of Technology, Chinhoyi, p. 66.

<sup>200</sup> M-F. B. Bonarjee, (2013). *3 decades of land reform in Zimbabwe: Perspectives of social justice & poverty alleviation*. Bergen Resource Centre for International Development, Bergen, p. 4.

<sup>201</sup> D. Bloomfield, T. Barnes, T. & L Huyse, (2003). Reconciliation after violent conflict. International IDEA, Stockholm p. 7.

<sup>202</sup> I. Mandaza, (1999). Reconciliation and social justice in Southern Africa: the Zimbabwe experience. In M. W. Malegapuru (Ed.), *African Renaissance: The New Struggle*. Mafube Publishing, Cape Town, p. 79.

power realised that maintaining the existing status quo of production relations would be exceptionally beneficial to them in terms of property and wealth accumulation so they could build on it or modify it in a gradual way.<sup>203</sup> Chisi argues that the liberation solidarity of ZANU-PF members is a manifestation of a tired nationalism to the whole agenda of liberation, it being a solidarity built around the primitive accumulation of wealth.<sup>204</sup> Put in another way, it was reconciliation with capital, and the avowed rhetorical commitment to socialism succumbed to the predatory aspirations of capital. Reconciliation entailed the government's acceptance of existing production relations to ensure continuity of production structures.<sup>205</sup> Continued white control of the economy also meant that most of the Africans would not accumulate capital because they were economically marginalised. Chung summarised the drawbacks resulting from reconciliation as follows:

... the retention of settler security institutions meant that the values, systems and processes that the government embodied, including uncritical obedience to authority, use of torture and violence such that the word 'interrogation' meant the use of brute force, lack of respect for human rights including extra-judicial killings, remained an integral part of the inheritance... colonial laws were now laws of the country ... the Rhodesian CIO led by Ken Flower was responsible for capturing, torturing and killing freedom fighters ... were ready to teach the tricks of the trade to the newcomers.<sup>206</sup>

The policy of reconciliation provided for the retention of white skills and gave Zimbabwe international recognition as a sovereign state. Mugabe had to moderate his image from a tough-talking guerilla fighter to a leader amenable to the politics of compromise and national unity.<sup>207</sup> This dissertation contends that the reconciliation policy benefited the few elites in power and the white settler community much to the disillusionment of the majority black population. One of the key issues was that the nationalist bourgeoisie who dominated the national liberation movements

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<sup>203</sup> J. N. Moyo, (1992). State politics and social domination in Zimbabwe, p. 315.

<sup>204</sup> Interview with Chisi.

<sup>205</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (1992). Beyond the house of hunger, p. 64.

<sup>206</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Directory Publishers, Bulawayo, p. 128.

<sup>207</sup> J. N. Moyo, (1992). State politics and social domination in Zimbabwe. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30(02), p. 315.

of ZAPU and ZANU was created by colonialism and so they were not to be trusted with the task of creating anything different from the colonial state that produced them.<sup>208</sup>

The elite foundations of ZANU, whose founder members were educated and schooled in European traditions and culture, championed the adoption of reconciliation regardless of whether it was a viable socioeconomic and political proposition or not. As Moyo argued, the threats of South Africa's destabilisation manoeuvres, fear of a coup plot by white Rhodesians in the military, police force and security organs, together with the challenges of integrating ZANLA and ZIPRA into the Rhodesian army fostered social conditions that required social domination in order for the governing party to secure legitimacy without sacrificing security and stability.<sup>209</sup> This laid the basis for ZANU-PF's fears which inevitably made open politics after independence in 1980 impossible. All these conditions worked at cross-purposes with the spirit of reconciliation which could only exist in principle and in the fulfilment of elite self-interest. It was generally meant to give the elite leverage to the economy in an extractive manner without necessarily addressing the legacies of the past. The antagonistic relations between blacks and whites as a result of many years of colonial oppression were assumed to have been forgotten with the sheer pronouncement of the policy and so remained a ticking time-bomb because the spirit and commitment to it were lacking from both sides. It was difficult to wish away the pains and suffering inflicted on the revolutionaries in one quick brush. Therefore, failure to address core issues such as negotiating about the violence perpetrated by both sides during the colonial era, bringing the perpetrators to book, and charting a path towards sustainable peace through truth and justice, meant that reconciliation was very fragile.

The policy of reconciliation, as far as it related to political rivals of ZANU-PF, particularly ZAPU and UANC that lost in the 1980 elections, was narrowly understood in terms of its practicality as a programme for former Rhodesian whites and ZANU-PF. It was like indicating left and turning right in terms of policy inconsistencies regarding ZANU-PF's former African opponents as evidenced by events in Matabeleland from 1982 to 1987, when PF-ZAPU struggled not only to remain politically relevant, but also to weather the storm against ZANU-PF's campaigns to ostracise it by military means. The integration of the various armies into a single Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) gave ZANU-PF numerical military advantage over other entities. The army

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<sup>208</sup> S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2006). *The nativist revolution and development conundrums in Zimbabwe*, p. 17.

<sup>209</sup> J. N. Moyo, (1992). *State politics and social domination in Zimbabwe*, p. 315.

became an indispensable cog that was instrumental in disciplining ‘dissidents’. ZANLA made up 60%, ZIPRA 35%, and RF 5% of the force.<sup>210</sup> It is alleged that between 1982 and 1987, about 20 000 PF-ZAPU supporters were killed in the Gukurahundi campaign on the orders of ZANU-PF<sup>211</sup> in its violent nation-building process and as part of its attempts to consolidate its power by eliminating rivals.

Operation Gukurahundi targeted community leaders, chiefs, teachers, nurses and ZIPRA combatants for elimination for supporting dissidents, and civilians were rounded up and compelled to sing songs in Shona [which was not their language but that of the majority ruling group] that glorified ZANU-PF while others were beaten for resisting.<sup>212</sup> Coltart regrets the government’s ill-fated decision at a rally in Lupane in 1983 to sanction the burning down of all villages infested with “dissidents”<sup>213</sup> leading to the deliberate shooting of 62 young men and women near Cewale River and the burning alive of villagers in Tsholotsho.<sup>214</sup>

The Emergency Powers Amendment Act (1986) transplanted from the colonial Emergency Powers Act (1960) in regard to preventive detention was decisively applied to deal with dissidents in Matabeleland to maintain law and order, thus ensuring that total dominance in the absence of political opposition would be achieved.<sup>215</sup> When a huge arms cache was discovered in 1982 at a farm allegedly owned by ZAPU, and when in the same year there were reports of fierce skirmishes in the Entumbane and Chitungwiza high-density suburbs of Bulawayo and Chitungwiza respectively between ZIPRA and ZANLA former fighters in camps, a crackdown on former ZIPRA commanders such as Lookout Masuku, Dumiso Dabengwa, Nicholas Nkomo, Tshaka Moyo, Masala Sibanda and Misheck Velaphi was launched, giving closure to coalition politics as Joseph Msika, Jim Ntini and Joshua Nkomo were expelled from the Cabinet.<sup>216</sup> That was

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<sup>210</sup> N. Kriger, (2003). Guerrilla veterans in post-war Zimbabwe: Symbolic and violent politics, 1980-1987, p. 131.

<sup>211</sup> Movement for Democratic Change, (2013). *Policy discussion papers*, p. 199.

<sup>212</sup> Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (1997). *Breaking the silence, building true peace: Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and Midlands, 1980-1988*. CCJPZ, Harare, p. 9.

<sup>213</sup> H. Cameron, (2017). *The Matabeleland massacres: Britain's wilful blindness*.

[www.davidcoltart.com/2017/04/matabeleland-massacres-britains-wilful-blindness/](http://www.davidcoltart.com/2017/04/matabeleland-massacres-britains-wilful-blindness/) Accessed 25 September 2017.

<sup>214</sup> M. Ndakaripa, (2014a). *Ethnicity, narrative, and the 1980s violence*, p. 31.

<sup>215</sup> J. Alexander, J. McGregor, & T. O. Ranger, (2000). *Violence and memory: One hundred years in the ‘dark forests’ of Matabeleland, Zimbabwe*. Heinemann, Portsmouth, p. 185

<sup>216</sup> M. Ndakaripa, (2014a). *Ethnicity, narrative, and the 1980s violence*, p. 29.

particularly so when ZAPU meetings were banned and when its offices were raided using the Emergency Powers.

Powers such as the above were extended to obliterate ZAPU electorally in the 1985 elections when, despite having won fifteen parliamentary seats, no ZAPU appointments to positions in government were made.<sup>217</sup> The violence of the Fifth Brigade in Matabeleland during the operation coerced ZAPU into signing the Unity Accord, 'a surrender document' as one analyst described it, on 22 December 1987.<sup>218</sup>

The formation of the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) by Edgar Tekere in 1988 must therefore, be construed in the context of an anti-one-party state struggle when ZAPU had ceased to exist as a party, and when there was no longer any threat to a one-party political strategy that ZANU-PF envisioned for Zimbabwe. In comparing multiparty with single party systems, Akinrinade argues that the choice for a one-party strategy hinges on the imperatives of political, economic and social development and that African states could not afford the divisive trends inherent in opposition and confrontational politics.<sup>219</sup> It is further argued that there is too much importance attached to multiparty elections without analysing the character of the postcolonial state itself because competing groups have historically been known not to have substantial policy alternatives.<sup>220</sup> Visible on the African continent are multiparty elections that give voters voting rights without any real options to choose since ethnic and primordial loyalties predominate, rather than a true exercise in democratic preferment.<sup>221</sup> Ironically, multiparty elections in Africa have become battlefields for political control of states, making democracy from the point of view of liberal thought, difficult to operationalise.

In line with the concept of multiparty elections and political openness, ZANU-PF did not transform itself into a democratic party upon entering the corridors of power: the guerillas had still not taken off their uniforms nor had they laid down their guns, because of the party's adherence to socialist

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<sup>217</sup> R. Matikiti, (2008). The church and the struggle for multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe, p. 25.

<sup>218</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2008a). Nation building in Zimbabwe and the challenges of Ndebele particularism. *African Journal on Conflict Resolution*, 8(3), p. 48.

<sup>219</sup> S. Akinrinade, (2000). Single or multi-party system: What option for Africa? *Africa Economic Analysis* n.p. [www.afbis.com/analysis/party.htm](http://www.afbis.com/analysis/party.htm) Accessed 13 June 2017.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

organisational structures such as the Politburo and Central Committee.<sup>222</sup> The party organs made executive decisions for the state as is the case with governments modeled on socialist lines. The government would rubberstamp party resolutions uncritically because the party structures were supreme. For example, during the Murambatsvina period in 2005, and in line with the Compulsory Purchase Powers under the new Land Acquisition Act of 1993, the government confiscated Ndabaningi Sithole's Porta farm that the veteran nationalist had used to provide housing to desperate tenants from the Caledonia areas on the eastern fringes of Harare<sup>223</sup>. The acquisition of the farm led to his self-imposed exile in the USA on allegations that he solicited arms to overthrow the government.<sup>224</sup> His persistent demonisation of Muzorewa as a traitor discredited him politically and eroded his urban power base that had already shrunk to a very low ebb.

The other dimension of the policy of reconciliation was the interpretive framework within which it was originally designed to fit. The ZCBC, Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe and the ZCC analysed reconciliation from a different perspective. They affirmed the biblical ethic in which those people who acquired wealth through cheating or exploitation of fellow human beings were required to return that wealth with interest.<sup>225</sup> The churches made appeals to the former colonial masters, including those who enjoyed privileges under the unjust economic system of white rule, to pay reparations to those they had exploited as a strong basis for creating a new society in the process towards genuine reconciliation.<sup>226</sup>

The role of reparations and mediation to give finality to all land disputes in the reconciliation equation as proposed by the churches was not considered important, at least in the short term. Upon its declaration, the policy had political implications which were taken to mean that fighting enemies would become friends again and co-exist in the spirit of forgiveness. Its economic and social implications were not explored as the new African elite sought political power at the expense

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<sup>222</sup> J. Makumbe, (2003). ZANU-PF: A party in transition? In R. Cornwell (Ed.). *Zimbabwe's Turmoil: Problems and Prospects*, Institute for Security Studies, Pretoria, p. 20.

<sup>223</sup> A. K. Tibaijuka, (2005). *Report of the fact-finding mission to Zimbabwe to assess the scope and impact of Operation Murambatsvina by the UN special envoy on human settlements issues in Zimbabwe*, p. 34  
[http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/zimbabwe/zimbabwe\\_rpt.pdf](http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/zimbabwe/zimbabwe_rpt.pdf) Accessed 18 June 2017.

<sup>224</sup> L. Laakso, (2003). *Opposition politics in independent Zimbabwe*, p. 5.

<sup>225</sup> The Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference, The Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe, The Zimbabwe Council of Churches, (2006). *The Zimbabwe we want: Towards a national vision for Zimbabwe by the churches of Zimbabwe, A discussion document*, p. 40. [http://archive.kubatana.net/docs/relig/zim\\_churches\\_national\\_zim\\_vision\\_060918.pdf](http://archive.kubatana.net/docs/relig/zim_churches_national_zim_vision_060918.pdf) Accessed 3 May 2017.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.



of all else. As events in the first decade of independence were to show, ZANU-PF, far from seeking to reconcile with other black parties, engineered or fronted rifts with the result that serious tensions emerged which made it difficult to achieve reconciliation. The glaring fact was that reconciliation was imposed on the ZANU-PF led government by the Lancaster House Agreement and was initially the result of compromise because the armed conflict had not produced an outright winner. White sceptics of the reconciliation policy, and of the subsequent amnesty, left the country, resulting in the decline of the white population. Within the same decade, the relations between the ZANU-led government and the white community became polarised. In both these cases, tensions oscillated between racial, ethnic, factional and class struggles, which only galvanised the regime's resolve to safeguard the hard-won independence by consolidating power.

The challenge with regard to the policy of reconciliation was that of convincing Sithole, Muzorewa and Nkomo, all of whom likely felt from experience gained through their encounters and factional and ideological struggles with Mugabe, that the pronouncement of reconciliation could not be taken for granted. The history of the nation was given a ZANU-PF rendition that was so narrowly defined, obliterating the autobiographies of other contemporary nationalists and, indeed, Edgar Tekere's disinterested narration of ZANU-PF in *A lifetime of struggle* (2004) and Joshua Nkomo's *The story of my life* (2001) that could provide alternative histories<sup>227</sup> worth celebrating. It was after independence that truth suffered at the hands of the ZANU-PF regime when it started to create its own history which was driven by a singular identity-based thinking and influenced by political interests.<sup>228</sup> Tarusarira also argues that history ought to be open for revision and plurality in order to become a firm base for socioeconomic reconciliation, and that, if it is used as an instrument to serve the interests of one side of the past conflict, post-conflict healing and reconciliation becomes more difficult.<sup>229</sup>

Presenting his independence speech in 2000 when the Third Chimurenga had just begun, and when the white community had become part of the rank and file of the opposition MDC, President Mugabe overtly stated: "Our present state of mind is that you [white commercial farmers] are now

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<sup>227</sup> J. Gonye, T. Moyo & J. Hlongwana, (2017). A revolutionary character, A dispensable rebel? Edgar Tekere's political point-scoring autobiography of a Zimbabwean Nationalist Movement. *Journal for Studies in Humanities & Social Sciences*, 6(1), p. 134.

<sup>228</sup> Tarusarira, J. (2016). *Reconciliation and religio-political non-conformism in Zimbabwe*. Routledge, Taylor and Francis, London, p. 620.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 611.

our enemies because you really behave as enemies of Zimbabwe.”<sup>230</sup> This is an indication that the land issue had reached a tipping point especially when the government used the race card to justify a spate of land acquisitions that targeted white owned farms. The political economy of land redistribution sounded the death knell for the policy of reconciliation.

From the economic point of view of the nationalist government, the rich resources that lured the colonial invaders into the country-rich soils for agriculture in the Highveld and an assortment of mineral deposits scattered throughout the country, could not be allowed to remain in the hands of a few whites as originally envisaged at Lancaster. From a political perspective, land was stolen from the ancestors to begin with, and therefore Africans did not consent to the ownership rights that were still the basis for the commercial farmers’ claim to the land.<sup>231</sup> The philosophy known as Mugabeism was developed in 2000 to show the paradigm change in government policy towards whites. The central concept – ‘Mugabeism’ – is therefore clearly a difficult one, as Mlambo convincingly explains: the difficulty in defining Mugabeism could be the result of scholars looking for a nonexistent ideological coherence in what may, in fact, be historically shaped and emotionally driven actions of a generation of nationalists that lived through a traumatic colonial period whose pain and scars they seek to assuage by hitting back at everything they regard as the source of their previous suffering. He contests that Mugabeism appears to be ‘merely a continuation of African nationalism of the 1950s and 1960s and the economic nationalist ideology that accompanied it.’<sup>232</sup> These white settlers in 1980 were embraced as citizens theoretically equal to Africans in terms of economic, political and human rights through the policy of reconciliation, but became ‘others’ as aliens and enemies of the state under the Third Chimurenga discourse of economic liberation.<sup>233</sup> The land issue contained within it the seeds of political, economic and racial conflict.

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<sup>230</sup> A. S. Mlambo, (2010). This is our land: The racialisation of land in the context of the current Zimbabwe crisis. *Journal of Developing Societies*, 26(1), p. 44.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>232</sup> D. J. Gareth, 2017. The meaning(s) of Mugabe(ism). *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 43, p. 840.

<sup>233</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2009). Making sense of Mugabeism in local and global politics, *Third World Quarterly*, 30, p. 1146.

## 2.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter highlighted the fact that reconciliation as a national policy calculated to steer the country in the desired economic and political direction of ZANU-PF was problematic if consideration is given to the circumstances that gave rise to it. The Lancaster House Agreement, which was looked upon negatively by the Patriotic Front except for the political promises of majority rule pending elections based on universal adult suffrage, was conservative in the main in that it upheld the existing racial, ethnic, cultural, economic, class and political status quo. The white constituency stood to benefit most from the compromise agreement. Political rivalries within the African nationalist parties themselves resurfaced as early as 1982 because the new government selectively applied the policy of reconciliation. The reconciliation framework excluded perennial rival parties PF-ZAPU and UANC, which became the principal objects of state terror and political marginalisation. These developments set the tone for an unhealthy political precedent in the practice of democracy, as a culture of fear rendered meaningful opposition dangerous. ZANU-PF's exclusion of PF-ZAPU and UANC from the national reconciliation process is reminiscent of its own exclusion from the Internal Settlement process. ZANU-PF was caught up in the web of historical precedents previously used against it and which it ironically began to use against others to its own advantage.

## **CHAPTER THREE: URBAN POLITICS AND THE QUEST FOR REGIME CHANGE (1980-2015)**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on the development of politics among urbanised Africans in Zimbabwe from the time of political independence in 1980 to around 2015 when the state machinery increasingly monitored the new thrust of political activism in urban areas. In the 1979 Internal Settlement deal with locally-based moderate African leaders such as Jeremiah Chirau, Chief Ndiweni and Ndabaningi Sithole, among others, Bishop Abel Muzorewa became PM as a result of the swing in urban votes in his favour. The Smith-Muzorewa partnership formed a coalition government and the country was known as Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. Mere inclusion of the name Rhodesia gave credence to the role that the white community still had in the country in terms of its politics and economics.

Although the Smith-Muzorewa government was internationally not recognised because liberation movements such as ZANU and ZAPU did not participate, at least Africans were given a taste of democratic practice for the first time in choosing a leader of their choice in a multiparty arrangement. What made the Internal Settlement government illegitimate both for the majority of Africans within the country as well as internationally, was the way the elections themselves were conducted. Rural communities did not participate in these elections. It was difficult to mobilise peasants for the elections because rural areas in Mashonaland and Matabeleland were controlled by ZANLA and ZIPRA forces respectively and were impenetrable. The greater part of Mashonaland was semi-liberated by ZANLA forces and in such areas, no party other than ZANU was known or supported [PF was included later].

Throughout its military campaigns in the countryside, ZANU-PF used a mixture of patronage and coercion for its peasant support and this was rooted in the violent mobilisation techniques used during the armed struggle.<sup>234</sup> The ZANU-PF elite that assumed power after the election victory of 1980 did not trust residents in urban areas because of their participation in the 1979 'sell-out' Internal Settlement, and for putting Muzorewa, a moderate, at the helm of political power. The

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<sup>234</sup> D. Compagnon, (2011). *A predictable tragedy: Robert Mugabe and the collapse of Zimbabwe*, cited in K. Law, 2014. Plundering the Past: History and Nation in Mugabe's Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 40, p. 52.

role of the urban government in terms of their participation in national matters to do with their welfare, how the two forces engaged each other, and how in particular, urban grievances as articulated by the workers' trade unions became both political and explosive as to attract international attention, are key concerns of this chapter.

Zimbabwe inherited a relatively enlightened urban workforce that had benefited substantially in terms of their social and economic orientation to the capitalist ethos. Such benefits accrued during the federation era when the industrial hub was Salisbury, the capital of Southern Rhodesia. The question of their exploitation as a labour force under a capitalist system was popularised during the armed liberation struggle. It might not have made any real sense to remind urban workers of their exploitation under the prevailing conditions because they were relatively better off than workers in neighbouring countries such as Zambia and Malawi. Southern Rhodesia emerged from the Federation as the most industrialised, having the most diversified economy of the partners.<sup>235</sup> Nyasaland supplied cheap labour to Southern Rhodesia to work on farms and in mines, and Northern Rhodesia contributed its copper export earnings that were invested in federal projects which largely benefited Southern Rhodesia.<sup>236</sup> Historically, the federation enterprise from 1953 to 1963, though short-lived, left Southern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, more advanced economically, industrially and in terms of infrastructure than its sister federation states of Zambia and Malawi. All development initiatives were focused on Salisbury, which was the federal capital. The facilities in urban areas were modeled on those of Britain to the extent that Salisbury was nicknamed 'Bamba Zonke' ('Grab all').<sup>237</sup> Many people in urban areas did not overtly support the struggle for liberation for fear of losing their menial jobs, and because of a very strong settler propaganda machinery put in place by the Smith regime that portrayed guerillas negatively as Marxists bent on destroying the "good" things that the white government had achieved for Africans.<sup>238</sup> The urban environs provided fertile ground for opposition politics after independence and people were ready to rally behind ZUM and MDC when they emerged in 1988 and 1999 respectively to challenge the ruling establishment.

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<sup>235</sup> B. Raftopoulos and A. Mlambo, (2009). *Becoming Zimbabwe: A history from the pre-colonial period to 2008*. Weaver Press, Harare, p. 91.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> D. H. Davies, (1984). Development: urban change in Zimbabwe. *Africa Insight*, 14(3), p. 166.

<sup>238</sup> D. Lowry, (2007). The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian political culture, ca. 1920s-1980. *Cold War History*, 7(2), p. 183.

### 3.2 ORIGINS OF WORKER-GOVERNMENT CONFLICT

Political activism by African workers in Zimbabwe started during the colonial era. When Africans and whites met in a colonial relationship induced by capitalism, they formed trade unions during the 1940s. The Federation of Bulawayo African Workers Union (BFAWU) was formed by Jasper Savanhu, the African Workers Voice Association (AWVA) by Benjamin Burombo, and the Reformed Industrial and Commercial Workers Union by Charles Mzingeli.<sup>239</sup> The three trade unions successfully organised the 1948 general strike which was a pioneer workers' protest against colonial rule and its corollary exploitation.<sup>240</sup> They also pioneered the rise of African nationalism through mass political formations. The City Youth League led by James Chikerema, George Nyandoro, Edson Sithole and Duduza Chisiza, among others, was formed in Salisbury in 1955. This was followed by the formation of the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress in 1957, which became the first mass nationalist political party to be formed by Africans in Rhodesia. There exists a thread in opposition politics in the country which reveals continuities rather than change. Strong and viable political challenge to a party in power in both precolonial and postcolonial periods originated from workers' organisations which subsequently transformed themselves into formidable opposition parties.

The liberation war in Zimbabwe culminated in an elite-driven constitution, as outlined in the previous chapter. The Patriotic Front agreed to a constitution that in all intents and purposes was tailor made for a new bourgeoisie class that was bent on changing the ruling class without necessarily changing the regime because they too aspired to be economically powerful in their individual capacities. Chung refers to them as 'black Europeans of today' ("Varungu vanhasi").<sup>241</sup> Therefore, at the inception of political independence, Zimbabwean society had different sets of value systems and the new elite clung to the white Rhodesian capitalist one despite its declaration of a socialist transformation of the economy. Simply put, the elite that assumed government responsibilities was suspended in mid-air in that there was little public participation in policy formulation. ZANU abandoned its pre-independence revolutionary promises of fundamental structural change (while retaining the rhetoric) in favour of a pragmatic accommodation of the

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<sup>239</sup> S. Huni, (2015). Trade unionism and the struggle. <http://www.sundaynews.co.zw/trade-unionism-and-the-struggle/> Accessed 21 June 2018.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Directory Publishers, Bulawayo, p. 165.

capitalist sector, at the same time implementing a welfarist social policy and boosting the peasant economy with subsidies and infrastructural development.<sup>242</sup> ZANU(PF)'s accommodation of the former beneficiaries of colonialism was rooted in the geo-political realities of the time with encouragement from the presidents of the 'Frontline States' which had suffered a wholesale flight of capital and skills after decolonisation.<sup>243</sup> These considerations, coupled with the need to consolidate political power, led to a strategic alliance with white capital that preserved and promoted privilege, setting the stage for an elite co-option process and more ominously, preserving racist politics to be played out much later.<sup>244</sup> The 1987 Constitutional Amendment on the Lancaster Constitution threatened the existence of whites in the country when their political safeguard of 20 seats was removed. That destroyed the racial relations that had precariously existed for seven years and a racialised struggle ensued thereafter.

The 1980 elections were conducted on the understanding that the white constituency would not contest the elections in the same constituencies with other black political parties. Whites would get all 20 urban seats. White Rhodesians did not need to carry out election campaigns in the urban areas because they knew that the Lancaster House Agreement preserved white political and economic privilege, and that whatever the outcome of the multiparty general elections of 1980, their wealth, industries, land, and political power would remain in their hands.

The socialist ideology of the ruling ZANU-PF party determined national policy after independence.<sup>245</sup> Ideology is a basket term for comprehensive visions of societies and social developments which contain explanations, values and goals for past, present, and future developments.<sup>246</sup> In support of this socialist thrust by government, the then president of Zimbabwe, Canaan Banana, argued that the Kingdom of God could only be realised in socialism.<sup>247</sup> It was argued that people in Africa had no more need of being converted to socialism than they had of being taught democracy, both of which were rooted in African traditional life.<sup>248</sup> Mboya, in

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<sup>242</sup> M. Dawson, & T. Kilsall, (2012). Anti-developmental patrimonialism in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 30(1), p. 51.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). 'In the beginning was the land': the appropriation of religious themes in political discourses in Zimbabwe. *Africa*, 75(02), p. 220.

<sup>246</sup> T. Tawengwa, (5 March 2017). The politics of coalitions in Zimbabwe, *The Sunday Mail*.

<sup>247</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). 'In the beginning was the land', p. 221.

<sup>248</sup> G. P. Mpangala, (2004). *Origins of political conflicts and peace-building in the Great Lakes Region*. Institute of Development Studies, University of Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam, p. 12.

supporting such a perspective, also argued that socialism was an attitude of mind towards people practised in African societies and did not have to be codified into a scientific theory in order to find existence.<sup>249</sup>

The socialist philosophy was chosen during the course of the armed struggle<sup>250</sup> and it was antithetical, in principle only as it later turned out to be, to the capitalist system in operation in Rhodesia at that time. The adoption of a socialist approach in addressing the economic discrepancies that existed in the country because of colonial rule should have meant that the means of production such as land, mines, and industries would be redistributed to the historically disadvantaged black people. The implementation of socialism was problematic in the sense that ownership and control of the economy of the country could not be transferred to African peoples in terms of the agreement reached. Ownership was thus not substantially altered after independence. In addition, the policy and strategies by successive white minority governments to block African people from gaining industrial experience and training meant that they were not in a position to take control of industries<sup>251</sup>. Thus, the government found itself in a dilemma and was half-hearted in its commitment to socialism. And 20 years into independence, the land had not been adequately redistributed with 4 500 white farmers still owning 70% of the prime land.<sup>252</sup>

A clause in the Lancaster Agreement specified that in the first ten years of independence, European land could only be acquired through a 'willing-seller-willing-buyer basis' and government would pay market value compensation in foreign currency for any land that it acquired.<sup>253</sup> The land reform programme in the first decade of independence had to take this proviso into account. On the one hand, the government was obliged to fulfil its liberation promises to the people who supported it during the war years by re-distributing land equitably between blacks and whites. On the other, there were no land, industries and mines to distribute to Africans because they still remained under the control of the whites in terms of the property clause in the Lancaster Agreement that blocked

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<sup>249</sup> C. J. Napier (2003). *Political economy of Africa*, University of South Africa, Pretoria, p. 341.

<sup>250</sup> J. Hanlon, (1984). *Mozambique: The revolution under fire*. Zed Books, London

<sup>251</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Directory Publishers, Bulawayo, p. 132.

<sup>252</sup> T. Shoko, (2006). *"My bones shall rise again": War veterans, spirits and land reform in Zimbabwe*: Leiden: African Studies Centre, p. 2.

<sup>253</sup> P. Mufune, (2010). Land reform management in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe: A comparative perspective. *International Journal of Rural Management*, 6(1), p. 4.



the confiscation of property, condemning such a practice as defying norm of civilised existence and therefore unconstitutional.

The colonial laws remained in full operation and were used to constrain the urban workforce. For example, the Industrial Conciliation Act (ICA), which prevented the formation of African-led trade unions,<sup>254</sup> was replaced after independence by the Labour Relations Act in 1985 that also tightened control of ZCTU labour activities. Some of the colonial laws had been effected in order to deal with the rise of black trade unions that had become used to engaging in anti-colonial struggles.<sup>255</sup> From this development, it can be argued that the ZANU-PF government inherited very weak black labour unions for which reason it became the prerogative of the government to help in the formation of a single federation, the ZCTU, to which other private unions would affiliate<sup>256</sup> According to Dansereau,<sup>257</sup> the state's response to labour between 1980 and 1981 was to support the establishment of ZCTU in 1981 under the slogan 'One country, one federation'. To ensure that ZCTU was fully compliant with party policies, Robert Mugabe's brother, Albert Mugabe, was proclaimed the first Secretary-General. Therefore, ZCTU depended on the state in its formative years, and according to Dansereau, it had to reckon with the authority of the ZANU-PF government to get permission to pursue union activities.

It is imperative that some historiographical reflections be made on the development of labour militancy in Zimbabwe. The earliest post-independence strikes in most urban areas were wildcat in nature in the sense that unions by then did not have the power to challenge decisions made by ZANU-PF because they were subordinated to the state and so had no basis to organise workers against government policies. Their demands were essentially labour-related. In the 1990s, the policy shift by government from the professed socialism to ESAP betrayed the urban workers who were still held in high esteem, epitomised in the address to the nation by the then PM, Robert Mugabe on 17 April 1980 that "...we are socialist. Basic wages and working conditions of black

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<sup>254</sup> B. Raftopoulos & L. Sachikonye, (2001). *Striking back: ...*, p. 263.

<sup>255</sup> Webster, E. 2007. Trade unions and political parties in Africa: New alliances, strategies and partnerships. *Trade Unions and Politics: Africa in a Comparative Context, Briefing paper 3*. Stockholm: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

<sup>256</sup> P. Alexander, (2000). Zimbabwean workers, the MDC & the 2000 election, *Review of African Political Economy*, 27(85), p. 406.

<sup>257</sup> S. Dansereau (2003) cited in Muusha, R. (2011). *How and why trade unions engage in politics in Southern Africa: The case of Zambia and Zimbabwe*. University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, p. 177.

and white must be based on an equal footing”.<sup>258</sup> During these early times, labour was not systematically organised and workers’ capacity to collectively bargain for improved working conditions was so circumscribed by the state. Increased labour militancy in urban areas as from 1991 with the introduction of ESAP led to more strike action by workers, as reflected in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Number of labour strikes in urban areas, Zimbabwe, 1991-1997<sup>259</sup>

YEAR	Number of strikes
1991	9
1992	9
1993	17
1994	35
1995	33
1996	27
1997	54

The above table clearly shows the increase in the number of labour strikes from 1991 to 1997. It was estimated that by 1995, close to 100 000 formal sector jobs would have been lost through ESAP.<sup>260</sup> The government responded by reverting to colonial laws that prohibited organised strike action against ESAP and applied force where it saw fit to deal with urban militancy. The ZCTU President, Gibson Sibanda, in his May Day speech in 1991 entitled ‘Liberalisation or liberation’ confronted the government and stated that economic change that was built on disorganising and silencing the voice of labour was neither sustainable nor stable.<sup>261</sup> It was feared that the implementation of the economic recovery programme would result in 100 000 workers losing their jobs through retrenchment.<sup>262</sup> The increase in strikes around 1997 can be explained in terms of the organisational capacity of the ZCTU on the eve of its becoming a fully-fledged political party by taking advantage of the economic discontentment of urban workers.

<sup>258</sup> R. Saunders, (2007). Trade union struggles for autonomy and democracy in Zimbabwe. In Kraus, J. (Ed.) *Trade Unions and the Coming of Democracy in Africa*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, p. 161-2.

<sup>259</sup> Zimbabwe Institute of Public Administration and Management (ZIPAM) cited in B. Raftopoulos and L. Sachikonye (2001). "Striking Back: The Labour Movement and the Post-colonial State in Zimbabwe 1980-2000, p. 145.

<sup>260</sup> B. Raftopoulos and L. Sachikonye, (2001). *Striking Back...*, p. 143.

<sup>261</sup> P. Yeros, (2013). The rise and fall of trade unionism in Zimbabwe, Part I: 1990–1995. *Review of African Political Economy*, 40(136), p. 222.

<sup>262</sup> B. Raftopoulos, and L. Sachikonye, (2001). *Striking back ...*, p 143.

Table 3.2: Growth of trade union membership<sup>263</sup>

Union Name	1990	1999	Percentage growth
ZPTWU	7 600	10 500	25
CWUZ	3 000	20 000	600+
ZBAWU	1 200	3 800	300

Table 3.3: Decline of trade union membership in the 1990s<sup>264</sup>

Sector	1990	1999
Textile industry	21 000	10 000
Clothing industry	32 000	22 000
National Railways of Zimbabwe	17 000	8 000
Domestic Service	100 000	70 000

As pointed out, the change in economic fortunes for urban workers in the early 1990s was a corollary of the government U-turn from socialism to quasi-liberal policies that smacked of capitalism. This later spread into worker struggles for democracy in the case of the MMD in Zambia and the MDC in Zimbabwe both of which started as black labour organisations. In Zimbabwe, the formation of the MDC was a direct outcome of ZCTU as labour demands increasingly became more political and politicised, and as government chose a confrontational approach in dealing with organised labour. These movements reflected a multi-class basis as evidenced by the groups that coalesced to form a broad front of urban workers and other affiliated institutions. One of the challenges that may confront a movement is the lack of a clear ideological standpoint because of the different and oftentimes irreconcilable political and economic interests of the affiliate organisations and individuals. In the case of the MDC, the background of subservience to ZANU-PF as ZCTU initially, until later when its new leadership became more confrontational and political, affected its operations substantially as it was now seen as the “enemy” by the ruling party.

As alluded to in the previous chapter, the policy pronouncements of reconciliation, reform and gradualism that were declared by the then PM Mugabe, further cushioned the whites politically and economically. Conditions for a socialist take-off were absent. These policies encapsulated a very gradual transition process under the theme ‘Growth with equity’. Reconciliation per se not

<sup>263</sup> B. Raftopoulos and L. Sachikonye, (2001). *Striking back...*p. 95.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

only referred to racial harmony but was also an acceptance that the economy was to remain in the hands of private capital.<sup>265</sup> Major policy shifts in the new government were constantly under check from the whites who could block their implementation especially where a two-thirds majority was inconceivably required for such policy to take effect. Regardless of these policy initiatives and the proclamation of amnesty, the white population dropped significantly.

The white constituency that was in full control of urban areas exhibited colonial trends of African political and economic exclusion and inferiorisation. In Harare and Bulawayo, for example, the new Africa majority government had to grapple with workers' demands for better living conditions and living wages. These were the same people who had earlier voted for Muzorewa in the Internal Settlement elections of 1979. These urban constituencies were relatively enlightened and educated as most of them possessed qualifications that allowed them to vote in 1979. In any case, they benefited from Muzorewa's 1979 election campaigns in the form of houses with title deeds. It was possible for urban dwellers to compare and evaluate the progress of the new government against the gains they obtained under the short-lived Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. Of keen interest to note was the lack of commitment to the economic advancement of urban workers by the new ZANU-PF government. Priority was given to the rural populace that had apparently demonstrated its loyalty to the party by overwhelmingly voting for it in the 1980 multiparty elections. The socialist rhetoric of ZANU-PF during the armed struggle required that attention be given to the rural population for the support they gave to the struggle for independence.

National policies were tailor-made to immediately satisfy these rural communities that had spearheaded the struggle for political independence. ZANU-PF had to accordingly transform itself from being a broad liberation front into a political party with a socialist ideology and programme to help in the socialisation of the means of production.<sup>266</sup> One of the challenges that confronted the government was the failure by the ZANU-PF party government to transform itself into a political party. The peasants largely supported its revolutionary war and so the ruling party could not associate itself with the working class which it had accused of collaborating with the whites and undermining the revolution for a long time. Socialising the means of production, therefore, remained not only rhetorical, but also a political gimmick because the government could not

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<sup>265</sup> T. Meisenhelder, (1994a). Capital, state, socialism: Lessons of Zimbabwe.

<https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/atc/4616.html>. Accessed 16 October 2017.

<sup>266</sup> T. Meisenhelder, (1994b). The decline of socialism in Zimbabwe. *Social Justice*, 21, p. 84.

distribute industries, mines, and factories which it did not own. That, on the part of government, was a clear case of ideological ambivalence where it called for socialism, yet, at the same time, it reassured private white capital that its vital economic and political interests would be promoted and protected.<sup>267</sup>

The social conditions for a socialist take-off after independence were absent, and the guerrilla mentality among the ruling elite was to be abandoned to pave way for the politics of reconciliation and compromise whose precedent had been set up at the Lancaster Conference. The dilemma of the government ought to be understood from the perspective that it had no alternative plan to substitute socialism upon the realisation that it was realistically untenable. In any case, the regime of Ian Smith, indeed, had characteristics of a socialist state as, due to UNSC sanctions, the economy had turned inward and had become relatively self-sufficient.

For its international acclaim and legitimacy, the government chose to respect the provisions of the Lancaster Constitution by allowing white Rhodesians to stay inside the country as part of nation-building. A new command economy, right from independence in 1980, came into existence whereby all planning was centralised and decisions cascaded from top to bottom much to the detriment of the black working class in urban areas. The Civil Society in the New Millennium of Zimbabwe, in a report by the Commonwealth Foundation,<sup>268</sup> summarised the following problems as having been inherited from the use of violence during the liberation struggle: a top-down decision-making structure; an unquestioning acceptance of commands from above; suspension of moral conscience; impunity by high office bearers and the belief that they are above the law and not punishable; and the use of distorted information, language and lies to cover up problems and plain truths.

A completely different scenario prevailed in the urban areas from that which the urban workers had expected. The government under ZANU-PF stewardship did not trust them but rather accused them of having participated in the 1979 elections that ushered in the Smith-Muzorewa government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia which did not have the support of the people because it was essentially

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<sup>267</sup> G. White, (1984). Developmental states and socialist industrialisation in the third world. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 21, p. 67.

<sup>268</sup> Commonwealth Foundation, (2000). *Democratic governance in Zimbabwean citizen power*. Commonwealth Foundation, London p. 6.

white-controlled. The colonial system that had exposed African urban workers to exploitation remained intact as only cosmetic changes were made.<sup>269</sup> Chung proceeds to argue that colonial institutions that were retained guaranteed a peaceful political transition in the country, but the drawbacks were also apparent:

[The retention] of the settler security institutions meant that many of the values, systems, and processes that they embodied, including uncritical obedience to authority, use of torture and violence such that the word ‘interrogation’ meant the use of brute force, lack of respect for human rights including extra-judicial killings, remained an integral part of that inheritance.<sup>270</sup>

The government also accused urban people of having betrayed them by not playing a part in the liberation struggle that was taking place in the countryside. Some of them had either chosen to remain in urban environs or migrated into urban areas because of the war. Most of the urban dwellers were viewed as siding with the discredited Muzorewa government. At the same time, whites in urban areas treated the urban Africans no differently than their treatment at the hands of whites during the colonial and white minority government era. This created a dilemma for urban people who were in an invidious position and had nowhere to fall back to for support of their interests as workers given the fact that the ZCTU in its formative stage was controlled by a partisan leadership.

The announcement of a National Minimum Wage Bill in 1980 prevented collective job action by the workers, yet, in most cases, wages were set far below existing wage levels.<sup>271</sup> Following the strike by transport workers in Harare in 1980, Kumbirai Kangai, the Labour Minister, threatened to whip all striking workers if the strike action continued.<sup>272</sup> In response to the strike, Prime Minister-elect, Robert Mugabe intimated that democracy is never mob rule, and that the independence obtained must not be construed as an instrument that vested individuals and groups

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<sup>269</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Bulawayo: Directory Publishers, p. 128.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> B. Raftopoulos, and L. Sachikonye, (2001). *Striking back ...*, p. 137.

<sup>272</sup> A. E. Sibanda, (1991). *Workers' Participation, Collective Bargaining and Tripartism in Formulation of Employment Policies in Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe*, Zimbabwe Institute of Development Studies, An Introduction to Comparative Labour Relations, Discussion Paper Series, No, 8, p. 22.

with the right to harass and intimidate others into action against their will.<sup>273</sup> From this discussion, it can be noted that workers' organisations were not strong enough to push for workers' rights and to articulate their grievances. The colonial administration had never permitted the establishment or recognition of organised workers' unions. The only avenue open to them were trade unions that had been formalised to at least reduce, not remove, employer-employee tensions over working conditions. These trade unions became outlets for the articulation of workers' grievances in towns and cities. They also became institutions through which to vent their increasing frustrations with the government by means of a series of strikes that were not sanctioned by the government.

As shown by the passing of the Leadership Code in 1984, some critics have argued that the African elite that formed the government misconstrued reconciliation to mean reconciliation with capital,<sup>274</sup> and that it was compensation time for them for the years spent or wasted in the bush fighting colonial injustices. The elite, therefore, stood to benefit more economically by establishing clandestine connections with whites in business for self-enrichment than supporting black trade unionism that would result in their own agendas being frustrated. The dilemma of the workers in the first decade of independence found expression in the continued antagonistic social relations of production given the fact that industries were still white-controlled and owned, implying that the whites had not lost ownership despite black political independence. Workers had expected the government to support them against whites who were still in full control of the country's principal means of production such as industries and mines, but such support was superficial as the government was mindful of the Lancaster Agreement which partially tied its hands. Workers were perhaps sacrificed on the altar of racial reconciliation.

In a remarkable paradox, white industry had more government protection in the first seven years of independence up to 1987 than they had had under the Rhodesian United Nations Security Council (UNSC) sanctions since 1965. The exploitative nature of capital continued under the new dispensation and that explains the decision by the small trade unions in the broader ZCTU of 1981 to replace the founding Secretary, Albert Mugabe (1981-1985), with Anselm Chitewe (1985-1986)

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<sup>273</sup> J. Smith, (2014). Mugabe's legacy of poverty and despair, *Zimbabwe Independent*, 25 April 2014. <https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2014/04/25/mugabes-legacy-poverty-despair/> Accessed 19 March 2017.

<sup>274</sup> J. N. Moyo, (1992). State politics and social domination in Zimbabwe, 305-330.

whom Morgan Tsvangirai (1988-2000) replaced.<sup>275</sup> a more forward-looking and courageous trade unionist as its Secretary-General. The ZCTU became quite relevant against the background of the neglect of workers by both government and the white employers. However, the founding of the MDC as a political mouthpiece driven by the concerns and grievances of workers and other people in opposition to government policies was a welcome development, but it weakened trade union militancy as experienced under Tsvangirai. Isdore Zindoga (2000-2001) and Wellington Chibebe (2001-2011) were Secretary Generals after Tsvangirai, but their leadership coincided with the harsh realities of intimidation politics following the government defeat in the 2000 referendum, its precarious dominance in the National Assembly when for the first time an opposition party (in this case MDC) garnered 57 seats, and when government was facing a legitimacy crisis for the first time since gaining power in 1980.

The Law and Order Maintenance Act (LOMA) that was ruthlessly applied on African urban workers during the heydays of colonialism in the country with an objective view to preventing the organisation of black labour, was transplanted into the new dispensation of the revolutionary elite leadership. It became a notorious piece of legislation after independence as the ZCTU challenged its legality in a country that professed to be democratic. Six trade unionists were detained following a 1992 demonstration against the adoption of ESAP.<sup>276</sup> ZCTU's attacks on LOMA were based on the fact that ESAP exposed the workers to economic exploitation, loss of job security due to retrenchments and the apparent irrelevance of its significance in a liberalised economy. John Nkomo, who by 1992 was the Minister of Labour, categorised the ZCTU as a political party and threatened to deal with it in the manner government had always dealt with opposition parties in the country.<sup>277</sup>

Parties such as PF-ZAPU under Joshua Nkomo, ZANU Ndonga under Ndabaningi Sithole, UANC under Bishop Abel Muzorewa, and the ZUM under Edgar Tekere had all been silenced by 1992 to the point of extinction due to the politics of intimidation, violence and fear that ZANU-PF used

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<sup>275</sup> A. Andersson, (2003). Mugabe: power, plunder, and the struggle for Zimbabwe. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 41, p. 500.

<sup>276</sup> L. Sachikonye, (1996). The nation-state project and conflict in Zimbabwe. In L. Laakso and A. Olokoshi (Eds.). *Challenges to Nation-State in Africa*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, p. 18.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.



during the armed struggle.<sup>278</sup> Although the struggle supposedly ended with the cease-fire agreement of 1979, the violent support mobilisation campaigns that ZANU and ZANLA used, and the militaristic dimension of their canvassing for support, were applied in their future confrontations with old and new political parties seeking to electorally challenge ZANU-PF's hegemony. Urban spaces were transformed into confrontation zones for government and labour, and labour and employer. Workers' problems, which included their conditions of service, accommodation shortages, job insecurity because of ESAP, failure of tripartite negotiation between government, labour and industry, prohibitions on labour strike action and general economic malaise, prompted the quest by workers for change at political level. Appeals for change of the national constitution were made and a broad-based coalition of 96 organisations from churches, cooperatives, trade unions, citizens' groups, human rights organisations and students formally launched the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) in 1998.<sup>279</sup> Students who were to make a political impact later such as Tawanda Mutasa, Brian Kogoro and Deprose Muchena saw the NCA as a first step to strong opposition and the electoral defeat of ZANU-PF.<sup>280</sup>

Lebas,<sup>281</sup> as introduction to her work, and with reference to the situation in Zimbabwe around 1998, intimated that "in a police state, you don't need a party that is democratic: you need a party that is an army". This implies that the citizenry would be expected to accept orders from above and not reason, question or seek justification for any government misdemeanor, where fear reigns over logic, where the state remains in a permanent state of undeclared emergency. It is not surprising that the formation of the NCA was a welcome development to many sections of society affected by the brutality unleashed by the government in quelling urban labour demonstrations during that period. The constitution required serious amendments or had to be drafted anew to take cognisance of the interests of all stakeholders affected directly or indirectly by the liberation constitution which they now regarded as restrictive and flawed.

The multiparty election of 1980 was based on the Proportional Representation (PR) system which meant that every contesting party was assured of representation in parliament and other state

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<sup>278</sup> J. Alexander & J. McGregor, (2013). Introduction: Politics, Patronage and Violence in Zimbabwe, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39:4, 749-763. p. 762.

<sup>279</sup> A. Lebas, (2006). Polarisation as craft: party formation and state violence in Zimbabwe. *Comparative Politics*, 38(4), p. 425.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., p. 419.

organs relative to the overall number of votes garnered in all constituencies. The party with the highest number of seats, ZANU-PF, progressively undertook to make Zimbabwe a *de facto* one-party state.

The one-party state project was believed to achieve national unity, and that would jeopardise PF-ZAPU that had won most seats in Matabeleland in 1980 and 1985.<sup>282</sup> The working class in urban areas, supported by students from the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) and other institutions of higher learning, overtly opposed the move. In this regard, they were supported by Edgar Tekere, a ZANU-PF renegade who had been expelled from the party in 1988 for opposing the drive towards a one-party state as undemocratic and a protective shield for corrupt elements within the political leadership.<sup>283</sup>

After his expulsion, Tekere formed the ZUM which garnered a very large following from the dispirited urban populations throughout the country's cities and towns. One of the strategies the ruling party used to make it possible for them to move step-by-step towards a single party strategy was the co-option of ZAPU into ZANU(PF) in the Unity Accord of 1987. This deal removed the PF-ZAPU threat that seemed to be the only one to ZANU-PF dominance at that time. The Forum Party formed by a former Chief Justice, Enock Dumbutshena, also had urban support. Meredith describes a state advertisement on television in 1989 in which the shattering of glass in a car accident was followed by a voice: 'This is one way to die. Another is to vote ZUM. Don't commit suicide. Vote ZANU-PF and live.'<sup>284</sup> Another advertisement showed a coffin being lowered into a grave followed by the warning: 'AIDS kills. So does ZUM. Vote ZANU-PF'.<sup>285</sup> In both cases, the electorate was urged to vote wisely for ZANU-PF and live or commit suicide by voting for ZUM. However, pressure against the adoption of one-party strategy mounted against ZANU-PF and the project was abandoned. The overall effect of all these developments was to heighten areas of conflict between urban workers and the ruling party. Populist strategies that stood to benefit the

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<sup>282</sup> L. M. Sachikonye, (1989). The debate on democracy in contemporary Zimbabwe, *Review of African Political Economy*, 16(45-46), p. 117.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

<sup>284</sup> M. Meredith (2002) cited in E. Chitando, (2005). 'In the beginning was the land': the appropriation of religious themes in political discourses in Zimbabwe. *Africa*, 75, p. 222.

<sup>285</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). 'In the beginning was the land', p. 222.

rural peasantry and cushion them from the economic vicissitudes could not be shelved but remained high on the priority list.

The confusion between democracy and populism ought to be clarified. A party seeks to gain popularity by crafting policies that have majority support regardless of their economic worth. The policies are implemented even when the economy will not benefit. This populist strategy to garner political support involves the selective distribution of gifts to known potential voters so that other people are lured. This practice seems to afflict every political party in Zimbabwe. Multipartyism on the other hand, is one of the most visible expressions of the presence of democracy in a country although the juridical existence of many political parties might not necessarily lead to freedom, but reflect, in quasi-authoritarian states, the outward trappings of the respect for the rule of law and human rights. So, emphasis on democracy involves the institutionalisation of majoritarianism and political equality as the foundation of decision-making.<sup>286</sup> Tambila also argues that colonialism was not a school in democracy, but in authoritarianism and therefore, colonial administrations throughout Africa bequeathed such practices to emerging postcolonial states which are expected to comply with democratic traditions as conceptualised by the rich western countries.

Rwodzi and Mubonderi have contributed to this debate on democracy and pose the question: Do poverty-stricken African countries need the kind of political democracy that comes in prescriptive exotic packages?<sup>287</sup> In the same vein, the Global Development Research Centre (2000) cited in Kamete (2003) posits that pre-independence Zimbabwe was judged to have been very undemocratic and therefore badly governed.<sup>288</sup> Zimbabwe, using the analogy above, has ever been a *de jure* multiparty state as evidenced later, by the passing of the Political Parties Finance Act in 1994 which stipulated that a party with fifteen or more seats in parliament would be entitled to receive public funding for its operations.<sup>289</sup> An Act such as this one was indicative of the presence

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<sup>286</sup> K. I. Tambila, (1995). The transition to multiparty democracy in Tanzania: some history and missed opportunities. *Verfassung und Recht in Übersee/Law and Politics in Africa, Asia and Latin America*, p. 477.

<sup>287</sup> A. Rwodzi & B. Mubonderi, (2015). State nations and the fate of western democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa: Prospects and challenges. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, 3, p. 222.

<sup>288</sup> The Global Development Research Centre (2000) cited in A. Kamete, (2003). In defence of national sovereignty? Urban governance and democracy in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 21(2), p. 193.

<sup>289</sup> Commonwealth Foundation Report, (2000). Democratic governance in Zimbabwean Citizen Power: Civil society in the new millennium, p. 15.

of different political voices represented by multiple political organisations that could be permitted to register as political parties and compete in elections freely.

Towards the end of the first decade after independence, signs of economic decline were beginning to show and this hit the working class the hardest. The country had little foreign currency to go around resulting in company closures and lay-offs. The closure of Cone Textiles, which was one of the two largest textile producers in Southern Africa, resulted in about 6 000 job losses in late 1994.<sup>290</sup> A new historical phase of women assertiveness to cope with economic challenges when the breadwinners were no longer formally employed began. Migrating to neighbouring countries such as South Africa, Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia was key to the survival strategies that both men and women adopted involuntarily. In this study, a sample of four companies was considered sufficiently representative to reveal the broader projections of lay-offs that took place throughout the urban centres of the country during the ESAP era as shown below.

Table 3.4: Selected company closures in 1996<sup>291</sup>

<b>Company</b>	<b>Number of workers</b>
G and D Shoes	2 000
Bulawayo Clothing	1 200
W S Craster Engineering	950
Fashion Industry Holding	2 000

The government adopt neo-liberal economic reforms proffered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) in 1991. Things came to a head in 1992 with the passing of the Land Acquisition Act that allowed for the compulsory acquisition of white land for redistribution to the landless peasants. There is need to establish the nexus between the Land Acquisition Act and ESAP to determine whether they were dependent or independent variables because the government implemented them simultaneously. ESAP created new societies of hopeless people, with streets in urban areas full of retrenched beggars and homeless job-seekers when industries were closing down. This urban trend grew in intensity as workers got more organised and affiliated

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<sup>290</sup> P. Carmody, (1998). Neoclassical practice and the collapse of industry in Zimbabwe: the cases of textiles, clothing, and footwear. *Economic Geography*, 74(4), p. 324.

<sup>291</sup> *The Herald*, (1996) *Collapse of clothing and textile industry imminent*. 27 March 1996.

to trade union bodies in different towns and cities, resulting in increased strikes for better wages and security of work among other grievances from 1991 up to 1997.

The government shelved the 1991 Land Acquisition Bill on land repossession which was set to be passed into law after the expiry of the Lancaster Constitution, particularly the clause on property rights that could be amended after ten years, ostensibly because it had to address economic fundamentals that were vital to the sustenance of the state and its citizens. ESAP was introduced in 1992 because of a persistent budget deficit of 10% of GDP; 20% of the GDP was being channeled into government debt; lack of employment creation in the formal sector; and strict foreign exchange rationing.<sup>292</sup> In a way, the land issue was postponed, but not abandoned. The political and economic mayhem led to food shortages in urban areas especially as more people were retrenched or went for months without pay.

The results of the 1995 National Assembly elections show that overall, ZANU-PF support had sharply declined. There were 1 126 822 votes cast for it in 1995 compared to 1 690 071 in 1990 although the number of its seats remained at 117 out of a total 120 seats. This indicates that there was urban voter apathy in 1995 resulting from the disintegration of ZUM that drew its political support from urban areas as well as from Manicaland, the home province of Edgar Tekere. In the 1996 Presidential elections, ZANU-PF received 1 404 501 votes for President Mugabe, which translated to 92.8 percent of the total votes cast.<sup>293</sup>

After the 1995 elections with a very low voter turnout, the government realised that there was growing resentment to its rule as evidenced by a series of strikes that rocked urban centres from 1996 leading to the mass stayaway of 1999 that almost paralysed the state. The mass stayaway was organised by the ZCTU in league with the NCA in all major cities of the country. Economic grievances were politicised to a point where the labour body felt that its working force that continued to sink into poverty required a political platform to articulate their plight as workers. The plight of workers required a political body that could wrest power from the ruling party. Against this background, the National People's Convention that had in 1998 convened to form the NCA converted itself into a fully-fledged political party known as the MDC in 1999. Rather than

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<sup>292</sup> T. Skålnes, (1993). The state, interest groups and structural adjustment in Zimbabwe, p. 408.

<sup>293</sup> This statistic is misleading because it is based on the number of people who actually voted, leaving out the number of registered voters who did not vote.

dealing precisely with the challenges confronting the urban poor, the government decided instead to deal with them politically, particularly when it emerged that MDC was a broad movement of disparate interest parties that differed in everything but were only united in a regime overthrow agenda.<sup>294</sup>

Zimbabwe's unnecessary military involvement in the war in the DRC in 1987, the award of unbudgeted gratuities to war veterans in 1997, the land reforms, and Operation Murambatsvina<sup>295</sup> all negatively impacted on the national fiscus and created an inflationary environment<sup>296</sup> that proved difficult to mend. The operation spread to more than 52 sites throughout the country and no area designated as 'urban' was spared.<sup>297</sup> Rupiya also gave an estimate of 700 000 people as having been left homeless and when the number of dependents was added, the figure rose to 2,4 million people who were adversely affected,<sup>298</sup> so worrying from the point of view of the victims of the operation was the reality of an informal economy being the mainstay of the economy.

The informal economy in the country was estimated to constitute 59.4% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), the highest in Africa.<sup>299</sup> Operation Murambatsvina indeed helped to inflate the figures of the unemployed, most of whom, under the prevailing social and economic conditions, then went to their rural homes. If, on the other hand, the estimate figures presented by the Combined Residents Association are anything to go by, the operation affected over 55 000 households in the 52 sites, and that translated to between 250 000 to 500 000 people who were rendered homeless.<sup>300</sup> The deterioration of the economy was not clearly and easily visible in the first decade of independence. The successful provision of services to the majority in rural areas was principally due to favourable international ratings of the government's programmes and a

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<sup>294</sup> B. Raftopoulos and L. M. Sachikonye, (2001). *Striking back ...*, p. 258.

<sup>295</sup> This was a government clean-up campaign to rid urban areas of criminal practices resulting from overcrowding and the illegal construction of unplanned settlements and bring sanity to city life.

<sup>296</sup> OECD, (2003). *Zimbabwe*. <https://www.oecd.org/countries/zimbabwe/2497679.pdf>, p. 355. Accessed 12 August 2017.

<sup>297</sup> M. Rupiya, (2005). Zimbabwe: governance through military operations. *African Security Studies*, 14(3), p.118.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> A. Mlambo, (2008). Historical antecedents to operation Murambatsvina. *The hidden dimensions of Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe*, p. 15.

<sup>300</sup> F. Musoni, (2010). Operation Murambatsvina and the politics of street vendors in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 36, p.308.

steady flow of donor assistance<sup>301</sup> from international sympathisers after the arduous liberation struggle.

The MDC was not clear on its ideology. The diversity of its stakeholders and its strong multiracial component prevented any ideological consensus. Tawengwa<sup>302</sup> rightly argues that a political party without a clear ideology has difficulties in gaining momentum with the people because that ideology is the consciousness that maintains the party's membership. He further argues that opposition party formations in Zimbabwe lack a clear set of principles and are ideologically bankrupt which explains how deeply divided they become during national elections and this has often given ZANU-PF plebiscitary power.

The multiracial nature of the MDC at its inception, and the lack of ideological clarity enabled Mugabe to link it with the regime change agenda. Chung argues that the MDC was ambivalent about the need for land resettlement and continued to make vague statements that belittled the land issue in Zimbabwe.<sup>303</sup> The term 'regime change' first appeared when the USA president Ronald Reagan used this expression in a speech encouraging the American CIA to topple Colonel Muammar Gaddafi and the Libyan government.<sup>304</sup> Bill Clinton and George Bush are said to have used the expression as well to justify the USA's repeated attacks on Saddam Hussein of Iraq after 1992. Mtizira defines regime change as the successful attempt to force a leader or government out of their position of power either by political, economic, or military pressure.<sup>305</sup> Why the government under ZANU-PF tutelage survived amidst both internal and external pressure cannot be adequately explained purely in terms of its ability to suppress and restrict the opposition's organisational capacity in the urban areas, but largely in terms of the sufficient numbers of people who supported it.<sup>306</sup> It is argued that while "Mugabe may be bad, and it may be sad, but he is certainly not mad".<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> L. M. Sachikonye, (1989). *The debate on democracy in contemporary Zimbabwe*, p. 122.

<sup>302</sup> T. Tawengwa, (2017). The politics of coalitions in Zimbabwe, *The Sunday Mail*. 5 March 2017.

<sup>303</sup> Interview with Chung.

<sup>304</sup> N. M. Nondo, (2017). Getting to grips with regime change. *The Sunday Mail*, 5 March 2017

<https://www.pressreader.com/zimbabwe/the-sunday-mail-zimbabwe/20170305/281642484961779> Accessed 16 July 2017.

<sup>305</sup> N. N. Mtizira, (2017). Getting to grips with regime change, *The Sunday Mail*. [www.sundaymail.co.zw/getting-to-grips-with-regime-change](http://www.sundaymail.co.zw/getting-to-grips-with-regime-change)

<sup>306</sup> S. Chan, (2003). Mugabe: Right and wrong, *African Affairs* 102 (407), p. 347.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

### **3.2 GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES: SILENCING GROWING URBAN OPPOSITION AND MOBILISING ELECTORAL SUPPORT**

In the first decade after independence, the urban workforce adopted a wait-and-see approach to government's initiatives that related to them as workers. They were more reformist than radical in their dealings with the government. In a way, price control mechanisms sanctioned by government worked well in protecting both the rural and urban populace from the exorbitant prices on food and other essentials at a time when whites still owned and controlled a functional capitalist economy. The establishment of Rural Service Centres, later known as Growth Points, prevented a phenomenal influx of young men and women from rural areas into towns because they had all the trappings of urban life. Fault lines began to develop between urbanites and the government especially after the latter had agreed to adopt ESAP as its blueprint for resuscitating the economy. Tawodzera<sup>308</sup> intimates that ESAP laid the basis for a serious downward trajectory in the country's economy.

The Zimbabwean Minister of Primary and Secondary Education after Dzingai Mtumbuka, Chung, was convinced that ESAP led to the closure of about 3 000 factories throughout the country's cities and towns, making Zimbabwe a primary product economy where meat and maize were not affordable by the majority of people and became luxuries, available perhaps only at Christmas.<sup>309</sup> The impact of company closures and the concomitant joblessness resulted in the diaspora phenomenon that cut across gender into neighbouring countries of Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, and Mozambique. With the skills required elsewhere in Britain, USA, Canada, and Australia, among other countries in the world, workers, some with professional skills, migrated, some with, and others without, proper documentation for entry. In a way, these migrations diluted the militancy of the dwindling urban workforce during the ESAP era, for which reason those who soldiered on were ready to embrace first, the more aggressive ZCTU and second, the opposition MDC party that was oriented towards the urban poor working class.

The accompanying periods of drought in 1991/92 caused rural-urban migration and this strained the few resources in urban areas. Mechanisms to ensure party hegemony in all structures and tiers

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<sup>308</sup> G. Tawodzera, (2011). Vulnerability in crisis: urban household food insecurity in Epworth, Harare, Zimbabwe. *Food Security*, 3, no page.

<sup>309</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*. Directory Publishers, Bulawayo, pp. 146-7.



of government sealed the fate of urban voters. It was a preparatory phase for the endorsement of a one-party state. The desire for a change of government by the informed urbanites was a direct challenge to the ruling establishment<sup>310</sup> as trade unionism assumed the role of political opposition in the absence of a viable opposition party that could successfully compete for power. The ZANU-PF government did not immediately grant urban residents the right to vote in urban governance issues even after the promulgation of universal adult suffrage.<sup>311</sup> The government reacted in various ways after it had failed to win back the urban workers' support. Legal, physical and administrative instruments were put in place to disenfranchise the urban electorate.<sup>312</sup>

Since independence, ZANU-PF, until the 1987 Unity Accord with PF-ZAPU, had been angered for failing to win parliamentary and local elections seats in Matabeleland. Bulawayo became the battleground for political contestation as the dissident menace in the Matabeleland regions intensified against the government. The confrontation between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU over control of Bulawayo made the government refuse to cooperate with the Bulawayo city council in coming up with solutions to the water shortages affecting the city because of its unfavourable hydro-climatic conditions. This was the position of the government up to 1992 in a bid to browbeat the city of Bulawayo into political submission<sup>313</sup> thereby weakening any opposition to its rule in the city. Musemwa also intimates that development projects such as the Matabeleland Zambezi Water Project (MZWP) were suspended indefinitely due to insecurity and political considerations and Mugabe admitted that development programmes in Matabeleland came to a halt due to this conflict.<sup>314</sup> This development in Matabeleland led many to conclude that resource allocation with regard to Bulawayo was compounded and underlain by ethnic imperatives<sup>315</sup> where the residents of Bulawayo were being treated unfairly simply because they were Ndebele-speaking and perennial rivals for power to the Shona-dominated ZANU-PF since the formative years of nationalist politics in the country.

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<sup>310</sup> A. Kamete, (2003). In defence of national sovereignty? Urban governance and democracy in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 21, p. 202.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., p. 204.

<sup>313</sup> M. Musemwa, (2006). Disciplining a 'dissident' city: Hydropolitics in the city of Bulawayo, Matabeleland, Zimbabwe, 1980–1994. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, p. 241.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

The MDC threatened ZANU-PF's political hegemony especially in urban areas where its support had shrunk to a very low ebb. As a test of its growing strength, the MDC collaborated with the NCA in 2000 to successfully campaign for a 'no vote' to the proposed new constitution that was set to replace the defunct Lancaster Conference Agreement of 1979. The potential threat to ZANU-PF of the swing of the urban vote in favour of the opposition in the 2000 parliamentary elections called for new violent strategies to intimidate and frighten the urban voters. In the Harare high-density location of Budiro, the medical surgery of a former freedom fighter, Chenjerai (Hitler)<sup>316</sup> Hunzvi, was used as a torture camp for arrested MDC activists<sup>317</sup> ahead of the respective 2000 parliamentary and 2002 presidential elections. A group led by Hunzvi and Joseph Chinotimba, both ZANLA war veterans of the liberation struggle, threatened war in the event that Mugabe lost the presidential election in 2002.<sup>318</sup> Furthermore, ZANU-PF youths and supporters were inclined to use violent means to mobilise urban support against the MDC which they caricatured as a front for the protection of white minority interests. The provincial governor of Mashonaland Central, Border Gezi, at a political rally in Bindura on 26 March 2000 verbally attacked those involved in MDC activities and told ZANU-PF members that "[they] must warn supporters of opposition parties that ZANU-PF was well known for spilling blood".<sup>319</sup> Three days later, the MDC regional offices in Bindura were petrol-bombed, two MDC vehicles were burned and 28 ZANU-PF rallies and visits by prominent political leaders resulted in violence.<sup>320</sup> Reports of war veterans and land invaders coercing farm workers and other individuals to participate in *pungwes*<sup>321</sup> of war veterans, and party cadres violently punishing those who did not attend such rallies or buy ZANU-PF party cards created mayhem in the province.

By 2000, there were very few people in rural Zimbabwe who owned black and white television even if these were more affordable than colour television sets. The Zimbabwe Television (ZTV)

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<sup>316</sup> Chenjerai Hunzvi, a war veteran, was given the nickname 'Hitler' for the ruthlessness with which he dealt with white farmers who were allegedly resisting their forced evacuation from their farms. He was equated with Hitler's attempts to exterminate the Jewish race in Germany when he came into power in 1933.

<sup>317</sup> D. Compagnon, (2000). Briefing Zimbabwe, p. 451.

<sup>318</sup> *DailyNews*, 16 March 2000. The threat of war if ZANU-PF lost the elections to the opposition is widely documented and the security services declared that they would go back to the bush to fight the neocolonialists if Mugabe lost power through an election. See also N. Kriger, (2005). (ZANU(PF) strategies in general elections, 1980–2000: Discourse and coercion, *African Affairs* 104(414), p. 28.

<sup>319</sup> A. Lebas, (2006). Polarisation as craft, p. 427.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>321</sup> These were all-night political gatherings during the war which were resuscitated to invoke the spirit of the revolution amongst the peasants.

was the only television station and it was under state control. ZANU-PF nationalists, then leaders of the country, emulated the previous Smith regime's policy of harnessing the media to further their political agendas. It could reach out to the people in the countryside. Joy Television that traded as TV2 and was launched in 1997, was owned by Flame Lily Broadcasting Limited. James Makamba, a former MP of the ruling party, was the major shareholder of this independent station.<sup>322</sup> The independent station was short-lived, having been closed down in 2003 by the enforcement of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (2001) regulation on allegations of violating the Broadcasting Services Act of 2001.<sup>323</sup> Zimbabwe Inter-Africa News Agency (ZIANA) that was pro-government, took over from Joy Television, maintaining the broadcasting monopoly of the state-controlled Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC). Dissenting political views could be disseminated via the channel. A modicum of freedom of expression existed although the independent television station was only reachable in Harare. Jeoff Nyarota, *The Financial Gazette's* chief editor at the time, recounts:

We published articles that the *Herald* and the *Sunday Mail* did not dare touch. We tested the limits of press freedom. While readers were ecstatic, the politicians were up in arms. At a time when there was no viable opposition party, the Financial Gazette which was the only independent newspaper, assumed that role.<sup>324</sup>

The ZBC was appropriated to serve the interests of the ruling party and was put under the strict control of government. According to Chitando<sup>325</sup>, ZBC was viewed as an extension of the Department of Information in the Office of the President and Cabinet.

*The Daily News*, a newspaper that emerged in the wake of the opposition MDC, became the mouthpiece of the political opposition in the country. With the banning of the *Daily News* in 2003 and state attack on *The Independent*, *The Standard* and *Financial Gazette* for their lack of

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<sup>322</sup> *Pambazuka News: Voices for Freedom and Justice*, (2002). *Private TV Station boss quits*. 21 May 2002. <https://www.pambazuka.org/global-south/zimbabwe-private-television-station-boss-quits> Accessed 7 September 2017. James Makamba is said to have launched his talk show in which he profiled all competing presidential candidates and gave lots of airtime to opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai which unsettled ZANU-PF and resulted in state interference and finally, the resignation of the executive director, Tony De Villiers.

<sup>323</sup> D. Thram, (2006b). *Zvakwana! Enough!: media control and unofficial censorship of music in Zimbabwe*. IN M. Drewett and M. Cloonan. (Eds.). *Popular Music Censorship in Africa*, Ashgate Publishing, Farnham, p. 80.

<sup>324</sup> S. Dombo, (2014). *Daily struggles*, p. 152.

<sup>325</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). 'In the beginning was the land', p. 228.

‘patriotism,’<sup>326</sup> readership sharply declined. People were shut off from getting alternative views about what was taking place in the country as they were subjected only to the *Herald* which was a state newspaper. It appeared as if it was an offence for one to be found in the cities and towns reading newspapers that the state had condemned as churning out opposition and western regime change propaganda.

All this was coupled with the popularisation of ZANU-PF by way of historical narratives that sought to authenticate it as the only legitimate party with a claim to rule the country.<sup>327</sup> This was propagated through various media such as the national television, radio stations that were state-controlled, indoctrination of the youth at Youth Training Centres, and the teaching of National and Strategic Studies at Teachers Training Colleges. A prospective student at these colleges was required to have undergone intensive physical training at the Youth Training Centres apart from the patriotic history that was endlessly repeated, before enrolment. History textbooks were re-written and Advanced Level history examination questions about the Third Chimurenga portrayed the imperialist character of the opposition MDC: one such paper had the following question: ‘Which political party in Zimbabwe represents imperialist interests and how must it be viewed by Zimbabweans?’<sup>328</sup> Political correctness, which meant supporting the governing party, was imposed on the urban populace, albeit amidst unrelenting resistance that manifested itself in various forms such as job stayaways to cripple industrial production, breaking into known business entities belonging to members of the ruling elite and ransacking essential goods, violent demonstrations which had the capacity to paralyse state functions and civil disobedience which generally lent people into prison once courts determined that the actions were politically motivated.

The urbanites, whose numbers swelled because of economic migrations from rural areas over the years, had election experiences every five years from 1980. In these elections, the opposition was organisationally too weak to unseat ZANU-PF whose rhetoric on land redistribution and liberation credentials still made sense to the general populace regardless of where they resided. Elections served to endorse ZANU-PF hegemonically. In any case, the black urban vote only began to make

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<sup>326</sup> Ibid.

<sup>327</sup> K. Law, (2014). Plundering the past: History and nation in Mugabe's Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 40, p. 217.

<sup>328</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (2007). Nation, race and history in Zimbabwean politics. In P. Nugent, D. Hammett and S. Dorman (Eds.). *Making Nations, Creating Strangers: States and Citizenship in Africa*, 16. Brill, Leiden, p. 161.

sense with the removal of the 20 seats reserved for whites in 1987. This arrangement became a potential source of problems from the urban workers whose votes did not change anything because their electoral constituencies were constitutionally white-controlled and uncontestable. The urbanites were technically disenfranchised in equally the same manner as happened to them before independence: under the prevailing *modus operandi*, they could not express their political preferences even if they had wanted to. From the inception of the MDC in 1999, when there was no reserved white vote, the working classes in urban areas saw this as an opportunity for the first time to honestly express their grievances against government at the polls.

Any political party in power has monopoly over the use of force and resources. The *Chambers Dictionary*<sup>329</sup> gives the definition of a political party as:

a relatively durable social formation which seeks office or power in government, exhibits a structure or organisation which links leaders at the centre of government to a popular following in the political arena and its local enclaves, and generates in-group perspectives or at least symbols of identification or loyalty.

The definition above suggests that a political party must, of necessity, be able to survive even under harsh political circumstances if it hopes to become the governing party one day. It must link leaders to the people in a symbiotic relationship and decide on a common philosophical thrust for approaching national development issues. Another simpler definition of a political party is "...the articulate organisation of society's active political agents, those who are concerned with the control of governmental power who compete for popular support."<sup>330</sup> Two issues alluded to in this definition are the appeal by the political agents to make binding decisions for the nation and the intellectual dimension that these political agents deploy to gain the support of those that they desire to rule. At election time, this involves the changing and twisting of the rules of the game by the incumbent party so that it remains in power in the absence of popular legitimacy. It also hints at how the party intelligently resorts to undemocratic or unorthodox means of mobilising political support from the people. This thesis considers this definition as a relevant one to explain ZANU-

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<sup>329</sup> Chamber's Dictionary (1967) cited in J. Hoadley, (1986). *The origins of American political parties 1789-1803*. The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington, p. 17.

<sup>330</sup> J. D. Martz, (2015). *Acción Democrática: evolution of a modern political party in Venezuela*. Princeton University Press, Princeton, p. 8.

PF hegemony since independence, except for a brief interregnum of the GNU, a coalition between ZANU-PF under president Mugabe, MDC-T under Tsvangirai and MDC-N under Welshman Ncube that ended in 2013.

Since independence, workers throughout the country celebrated and commemorated Workers' Day organised by the ZCTU annually. All workers affiliated to this giant trade union so that it protected them from the unfair labour practices and unjustified dismissals from their jobs. At first, the government provided it with all the support it needed to challenge white industrialists who did not provide acceptable working conditions and reasonable wages and salaries to their workers. The government always sent representatives to attend the national May Day workers' celebrations up until 1988. The new ZCTU leadership after 1988 was not ZANU-PF compliant but took an extreme leftist position in matters affecting the general welfare of workers.

Although workers' votes in urban areas in the first decade translated to naught because urban constituencies were white-controlled, the government received unanimous support in the first decade for its price controls and minimum wage scales. These policies were indicative of the government's marriage to socialism. During this period, urban workers were more content with their welfare than with power politics. It is often the case that once the dominant parties in countries that experienced revolutionary wars face challenges from opposition and civic groups to their power, the exclusionary language of liberation re-emerges and, in the case of Zimbabwe, the language is such that the country cannot be ruled by a party that is not rooted in the struggle.<sup>331</sup> One of the initial strategies was to silence Bulawayo, a city that was regarded as harbouring PF-ZAPU anti-government elements, based on the election results of the 1980 elections in which ZANU-PF failed to secure a single seat.

The most immediate campaign, popularly known as Gukurahundi, which literally means 'the wiping away of all the chaff by heavy rains in readiness for a new season', involved a carefully-orchestrated military project in the Entumbane suburbs of Bulawayo in 1982. Historians and political scientists alike do not make reference to the fact that 'The year of the Storm' was popularised in 1979 by ZANU-PF as its theme after realising that victory was almost certain due

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<sup>331</sup> S. R. Dorman, (2006). Post-liberation politics in Africa: Examining the political legacy of struggle. *Third World Quarterly*, 27, p. 1092.

to the successful military showdowns it had registered on the war front. The Gukurahundi policy hatched in 1979 was declared when it was apparent that the destruction of the settler regime was almost at hand and inevitable even without recourse to political negotiations as ZANU-PF finally did. Through this policy, alleged puppets of the earlier Internal Settlement such as Ndabaningi Sithole, Jeremiah Chirau, Chief Ndiweni, and Bishop Abel Muzorewa, together with the capitalist system they portended to represent, had to be eliminated. An enemy list was published in mid-1979 in which high-ranking personalities of the Internal Settlement parties were singled out for liquidation.<sup>332</sup> This supports my argument that the reconciliation policy pronounced by ZANU-PF after its 1980 election victory may not have been sincere but was a strategy to buy time and eliminate all black opposition in its quest to attain one-party rule.

Yet the Gukurahundi mentality of the fighting phase could not be applied as originally envisaged, because the social conditions were not conducive to its implementation. The army that was predominantly Shona-speaking, indiscriminately used helicopters to hunt down enemies of the state. Compagnon<sup>333</sup> argues that given the legacy of the 1970s when ZANU and ZAPU almost always clashed over ownership of the mandate to lead the nationalist struggle, the electoral victory scored by ZANU-PF meant that there was no room for dissent after independence. He further intimates that Gukurahundi was a premeditated political purge to uproot ZAPU and to isolate its leaders, thus setting the precedent for the systematic harassment of future opposition parties.

The concept Gukurahundi was adopted before independence when the ZANU-PF leadership intended to wipe away all institutions that it felt represented colonial oppression, and to deal decisively with those African leaders who had collaborated with the white minority regime against the armed struggle. It is my contention here that Gukurahundi must be understood generally as an attempt by the ruling ZANU-PF party to eliminate potential sources of opposition to its rule, and to its drive towards socialism when resistance to its implementation was high, and this was not ethnic in its execution, except that events in Matabeleland were blown out of proportion to settle old scores between the two parties. This strategy was not only confined to Bulawayo and the Matabeleland regions, but also filtered into other urban areas as the ZANU-PF government

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<sup>332</sup> M. Sithole & J. Makumbe, (1997). Elections in Zimbabwe, p. 133.

<sup>333</sup> D. Compagnon, (2011). *A predictable tragedy: Robert Mugabe and the collapse of Zimbabwe*, cited in K. Law, 2014. Plundering the Past: History and Nation in Mugabe's Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 40, p. 220.

consolidated its hold on power. This was interpreted to mean that any party that was formed after independence had no mandate to run the country. The table below shows how ZANU-PF's parliamentary majority was under threat between 2000 and 2005 from the opposition MDC, yet the power to rule depended not so much on parliamentary seats than on presidential results.

Table 3.5: Composition of the Zimbabwean parliament: 2000-2005<sup>334</sup>

Political Party	Legislative seats	% of votes
ZANU (PF)	62	51.7
MDC	57	47.5
ZANU-Ndonga	1	0.8
Non-Constituency	12	-
Seats Provincial	8	-
Governors	10	-
Chiefs		
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

The partisan police and army leadership comprising war veterans of the armed struggle made political statements that were calculated not only to victimise the MDC into obscurity, but also to threaten war if Mugabe was voted out of power.<sup>335</sup> The Commissioner of Police, Augustine Chihuri, a senior member of ZANU-PF, distanced himself from the violence that characterised the 2002 elections, arguing that he could not involve the police in political fights but threatened to resign from his post should an opposition party win the elections.<sup>336</sup> Chihuri was one of the six service chiefs who issued a public statement that they would not salute nor support a presidential candidate with questionable liberation credentials as highlighted by the declaration: “The highest office in the land is a straitjacket, whose occupant is expected to observe the objectives of the armed struggle. Anyone with an agenda that threatens the very existence of our sovereignty is unacceptable”.<sup>337</sup> The pronouncement above prompted SADC's response at its summit in Malawi where it also issued a statement that in accordance with the multiparty dispensation in the region,

<sup>334</sup> K. Matlosa, (2000). Election monitoring and observation in Zimbabwe, p. 144.

<sup>335</sup> IoL.co.za, (2000). *Vets promise war if MDC wins election, 6 May 2000*, <https://www.iol.co.za/news/africa/vets-promise-war-if-mdc-wins-election-36761> Accessed 18 December 2017. See also J. Makumbe, (2006). Electoral politics in Zimbabwe: authoritarianism versus the people. *Africa Development*, p. 31

<sup>336</sup> J. Makumbe, (2006). Electoral politics in Zimbabwe: authoritarianism versus the people, p. 57.

<sup>337</sup> E. Mambo, **Mugabe remarks expose military, *Zimbabwe Independent*, 15 April 2016.** <https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2016/04/15/mugabe-remarks-expose-military/> Accessed 19 November 2016.



political statements were not for the military but for politicians.<sup>338</sup> The ‘Final Push’ organised by the MDC in Harare in 2003 ended in disaster for opposition politics in urban areas where it was stronger than ZANU-PF. It was anticipated that all workers and urban opposition supporters would march into the city of Harare from all directions and then finally march towards State House, the President’s state residence, to compel him to resign. The term itself connoted the illegitimate application of force to remove a popularly elected government. ZANU-PF opportunistically used this MDC strategy to link the opposition with violence and it initially deployed the army to disperse the demonstrators before militarising all institutions of government. Because the MDC’s political demands unsettled the governing party,<sup>339</sup> it became imperative for the government to monitor MDC activities in towns and cities to ensure the source of its organisational strength in terms of party funding and support, was identified.<sup>340</sup>

Regime change discourses in Zimbabwe between 1998 and 2009, instead of bringing sanity to the country, heightened political discord locally, regionally, continentally, and internationally. The government responded in many ways to ensure it survived the onslaughts from opposition forces and from the international community, both of which argued that the people in the country were being denied their democratic rights to choose and to participate in other national processes by the ZANU-PF regime in its determination to manipulate the electoral process and preserve the country’s sovereignty.

Sovereignty as a concept was vaguely expressed to mean the protection of Zimbabwe’s political, economic, social, religious, ideological and cultural independence from western predators. The Legal Dictionary definition of the concept is the power of a state to do everything necessary to govern itself, such as making, executing, and applying laws; imposing and collecting taxes; making war and peace; and forming treaties or engaging in commerce with foreign nations.<sup>341</sup> Based on this definition, opposition forces, with the support of the urbanites, became “enemies” of the state. Lacking in the conceptualisation of this definition is the government’s repudiation of

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<sup>338</sup> *The Zimbabwe Independent*, 11 January 2002 cited in J. Makumbe, (2006). *Africa Development*, Vol. XXXI, No. 3, 2006, p. 58.

<sup>339</sup> Interview with Mandiwanzira and McLaughlin.

<sup>341</sup> Legal Dictionary, <https://legaldictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Sovereign+nation>. Accessed 30 April 2018.

constitutional sovereignty. The constitution ceased to be the supreme document on the land as it was progressively fine-tuned to legalise decisions and activities already made against the law. The government usurped the monopoly to transmit the political culture of the country. The challenge that the MDC faced, unlike other opposition parties before it, such as ZUM and the Forum Party, resulted from its multiracial composition. White Rhodesians who had lost their Lancaster Agreement political privileges when the 20 seats originally reserved for them were removed, and when the government, in 1992, resolved to confiscate white-owned farms without compensation, joined the new opposition MDC party *en masse*. Among them were former Rhodesians such as David Coltart and Trudy Stephenson. This gave credence to the regime change project because the affected whites were fighting for their survival.

One of the reactions by government after realising its growing unpopularity with the urbanites was to disenfranchise the urban electorate through legal, physical and administrative instruments.<sup>342</sup> Requirements for registering as voters were made more stringent as lack of proof of residence prevented the increasing urban populations from exercising their right to vote. Many people of voting age could not return to their rural homes to either register as voters or to vote on election day because of economic challenges that had pushed them to urban areas in the first place. It meant that people who could have registered as voters in urban areas, had conditions been simplified, could not vote. Disenfranchisement of urban voters was made possible when, in 2002, the Registrar of General Elections (RGE) reduced the number of polling stations in urban areas and increased the number of rural polling stations.<sup>343</sup> That gave the opposition sufficient ground for suspicion that the RGE was also a senior member of the ruling party.

Even though potential voters had secured the requisite documents that could allow them to vote such as lodgers' cards, Chitungwiza and Harare registered the highest numbers of voters who failed to cast their votes on the second and third day of voting in the 2002 parliamentary elections<sup>344</sup> due to the reduced number of polling stations. The Delimitation Commission of 2000 whose principal task was to constitutionally re-define constituency boundaries in line with existing official population statistics in a geographic area, was constituted by Presidential appointees after every five years before conducting parliamentary elections. In terms of the Zimbabwean constitution,

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<sup>342</sup> A. Kamete, (2003). In defence of national sovereignty, p. 205.

<sup>343</sup> J. Makumbe, (2006). Electoral politics in Zimbabwe, p. 51.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

the president appoints the commission. Its impartiality was questioned by Makumbe and Compagnon due to its vulnerability to ruling party influence.<sup>345</sup> In the 2000 elections, the opposition criticised the Delimitation Commission for gerrymandering in drawing up urban constituencies.<sup>346</sup>

The 2005 Delimitation Commission set at the height of the MDC's ascendancy and popularity among the urban dwellers was heavily criticised by the opposition and civil society organisations for its partiality towards ZANU-PF. New demarcations were made to increase seats in rural areas such as Uzumba Marambapfungwe and Mashonaland Provinces at large that were ZANU-PF strongholds, whereas constituencies were cut in urban areas where the opposition MDC enjoyed great support areas. The opposition argued that ZANU-PF was determined to subvert the democratic will of the people of Zimbabwe by turning national institutions such as ZEC, the Delimitation Commission, the Electoral Supervisory Commission (ESC) and the Election Directorate into ZANU-PF rigging apparatus to promote its tyranny.<sup>347</sup> Also worrying at that time was that Harare and Bulawayo Provinces with predominantly MDC strongholds suffered voter migration to rural strongholds [largely due to Murambatsvina] that were the source of ZANU-PF electoral victory since 1980. However, urban voters remained steadfast in expressing their anger against the ruling party government as evidenced by the huge swing in urban votes towards the opposition MDC in the 2000 parliamentary and 2002 presidential elections, as well as the 2008 harmonised elections involving council, mayoral, parliamentary, and presidential elections.

The worsening economic crisis in urban areas resulting from the phenomenal rural-urban migrations put strains on existing infrastructure and resources. Shacks proliferated in most high-density suburbs as an indication of an acute housing shortage. The development coincided with a period in the country's history when there was de-industrialisation and concomitant job layoffs due to ESAP. People resorted to informal employment using shacks that had sprung up on plots in formal townships.<sup>348</sup> There was no money to repair dysfunctional sewer pipes or to provide other

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<sup>345</sup> J. Makumbe & D. Compagnon, (2000). *Behind the smokescreen*. University of Zimbabwe Publications, Harare, pp. 53-54.

<sup>346</sup> J. Makumbe, (2006). Electoral politics in Zimbabwe, p. 52.

<sup>347</sup> G. Phiri, (2005). *The delimitation commission: a rigging ploy*.

<https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2005/04/29/delimitation-commission-a-rigging-ploy/> Accessed 21 June 2018.

Also, an interview with Sydney Chisi.

<sup>348</sup> D. Potts, (2008). The urban informal sector in sub-Saharan Africa: from bad to good (and back again?). *Development Southern Africa*, 25, p. 160.

traditional services such as water reticulation and general maintenance of existing infrastructure as the country's foreign currency reserves were quickly depleted because of the sudden decline in regional and international trade.

It was against above background that the government launched 'Operation Murambatsvina' in 2005 throughout all the towns and cities across the country. From the point of view of public safety, government deemed it proper and necessary to launch this operation to eradicate illegal shacks and informal jobs that were not easy for the government agencies to regulate. The strategy, indeed, affected the urban poor the most. News analysts held the view that the Mugabe regime's "war on the poor", as the Murambatsvina campaign entailed, was a strategy to punish the urban dwellers for voting for the opposition MDC in the 2002 parliamentary elections and to drive them back to the rural areas where they would be 're-educated' in the guise of eradicating the parallel market and removing the filth from the country's cities.<sup>349</sup> The campaign neutralised the militancy of the urban people by sending the urban homeless back home and disenfranchising them in the process. Re-education was relatively easy because rural areas were political constituencies of the ruling party where party functionaries used violent techniques to condition and coerce them into supporting ZANU-PF and to make them admit to having made mistakes in 2002 by voting for the opposition MDC.

Potts<sup>350</sup> argues that these shacks were tolerated in the 1990s and early 2000s as poverty continued to increase and there was apparently no visible threat from the new urban arrivals to existing power relations in urban areas. The methodology of executing the destruction of unplanned structures created urban mayhem and further distanced the urban residents from the government. Bratton and Masunungure<sup>351</sup> perceive the clean-up campaign as a state-sponsored campaign to stifle independent economic and political activity in the country's urban areas. The timing of the campaign when the opposition MDC was in an upward political trajectory confirmed the people's

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<sup>349</sup> D. Thram, (2006a). Patriotic history and the politicisation of memory: manipulation of popular music to re-invent the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe 1. *Critical Arts: A Journal of South-North Cultural Studies*, 20, p.75.

<sup>350</sup> D. Potts, (2008). The urban informal sector in sub-Saharan Africa, p 77.

<sup>351</sup> M. Bratton, & E. Masunungure, (2007). Popular reactions to state repression: Operation Murambatsvina in Zimbabwe. *African Affairs*, 106, p. 21.

fears that the government move was calculated to banish urban dwellers to rural areas by permanently shutting down their illicit trade.<sup>352</sup>

Trade deals that were not sanctioned by the government became illegal at the zenith of opposition politics in urban areas. According to Bratton and Masunungure,<sup>353</sup> the approaches that the government deployed were repressive in the main as to deepen the polarisation between political parties. The most far-reaching contribution of Operation Murambatsvina was to swell the ranks of the opposition MDC party with anti-government, jobless and disillusioned urban residents who joined just to voice their opposition. That meant that some people who were never affiliated to existing trade unions because they were never formally employed, became politically active after the government had succeeded in destroying illegal structures.

Operation Murambatsvina can be interpreted in socioeconomic and political terms. On the one hand, high-density suburbs such as Mbare in Harare and Sakubva in Mutare, for example, were ugly sites characterised by criminal activities, murder, prostitution and other social vices. This description, therefore, should have provided moral justification for government action to use force to drive out people from their illegal shacks. On the other hand, the operation was heavily politicised and government action was viewed by residents as an attempt to dilute opposition support in urban areas as people without accommodation would be compelled to go back to their rural homes. Government feared that rural people were migrating to towns and cities and swelling opposition numbers. The effect of the success of the operation impacted negatively on the MDC, the only viable opposition party around 2005 in the country. The opposition was constrained in the sense that it could not campaign freely in rural areas nor in areas outside urban centres. It could not easily follow up on its supporters who had relocated to their rural homes because chiefs were government workers receiving monthly stipends and they ensured that all their people rallied behind their government.

The role of the army in sustaining ZANU-PF power in urban areas was evident in the manner in which the government engaged it in dealing with workers' strikes and demonstrations. Ruthlessness to instill fear among striking workers in the period from 1997 up to 1999 led to

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<sup>352</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid.

serious divisions within the working force. Strike action organised by the ZCTU in urban areas was paralysed and lacked coordination through the use of divide-and-rule tactics by the government. A parallel trade union called the Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions (ZFTU) led by Joseph Chinotimba, a war veteran of the liberation struggle, was formed and made official, when the ZCTU was at the zenith of its popularity to create confusion within the workers. The ZFTU rivalled the ZCTU for membership and diluted the effectiveness of the latter. The rival trade union drew its strength and legitimacy from the ruling party, converting its members to ZANU-PF. Elections became time-wasting exercises conducted routinely to extend ZANU-PF's mandate to rule. Indeed, the urban electorate lost the interest to vote in elections after realising that, historically, elections maintained the political status quo.<sup>354</sup>

The role of the military in determining the leader of the country, and in ensuring 'political correctness', and its appetite for politics within ZANU, was first witnessed at the *Bi-annual Dare ReChimurenga* Conference where General Tongogara for the first time in ZANU's history proposed that all guerrillas had the right to elect the Dare members on the basis of the 'one man, one vote' principle. By changing the voting arrangements, Tongogara and his High Command were then able to influence ZANU's leadership, as was reflected by the ordinary guerrillas' unreserved preparedness to vote for political leaders who enjoyed Tongogara's support. Previously since 1967, *Dare* members were elected into office by ZANU's civilian members, who were then mostly based in Zambia. The same happened in 1975 when the ZANLA military leadership in Mozambique ousted Ndabaningi Sithole as party leader for his renunciation of violence to secure his release from prison. In urban areas, a substantial number of potential voters were enfeebled and this counted very much in government's favour. As Rusero,<sup>355</sup> a Harare-based analyst intimates: "Anyone who should succeed Mugabe should pass the vote of the military". Before the 2008 election which raised opposition hopes of forming the new government, treason charges were laid against Tsvangirai in 2002 for allegedly plotting to assassinate President Mugabe, and the state witness, Ben Menashe, produced a video tape that sought to incriminate Tsvangirai before

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<sup>354</sup> See Table 1.1 in chapter 1 showing the declining statistics of voters in the 1995 parliamentary elections where only 2,6 million people in 1995 registered to vote as opposed to 4,8 million in 1990. Only 1,48 million finally cast their votes in 1995.

<sup>355</sup> A. Rusero, (2017). *Mugabe's five likely successors*, [www.thestandard.co.zw/17.03/12/mugabes-five-likely-successors](http://www.thestandard.co.zw/17.03/12/mugabes-five-likely-successors) Accessed 14 July 2017.

the case collapsed in 2004.<sup>356</sup> From this we can deduce that the opposition parties led by individuals who did not have a history of the armed struggle, had a slim chance of getting into power through an election. Even when people expressed their votes through a secret ballot, Mugabe remained in power through chicanery and brute force.<sup>357</sup> This was about the 2008 presidential elections in which President Mugabe faced his first ever defeat by Tsvangirai's MDC in an election.

Tsvangirai and the MDC were accused of harbouring a regime change agenda masterminded by western countries and multinational institutions such as the WB and the IMF, and this increased military hostility against the MDC. According to Chung, the refusal by the military to accept Tsvangirai and his MDC party contributed to Tsvangirai's election defeat in the harmonised elections of 2013.<sup>358</sup>

### 3.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the historical circumstances that gave rise to the development of militant urban politics in Zimbabwe. The workers in urban settlements during the colonial period did not have organisations that represented them. Even if they had wanted to have these, the colonial system prevented their development through a series of legislation. It must be remembered that the black trade unions of the 1960s evolved into mass political parties that also turned revolutionary upon realising that racial discrimination at work places continued unabated and that Africans were not allowed direct participation in the formulation of urban policies that affected them.

The country's political independence in 1980 meant that an urban workforce that was not relatively developed organisationally was bequeathed to a new dispensation under the new black elite. This elite government that assumed governmental responsibilities had shot itself in the foot by accepting the Lancaster Constitution that communicated the language of the political and economic status quo. The government's dilemma in trying to resolve and balance the contradiction in its promises

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<sup>356</sup> D. Mutasa, (2017). *ZANU PF wants Tsvangirai dead*. [www.dailynews.co.zw/article/2017/03/13/zanu-pf-wants-tsvangirai-dead](http://www.dailynews.co.zw/article/2017/03/13/zanu-pf-wants-tsvangirai-dead) Accessed 25 September 2017.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

<sup>358</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*, p. 178. In her interview, she also argues that Tsvangirai lost in the 2013 elections because he betrayed both his own followers and the west by participating in the GNU.

to the white community and to the rural war supporters resulted in the urbanites not getting the attention of government that they expected. Instead, the brief period just after independence appeared promising to the workers in towns and cities as the quasi-socialist policies that Smith had devised because of UNSC sanctions were akin to a socialist order that ZANU-PF professed to embrace. The system was maintained and reformed cosmetically as the new national leadership stood to benefit materially from the inherited economic arrangement. The single workers' federation formed in 1980 with the blessing of the government was conservative in the sense that the leadership was partisan and therefore less confrontational with the government regarding the rights of workers and their conditions of service.

When Zimbabwe's economy after the first decade of independence, and particularly after the adoption of ESAP, began to plummet, workers in urban areas were hit the hardest, forcing the ZCTU to elect a new leadership that was not subservient to ZANU-PF. The government dealt with the ZCTU as if it were dealing with an opposition party as indicated by the Minister of Labour at that time, John Nkomo. The period after 1990 was characterised by tensions between the ZCTU and the government as workers' economic demands became political. The formation of the MDC party as a brainchild of the ZCTU worsened the plight of urban workers as the government was quick to associate the opposition party with a new form of colonialism 'through the back door'.

The presence of several white Rhodesians within the rank and file of the MDC's structures, David Coltart and Eddy Cross among others, was a problem for the party for it allowed the Mugabe regime to brand it in Marxist jargon as a counter-revolutionary force that would be contained by deploying heavy-handed strategies. Murambatsvina was one such strategy which, indeed, neutralised urban militancy. Later, constituency boundaries, especially those relating to urban areas, were delimited so that fewer urban constituencies existed, resulting in mass disenfranchisement of urban voters.

The next chapter discusses sanctions and the debates surrounding their legitimacy from the point of view of the opposition parties, ZANU-PF, USA, Britain, and western-oriented institutions such as the EU, IMF and WB. The chapter also interrogates regime change agenda as driven by internal opposition parties and analyses counter-arguments from ZANU-PF which constrained the advancement of multiparty democracy in Zimbabwe.



## **CHAPTER FOUR: THE SANCTIONS DISCOURSE: AGENDA SETTING AND STRUCTURAL CONSTRAINTS, (2000- 2008)**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on sanctions, both political and economic, comprehensive or limited, and seeks to interrogate their effectiveness in achieving the intended goals of the Western countries who imposed them. Sanctions are a coercive response to an internationally wrongful act authorised by a competent social organ.<sup>359</sup> The sanctions against Ian Smith's Rhodesia had international legitimacy as they were imposed by the UNSC. The sanctions on Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwean government, in contrast, lacked international legality in that they were imposed by institutions, countries and organisations without the mandate of the UN. Mugabe's intransigence over the land redistribution modalities which victimised the white landowners in the country in 2000 made Britain to contemplate sanctions against the political elite. These were 'smart' in the sense that they targeted those elite in influential positions of power and in government.<sup>360</sup> The American Congress followed suit in 2001 by passing Zimbabwe Democracy Recovery Act (ZIDERA) in 2001, to provide transition to democracy and to promote economic recovery following Zimbabwe's slip into anarchy and lawlessness that characterised the land reform process.<sup>361</sup> By 2002, Zimbabwe was the fastest shrinking economy in Southern Africa when Britain stopped funding land reform and when it succeeded in persuading the EU, IMF and WB to suspend their programmes since Zimbabwe had become uncreditworthy and implement targeted sanctions

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<sup>359</sup> R. A. Murphy, (2011). The development of economic sanctions in the practice of the United Nations Security Council: University of Nottingham, p. 4.

<sup>360</sup> These sanctions were smart because they targeted ZANU-PF leaders, ministers and chief securocrats. They were not trade sanctions against Zimbabwe because it could still do business with the rest of the world.

<sup>361</sup> E. Lahiff, (2003). The Politics of Land Reform in Southern Africa, Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa: Institutions, Governance and Policy Processes, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex, Research Paper 19 <http://www.ids.ac.uk/slsa> Accessed 7 June 2017.

against the government.<sup>362</sup> The understanding was that once there was a return to the rule of law and respect for ownership to property [land], the senders of sanctions would re-engage the government of Zimbabwe and help it to prosper.

To ensure the Mugabe regime complied with the return to good governance, or in the words of Jack Straw, the British Foreign Secretary, “until a more representative government was in place”,<sup>363</sup> assets of those people on the sanctions list the senders of sanctions had prepared were frozen and that involved money in their foreign bank accounts so that they could not access it<sup>364</sup>. The Commonwealth Observer Group in Zimbabwe pushed for the suspension of Zimbabwe from the Council of the Commonwealth for twelve months and the South African president Thabo Mbeki contacted the Australian PM, John Howard, to convey the message that he did not want to see the Zimbabwean suspension renewed.<sup>365</sup> On the other hand, Howard maintained his position that Zimbabwe should not be allowed to resume participation in Commonwealth Council affairs until there was a complete change of approach which could only happen with the disappearance of the Mugabe government.<sup>366</sup> The SADC region comprising twelve members of the Commonwealth distanced itself from this so-called McKinnon ‘broad held view’ but accused both McKinnon and Howard of being consumed by racist emotionalism.<sup>367</sup> It comes as no surprise that ZANU-PF, with the support of the SADC members in the Council of the Commonwealth, could construct a very strong regime change intentions spearheaded by Britain and Australia and targeted to undermine Mugabe and his government. This common front against Mugabe and his government was cemented after the 2002 presidential elections won by Mugabe against the backdrop of massive rigging, voter intimidation, opposition disappearances, torture and manipulation of the voter’s roll and the whole electoral process which made a potential loser to win the election.<sup>368</sup> The same elections that Britain and other western countries, including human

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<sup>362</sup> I. Taylor and P. Williams, (2002). *The limits of engagement*, p. 549.

<sup>363</sup> I. Taylor & P. Williams, (2002). *The limits of engagement*, p. 556.

<sup>364</sup> Office of Foreign Assets Control. (2018). Sanctions List Search. Facts: US targeted sanctions apply to only 113 Zimbabwean individuals. [https://photos.state.gov/libraries/zimbabwe/231771/PDFs/2014\\_0223\\_sanctions\\_facts\\_and\\_myths.pdf](https://photos.state.gov/libraries/zimbabwe/231771/PDFs/2014_0223_sanctions_facts_and_myths.pdf) Accessed 19 February 2018

<sup>365</sup> Parliamentary Debates, Wednesday 21 January 2004, Vol. 30. No. 30.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>367</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>368</sup> See CCJPZ 2002 Election Report which documents of election irregularities in 2002 which led to shame elections or ‘election by stealth’.

rights organisations, lambasted as fraudulent were described by the Tanzanian president, Benjamin Mkapa, as democratic and that Mugabe was a champion of democracy because the people of Zimbabwe had spoken loudly and clearly in favour of Mugabe.<sup>369</sup>The controversy surrounding the character of Mugabe helps to interrogate the moral worth of these sanctions as they, instead, devastated poor Zimbabweans.

This chapter focuses on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of sanctions, as well as the adaptive capacities of the targets to strengthen their resolve to stay in power by envisaging new philosophical thrusts that were appealing even to those poor people most disadvantaged by them. Although sanctions are intended to evoke conformity or, in extreme cases, regime change, an unintended opportunity is created to improve self-sufficiency. There is a thread that runs through the imposition of sanctions in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe respectively: enforcement proved problematic due to breaches by countries that would have been seriously affected economically if they had committed themselves to the implementation and maintenance of such sanctions. This chapters undertakes a comparative analysis of how sanctions largely influenced Smith's and Mugabe's political and economic policies, and how these sanctions gave rise to more recalcitrance and a democratic deficit.

Wigell has identified four typologies of regimes: democratic, constitutional oligarchic, electoral autocratic and authoritarian.<sup>370</sup> These are important to this study because they collectively assist in defining the political trends that have shaped the history of Zimbabwe for over three decades. They are all relevant in the sense that they have been effectively applied in different political scenarios and with varying levels of intensity, depending on the uniqueness of the circumstances. Zimbabwe can be described as democratic because elections are routinely held to elect leaders and representatives throughout the country. Another supporting development is that Zimbabwe agreed to a multiparty system through the Lancaster House agreement and no declaration was ever made to proclaim a one-party status.<sup>371</sup> Zimbabwe has a constitution, just like other countries in the world. What needs to be established is whether the key principle of democracy (government by

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<sup>369</sup> I. Taylor & P. Willams, (2002). *The limits of engagement*, p. 562.

<sup>370</sup> M. Wigell, (2008). Mapping 'hybrid regimes': Regime types and concepts in comparative politics. *Democratisation*, 15, p. 230.

<sup>371</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*, p. 134.

consent), which is the right of the governed citizens to change their government if it no longer serves their interests, is ingrained within the political and electoral culture of Zimbabwe.

The term oligarchy refers to the adoption of decisions that serve to protect the selfish interests of a ruling clique through constitutional manipulation and electoral fraud. The developments in Zimbabwe since the 2002 elections are arguably a case in point, where opposition parties could win votes and seats while being denied victory.<sup>372</sup> So many amendments were made to the constitution, the effect of which was the constitutional entrenchment of ZANU-PF's hegemonic power. This was accompanied by many electoral irregularities that gave privilege to the ruling party, as seen in the previous chapters. This also happened when it was felt that the British had reneged on the promise to fund the Zimbabwean land resettlement programme, hence the Land Acquisition Act of 1991. Electoral autocracy is well documented in CCJP publications, one of which is the *The Catholic Observer Report* of 2013.<sup>373</sup> Authoritarianism was what colonialism was about and the ruling elite emerged from, and was nurtured by, a colonial system that was manifestly authoritarian. An examination of the Zimbabwean political regime needs to take cognizance of the set criteria above so that a broader perspective on the sanctions discourse can be made.

From the Zimbabwean ZANU-PF revolutionary perspective, sanctions were part of the agenda of the west to paralyse the ZANU-PF government so that an alternative government friendly to the western powers would take power. An agenda functions to set alternatives and priorities for decisions and involves the specification of political issues, and the origins and manipulation of issues.<sup>374</sup> These issues are discussed in this chapter because debates about multiparty politics in the country, and the reluctance by the ruling government to liberalise the political space, both revolve around the regime change agenda which was, and remains, the major stumbling block to a genuine political transition story. The chapter also illuminates the longitudinal historical challenges that resulted in the western blackmail of Zimbabwe as undemocratic. The popularly asked question in pro-government circles in Zimbabwe was whether opposition parties were

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<sup>372</sup> P. Chigora, T. Guzura, & J. Ndimande, (2015). *The Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) regime in power in the 21st Century*, p. 3.

<sup>373</sup> Social Communications Commission (SOCCOM) of the Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC), (2013). *The Catholic Observer Election Observation Report*. Compiled in collaboration with the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office (CPLO) CCJPZ, Africa Synod House, Harare.

<sup>374</sup> S. D. Krasner, (1982). Structural causes and regime consequences: regimes as intervening variables. *International organization*, 36, 185-205.

pursuing their own home-grown political agenda or one that was typically not their own but that of outside forces.

Historically, Rhodesia was the first former colony to have economic sanctions imposed on it by the UNSC in 1965<sup>375</sup> when Ian Smith, the leader of an exclusively white Rhodesia Front Party, declared what became known as the UDI on 11 November 1965. The Central African Federation made up of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Nyasaland (now Malawi) had been in existence since 1953 but started to crumble under the sheer weight of African nationalism in both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Events in Southern Rhodesia were moving in the opposite direction, given that nationalism in the other two federation states, with the support of the British government that was also driven by the spirit of decolonisation after the Second World War, resulted in self-determination for Africans, whereas in Southern Rhodesia, white independence was proclaimed instead. As envisaged in the Federal constitution, African interests in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland were paramount because there were fewer whites in those territories as compared to Southern Rhodesia where there was a substantial white minority with vested political and economic power. This proclamation became the basis for sanctions by the UNSC, supported by the General Assembly as a test case, to enforce compliance with its resolutions on the illegal regime as opposed to punishment. The UNSC Resolution 216 (1965) on 12 November, a day after the UDI was declared, condemned the usurpation of power by a settler minority in Southern Rhodesia. Instead, the UNSC regarded the declaration of independence by it as having no legal validity, whereupon the government of the United Kingdom was called to quell the rebellion and bring the minority regime to an immediate end.<sup>376</sup>

Smith's regime attracted the wrath of the international community by acting contrary to UN declarations that expressed the need for peoples throughout the world to rule themselves. In 1965, Smith enacted the Emergency Powers, later referred to as Law and Order Maintenance Regulations, which he used to detain African nationalist leaders without trial, ban African public meetings, and curtail political activity.<sup>377</sup> Apart from promoting European interests, the Rhodesia Front curtailed multiparty democracy by banning African opposition parties and, as Matikiti puts

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<sup>375</sup> M. Hove & H. Chingono, (2013). National interests and the sanctions strategy 1959-2013, p. 6.

<sup>376</sup> United Nations, (1966). General assembly resolutions on Rhodesia, p. 168. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/004/41/IMG/NR000441.pdf?OpenElement> Accessed 20 June 2018.

<sup>377</sup> R. Matikiti, (2008). The church and the struggle for multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe., p. 25.

it, defied domestic and international pressure for change in the minority governance of Rhodesia.<sup>378</sup> The era of colonisation had passed and continued political control of territory by outside powers or minority groups was no longer tolerated.

Debates on the UNSC sanctions on Rhodesia have attracted the attention of many scholars who argue that they did not really work.<sup>379</sup> Part of the explanation of the ineffectiveness of these UN sanctions was that the British and the Americans who sat in the UNSC would not have deliberately designed a sanctions package to bring the Rhodesian economy to a standstill. Even if the sanctions remained in force until the multiparty elections of 1980 which ushered in the ZANU-PF government, they must be understood in this context of leniency to a “kith and kin” group in Rhodesia, notwithstanding the ever-growing trade that continued unabated between Rhodesia and South Africa, Zambia, Portugal, and even the USA itself.<sup>380</sup> However, the sanctions against Rhodesia had a direct impact on economic performance. Smith responded by turning inward, harnessing and mobilising locally available resources and even making the country do without outside assistance. This is a key element to any study of economic sanctions, particularly when these sanctions produced unintended outcomes that were positive to the receiver.

Admittedly, the African elite that assumed political power in Zimbabwe in 1980 inherited a very robust economy. President Julius Nyerere pleaded with Mugabe to preserve the jewel of Africa he had inherited.<sup>381</sup> resulting from the successful attempts by the Rhodesian regime to mitigate the effects of sanctions by popularising a culture of innovativeness and survival strategies in crisis situations. Smith’s regime developed widespread state control of the economy to counteract UN sanctions, and this meant that the independent Zimbabwe government inherited an economic system that had many nationalized companies.<sup>382</sup> The inherited economic setup was akin to the socialist-oriented economy that the new ruling African elite sought to build.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

<sup>379</sup> W. Minter & E. Schmidt, (1988). When sanctions worked: The case of Rhodesia reexamined. *African Affairs*, 87, p. 207.

<sup>380</sup> R. A. Murphy, (2011). The development of economic sanctions in the practice of the United Nations Security Council: University of Nottingham, p. 63.

<sup>381</sup> D. Dewa, E. Musara, & E. Mupfururi, (2013). Industrial decline in Zimbabwe, Gweru post 2000: Which way now. *World Journal of Arts Commerce and Sciences*, 1, p.3. Also Megahey, A. (2005). *A school in Africa: Peterhouse. Education in Rhodesia and Zimbabwe 1955-2005*. Macmillan, Oxford.

<sup>382</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*, p. 90.

<sup>383</sup> J. N. Moyo, (1992). State politics and social domination in Zimbabwe, p. 322.

The success of the Rhodesian economy under a sanctions environment required that the government be authoritarian and commandist in its approach to political and economic matters as it was. The government directed all operations and continued to make decisions that further entrenched white political and economic supremacy. Interestingly, many jobs that did not require skills were created during the sanctions era and Salisbury, now Harare, became a major economic and industrial hub in Southern Africa. Very few Africans could vote and a majority did not have the requisite qualifications that would allow them to vote. The law was skewed in favour of the ruling minority and the violent nature of the Smith regime was clear to see from the arbitrary arrests and summary detentions of nationalist leaders that preceded the UDI. The argument here is that authoritarianism was the response of the regime to sanctions and it worked well to counter the effects of those sanctions. Sanctions, as originally designed, failed to evoke compliance from the Rhodesian government, but rather strengthened its hostility towards the outside world as well as internal opposition. Sanctions made reality, the unchallenged existence of authoritarianism, accompanied by the ethos of hard work and a spirit of solidarity from the minority regime in a *de facto* one-party state. As part of the demonstration of the ineffectiveness of sanctions, it is argued that it was the military might of the African nationalist guerilla forces as well as the heavy diplomatic pressure from western powers and South Africa that brought about the transfer of power to the majority in Rhodesia, with sanctions playing a minor role in the process. This was a lesson the same western countries might have missed when they imposed sanctions on the Mugabe regime because they were again viewed as inconsequential in bringing about the desired economic and political change.

The maintenance of economic sanctions on Rhodesia up to 1980 cannot be adequately and reasonably defended. The United States honoured them more in the breach than in the observance, especially when both Smith and Mugabe, though at different times, were allowed entry into the US despite their subjection to travel bans,<sup>384</sup> and when the British government was half-hearted in its commitment to the Rhodesian sanctions. Perhaps a more plausible explanation is that those in favour of sanctions could not possibly annul them without justification, and their withdrawal would impact so much negatively on their reputation. Reneging on the sanctions issue could have

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<sup>384</sup> R. A. Murphy, (2011). The development of economic sanctions in the practice of the United Nations Security Council, p. 65.

brought the British government into disrepute internationally. Such action could be interpreted as failure of its planned decolonisation agenda which initially arrogated to the University of London an educational colonial empire as part of the road to decolonisation., and since they were not enough compradors to take over political power in British colonial Africa, more could be created in a characteristic neo-colonial planning.<sup>385</sup>To argue that sanctions were an instrument predicated on bringing the rebel government into line, thereby preparing the country on the road to majority rule and democracy, would be to ignore the impact of their replication after the African majority had taken over the reins of power.

At the Lancaster House negotiations in 1979, Bishop Muzorewa, who had been elected PM of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia, challenged the British government to remove sanctions on the newly born country for the simple reason that the country was under black rule and there was no point in maintaining them.<sup>386</sup> Despite all the pressure to having these sanctions removed, they remained in full force because the government of Muzorewa lacked both local and international legitimacy. This illegitimacy was premised on the fact that ZANU-PF and ZAPU had not contested the elections and were seen as representing the voice of the majority of Africans in the country.

The 1980 elections, won by ZANU-PF, were supervised by Lord Soames, the last British Governor of Rhodesia, who oversaw the transfer of power to the winners in a dramatic ceremony that witnessed the lowering of the Union Jack-the British flag- and the hoisting of the Zimbabwean flag to herald the dawn of independence. PM, Robert Mugabe, was quick to pronounce the policy of reconciliation and managed to shed off suspicions in the western world held about his communist inclination. Hodder Williams made a prediction that the transfer of power from the Rhodesian government to the new African elite would be merely a prelude to an essentially reformist administration.<sup>387</sup>Inherited capitalist structures and institutions were adopted and adapted to ensure continuity despite the change of government.

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<sup>385</sup> J. Flint, (1983). Planned decolonization and its failure in British Africa. *African Affairs*, 82, p. 404.

<sup>386</sup> Constitutional Conference Report. (1979, 10 September-15 December). *Paper presented at the Lancaster House Conference*, London, n.p.

<sup>387</sup> R. J. Burdette, (1987). The Zimbabwe economy: Prognostications and realities after six years. *Zambezia*, 14, p.57.



Between 1980 and 1981, there was record-breaking economic growth rate of 26 percent, creating the impression that Zimbabwe was a successful democratic state.<sup>388</sup> Such growth rate was due to the removal of sanctions and the termination of the war and a façade of democracy was cloaked in authoritarianism that originated from both the colonialist and nationalist legacies that were impervious to democracy and respect for pluralism.<sup>389</sup> The chapter on reconciliation discusses this policy at length, but it is important to reiterate that the provisions of the Lancaster Agreement had a neo-liberal slant to protect settler property and economic interests, and that there was nothing under these compelling conditions that the new government could do outside these stipulations. Sanctions were lifted in 1980 and during the first decade of independence, relations between Zimbabwe and Britain and other western countries were very cordial.

The thrust of this chapter is to interrogate the factors that led to the imposition of the so-called illegal yet contentious sanctions by Britain, USA, the WB and IMF, a development that has had strong bearing on the current political and economic impasse in Zimbabwe since 1991. It is in the context of sanctions that multiparty politics, with reference to democracy discourses in Zimbabwe, can be understood. The nexus between sanctions and regime change, and regime change and appeals for democracy, becomes central in studying the behaviour of the ZANU-PF government and the opposition parties over time.

The decision by the ZANU-PF government to confiscate white-owned farms without compensation because the British government had reneged on their promise to finance the resettlement programme, was regarded by most whites and many in the Western world as being in contravention of the Agreement and as the first step towards socialism. According to Taylor and Williams, the problem came to a height in 2000 when the government's draft Constitution, which contained a clause providing for compulsory land acquisition without compensation unless paid for by the British government, was defeated in a referendum.<sup>390</sup> Another view was that the British discontinued funding the resettlement scheme in protest at the corruption engulfing the process resulting in personal gain by Mugabe and the ZANU-PF elite.<sup>391</sup> Western governments stopped financing Zimbabwe's land reform programme as protest against Zimbabwe's entry into the war

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<sup>388</sup> S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2006). The nativist revolution and development conundrums in Zimbabwe, p. 24.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid.

<sup>390</sup> I. Taylor & P. Williams, (2002). The limits of engagement, p. 550.

<sup>391</sup> Ibid.

in the DRC in 1998 on the side of Laurent Kabila.<sup>392</sup> Tendi posits the “Anyaoku Narrative” for the delay in the land reform programme which argues that the ZANU-PF government delayed land redistribution because of a request from the then Commonwealth Secretary-General Emeka Anyaoku who stated that land redistribution in Zimbabwe would affect the transition from apartheid in South Africa to democratic rule.<sup>393</sup> Mugabe agreed to this suggestion, which accounts for South Africa’s policy of ‘quiet diplomacy’ during the presidency of Thabo Mbeki, when Mugabe’s regime was at its most ruthless but Mbeki ignored these gross human rights violations because he had to pay and please Mugabe by pursuing ‘Quiet Diplomacy’.<sup>394</sup> However, Tendi does not provide concrete evidence to support his argument but a more plausible explanation could be that the reconciliation policy delayed land redistribution, as well as ESAP and Mugabe’s support for Laurent Kabila in the DRC.

What stands out very clearly from this discussion is that the decision by the government to confiscate white-owned farms was seen by its critics as a violation of democratic principles because coercion and violence were the *sin quo non* for the successful implementation of the land reform programme. The liberation struggle was re-lived and was defined as solely about land.<sup>395</sup> Manheru, cited in Ranger (2005), states that under the circumstances, whites were fitting candidates for an African “Nuremberg”.<sup>396</sup> This was a direct reference to the attempts by Hitler in Germany before and during World War II to exterminate Jews and other non-Aryan races. Photographs showing the horrific brutality meted against whites in Zimbabwe turned into a racial conflict that saw white victims of land invasions become vulnerable to brute force, and human rights watchdogs were quick to parade such acts that were inconsistent with the rules of democratic and orderly rule.

This forms the background to the imposition of sanctions against the Mugabe regime. It is important to note that Zimbabwe’s long history of struggle against sanctions meant that it had developed survival strategies that relegated democratic norms and practices to the dustbin. Advocates of sanctions failed to take cognizance of realities on the ground. For example, expecting

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<sup>392</sup> F. Chung, (2015). Zimbabwe: Looking east, p. 147.

<sup>393</sup> B-M.Tendi, (2010). Making History in Mugabe’s Zimbabwe: Politics, intellectuals and the media, p. 7.  
[www.beck-shop.de/fachbuch/vorwort/9783039119899\\_Intro\\_006.pdf](http://www.beck-shop.de/fachbuch/vorwort/9783039119899_Intro_006.pdf) Accessed 23 September 2017.

<sup>394</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>395</sup> T. Ranger, (2005). The rise of patriotic journalism in Zimbabwe and its possible implications, p. 16.

<sup>396</sup> Manheru cited in T. Ranger, (2005). The rise of patriotic journalism in Zimbabwe, p. 15.

the Smith regime to be democratic in the presence of nationalist groups vying for power was untenable. On the other hand, imposing sanctions on the government of Zimbabwe, though in line with the liberal discourse that theoretically endorsed the principles of private property and respect for human and other fundamental rights, hardened the Mugabe government and led to the full mobilisation of the country's resources in an act of outright defiance. The liberal views were antithetical to the new land resettlement thrust where consensus on redistribution methodologies between the white landowners and the black government was hard to reach. The argument has been that whites used force to evict Africans from their fertile lands and there was never talk about how undemocratic the exercise was. To expect democratic principles in the new spate of land acquisitions throughout the country after the referendum of 2000 was attempting to correct a practice that was inherently skewed in favour of authoritarianism to achieve the desired outcome. The nexus between sanctions and multiparty democracy was exploited opportunistically over the years by the ruling party and the opposition forces. That resulted in the deployment of regime change as a ZANU-PF discourse to undermine the efficacy of opposition parties. As David Coltart argues, in the Zimbabwean context, sanctions failed to achieve the intended purpose for they were viewed as a tool for western imperialism and that after ten years of their implementation, sanctions instead became an effective tool for ZANU-PF.<sup>397</sup>

#### **4.2 REGIME CHANGE DISCOURSES AND IMPLICATIONS FOR MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY**

This dissertation adopts a multiparty definition of democracy. In this perspective, democracy consists of respect for the rule of law, respect for human rights, periodic free and fair elections, and freedom of information through a free mass media.<sup>398</sup> In the words of Lord George Brown, the British Foreign Secretary in the 1960s, "...democracy means that there shall be no one to stop us from being stupid if stupid we want to be".<sup>399</sup> This definition points to the fact that democracy is a relative term that means so many things to different people, and that it is problematic and multifaceted in its interpretation. It suggests that people are free to make choices on what affects

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<sup>397</sup> T-B. Tendi, (2012). Sanctions against Zimbabwe have failed, *New Statesman* [www.davidcoltart.com/2012/06/sanctions-against-zimbabwe-have-failed](http://www.davidcoltart.com/2012/06/sanctions-against-zimbabwe-have-failed) Accessed 5 July 2016.

<sup>398</sup> K. I. Tambila, (1995). The transition to multiparty democracy in Tanzania, p. 477.

<sup>399</sup> T. Gylfason, (2013). Democracy in Africa, n. p. <https://voxeu.org/article/democracy-africa>, Accessed 18 February 2016..

them, whether for better or worse. A democratic political system is one where the government is elected by, and answerable to, the people and all people are free from harassment and intimidation<sup>400</sup> regardless of their different political affiliations.

The western conception of democracy with its emphasis on the proliferation of many political parties in a country assumes that different standpoints are allowed to compete meaningfully for the control of the country's resources, and that competent people would fill in positions of power on merit. For example, western liberal traditions consider multiparty systems as the most reliable systems for the cultivation, development and institutionalisation of democracy and they allow a hundred flowers to bloom and a hundred schools of thought to contend.<sup>401</sup> Prah<sup>402</sup> intimates that democracy's definitional boundaries relate to the character and interests of specific groups at a given point in history. He makes use of the USA example of democracy where African Americans remained disenfranchised in large areas of the south for so many years, yet it professed to be the epitome of democratic practices.

Challenges to a genuine political transition in Zimbabwe find expression in the long history of authoritarianism. Zimbabwean nationalist leaders, who themselves were products of a brutal colonial system, had been schooled in the use of force to achieve objectives of a political nature. African nationalists who assumed power eventually came to reflect the tyranny they categorically opposed during the war of liberation. All structures associated with the one-party state under the Smith regime were maintained and, in some cases, adapted, to suit the political interests of the new elite in leadership. These included settler security institutions and some of the most notorious inherited laws.<sup>403</sup> The debate about political regime change must be understood from the era of the revolution when Ndabaningi Sithole was replaced by Mugabe after he had renounced the use of violence and how and why thousands of 'dissidents' in ZANU camps in Mozambique were detained for allegedly plotting to overthrow Mugabe in 1978.<sup>404</sup> The term 'dissidents' referred to ZANLA freedom fighters in Mozambique who refused to acknowledge Mugabe as the new leader of the party and who protested his endorsement as the party's President after the ouster of

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<sup>400</sup> W. Ncube, (1995). *Understanding politics and democracy*, Mambo Press, Gweru, p.1.

<sup>401</sup> K. K. Prah, (2003). *Multi-party democracy and its relevance in Africa*, Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society, Cape Town p. 1.

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>403</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*, p. 90.

<sup>404</sup> L. Laakso, (2003). *Opposition politics in independent Zimbabwe*, p. 2

Ndabaningi Sithole by the ZANLA High Command. An interesting development after independence in Zimbabwe was the self-imposed exile of Ndabaningi Sithole in the USA on allegations that he had solicited arms to overthrow the government.<sup>405</sup>

In 1965, Ndabaningi Sithole was hailed as the leader of all true patriots but became a ‘traitor’ in 2005 for betraying the liberation war.<sup>406</sup> It was because of Sithole’s alleged complicity in seeking to change the regime that he was not awarded the status of a national hero upon his death. Such claims against the founder president of ZANU by government have not been substantiated, but it can be intimated that the government made a deliberate attempt to trivialise his revolutionary credentials while at the same time consolidating its hold on power. This dealt a death blow to Sithole’s political career. Even if people in the Chipinge constituency from whence he came continued to show solidarity with him in subsequent elections, his party literally became tribal and not national in its composition. It can be argued that although Zimbabwe was a *de jure* multiparty state after independence, repressive measures were implemented leading to the harassment of ZANU Ndonga out of existence. The post-independence euphoric mood that pervaded all areas liberated and semi-liberated by the military wing of ZANU, ZANLA forces, made it difficult for other political figures to be relevant in an atmosphere that was heavily tilted politically in favour of ZANU-PF. Tambila Kapetwa, writing about democracy in Tanzania, states that in a one-party democracy, the ruling party is supreme.<sup>407</sup> In the first five years after independence, ZANU-PF was the supreme authority to the extent that a state party was created, leaving no other party for the electorate to cross over to.

The Gukurahundi debacle in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands province barely two years after independence was also characterised as a state attempt to rid of dissidents whom ZANU-PF accused of receiving their blessings to destabilise the country from PF-ZAPU.<sup>408</sup> Although there was no formal declaration of a one-party strategy in the country, the operating environment for political opposition was circumscribed. The discovery of arms cache on a PF-ZAPU farm 1982 and the subsequent sacking and escape of Joshua Nkomo worsened relations between the two

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<sup>405</sup> Ibid., p.5.

<sup>406</sup>T. Ranger, (2005). The rise of patriotic journalism in Zimbabwe and its possible implications. *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, 2, p. 11.

<sup>407</sup> K. I. Tambila, (1995). The transition to multiparty democracy in Tanzania, p. 473.

<sup>408</sup> N. Kriger, (2005). ZANU (PF) strategies in general elections, 1980–2000, p. 6.

revolutionary parties.<sup>409</sup> As Laakso<sup>410</sup> puts it, the Ndebele had to reckon with ZANU-PF power and if they wanted to be represented in government, they had to support ZANU-PF. This paved way for the signing of the Unity Accord in 1987 when PF-ZAPU ceased to exist as a party: it became part of the enlarged ZANU-PF.

There was no clear distinction between party and government and efforts by the party government to consolidate its power continued even after Sithole and Nkomo had been silenced. Indeed, the elimination of Sithole and Nkomo as political rivals was part of the power consolidation agenda by the ruling ZANU-PF party. Origins of political violence emanated from the 1960s when Smith declared the UDI.<sup>411</sup> Shire further intimates that the British government contributed to the downward economic spiral in Zimbabwe by using coercive diplomacy in the EU, Commonwealth and the USA to secure the imposition of declared and undeclared sanctions on the government of Zimbabwe and its leadership. Jack Straw, who was the British Foreign Secretary at the time, in his address to Parliament in 2002, stated: “I can tell the house today that we will continue to oppose any access by Zimbabwe to international financial resources”.<sup>412</sup> Britain was accordingly implicated as pursuing a regime change agenda which involved the replacement of government structures, institutions, and related processes. It is important to note that this statement came in the wake of the formation of the MDC in 1999 which was the first formidable opposition party to have emerged in Zimbabwe since independence. It also came immediately after the USA had passed the ZIDERA whose thrust was not to punish President Mugabe and his party, but to push the people of Zimbabwe to their lowest so that they revolted and did away with ZANU-PF.<sup>413</sup> From this perspective, it can be averred that ZIDERA acquiescently expressed regime change as the ultimate intention of sanctions.

The enactment of ZIDERA, ostensibly to support the Zimbabwean people in their quest for ‘democratic change’, to grow the economy, and to bring back the rule of law, was taken advantage of by ZANU-PF. The principal objective of ZIDERA was democratic change and it was quickly linked by the Mugabe regime to the MDC, as the act was seen as giving advantage to the opposition

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<sup>409</sup> T. Rich, (1983). Zimbabwe – only teething troubles? *The World Today*, 39(12), p.500.

<sup>410</sup> Laakso, L. (2003). Opposition politics in independent Zimbabwe, p. 4.

<sup>411</sup> G. Shire, (2007). The case for Robert Mugabe: Sinner or sinned against? *The Black Scholar*, 37, p. 33.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>413</sup> K. Mafuka, (2009). Politics of US sanctions in Zimbabwe, *The Financial Gazette*, 30 April 2009.

in the political arena.<sup>414</sup> Western targeted sanctions were expected to bring democracy and human rights to Zimbabwe, and this included property rights and freedom from torture<sup>415</sup> The name given to the opposition MDC resonated with the neo-liberal ideals as contained in ZIDERA and this made it indistinguishable from, and [coincidentally] similar in its democratic thrust, to the resolutions made in Washington about the Harare administration. What could have worsened relations between western governments and Zimbabwe was their interpretation of ‘Mugabeism’ as anti-democratic and anti-human rights, and their definition of the Zimbabwean crisis hinged so much on governance whose solution required regime change.<sup>416</sup> Major and McGann cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni<sup>417</sup> argue that conventional wisdom assumes that the imposition of economic coercion [sanctions] would exercise sufficient bite that citizens in the target country would exert political pressure to force a change of government, and that this remains the modus operandi of a sanctions policy.

In the context of a politically and economically disorderly situation, it became important for the ruling ZANU-PF to rally behind their revolutionary icon, giving rise to Mugabeism. As Sabelo Ndlovu puts it, Mugabeism was an ideological concoction from Nyerereism, Marxism, Stalinism, Maoism, Nkurumaism, Garveyism, Negritude, Pan-Africanism, African neo-traditionalism, and nativism.<sup>418</sup> Mugabeism as a philosophy became popular with ZANU-PF supporters because it sought to address issues to do with liberation and oppression, peace and war, reconciliation and retribution, empowerment and dispossession, victimhood and heroism, social justice and injustice.<sup>419</sup> Attempts by western powers to make sense of Mugabeism, and in particular, for them to come to terms with the land question, created deep divisions even among scholars interested in the unfolding drama in the country. In the early 1980s, Mugabeism was viewed by the west as progressive, having embraced whites as citizens by means of reconciliation and through maintenance of existing state institutions that abundantly rewarded whites in economic terms.<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>414</sup> D. Masaka, (2012). Paradoxes in the ‘sanctions discourse’ in Zimbabwe, p. 58.

<sup>415</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*, p. 155.

<sup>416</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2009). Making sense of Mugabeism, p. 1144.

<sup>417</sup> D. Masaka, (2012). Paradoxes in the ‘sanctions discourse’, p. 53.

<sup>418</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2009). Making sense of Mugabeism, p. 1141.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

<sup>420</sup> Ibid., p. 1145.

After 2000, Mugabeism was viewed as a hegemonic programme, or an ideology, that listed whites as ‘Enemy Number 1’ under the Third Chimurenga discourse of economic liberation, which also articulated exclusionary discourses of citizenship.<sup>421</sup> Mugabe consequently portrayed the Third Chimurenga as the logical conclusion of the first two Chimurengas.<sup>422</sup> It also became a concept that meant different things to different people, both locally and globally. Due to the failure of the 2000 plebiscite which the government had intended to use in its bid to develop a new constitution for Zimbabwe, an unorthodox economic plan came into existence, one that was diametrically opposed to western sanctions whose key objective was regime change.<sup>423</sup> The strategy involved deliberate defaulting on foreign debt obligations; undertaking a foreign policy that worked at cross purposes with the former coloniser, Britain; state intervention in the conduct of business in the country; and orchestrating a fast-track land reform programme.<sup>424</sup> Mamdani and Moyo and Yeros blame sanctions that were meted out against Zimbabwe by the western powers in league with international financial houses as having radicalised the state, making a reality of the Zimbabwean political and economic crisis.<sup>425</sup> They represent a crop of scholars whose sympathy lay with the ZANU-PF government and who have tried to make sense of Mugabeism. According to Mamdani, the land reform programme was a democratic revolution as part of a strategy of achieving mass justice for those who were denied justice by the colonial system. It was from this analogue that Mugabism developed as a concept to differentiate real men (*varume chaivo*) from pretenders (*amadoda sibili*). Western reaction by way of sanctions to the government’s land reform programme which they argued violated an individual’s right to property, regarded as a fundamental principle in any democratic dispensation, gave all elections after 2000 a new dimension. Elections became synonymous with war and confrontation as evidenced by the number of political victims who were murdered, raped, maimed and tortured for belonging to the wrong party as shown in Table 4.1.

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<sup>421</sup> Ibid., p. 1152.

<sup>422</sup> B-M. Tendi, (2010b). Making history in Mugabe's Zimbabwe: Politics, intellectuals, and the media, Peter Lang, Oxford, 4, p. 94.

<sup>423</sup> S. Moyo & P. Yeros, (2007). The radicalised state, p. 106.

<sup>424</sup> Ibid.

<sup>425</sup> S. J. Ndllovu-Gatsheni, (2009). Making sense of Mugabeism, p. 1143.



Table 4.1: Cases of human rights violations reported to the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum 2001-2008<sup>426</sup>

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	206	2007	2008
Abductions	115	223	52	62	18	11	19	137
Arrest/detention	670	274	627	389	1286	2611	2766	922
Disappearances	0	28	4	0	0	0	0	19
Murder	34	61	10	3	4	2	3	107
Political discrimination	194	388	450	514	476	288	980	2987
Torture	903	1172	497	389	136	366	603	723

The concept Mugabeism, therefore, grew in reaction to sanctions. The war cabinet in the war against sanctions was expected to propagate the same spirit of 'bravery imbued in 'real men,' hence the philosophy of Dodaism<sup>427</sup> which manifested itself in their performing courageous deeds, their readiness to shed blood in defence of the country's sovereignty, their outright defiance of western ideals and, above all, their sacrifice.<sup>428</sup> The history of the total emancipation of the country began to revolve around Mugabe in line with what Coleman in Prah<sup>429</sup> refers to as "personalismo", which refers to the tendency for political groups to rely on a strong personal leader. This tendency was to regard the views of the president, Mugabe, as the belief system of the entire ZANU-PF party. The sanctions era from 2002 up to 2008 witnessed the nationalisation of Zimbabwean history by the incumbent ZANU-PF government and the cautious revival of nationalist or nativist politics around the concept of the 'enemy'. All people who were not card-carrying members of ZANU-PF fell into the enemy category. The enemy concept was devised when the focus of the ruling party was on creating a one-party state. Mugabe alluded to the one-party state ideology when he commented: "when all people carry party cards, the present national registration cards would be abolished ... it would be easier to identify the enemy".<sup>430</sup> What is important to note from the discussion is that all opposition activities were circumscribed and the MDC in particular, was

<sup>426</sup> L Sachikonye, (2011). *When a state turns on its citizens*, p. 21

<sup>427</sup> The Ndebele word for men is 'amadoda.' At the height of the political stand-off between Harare and London, or between Zimbabwe and the west, the word became synonymous with strong party cadres, 'real men,' prepared to take risks remove vestiges of imperial control in Zimbabwe and daringly challenge what ZANU-PF perceived as regime change initiatives.

<sup>428</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2009). *Making sense of Mugabeism*, p. 1153.

<sup>429</sup> K. K. Prah, (2003). *Multi-party democracy and its relevance in Africa*, p. 3.

<sup>430</sup> M. Cowen and L. Laakso, 2002. *Multi-party Elections in Africa*.

<https://books.google.co.zw/books?isbn=0852558430> The Herald, 25 January 1982. Accessed 5 May 2017.

implicated in conspiracies that were designed to effect the recolonisation of Zimbabwe and, from the point of view of ZANU-PF, the ousting of Mugabe from power.

Scholars such as Ranger, Schanecchia, Jocelyn, Alexander and Campbell represent the school of thought that places human rights, democracy, and violations discourses as central in inviting western sanctions on Zimbabwe.<sup>431</sup> It is argued that Mugabe was a political creation of colonialism because colonialism was not a terrain of democracy, but rather a terrain of conquest, violence, police rule, militarism and authoritarianism.<sup>432</sup> Therefore, the authoritarianism of the colonial era reproduced itself within the nationalist political movements. In the case of ZANU-PF, this authoritarian culture was reinforced during the war of liberation<sup>433</sup> when those people associated with the Rhodesian colonial system, or with other African political parties, were murdered in celebratory style at *pungwes* (night meetings) by the ZANLA freedom fighters. This was intended to eliminate so-called sell-outs, and cow potential political enemies into submission. Of course, there are examples of anti-colonial fighters who were subject to extreme brutality, respecting the rule of law once they came into power. While the conditions in Zimbabwe would have shaped Mugabe's actions, the general point about the culture of impunity and violence preceding independence, is well taken.

One very important constraint in opposition politics and their call for democracy was the lack of strategies to confront an authoritarian state with very strong regional support and liberation legitimacy through peaceful means.<sup>434</sup> The MDC politics did not prioritise the structural inequalities in Zimbabwe that were created by colonialism, but drew its inspiration from neo-cosmos, which is the politics of human rights.<sup>435</sup> While the Third Chimurenga, because of the abuse of human rights associated with it, resulted in international condemnation, there was little practical support from proponents of sanctions for rank-and-file Zimbabweans. On the contrary, western, especially British rhetoric suited the Mugabe regime which used it to affirm that the country's sovereignty was under threat. Tsvangirai was portrayed as a "puppet" of the British

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<sup>431</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2009). Making sense of Mugabeism, p. 1143.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid., p. 1144.

<sup>433</sup> H. Melber, (2002). *Zimbabwe's presidential elections 2002: evidence, lessons and implications*. Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, p. 11.

<sup>434</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (2006). Reflections on the Opposition in Zimbabwe, p. 58.

<sup>435</sup> Neocosmos, M. (2007). "Development, Social Citizenship and Human Rights: Re-thinking the Political Core of an Emancipatory Project in Africa." *Africa Development*, XXXII (4), p. 50.

government whose ultimate aim was to re-colonise the country.<sup>436</sup> Try as it may, Tsvangirai and the MDC failed to counter patriotic history's version of its role in Zimbabwean history, simply being branded as lackeys or stooges of white farmers and international capital.

Key among the factors that enabled the ordinary people in rural areas to view the MDC as a party that served the interests of the whites was the financial support it received from Scandinavian countries when the party was launched in Mount Pleasant,<sup>437</sup> a predominantly white upper-class suburb in Harare. As McLaughlin<sup>438</sup> contends, outside funding for any political party gives it a certain visibility and ability to move around with vehicles, and, in any election, political parties get sponsorship both from within and from without. That is the reason the US recently passed laws to limit the amount of foreign support in American politics because Saudi Arabia and other Middle East countries were having considerable influence on election outcomes. McLaughlin agrees with Mandiwanzira over the issue of opposition funding from outside the country in the form of governments, individuals and NGOs, all of which wanted to maintain a colonial hang on the economic resources of Zimbabwe.<sup>439</sup> Mandiwanzira repeatedly makes reference to MDC mafia organisations in Cape Town in South Africa and Australia, as well as the Westminster Foundation in Britain that was viewed as the seed funder of the regime change strategy. He views them as institutions keen on propping up the opposition against ZANU-PF.<sup>440</sup> ZIDERA, passed in USA in 2001, the same year the House of Commons in Britain empowered the Westminster Foundation to fund democratic transition processes in Zimbabwe, was specific in terms of its commitment to fund opposition party activities and civil society organisations in the guise of strengthening democracy in the country. As Porto<sup>441</sup> notes, the Westminster Foundation sought to transform the MDC into the best opposition party in Zimbabwe since independence in 1980.

Deficient in the MDC counter-narratives was the conspicuous absence of direct references to itself as a trade union movement. It is this history of trade unionism that led to the struggle for liberation when economic grievances were politicised. The political struggle involving people like Joshua

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<sup>436</sup> B-M. Tendi, (2010b). Making history in Mugabe's Zimbabwe, p. 180.

<sup>437</sup> Interview with McLaughlin.

<sup>438</sup> Ibid.

<sup>439</sup> Interview with Mandiwanzira and McLaughlin.

<sup>440</sup> Interview with Mandiwanzira.

<sup>441</sup> J. G. Porto, (2012). Multipronged strategies for a multifaceted crisis? A critical reflection on EU Policy towards Zimbabwe. *The European Union and Global Development*. Palgrave MacMillan, London, n. p.

Nkomo, Charles Mzingeli and Masotsha Ndlovu gave the trade union movement a noble history which the MDC could have capitalised on to provide a strong counter-narrative rooted in the nationalist, as opposed to a liberation, struggle dating back to the early 1960s. McLaughlin, a journalist, adult educator and promoter of peace and justice on the continent, was arrested and deported to USA from white-ruled Rhodesia in 1977, but returned to Mozambique where she ministered to ZANU refugees in Mozambique and became familiar with ZANU members there, including Fay King Chung.<sup>442</sup> The weakness of the opposition narrative was its persistent critiquing of ZANU-PF without presenting a counter-narrative, which was why, in the USA, Hilary Clinton fared badly against Donald Trump in the elections.<sup>443</sup>

The two schools of thought discussed above represent the debate over sanctions. Cameron and Dorman identify nationalism and democracy as competing discourses that clashed head on post-2000, resulting in the development of antagonistic social relations of civil society.<sup>444</sup> The era of sanctions is estimated to have started in 2002, but to have peaked in 2008 when democracy sharply declined due to massive human rights abuses, accompanied by a plummeting economy which witnessed the presence of the military in the political state apparatus.<sup>445</sup> The head of the EU election observer mission, Pierre Schori, was expelled from the country in 2002 by the Zimbabwean government for “political arrogance” and the incident attracted targeted sanctions by the EU against Mugabe and 20 others.<sup>446</sup>

Tony Blair had no reservations in announcing in 2004 that Britain worked so closely with the MDC on the measures that Britain should take in respect of Zimbabwe, although he was afraid that the measures, which included sanctions, would have limited effect on the Mugabe regime.<sup>447</sup> He was right. Targeted sanctions failed to make the ZANU-PF government concede to western and opposition demands for the restoration of human rights and the rule of law. Instead, politically-motivated violence escalated unabated, whereas constraints on neutral election observers, on

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<sup>442</sup> McLaughlin’s bio-data supplied to me on 1 February 2018.

<sup>443</sup> Interview with McLaughlin.

<sup>444</sup> C. Ncube, (2010). *Contesting hegemony: Civil society and the struggle for social change in Zimbabwe, 2000–2008*. The University of Birmingham, p. 5.

<sup>445</sup> J. Grebe, (2010). *And they are still targeting*, p. 4.

<sup>446</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>447</sup> *Ibid.*, p.13.

freedom of expression and of press, and on judicial independence, became a necessary aberrant that buttressed the hegemony of ZANU-PF institutions in the 2002 elections.

It is evident that sanctions were intended to discipline the Mugabe regime in terms of the neo-liberal definition of the Zimbabwean crisis which lays primacy to militarisation of domestic politics, lawlessness by the executive, limited democratic space, dubious electoral practices and economic decline.<sup>448</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni also regards the crisis in Zimbabwe as a reflection of the risks encountered by an African country when it attempts to defy the disciplining forces of globalisation and neo-liberalism.<sup>449</sup> The nationalists responded by abandoning their commitment to the Lancaster House Constitution of 1979, which had placed limitations on their policies. The government embarked on an aggressive land reform programme in outright defiance of the spirit of reconciliation of the Agreement. Mandaza commented: "...the reconciliation exercise serves a political function, facilitating the necessary compromise between the rulers of yesterday and inheritors of state power within the context of incomplete decolonisation".<sup>450</sup> The argument stems from the loopholes in the Lancaster Constitution which was historically specific in terms of the time the new government would need to start making the constitution more people-centred than it was. Addressing the land question heralded the countdown towards the scrapping of the Lancaster House Constitution.<sup>451</sup> That meant amending it to allow for land restitution and removing some protective clauses that gave whites monopoly over power and resources. Mandaza's analysis subscribes to the view that the elite that assumed power after the 1980 elections knew that it was an empty victory and that decolonisation was far from complete. Apart from having reconciliation rigidly enshrined in the Lancaster Agreement, Mandaza argues that it was proclaimed because there were limited options for Mugabe given that his political power was still quite unstable, and the political climate was full of suspicion<sup>452</sup> from military threats by the white military machine.

There is a need to put the crisis in Zimbabwe in its proper context. Some reductionist critiques blame the crisis on the long incumbency of President Mugabe. When the 2000 referendum failed,

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<sup>448</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2006). The nativist revolution and development conundrums in Zimbabwe., p. 3.

<sup>449</sup> Ibid.

<sup>450</sup> Mandaza, I. (1999). Reconciliation and social justice in Southern Africa: the Zimbabwe experience. *African Renaissance: The New Struggle*. Mafube Publishing, Cape Town, p. 110.

<sup>451</sup> Sachikonye, L. M. (1989). The debate on democracy in contemporary Zimbabwe, p. 117.

<sup>452</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. (2006). The nativist revolution and development conundrums in Zimbabwe, p. 19.

Mugabe and his lieutenants planned to use land as their main campaign theme.<sup>453</sup> Chenjerai Hunzvi, a Soviet-trained fighter and medical doctor nicknamed ‘Hilter’ because of his brutality, and ZANU-PF war veterans and youths, backed by elements of the army and Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), were engaged and deployed to administer selective violence on white farmers, farm workers, MDC activists, rural teachers and nurses suspected of supporting the MDC.<sup>454</sup> Compagnon<sup>455</sup> is of the view that the threat by the militia that ZANU-PF would resume the bush war meant that Mugabe and his comrades believed that the state belonged to them by privilege of conquest because they won the war. Since sanctions, despite the semantic usage of ‘smart’, ‘targeted’ or ‘illegal’ to describe them, were declared outside the UN mandate, the economic meltdown and the concomitant breakdown of law and order in the country can be viewed as a responsibility shared between the Mugabe regime and the sanctioners.

Scholars from the neo-liberal school of thought, which lays the blame for the crisis in Zimbabwe on a human rights and democracy deficit, are convinced that the crisis in Zimbabwe had nothing to do with sanctions, but with the sheer lack of democratic principles in the country. It was from the neo-liberal traditions that the MDC borrowed so heavily for its party philosophy. ‘Regime change’ developed into a discourse that pervaded MDC politics to the extent of adopting the mantra of change of government as the only solution to the Zimbabwean crisis.<sup>456</sup> Yet, the operations of the MDC were somehow limited in the sense that the issue of sanctions was tabled in London just before the formation of the MDC and that gave credence to the assumption that Tsvangirai and his MDC party had called for them, hence the name ‘Tsvanctions’ for sanctions.<sup>457</sup> From a nativist or indigenisation paradigm, the crisis was caused by the western countries and their affiliate organisations such as the IMF and WB that imposed sanctions as punishment on Zimbabwe for undertaking land reform with a view to addressing past colonial distributive injustices that the new state had inherited. From a nationalist perspective, the inevitable land reform programme sought to relieve the congestion on the non-productive land into which the former colonial masters had driven Africans.

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<sup>453</sup> D. Compagnon, (2011). *A predictable tragedy: Robert Mugabe and the collapse of Zimbabwe*, p. 52.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 450.

<sup>455</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>456</sup> S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2006). *The nativist revolution and development conundrums in Zimbabwe*, p. 5.

<sup>457</sup> *The Herald* 16 June 2010. *Zimbabwe: Tsvanctions – the dearth of leadership*.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201002030113.html> Accessed 29 May 2017.

### 4.3 THE LINK BETWEEN SANCTIONS AND REGIME CHANGE

The sanctions imposed on the ZANU-PF leadership were dubbed as ‘smart’ or targeted sanctions.<sup>458</sup> Grebe contends that targeted sanctions were aimed at selected individuals who were directly linked to the state apparatus because of the positions they held. Such sanctions were intended to reduce economic harm on the ordinary citizens and to prevent a humanitarian crisis in Zimbabwe.<sup>459</sup> It means that in the case of Zimbabwe, no comprehensive sanctions were declared because it could still conduct trade and financial transactions with other countries. ZANU-PF interpreted the imposition of targeted sanctions as a strategy by those who imposed them to effect regime change by creating an uneven playfield where ZANU-PF was caricatured as a clique of bad governors, and where the MDC was hailed as having the remedy to the economic and political woes affecting the country.<sup>460</sup>

Many issues arose because of the sanctions. Whether restrictive, as the opposition MDC preferred to call them, or targeted, as understood in the western sphere, they indeed impacted negatively on the applicability of democracy and on the viability of multipartyism. ZANU-PF regarded sanctions as a western project to effect regime change by using the MDC that they viewed as a puppet of the west.<sup>461</sup> Sanctions were perceived by ZANU-PF as tantamount to a declaration of war and were regarded as unwarranted outside interference in the affairs of a sovereign state.<sup>462</sup> Bracking<sup>463</sup> argues that sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by the west enabled the government of Mugabe to gainfully apply the regime change narrative and to effectively present itself as a liberal democracy suffering from imperial interference. There was negative publicity about Zimbabwe in the western media which led to the pulling out of investors and de-industrialisation giving it a pariah status.<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>458</sup> S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2012). Rethinking Chimurenga and Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe: A critique of partisan national history. *African Studies Review*, 55(3), p. 3.

<sup>459</sup> J. Grebe, (2010). And they are still targeting, p. 4.

<sup>460</sup> D. Masaka, (2012). Paradoxes in the ‘sanctions discourse’ in Zimbabwe: A critical reflection, p. 55.

<sup>461</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). ‘In the beginning was the land’: the appropriation of religious themes in political discourses in Zimbabwe. *Africa*, 75, p. 223.

<sup>462</sup> **D. Mutasa, Sanctions A Declaration of War, *The Herald* 7 July 2011. <https://www.herald.o.zw/Sanctions-a-declaration-of-war-mutasa> Accessed 19 February 2017.**

<sup>463</sup> S. L. Bracking, (2009). Political economies of corruption beyond liberalism: An interpretative view of Zimbabwe. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 30, p. 42.

<sup>464</sup> *The Herald*, 7 July 2011.

Zimbabwe was placed in a state of emergency where rules of doing business, norms that shaped the country's philosophical underpinnings and democratic freedoms in their various manifestations were suddenly curtailed in a typical retreat to a one-party arrangement. Opposition parties, civic society organisations and churches, though not formally legislated out of existence, had to contend with a heavily-militarised environment that was designed to rescue the country from 'recolonisation' and forcible regime change.

ZANU-PF opportunistically exploited the sanctions discourse to lay claim that they were a victim of a western agenda to prevent land repossession from the white minority in Zimbabwe.<sup>465</sup> This line of reasoning received support from China and Russia who vetoed decisions against Zimbabwe in the UNSC on many occasions and from many African leaders such as Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, Sam Nujoma of Namibia and Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania who fraternised with Mugabe in a spirit of revolutionary brotherhood. For example, by 2012, China had used its Security Council veto eight times to veto sanctions against Zimbabwe.<sup>466</sup> The pariah status of Zimbabwe as a result of sanctions was defended by other African leaders within the discourse of anti-colonialism<sup>467</sup> Commenting on the EU sanctions on Zimbabwe, Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania remarked: "... the EU wants to divide Africa at Brussels just as they did in Berlin where a conference that regulated colonialism was held in 1884. Africa must say 'no'".<sup>468</sup> South Africa, the arbiter in the political crisis between ZANU-PF and the opposition MDC, adopted 'Quiet Diplomacy' as a strategy to deal with Mugabe and its overall framework was diplomacy rather than sanctions or military action, preferring 'negotiations behind the scenes' with Mugabe.<sup>469</sup> According to Mhango, Quiet Diplomacy was a naïve approach to a peace-making strategy in Zimbabwe<sup>470</sup> which was viewed as silent approval of Mugabe's violations of human rights and a culture of impunity.<sup>471</sup> South

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<sup>465</sup> D. Masaka, (2012). Paradoxes in the 'sanctions discourse' in Zimbabwe, p. 67.

<sup>466</sup> Quora.com., (2015). Does the China's sparing use of the veto in the UN Security council suggest that China is actually a friendlier member of the world than most people think? <https://www.quora.com/Does-the-China%E2%80%99s-sparing-use-of-the-veto-in-the-UN-Security-council-suggest-that-China-is-actually-a-friendlier-member-of-the-world-than-most-people-think> Accessed 14 February 2018.

<sup>467</sup> D. Hammett, (2011). Resistance, power and geopolitics in Zimbabwe. *Area*, 43, p. 208.

<sup>468</sup> B-M Tendi, (2012). Taking Zimbabwe Forward Together: The EU's Zimbabwe dilemma, 13 September 2009, [www.davidcoltart.com/2012](http://www.davidcoltart.com/2012) Accessed 13 August 2017.

<sup>469</sup> M. Adelman, (2004). Quiet diplomacy: the reasons behind Mbeki's Zimbabwe policy. *Africa Spectrum*, p. 254.

<sup>470</sup> G. A. Mhango, (2012). Is quiet diplomacy in consonance with meaningful peace-making in SADC? Lessons from Zimbabwe. *Southern African Peace and Security Studies*, 1, p. 14.

<sup>471</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). *The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict*. FES Peace and Security Series. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Maputo, p. 252.



Africa denied the request by other SADC countries such as Tanzania, Zambia and Botswana to expand the mediation team member states to help in crafting a peaceful settlement to the political crisis in Zimbabwe. The allegation was that Mbeki was afraid that the Confederation of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) might follow the MDC example and transform itself into a formidable opposition movement.<sup>472</sup> Whatever the argument, South Africa's policy in the crisis made it complicit in prolonging the Mugabe phenomenon. The EU was divided over the sanctions issue and France extended bilateral development cooperation with Zimbabwe at a time when most other EU countries were reducing cooperation.<sup>473</sup> After the travel ban imposed on President Mugabe, his cabinet and other key members in the regime, Mugabe in 2002 used the bilateral relations to travel to the UN in New York via France and in June of the same year, Mugabe traveled to Rome for a UN and Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) meeting.<sup>474</sup>

From the foregoing, it is apparent that sanctions were not effective because they did not have the desired effect of making the target, the ZANU-PF government, change its policy position. The two binaries remained unresolved nor unreconciled: ZANU-PF viewed sanctions as illegal punitive measures put in place by the EU and the US as punishment on the government of Zimbabwe for embarking on a 'democratic land dispensation'<sup>475</sup> that empowered the historically unprivileged Africans by implementing the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) in 2000. Ndakaripa<sup>476</sup> compares it with the collective view of the US, EU and the MDC that contended that sanctions were collective persuasion measures that were meant to compel ZANU-PF to respect democratic principles, the rule of law, human rights and proper governance. Whatever name was given to the sanctions – 'smart', 'restrictive' or 'targeted' – inevitably made the Zimbabwean crisis very complex. The reason was that ZANU-PF, through its tight control of the media in order to propagate a diehard stance on the irreversibility of the land reform programme, and the need to outwit the advocates of the sanctions, proffered justifications for the economic crisis from the point of view of western interference in the internal affairs of Zimbabwe. Such a stance hardened the ruling party against western political, imperial, and economic designs to the extent that no

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<sup>472</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>473</sup> J. Grebe, (2010). *And they are still targeting*, p.13.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid., p.15.

<sup>475</sup> M. Ndakaripa, (2014b). *United States / European Union 'Sanctions' and the contestation for political space in Zimbabwe, 2000 to 2012*. University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, p. 135.

<sup>476</sup> Ibid.

substantive democratic and governance reforms could be implemented. Doing so would be detrimental to ZANU-PF's hegemonic power, and to its control of the most critical state institutions, the bureaucracy and the party leadership system. One remarkable paradox is that ZANU-PF grew even stronger under the prevailing sanctions so that no regime change would take place. In response, Mugabe declared that only God who appointed him would oust him from power.<sup>477</sup> This resonated with the divine right of kings of 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe when criticising and challenging rulers was sinful and criminal. It was this strength and the intransigence of ZANU-PF and the military that became impediments to democratic reforms which might have led to its loss of power.<sup>478</sup>

Much has been documented about the role of economic sanctions as a strategy to cause a change of regime. According to Bonfatti,<sup>479</sup> regime change theories have also been used to study attempts at regime change by western governments throughout the world, especially after the fall of Soviet communism in 1989 and the emergence of the supposed unipolarity in the immediate aftermath, or as Fukuyama<sup>480</sup> puts it: it was the "End of History". Most direct forms of western intervention such as military force, diplomatic persuasion, political and economic conditionalities and democracy assistance programmes failed to produce the desired democratic outcomes.<sup>481</sup> These authors argue that democratic outcomes are predicated on the strength of civil society in a given country. Operation Murambatsvina was launched in Zimbabwe's urban areas in 2005 and the government justified such an operation because there were so many shacks in high-density suburbs which had become virtual habitats for social misfits, resulting in increased crime and cases of murder, rape and disease due to limited infrastructure. According to Bratton and Masunungure,<sup>482</sup> the operation was a state-sponsored campaign to stifle independent economic and political activity in the country's urban areas and to banish urban dwellers to rural areas. A counter-argument by

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<sup>477</sup> A. Geoghegan, 'Only God' can oust me, Mugabe declares *The Telegram*, 20 June 2008.

[www.abc.net.au/news/2008-06-21/only-god-can-oust...mugabe-declares/2479166](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2008-06-21/only-god-can-oust...mugabe-declares/2479166) Accessed 5 March 2016.

<sup>478</sup> N. Kriger, (2012). ZANU PF politics under Zimbabwe's 'Power-Sharing' Government. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 30, p. 12.

<sup>479</sup> R. Bonfatti, (2017). An economic theory of foreign interventions and regime change. *Canadian Journal of Economics/Revue canadienne d'économique*, 50, p. 3.

<sup>480</sup> F. Fukuyama, (1992). *The end of history and the last man*. Penguin, London, p. 67.

<sup>481</sup> S. Levitsky & L. A. Way, (2006). Linkage versus leverage. Rethinking the international dimension of regime change. *Comparative Politics*, 38, p. 382.

<sup>482</sup> M. Bratton and E. Masunungure, (2007). Popular reactions to state repression: p. 21.

Potts<sup>483</sup> holds that the huge growth in informal employment resulted in the development of shacks within the plots of formal townships but the practice was not tolerated by government due to the increase in poverty levels among the people. Such an argument supports the actions of the government which held that order had to return to the cities through the eradication of illegal housing structures.

The Murambatsvina campaigns were carried out with so much force that a humanitarian problem arose when those people whose shelters had been destroyed by state bulldozers either had to go back to their rural homes or became vagabonds and squatters. The timing of the Murambatsvina campaign coincided with the period when the opposition MDC controlled all urban areas and the campaign was criticised as a ZANU-PF strategy to dilute urban constituencies that favoured the opposition. ZANU-PF destroyed the capacity of opposition parties to organise meetings in several ways. First, people who migrated back to rural areas weakened the opposition because they were disenfranchised: most found themselves not being able to vote either in their rural constituencies or in urban ones because their names did not appear on voter's rolls. Second, due to de-industrialisation, civil society groupings became less vibrant and trade unionism literally ceased to exist, nor could they, in all reasonableness, serve as institutions for the articulation of labourers' demands.

Operation Mavhoterapapi ("Who did you vote for?") in the 2008 elections was executed vociferously by the ZANU-PF youth militias, war veterans, party youths, and the military following the defeat of President Mugabe by Tsvangirai in the presidential race by 42.56% and 47.12% respectively.<sup>484</sup> The diaspora phenomenon that originated during the ESAP era after 1991 because of economic decline, grew in intensity from this *Mavhotera papi* campaign ahead of the June 2008 run-off presidential election as known opposition activists were hunted down and selectively killed in cold blood.<sup>485</sup> The era was characterised by massive abuses of power, the militarisation of the bureaucracy, the politicisation of economic issues and a state of insecurity.

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<sup>483</sup> D. Potts, (2008). The urban informal sector in sub-Saharan Africa: from bad to good (and back again?). *Development Southern Africa*, 25, p. 163.

<sup>484</sup> [www.kubatana.net](http://www.kubatana.net), (2008). *Harmonised elections*.

<http://archive.kubatana.net/html/archive/elec/080329kubres.asp> Accessed 7 March 2018.

<sup>485</sup> The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, (2008). Political violence report: December 2008. The report showed cumulative totals for January-December 2008 of victims recorded as follows: 6 politically motivated rapes, 107 murders, 137 abductions/kidnappings, 1913 cases of assault, 19 cases of disappearance and 62 displacements, p. 2.

The era was code-named ‘Jambanja’ which in the Shona dialect connotes the use of force, rampant lawlessness as well as violent and angry confrontations with white farmers over the land by war veterans of the liberation war.<sup>486</sup> Relations were quite personal and intimate in rural areas where people knew each other, and so opposition supporters were easy to identify. Mugabe won the presidential re-run in June 2008 from which the opposition MDC withdrew, citing state terror and political intimidation on its supporters, was won by Mugabe. The Herald newspaper had an item in which General Chiwenga declared that Mugabe would win the run-off elections of June 2008 resoundingly<sup>487</sup> The *Daily Telegraph* ran a heading ‘Zimbabwe Generals have taken Mugabe’s power’ and the Herald showed an item ‘Rally behind president in run-off, soldiers told’<sup>488</sup> and this shows military interference and influence in the run-off elections. The Masvingo Resident Minister and Governor, Willard Chiwewe, made a blunt statement: “Zimbabweans had no choice but vote for ZANU-PF. This is a choice with no choice. It’s either you vote for war or peace”.<sup>489</sup> By election day, more than 80 opposition supporters were dead, hundreds went missing or were injured, and Tsvangirai dropped out of the contest and took refuge in the Dutch Embassy.<sup>490</sup> Cases abounded in rural polling stations where civil servants, who included teachers and nurses, were ordered to affirm their illiteracy so that trusted people could cast votes on their behalf. A culture of silence, fear and uncritical compliance with ZANU-PF’s definition of enemies was institutionalised as political correctness became the watchword that pervaded every aspect of human endeavour in the country.

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

ZANU-PF met the sanctions that were imposed on identified ZANU-PF executive members and organisations affiliated to the ruling party by the EU, WB and the IMF under the auspices of the USA and Britain with an equal determination to render them less effective. The MDC that was formed in 1999 was viewed as a mouthpiece of the British given the substantial number of former

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<sup>486</sup> R. Pilosof, (2011). The Commercial Farmers’ Union of Zimbabwe (CFU) and its politics after Jambanja, n.p. <http://solidaritypeacetrust.org/897/the-commercial-farmers%E2%80%99-union-of-zimbabwe-cfu-and-its-politics-after-jambanja/> Accessed 19 August 2017.

<sup>487</sup> The Herald, 23 June 2008.

<sup>488</sup> ‘Rally behind President in runoff, soldiers told’, *The Herald*, 31 May 2008.

<sup>489</sup> *Financial Gazette*, 19 June 2008.

<sup>490</sup> **C. Timberg, Inside Mugabe's Violent Crackdown, *The Washington Post*, 5 July 2008.**  
**[www.washingtonpost.com > world > africa](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa) Accessed 3 May 2016.**

white Rhodesians in its rank-and-file membership. Because of the consequences for the public that would accompany the imposition of smart or targeted sanctions on Zimbabwe, the nationalist interpretation was that the western nations had declared war on the state. In a war situation, human rights, the rule of law and other liberal freedoms that are consistent with democracy and multiparty practice could be circumvented. Opposition politicians, although theoretically legally permitted in the country, had to grapple with a shrinking political space because they fell within the enemy camp.

It must be noted that sanctions on key government leaders were exploited to advance and strengthen ZANU-PF's power retention or power agenda. It was these sanctions that led to the resuscitation of liberation memories and the appropriation of history by ZANU-PF. The liberation discourse was re-lived and even the heroes and heroines of the First Chimurenga, such as Kagubi and Nehanda, were reference points in justifying the restitution of land to the black or indigenous people. The word 'indigenous' became synonymous with 'black' and whites fell out of this racial characterisation. The Third Chimurenga, which essentially focused on the land issue in line with the government's empowerment and indigenisation programmes, was carried out arguably with a ferocity that surpassed the violence perpetrated by the colonial regime. The CCJPZ posits that the political climate after the 2000 referendum that humiliated ZANU-PF was characterised by unacceptable levels of violence which prevented the electorate from freely voting for their opposition parliamentarians in the national election in the same year.<sup>491</sup> It also affirmed that politically motivated destruction of property, beatings, abductions, torture and killings were widespread at a level not seen in Zimbabwe for many years and, overwhelmingly, ZANU-PF supporters were responsible for 90% of the systematic violence.<sup>492</sup>

The government led by ZANU-PF took advantage of incumbency to mobilise state resources to build relations based on patronage politics. A political party in power has monopoly over the use of force and resources. The 2002 elections are a case in point. The Defence Forces in the 2002 presidential elections that pitted Mugabe against the opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, vowed to execute a coup d'état if Tsvangirai won. In their statement of intent, they categorically stated: "...let it be known that the highest office on the land is a straightjacket whose occupant is expected

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<sup>491</sup> CCJPZ Report, (2002). The Presidential elections; March 9, 10, 11 2002.

<sup>492</sup> CCJPZ. (2000). Crisis of Governance: A Report, on political violence in Zimbabwe, Vol. 1, p. 24.

to observe the objectives of the liberation struggle...we will not accept, let alone salute, anyone with a different agenda that threatens the very existence of our sovereignty, our country and our people.”<sup>493</sup> The interference by the military in political affairs was a major setback to freedom of political conviction during the sanctions era from 2000 to 2008. In chapter two, I alluded to the fact that Mugabe in the 1970s in Mozambique, became the president of the party using Ndabaningi Sithole’s renunciation of violence while in prison in a bid to secure his release, as an excuse to oust him as ZANU president for having betrayed the revolution. The military leadership endorsed Mugabe as president, much to the dismay of ordinary guerillas, most of whom were thrown into prison for voicing their discontent in the 1977 ZIPA clean-up campaign in Mozambique. The party leadership, it can be argued, was rooted in quasi-dictatorial practices that brooked neither dissent nor criticism. The military factor was an essential component of Zimbabwean politics whose precedent was set during the armed struggle and was illuminated in subsequent elections in the country.

The ZANU-PF armed struggle and the colonial state structures were both conceived in violence and were maintained throughout through the free use of violence. The sanctions era entrenched the military and security establishments within mainstream state politics and that explains why incidences of violence and intimidation made the presidential election results of 2002 locally, regionally and internationally questionable. The playing field was uneven especially with the promulgation of the Access to Information and the Protection of Privacy Bill (AIPPA), which was meant to control information dissemination and reportage. Simply put, the government did not condone any criticism and journalists had to articulate the state position in their reporting. Freedom of assembly was prohibited by the POSA and according to CCJPZ, these colonial pieces of legislation were timed to start working just before the Presidential elections of 2002. The developments highlighted above are illustrative of the responses the ruling party gave to western sanctions. Apart from the continuity of the ZANU-PF government having inherited violence and undemocratic colonial state apparatus that continued into the independence period, sanctions were viewed by those targeted by them as violence, and the argument was that violence begets violence.

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<sup>493</sup> M. Musiyiwa, (2013). The Narrativization of post-2000 Zimbabwe in the Shona Popular Song-Genre: An Appraisal Approach, Doctor of Philosophy Thesis, Stellenbosch University. p. 91.

## CHAPTER FIVE: THE THIRD CHIMURENGA (2000-2015) AND POLITICAL DEADLOCK

### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Third Chimurenga, connotes the continuation of a political struggle that was started in 1896. This political struggle was resumed in earnest in 2000 with an emphasis on land redistribution, 20 years after independence. It suggests that the unresolved land issue resulting from restrictions imposed on the new African majority government by the Lancaster Constitution, and buttressed by the policy of reconciliation, in 1980, was a salient source of future racial conflicts. This chapter focuses on the seizure of white-owned land by the Svosve people in the Marondera area and how this act was first used by the ZANU-PF government and then nationalised in order to trigger disturbances that later became known as the Third Chimurenga.

The Third Chimurenga was the culmination of sporadic land grabs by rural communities that coalesced into a state project. It impacted variously on the country's political system and governance style. The democratic struggles that accompanied the popular rejection of the draft constitution in 2000, from the perspective of ZANU-PF, spoke the language of human rights and the rule of law, which principles did not augur well for the government's land redistribution programme that needed force and complete retraction of such principles for it to be successful. The concept *Jambanja* ('direct action') was interchangeably used with the Third Chimurenga and was a redistribution process marked by considerable coercion and violence.<sup>494</sup> This chapter looks at the relations that ensued between the party government and opposition political parties in the context of a broader interpretation of the Third Chimurenga up to 2015.

There is another dimension to the Third Chimurenga. Indeed, the Svosve people in Marondera district could have ignited it with or without intervention from the government. It would be reductionist to link the Third Chimurenga with land redistribution alone. Rather, it became a summary of the whole ZANU-PF programme, to be unpacked under compelling conditions of war. War itself is not without violence. This category of the revolution was different from the first two in that it was fought from a position of strength when the elite were in power and could use

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<sup>494</sup> S. Moyo, (2011). Changing agrarian relations after redistributive land reform in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38, p. 943.

state power and resources to ‘discipline’ whites and their black accomplices who were declared enemies. The campaigns from 2000 sought a new definitional conception of independence, to be widened to cover not only the repossession of land but also of mines, industries and factories. This interpretation fitted in well with indigenisation and empowerment programmes bankrolled by the government. In this regard, another definition, or description, of the Third Chimurenga is that which broadly focuses on purges in ZANU-PF with a view to eliminating identified or alleged neo-colonial accomplices who masqueraded as patriots. The Third Chimurenga institutionalised land grabs when the British government reneged on its commitment to provide funding for land resettlement. It was a radicalised and racialised approach to policies of indigenisation and empowerment that, of necessity, demanded the deployment of coercive force to produce results; celebrating the indispensability of Mugabe and, lastly, popularising *Mugabeism* and the Zanufication of Zimbabwe.

The First Chimurenga of 1896-1897 witnessed the massive humiliation of Africans in their war of resistance to colonial occupation of the country. The Second Chimurenga from 1966 up to 1979 was led by black nationalists cum intellectuals who had received western education. It was a struggle that was justified on the premise that the first war of resistance had ended in disaster for Africans in that they lost all they had – land, rights, freedom, and independence. The Second Chimurenga, therefore, was deemed a continuation of the first, except that in this, confrontation was through the use of arms obtained from international sympathisers during the Cold War era, especially socialist bloc countries such as Yugoslavia, China, Romania and the Soviet Union. Although the Second Chimurenga ushered in an African majority government that assumed office in 1980, the incompleteness of the decolonisation process, from the perspective of African nationalists, was evident in the continued white ownership of the principal means of production such as land and industries. That was what reconciliation was seen to entail – the constitutional entrenchment of multiracialism that translated to co-existence without radically altering the relations of production that were skewed in favour of a white segment of the population in the country.

A more empirical historical study of the land question in Zimbabwe is required. This is because the government led by ZANU-PF has always harped on equitable land redistribution as an issue that defines the completeness of the liberation struggle. The Third Chimurenga was thus the



continuation of a land narrative connected to the First and Second Chimurenga. The land issue was pivotal in determining the extent to which the government under the tutelage of ZANU-PF was prepared to liberalise the political space and allow for a genuine, democratic, multiparty tradition in the country.

The disproportionate redistribution of land formerly owned by white farmers to the indigenous African people in Zimbabwe can be viewed as modern replication of the colonial 1930/1 Land Apportionment Act (LAA). The LAA was a piece of colonial legislation that demarcated land into black and white areas, dispossessing Africans of the most productive regions in the process. The ‘willing-seller willing-buyer’ arrangement reached at Lancaster was based on the understanding that whites who were willing to dispose of their farms to the government so that it would resettle its black peasants would receive compensation from government. The British and the Americans had also agreed to make compensation money available to government. Through British money, few historically-marginalised blacks at the inception of the land reform programme were resettled by government on farm land peripheral to Agro Region 1. These generally were areas that differed slightly from their places of origin in terms of climate and soil type. Not surprisingly, former white landowners could easily dispose of such land on the ‘willing-buyer willing-seller’ basis as agreed at Lancaster in 1979.

The resettlement model adopted in the 1980s targeted the poor from the countryside as the main beneficiaries. After the passing of the 1992 Land Acquisition Bill, which vested government with the power to revise the stringent clause on property rights enshrined in the Lancaster House Constitution, government focus turned to the middle-class blacks who would benefit from Model A1 and A2 schemes. The A1 scheme created about 145 000 farm households of smallholder, self-contained farms and village settlements with individual arable fields and communal grazing by the end of 2002.<sup>495</sup> The A2 scheme resettled around 16 500 householders on larger-scale plots that aimed at small-scale commercial farming.<sup>496</sup> Qualifications for one to benefit from this A2 land scheme were based on property and collateral agreements<sup>497</sup> which prevented the ordinary poor

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<sup>495</sup> I. Scoones, N. Marongwe, B. Mavedzenge, F. Murimbarimba, J. Mahenehene & C. Sukume, (2011). Zimbabwe's land reform: challenging the myths. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(5), p. 971.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

<sup>497</sup> FAO Legal Office, (2013). *Zimbabwe agricultural investment plan (ZAIP 2013-2018); A comprehensive framework for the development of Zimbabwe's agriculture sector*, p. 42. <https://landportal.org/library/resources/lex-faoc152671/zimbabwe-agriculture-investment-plan-zaip-2013-2017> Accessed 21 June 2018.

peasants from applying and competing. The moment land was usurped without compensation, financial institutions stopped giving value to farming land due to the nature of the land ownership system and this was apparent in the huge number of A2 farmers who possessed offer letters which were not accepted by financial institutions as collateral security.<sup>498</sup>

The withdrawal of British commitment to continue funding the resettlement programme brought the Third Chimurenga in its wake and this involved the forced removal of white farmers usually from land adjacent to towns and cities. Arguably, that was the only available option for the government to get land to resettle blacks without British money as fulfilment of liberation war promises. Later, it turned out that white-owned farms adjacent to urban areas and situated on the most fertile Highveld were reserved for the political ruling elite class. The position of this chapter is that instead of land being redistributed to the most deserving and economically-deprived classes, land barons emerged from the ruling elite and war veterans who allocated to themselves land and multiple farms in a neo-colonial fashion. This chapter further argues that land resettlement must be problematised in view of the fact that the Third Chimurenga land redistribution methodologies exhibited not only elite competition over the most fertile land around urban and other renowned centres of mineral production, but also the absence of institutional regulatory mechanisms on the politically powerful. Of interest to note from the Third Chimurenga is that it targeted white-owned farmlands that were near towns and cities. The white farmers had invested a lot in their farms economically and emotionally, given the fact that Rhodesia was a settler colony and the few whites who settled in the country had come to stay permanently, making the country their home. The ruling elite and others who provided safety props to the regime established patrimonial networks and scrambled against each other to own these farms.

The chapter thus investigates the social class dimension of land redistribution in Zimbabwe using nonreactive methods, content analysis and existing statistics. The central argument is that objective conditions for finality on land reform are absent, and democratic practices in a Zimbabwean society characterised as it is by factual inequalities in land ownership can hardly be sustained. Democracy becomes firmly established in political systems that allow for justice and equality to take place. A political approach, as opposed to a developmental approach to land reform, proffered

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<sup>498</sup> M. Hove & A. Gwiza, (2012). The fast track land reform programme and food insecurity: A case of Zimbabwe from 1992 to the present. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 2(8), p. 290.

partisan strictures regarding beneficiaries of land under the Third Chimurenga. This chapter, indeed, takes the ongoing debate further, linking the Third Chimurenga with the erosion of the rights of whites to Zimbabwean citizenship, their disenfranchisement and the categorisation of opposition parties as cohorts of the west seeking to bring back white control of the country.

## **5.2 BACKGROUND TO THE THIRD CHIMURENGA, 2000**

The 15-year-old revolutionary struggle for independence in the then Rhodesia culminated in a negotiated settlement at Lancaster in Britain in 1979. One of the key reasons for the continuation of the armed struggle after Bishop Abel Muzorewa had become PM of a coalition government ushered in by the 1979 Internal Settlement, was that the Patriotic Front of ZAPU and ZANU regarded it as a sell-out settlement. The Internal Settlement theoretically transferred power to blacks while the capitalist system remained intact under white control and ownership. Nationalist hopes were high at Lancaster that the land issue as well as the principle of majority rule would be discussed fully and conclusively. Lord Carrington, representing both the British government and the Commonwealth, ensured that negotiations were going to be based on the proposals that he had framed. Yet when Lord Carrington finally presented the draft constitution, it contained no reference to the land.<sup>499</sup> Given the fact that Britain did not have its own written constitution, it was worrying to the nationalist delegation how it could create one for a post-independence Zimbabwe. Because of mounting pressure on the PF delegation from the Frontline States among which were Mozambique and Tanzania, to bring an end to fighting in Rhodesia, so many compromise agreements characterised the negotiations. One of the compromised issues was the land question. The British proposals were translated into a constitutional framework, suggesting that as the negotiations progressed, the thrust was on ‘constitution-making’ and not on land, nor majority rule.

The multiparty elections held in 1980 were won by ZANU-PF with 57 seats against 27 for PF-ZAPU, 3 seats for Muzorewa’s UANC and 20 seats reserved for whites as prescribed by the Lancaster Constitution. The influence of the Mozambican President, Samora Machel, in shaping production relations in Zimbabwe soon after independence was apparent when he advised ZANU-PF against frightening away white settlers by implementing radical changes as that would result in a precipitate flight of white technical skills and capital.<sup>500</sup> Through experience from hindsight,

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<sup>499</sup>M. Plaut, (2007). US backed Zimbabwe land reform, *BBC News*, 22 August 2007.

<sup>500</sup> T. Meisenhelder, (1994b). *The decline of socialism in Zimbabwe*, p. 86.

the liberation party in Mozambique, FRELIMO, had forcibly driven out their Portuguese settlers after inflicting an outright military win over them with disastrous consequences. The socialist government under the tutelage of FRELIMO learned that Portuguese colonial institutions and structures should have been replaced gradually to allow for continuity through the systematic transfer of skills to blacks. As a result, it was compelled to start from nothing as most people with skills had sabotaged the economy and industries before they left for Portugal.

In the early years of independence, the ZANU-PF government had an ideological battle to fight and a dilemma to contend with. It was theoretically wedded to socialism which was the rallying economic principle during the era of the armed struggle. It had to grapple with the need to satisfy its revolutionary promises of distributing land to people who had supported the struggle on its side, and at the same time to reassure whites who owned private capital that their interests would be protected and promoted.<sup>501</sup> The ideological contradictions that ZANU-PF found itself immersed in after independence, and after the declaration of national reconciliation, raised debates about the party's genuine commitment to a socialist dispensation, particularly when the political leadership had multiple farms themselves.<sup>502</sup> It can be argued that the Lancaster Constitution circumscribed the operations of government and robbed it of the needed political space to expeditiously determine the economic destiny of the country with reference to land redistribution. As Meisenhelder<sup>503</sup> argues, the Lancaster Constitution delimited the economic power and transformational option of the new Zimbabwean state. In a way, it reduced the bloody armed struggle to a constitution-making process while maintaining the economic status quo that favoured the white landowners.

The crisis over land, the ruthlessness that accompanied the redistribution exercise and the reallocation modalities after 2000 must be understood in the context of war. That was the reason the events after 2000 were characteristically referred to as the Third Chimurenga as an indication of a continuing struggle dating back to the First Chimurenga. It should be noted that the reluctance by the whites to release adequate land for redistribution, the renegeing of the British government to continue funding the process of land resettlement and reform and the corruption that crept into the

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<sup>501</sup> G. White, (1984). Developmental states and socialist industrialisation in the Third World, p. 67.

<sup>502</sup> Parliamentary Debates, 21 January 2004, Vol. 30, No. 30. A list is of politicians and the names of farms they acquired is presented. Linked to this was an unconfirmed statement from the Mnangagwa administration that the former president, Mugabe, owns more than twenty farms.

<sup>503</sup> T. Meisenhelder, (1994). The decline of socialism in Zimbabwe, p. 89.

process of distributing land availed to government through the ‘willing-seller willing-buyer’ principle made the land issue a complicated one. It, indeed, became both political and economic. The confrontational state ethos adopted after independence in 1980, for example, the Gukurahundi, disrespected the interests of its society at large because it was suspicious of its pre-independence enemies. It is estimated that the average farm size for a family in Britain is 65 hectares, 35 hectares in France, around 200 hectares in the USA; but a massive 3 000 hectares in Zimbabwe, with some farms as large as 15 000 to 20 000 hectares.<sup>504</sup> Only 40% of such huge farms owned by whites in colonial Rhodesia were utilised.<sup>505</sup> Independence in 1980 was hollow in that it gave birth to a neo-colonial state where all colonial institutions of repression and all the apparatus of the colonial state were retained and maintained.<sup>506</sup> The nationalist agenda at Lancaster was watered down to a transfer of power from white minority to black majority without attacking the colonial state structures that were underpinned by settler-native binaries.<sup>507</sup>

The land issue remained unresolved at Lancaster and it was potentially explosive in the long run as 6 000 white farmers were left in possession of about 40 percent of the total agricultural land of Zimbabwe and this status quo was maintained until the early 1990s<sup>508</sup> when the constitution was amended. As part of its fulfilment of the obligations enunciated at Lancaster, Britain financially supported land redistribution in the early 1980s but suspended its support after evidence of alleged corrupt tendencies that surrounded the redistribution exercise.<sup>509</sup> In support of this argument, Taylor intimates that the British government suspended payments with three million pounds left unspent in protest at the corruption of the process for personal gain by Mugabe and his elite.<sup>510</sup> With the expiry of the ten-year period, the Land Acquisition Act passed in 1992 gave the government power to acquire land and this was conditional on the payment of what was deemed to be ‘fair’ compensation to the white farmers who had voluntarily elected to dispose of their properties. As heated debates on the land issue followed the promulgation of the Land Acquisition Act, it was a countdown to the scrapping of the Lancaster Agreement itself.<sup>511</sup>

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<sup>504</sup> G. Shire, (2007). *The case for Robert Mugabe: Sinner or sinned against?* p. 32.

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>506</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*, p. 128.

<sup>507</sup> S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2006). *The nativist revolution and development conundrums in Zimbabwe*, p. 16.

<sup>508</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). *The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict*, p. 26.

<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>510</sup> I. Taylor & P. Williams, (2002). *The limits of engagement*, p. 550.

<sup>511</sup> L. M. Sachikonye, (1989). *The debate on democracy in contemporary Zimbabwe*, p. 117.

The 2000 Draft Constitution that was defeated in a referendum by 57% to 43% was designed to counter the 1992 Land Acquisition Act which hamstrung the government to strict compliance to compensating white farmers who had willingly released their land for redistribution. The defeat of the referendum also meant a defeat for ZANU-PF, the first defeat that ZANU-PF as a government had faced since independence in 1980. According to Hammett, the rejection of the draft constitution in 2000 impelled the government, out of political necessity, to close space for democratic dissent and deploy war veterans of the Second Chimurenga and armed militiamen to undermine opposition parties.<sup>512</sup> One of the reasons for the rejection of the draft constitution was that it contained a clause that provided for the acquisition of white-owned land without compensation unless paid for by the British government.<sup>513</sup> Despite the rejection of the draft constitution as a result of the popular mobilisations made in both rural and urban areas against it by the NCA and MDC, President Mugabe in the same year signed the Presidential Powers Temporary Measures Land Act. This legislation gave power to government to acquire farms as required by the 1992 Land Acquisition Act to fast-track the resettlement of black peasant farmers on the 2 102 gazetted farms without compensation being given to the losing white farmers.<sup>514</sup> As a response to this development where whites were losing out economically through losing both land and compensation money, they resurfaced in 2000, making court appeals against the ruling to confiscate their farms<sup>515</sup> and getting actively involved in opposition politics of the MDC that had been formed in 1999.

Mamdani draws a link between sanctions and land reform and concludes that sanctions contributed to the deepening economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe.<sup>516</sup> He regards the land reform programme that began in 2000 as mass justice for people who were denied that justice under the colonial system. Ndlovu-Gatsheni<sup>517</sup> analyses the concept of ‘nativism’ that was developed after 2000 as a policy framework that informed the indigenisation and black empowerment programmes subsequently undertaken by government. Of interest to note in his conceptualisation of nativism is its slant towards the indigenous black people who should be empowered because of their long

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<sup>512</sup> D. Hammett, (2011). *Resistance, power and geopolitics in Zimbabwe*, p. 204.

<sup>513</sup> I. Taylor & P. Williams, (2002). *The limits of engagement*, p. 550.

<sup>514</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>515</sup> M. Dube, & R. Midgley, (2008). *Land reform in Zimbabwe: context, process, legal and constitutional issues and implications for the SADC region*, p. 3.

<sup>516</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2009). *Making sense of Mugabeism*, p. 1143.

<sup>517</sup> *Ibid.*

history of economic marginalisation under white rule since 1890. From this background, a powerful discourse, centred on indigenisation of the economy as the last step towards completing the decolonisation process that was started in the 1960s with the formation of nationalist parties, was launched and it excluded whites. Land could not be repossessed from white farmers unless the right to Zimbabwean citizenship was taken away from them around 1999 when whites joined the opposition MDC which ZANU-PF regarded as a puppet party of the British government. This reasoning in ZANU-PF circles was motivated by the fact that the MDC was joined by whites with money and the original founders of this party had their objectives subverted once they had white farmers coming to join up.<sup>518</sup>

When the European Union (EU), Britain and the USA imposed sanctions on the government elite in Zimbabwe after the violent FTLRP that was started in earnest in 2000, ZANU-PF viewed these measures as illegal punitive actions for its bold decision to address the historical land imbalances.<sup>519</sup> In the USA, the ZIDERA, which was passed in 2001 to put pressure on the Zimbabwe government to uphold democracy and the rule of law, to ensure non-violent free and fair elections and respect for property and human rights<sup>520</sup> aggravated the situation instead of remedying it in that it restricted the US to vote in support of new assistance to Zimbabwe from international financial institutions.<sup>521</sup>

The state was radicalised in response to sanctions and the land narrative assumed critical proportions in mobilising people against the perceived ‘enemies of the state.’ Both the opposition MDC and ZANU-PF that were competing for control of the state, opportunistically used sanctions to further their party objectives, each making repeated references to these sanctions in contrasting ways. The polarisation of relations between Zimbabwe, its former colonial power Britain, the USA and other EU countries, and the resultant ‘targeted’ sanctions that were calculated to effect ZANU-PF compliance to neo-liberal ideals such as the rule of law and accountable governance enabled

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<sup>518</sup> Interview with Chung.

<sup>519</sup> M. Ndakaripa, (2014a). *Ethnicity, narrative, and the 1980s violence in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces of Zimbabwe*, p.135.

<sup>520</sup> D. Masaka, (2012). Paradoxes in the ‘sanctions discourse’, p. 51.

<sup>521</sup> T. Moss, (2015). *Mugabe’s new best friends in Brussels*. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/03/03/mugabes-new-best-friends-in-brussels/> Accessed 19 February 2018.

Mugabe to harp on the land issue as his major campaign theme to gain political mileage at home, regionally and internationally with support from the army.

By 2000, there were spontaneous mass land occupations on white-owned farms in Marondera district following government inaction and the lack of commitment to the land redistribution programme by the ZANU-PF government. The government had betrayed its supporters and it could not descend heavily on the people who were desirous of taking ownership of pieces of land illegally. By 2000, the government also had to deal with urban mobilisations against it by the opposition MDC. Under these conditions, violence was unavoidable either against land occupants, against neo-colonialism or against the opposition.<sup>522</sup> Moyo and Yeros<sup>523</sup> further argue that the predicament that ZANU-PF found itself in is poorly understood by left-wing critics whose analyses focus on human rights morality. Such analyses become important when considering ZANU-PF behaviour after 2000 when it was technically at war, or when the country was deemed to be in a state of emergency. The question of human and other rights was incompatible with the situation on the ground from a ZANU-PF point of view.

### **5.3 ZANU-PF LIBERATION NARRATIVES: EVOLUTION OF THE ENEMY CONCEPT**

ZANU-PF liberation narratives were born out of the developments that took place after the rejected referendum in 2000. The sovereignty of Zimbabwe, expressed in terms of black land ownership, was rekindled against the background of growing opposition to ZANU-PF rule. The perspective of the opposition is that the defeat of ZANU-PF in the referendum represented an opposition narrative that had a telling effect on the elite in power as that awakened them to the realisation that their power base had diminished. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni<sup>524</sup> puts it, ZANU-PF inscribed a national monolithic history to re-invent itself amidst deteriorating control over the popular will. Ranger<sup>525</sup> concurs by intimating that the national history served to proclaim the continuity of the Zimbabwean revolutionary tradition which was averse to all other historical perspectives on the Zimbabwean story except the one sanctioned by ZANU-PF.

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<sup>522</sup> S. Moyo & P. Yeros, (2007). *The radicalised state*, p. 105.

<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>524</sup> S. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2012). *Rethinking Chimurenga and Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe*, p.1.

<sup>525</sup> T. Ranger, (2004). *Nationalist historiography, patriotic history and the history of the nation*, p.215.



As had happened in Tanzania when Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) lost its grip on people and systematically intimidated other parties out of existence in 1963 and legislated itself as the sole party,<sup>526</sup> the ruling ZANU-PF party started to monopolise the transmission of the political culture of the state through state-owned media and propaganda. Propagandists who were intellectuals themselves, were charged with the task of orienting the history of Zimbabwe to fit-in with ZANU-PF thinking, making proclamations that the land is the economy and the economy is the land.<sup>527</sup> In December 2000, Mugabe told ZANU-PF that it must continue to strike fear into the heart of whites who were their real enemy.<sup>528</sup> When Ian Smith came to power in 1964, his Rhodesia Front party appointed propagandists from apartheid South Africa to articulate what it perceived as a serious communist menace, and to caricature Mugabe as a communist.<sup>529</sup> This political practice was bequeathed to the black government and was literally applied in its original form against groups and organisations that ZANU-PF classified under the ‘enemy concept’. A version of this propaganda in the present era may be what is now called ‘fake news’.

The land question enabled the ruling party to reconfigure itself ahead of the presidential elections set for 2002. Mugabe threatened to resume the bush war should the electorate reject the party as it had done in the referendum two years earlier. Gramsci’s theory of hegemony aptly underscores the link between hegemony and dictatorship both of which are mutually inclusive and complementary.<sup>530</sup> It must be noted that by threatening to resuscitate the armed struggle, Mugabe, in a collegial relationship with the war veterans, had a firm belief that the state belonged to them and to ZANU-PF because they liberated it. Compagnon<sup>531</sup> sharply contradicts this ZANU-PF claim, arguing that it is a characteristic distortion of history to say that the country belongs to them. Mugabe rhetorically kept reminding people that Zimbabwean sovereignty was not negotiable and that he would rather eat grass than compromise the country’s sovereignty.<sup>532</sup> From the perspective of ZANU-PF, targeted sanctions imposed on Mugabe and his war cabinet were intended to persecute them for their bravery in challenging the west’s international hegemonic control of the

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<sup>526</sup> K. I. Tambila, (1995). The transition to multiparty democracy in Tanzania, p. 487.

<sup>527</sup> D. Moore, (2001). Is the land the economy and the economy the land? Primitive accumulation in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 19(2), p. 253.

<sup>528</sup> M. Dube, & R. Midgley, (2008). Land reform in Zimbabwe, p. 16.

<sup>529</sup> D. Lowry, (2007). The impact of anti-communism on white Rhodesian Political culture, p. 188.

<sup>530</sup> T. R. Bates, 1975. Gramsci and the Theory of Hegemony, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. 36, No. 2, p. 352.

<sup>531</sup> D. Compagnon, (2000). Briefing Zimbabwe, p.450.

<sup>532</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). ‘In the beginning was the land’, p. 233.

weaker states such as Zimbabwe (ibid.). It was for this same reason that western countries wanted regime change in Zimbabwe to secure their economic interests and the ESAP was considered part of the regime change strategy.<sup>533</sup> The land narrative temporarily lost significance as evidenced by the rejection of the draft constitution of 2000 that prioritised land redistribution based on proactive legislation that was fast-tracked through a predominantly ZANU-PF parliament. For the land project to succeed, ZANU-PF manipulated the discourse of nation-building and made itself privy to sustainable development in Zimbabwe, making sure that it remained legitimate as a party both at home and internationally even after systematically eliminating the opposition.<sup>534</sup>

Gramsci also refers to the inseparable nature of cultural and intellectual factors in historical development, highlighting the role of intellectuals in designing society's destiny, enforcing consensus through dictatorship as means to create and achieve party hegemony.<sup>535</sup> In Zimbabwe, intellectuals such as Tafataona Mahoso from the Harare Polytechnic, Vimbai Chivaura from the English Department of the UZ, Claudius Mararike (UZ) and Mupeperekwi from the UZ Agriculture Faculty took turns to present a programme entitled *National Ethos* on the only available television station that operated in the country. The programme was designed to create a patriotic citizenry, the assumption being that the renowned professionals would hoodwink the audiences by their repeated patriotic arguments. These intellectuals sought to extend the worldview of the rulers to the ruled and to secure the consent of the masses to the law and order of the land. However, it is when these intellectuals fail in their assignment to create party domination that the ruling class engages the coercive apparatus to discipline those who do not see things through their lenses.

The ruling ZANU-PF party after 2000 had the advantage of almost two decades of incumbency before the formation of a formidable opposition MDC party in 1999. However, ZANU-PF got a rude awakening in the 2000 parliamentary elections when its parliamentary hegemony was broken for the first time since independence. Despite ZANU-PF's concerted efforts to de-campaign the MDC as a party with no liberation war credentials<sup>536</sup> or as a party that was not rooted in the armed struggle, the opposition garnered 57 seats against ZANU-PF's 62 seats under conditions of state-

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<sup>533</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 27.

<sup>534</sup> C. Ncube, (2010). Contesting hegemony, p. 76.

<sup>535</sup> T. R. Bates, (1975). Gramsci and the theory of hegemony, p. 353.

<sup>536</sup> W. Willems, (2013). 'Zimbabwe will never be a colony again': changing celebratory styles and meanings of independence. *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 36, p.24.

sponsored violence <sup>537</sup>that saw the murder of the leader of the MDC, Morgan Tsvangirai's campaign manager, Tichaona Chiminya, near Murambinda Growth Point. The struggle for control of the state before the 2002 presidential elections demanded a meticulous re-definition of key concepts such as independence, heroism and belonging to the exclusion of all organisations and individuals that dared to challenge ZANU-PF. These were labeled as traitors who would be dealt with by the ruling ZANU-PF party. The CCJPZ and the WCC covered the 2002 presidential race that pitied Tsvangirai for MDC and Mugabe for ZANU-PF. It argues that ZANU-PF "stole" the election in view of the high incidences of intimidation and violence that were sufficiently serious to question the legitimacy of the election results.<sup>538</sup>

The role of the media in disseminating ZANU-PF party propaganda was a key aspect in state denial to proffer political space for opposition politics immediately after the government defeat in the 2000 referendum. The opposition MDC and individuals who were critical of ZANU-PF were targeted for media attack. Their interests were reframed and repackaged by the Ministry of Information and Publicity led by another intellectual, Professor Jonathan Moyo so that the so-called unpatriotic behaviour of black Zimbabweans who were vehicles of the white-driven regime change interests would be laid bare. When Tsvangirai visited one of the remotest villages in Zimbabwe it is said that people asked to know why he was black because ZANU-PF had always been telling them that he was white. This also was the extent to which mainstream media played a very destructive role. The government made illegal the operation of independent radio and television stations, a decision that saw the closure of Joy TV in 2002 so the listeners were exposed to the state ZTV that churned out information that was pro-ZANU-PF. Mugabe and ZANU-PF were openly supported whereas the opposition was viciously attacked.<sup>539</sup> It was for this reason that Chitando substituted 'Terror vision' for 'television.'<sup>540</sup> The new land politics in Zimbabwe after the annulment of the Lancaster Constitution revived racial conflicts that had been subdued under the dispensation of reconciliation in the first decade after independence. The whites were an irreplaceable enemy of the state for their close association with the MDC which was not clear on its party policy regarding land redistribution. One of the challenges the MDC faced was that it was

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<sup>537</sup> R. Matikiti, (2008). *The church and the struggle for multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe*, p. 34.

<sup>538</sup> CCJPZ. (2002). *The presidential elections; March 9, 10, 11 2002*.

<sup>539</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). 'In the beginning was the land', p.221.

<sup>540</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 235.

a movement that represented diverse political and economic interests whose common denominator was removing Mugabe from power. Its composition was such that unanimity in strategy and policy implementation was difficult to achieve as evidenced by the 2005 split of the party into MDC-T and MDC-M over the government decision to create the Senate as the Upper Chamber of the Parliament of Zimbabwe.

The use of the race card by Mugabe to regain his fading popularity at home after losing the referendum gave him adequate guarantees of support from the war veterans who in 1997 had been given gratuities of \$50 000 each.<sup>541</sup> Consequently, war veterans were easily systematically mobilised and deployed as ambassadors in resolving the land problem that colonialism had created.<sup>542</sup> Chung admits the political acumen and the intellectual sophistication in Mugabe. His political skills in the 2002 presidential elections were demonstrated by his consistent attempts to portray the presidential race internally as black versus white, and internationally as the west (USA and Britain) versus Africa.<sup>543</sup> The CCJPZ report further discusses advertisements for Mugabe on television and state-controlled newspapers that consistently referred to the MDC as a British-led opposition and its leader, Tsvangirai as Judas Iscariot.<sup>544</sup> This was a biblical analogue that equated Judas Iscariot who, because of the love of money, sold out his master to the Jews for crucifixion in the same manner Tsvangirai was, according to ZANU-PF, selling the country, notably the land, to the former colonisers for the love of money. It was not surprising that in the 2002 presidential and subsequent elections, African leaders endorsed the election results that Mugabe had won despite glaring evidence of electoral fraud and manipulation on a grand scale.

The liberation narratives of the ruling ZANU-PF party were re-invigorated towards the 2002 presidential elections. New strategies were deployed to blackmail the nascent opposition MDC party. ZANU-PF mobilised war veterans to make pilgrimages to ZANLA bases in Mozambique that had been subjected to aerial bombardment by the Smith regime during the war and towards the finalization of the 1979 Lancaster Constitutional Conference. Such pilgrimages brought reminiscences of the experiences that the war veterans had gone through and of how they survived

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<sup>541</sup> N. Kriger, (2000). Zimbabwe today: hope against grim realities. *Review of African Political Economy*, 27(85), p. 444.

<sup>542</sup> M. Adelman, (2004). Quiet diplomacy, p. 250.

<sup>543</sup> CCJPZ. (2002). The presidential elections; March 9, 10, 11 2002.

<sup>544</sup> Ibid.

the military onslaughts of the white regime. To be part of the teams that visited Chimoio, Nyadzonia and other ZANLA bases in Mozambique was to undergo an emotional experience. Mass graves at Chimoio and Nyadzonya were stark reminders to the war veterans that back home, the opposition parties should not be allowed to compromise the independence that the country now enjoyed. That hardened their resolve to deal with the MDC in the same manner they would deal with the whites who were alleged to have supported the ‘no’ vote in the 2000 referendum that was so clear in what the government’s position was about land repossession and redistribution. Medium spirits of reputation accompanied the war veterans as a way of showing that the exercise had blessings from custodians of African culture and tradition, and to give legitimacy to the land redistribution that was already underway.

ZANU-PF became synonymous with Zimbabwe in the sense that there was no separation of power between ZANU-PF and the state. In terms of the socialist vanguard approach which specifically hailed the supremacy of the party all the way,<sup>545</sup> national institutions are subordinated to party interests, and not the other way around. From another perspective, a state party or a party state are juxtaposed concepts in political circles and in Zimbabwe, they point to the capture of the state by ZANU-PF, a development which has made it difficult for the opposition to win elections and take power, even when the electorate overwhelmingly voted for it.

The next presidential elections were held in March 2008 and they were harmonised with the parliamentary and council elections for the first time in the history of electoral politics in the country. The land issue was ZANU-PF’s rallying point. By then much of the white-owned land had been confiscated for redistribution under Models A1 and A2. In the first round of presidential elections, Tsvangirai won by 47 percent against Mugabe’s 4 percent, but failed to win an absolute majority for him to be able to form a government. This was even though it took ZEC about five weeks to announce the winner, raising suspicions that the results could have been doctored to give ZANU-PF a second chance. As Chisi laments: “You cannot explain a victory of an opposition and holding of results for thirty days. No explanation for that [is given] and finally the winner had to humble himself to become a subordinate of a loser to form a GNU.”<sup>546</sup> This was a direct reference to the 2008 first round of presidential elections that did not count for the opposition because it

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<sup>545</sup> K. I. Tambila, (1995). *The transition to multiparty democracy in Tanzania*, p. 473.

<sup>546</sup> Interview with Sydney Chisi.

failed to get an absolute majority. However, so worrying to the voters was the announcement of presidential results which delayed by more than a month. To complicate matters, the principle of ‘absolute majority’ got different interpretations: whether it meant 51 percent or 50 percent plus 1 remained unclear. This seems to resonate with the view that in Zimbabwe, opposition parties can win votes and seats while being denied victory.<sup>547</sup>

Masunungure states that there is evidence to suggest that the regime concluded that its party had failed in the March 2008 presidential elections and so the military should lead the march to the 27 June elections which was the date set for the election run-off.<sup>548</sup> Masunungure remarks that Mugabe had to institute a military style leadership to campaign for him in the re-run and this was not without violence to coerce voters and reduce the contest to a battle between the bullet and the ballot.<sup>549</sup> The military, the bulk of whom were former fighters of the ZANLA outfit, accepted their deployment in villages and communities that they served during the armed struggle and there, they used their familiarity with the peasants to relive the Chimurenga networks which were instrumental in regaining electoral support for ZANU-PF. The Operation Makavhotera Papi (Operation Who did you vote for) code-named CIBD (Coercion, intimidation, beating, displacement) sought to identify and punish those who did not vote for Mugabe in the March 2008 elections.<sup>550</sup> Throughout the period from 2000, ZANU-PF reverted to the use of chiefs, soldiers and the police using fear management, mobilisation and electoral processes. In Komichi’s views, the President, under circumstances of fierce political competition surrounded himself with several layers of protection: he became unreachable, became king, became ‘God’ to be worshipped as the Almighty, and people were subdued to the whole setup of that nature.<sup>551</sup>

The state monopoly over control of media was damaging to the opposition political parties. Chisi laments the style of reportage in the *Herald* newspaper in Harare and the *Chronicle* newspaper in Bulawayo during the Gukurahundi era. There was much negative reporting on dissidents while the newspapers were silent on the mass graves and the mass killings of the Ndebele people who were alleged to be supporting their destabilisation campaigns against the government of ZANU-

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<sup>547</sup> P. Chigora, et al, (2015). The Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front, p. 3.

<sup>548</sup> E. Masunungure, (2009). A militarised election. *Defying the Winds of Change*, p. 80.

<sup>549</sup> Ibid.

<sup>550</sup> L. Sachikonye, (2011). When a state turns on its citizens, p.49.

<sup>551</sup> Interview with Morgen Komichi.

PF.<sup>552</sup> *The Chronicle*, located in Matabeleland, could not report on the mass killings and disturbances in Matabeleland because it belonged to the public media controlled by ZANU-PF. Chisi asserts that “the Chronicle is given ‘copy and paste’ articles [for publication]. The headline in *The Herald* becomes the headline in *The Chronicle* as if there is no news in Matabeleland.”<sup>553</sup> Mashakada posits that ZANU-PF staffed newspapers and media houses with their own functionaries.<sup>554</sup> He relates the bombing of the *Daily News* offices by state functionaries, yet it was the voice of the people at that time. He also relates to the TV programme called “Face of the Nation” in which he, on behalf of the MDC, debated against David Chapfika of ZANU-PF whom he outperformed, and another between Learnmore Jongwe and Jonathan Moyo which produced similar results.<sup>555</sup> That led to the banning of the MDC from state television, and the banning of Tsvangirai’s face from television. It shows that media’s role became pervasive to the disadvantaged of the opposition.

The promulgation of the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and POSA prior to the 2002 elections constrained the opposition in several ways. Commenting on the AIPPA Bill, Edson Zvobgo declared the unconstitutionality of twenty of its provisions thus:

The original Bill was manifestly unconstitutional. As chairman of your committee, I can say without equivocation that this Bill, in its original form, was the most calculated and determined assault on the liberties guaranteed by the constitution in the twenty years I served as Cabinet Minister.<sup>556</sup>

It was POSA that led to Tsvangirai’s torture and arrest in 2002 on treasonous charges because of a clause relating to insurgency and banditry. The two pieces of legislation cushioned Mugabe from open criticism and criminalised frank debates on the state.

Viewers had no alternative sources of news and information particularly after the 2008 March presidential elections that were won by MDC. The ZTV and ZBC complemented the efforts of the state newspapers in disseminating information regarding opposition parties. They were viewed as

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<sup>552</sup> Interview with Chisi.

<sup>553</sup> Interview with Chisi.

<sup>554</sup> Interview with Tapiwa Mashakada.

<sup>555</sup> Interview with Mashakada.

<sup>556</sup> CCJPZ. (2002). The Presidential elections; March 9, 10, 11 2002.

western-backed and as parties that were devoid of any liberation credentials. Before the election run-off scheduled for June 2008 to decide the winner between Tsvangirai and Mugabe, these state institutions spread messages about the intentions of the opposition parties to return the country to whites. This campaign was augmented by the deployment ZANU(PF) supporters, government officials, ‘war veterans’ and state security forces who conducted brutal daily ‘re-education’ meetings in which they beat and tortured residents, forcing them to denounce the MDC, swear allegiance to ZANU(PF)<sup>557</sup> and vote ‘correctly’ in the June Presidential re-run. The song *Ndimi Mega* (You Alone) was popularised and repeatedly sung on the state-controlled radio stations that were operative from around 2008. The ‘singular mentality’ elevated Mugabe to the level of infallibility and indispensability, where the ruling party made serious claims that the country could not progress in the desired direction without him, and that he should rule for as long as he lived. He was regarded as irreplaceable. News on television and radio, or any reference to the President on the electronic and mass media platforms, portrayed Mugabe as the epitome and guardian of the sovereignty of Zimbabwe and Africa. Chisi admitted that ZANU-PF would, for as long as Mugabe was alive, remain a very sophisticated party.<sup>558</sup>

It can be anticipated that Mugabeism has become in Zimbabwe, a philosophy whose legacy might live on even after his death because of how deeply entrenched the philosophy has become in all institutions of the state. McLaughlin, Chisi, Chung and Coltart in their interviews intimate that ZANU-PF remains a difficult party to beat because it has its party machinery all over the country, aside from the regional solidarity that comes from support from organisations such as the South West Africa People’s Organisation in Namibia, and the ruling party in South Africa, the ANC, as well as the leaders of those countries. Mugabe was described as the “Godfather” of the African Revolution and was addressed by a chain of titles such as ‘His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Head of State and Government, and Commander-in-Chief of the Zimbabwe Defence Forces.’ Some were reminded of the titles that Idi Amin, the president of Uganda from 1971 up to 1979 who was also addressed as ‘His Excellency, President for Life, Field Marshal Al Hadji Doctor Idi Amin Dada, Lord of all the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Sea and Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa in General and Uganda in particular.’<sup>559</sup>The

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<sup>557</sup> E. Masunungure, (2009). A militarised election, p. 87.

<sup>558</sup> Interview with Chisi.

<sup>559</sup> B. Kasuka, (2012). *Prominent African Leaders since independence*, p.81. New Africa Press, Washington, D.C.



rural areas were sealed off and the opposition could not penetrate them to sell their agendas and defend themselves. The government, which indeed was the ruling party, violated a constitutional provision which states that all people must access media. Since the land reform that was started in 2000, the media has been used to fan factionalism and violence, and opposition parties were denied room to express themselves and to appeal to the public through the Zimbabwean media platform.

#### **5.4 OPPOSITION COUNTER-NARRATIVES: EVALUATING ITS POLITICAL TRAJECTORY**

Several opposition parties have been formed since 1980. The presence of opposition parties, most of which have appeared on the political scene and have since disappeared, such as ZANU Ndonga under Ndabaningi Sithole; ZUD under Margret Dongo, a former freedom fighter under ZANLA forces; ZUM under Edgar Tekere; Democratic Party under Emmanuel Magoche; former Chief Dumbutshena's Forum Party, among others, makes it difficult to characterise Zimbabwe as a dictatorship. Each of these parties had supporters, thus demonstrating one of the democratic tenets of freedom to belong to an organisation of one's choosing, or even the freedom to differ. All of the parties failed to dislodge Mugabe in their quest to bring real democracy that could go beyond the mere holding of elections on a regular basis in accordance with the constitution. The explanation given is that they were permitted to freely operate because they offered no serious challenge to ZANU-PF. One good example was Dzinemunhenzva, from Wedza who, in every election, was a presidential candidate, but beyond his grinding mill, nothing was heard about his African Political Party. These opposition parties failed to offer credible policies to the electorate upon which to build a strong economy to achieve long-term development.<sup>560</sup>None of them succeeded in mobilising the rural electorate due to financial constraints. Mashakada alludes to the fact that the early democratic formations failed to galvanise people adequately enough and they did not come up with a new narrative of change because they were all pitted in the liberation mold without breaking the barrier. Mashakada and Coltart agree that the opposition formations that came before the MDC in 1999 failed because they were not clear on statecraft, on the ideological thrust to take in terms of developing the economy, and on the alliances that they needed to build to secure electoral victory. As Coltart puts it, opposition parties have been their own worst enemies in two

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<sup>560</sup> Interview with Chisi.

respects: either policy did not so much divide them but personalities, or their party positions have been irreconcilable.<sup>561</sup>

The opposition narrative of change is implicit and central in the name of the main opposition MDC party that was founded in 1999. All interviewees agreed that the opposition had counter-narratives except Mandiwanzira, who felt that they did not have any because the agenda they were pursuing was not their own indigenous ones.<sup>562</sup> He gives reference to the opposition taking western neo-liberal positions that were irrelevant to the situation on the ground, resulting in confusion “when they hit against a brick wall.”<sup>563</sup> This argument can further be developed along the line that when the opposition MDC was popularising and theorizing western ideals such as the rule of law, good governance and human rights, among many other ideals, ZANU-PF was being practical, going out and parceling out land to the people. Mandiwanzira is supported in this argument by Kori who opined that the opposition was not clear on the land reform programme and that by insisting on an orderly land redistribution programme, respecting property rights, the need for a new constitution, and the replacement of the obsolete Lancaster Constitution, they took the narrative of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that were regarded as an opposition mouthpiece.<sup>564</sup> The government regarded the MDC’s neo-liberal tendencies as an attempt to get the support of friends from overseas who could sponsor them. What emerged clearly from the responses on the issue of opposition counter-narratives was the attempt by interviewees to link opposition solely with the MDC.

The opposition ‘MDC is a name that can be unpacked as follows. A movement refers to interest groups, organisations, associations and civil society coming together for a common good, even if their interests are either irreconcilable or at variance with each other. The only challenge with a movement is that when what united the disparate groups in the beginning ceases to exist, each segment can recoil into its cocoon. If the movement is set to continue after a real or perceived common enemy disappears, fissures inevitably occur and often with devastating effect. ‘Democratic’ derived from ‘democracy’ assumes that the operating environment is characteristically authoritarian and the ordinary people do not enjoy political rights to determine

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<sup>561</sup> Interview with Coltart.

<sup>562</sup> Interview with Super Collin Mandiwanzira.

<sup>563</sup> Interview with Mandiwanzira.

<sup>564</sup> Interview with Arkmore Kori.

and choose their leaders, or to freely express themselves without fear. In Africa, some of the authoritarian political regimes are led by ‘democratic’ parties. Democracy is built on the assumption that the electorate is informed. Change becomes key to any meaningful transformation in each society, particularly where and when the leadership, or the ruling party, becomes clueless and is bereft of ideas after many years in control of the state. Again, change is not always positive, because the electorate could be swayed into voting for a more effective oppressive regime than the one being voted out.

It is evident that it has been very difficult for the opposition political parties in Zimbabwe to communicate their policies to the electorate because they did not have access to the electronic media. Limited resources to disseminate and publish their manifestos compounded this existing challenge. Opposition budgets were stringent and the opposition could not exhaust the media platforms to sell their narratives. There was also general consensus from the respondents that public media in Zimbabwe, both print and electronic, were controlled by the ruling ZANU-PF party. Mutsvangwa was alone in arguing that MDC did not have its own narrative to sell to the people because it was a concoction of conflicting interests, with different organisations getting united only to push ZANU-PF out of power.<sup>565</sup> On the contrary, Maziriri, who belonged to the same ZANU-PF party with Mutsvangwa, insisted that the opposition MDC had a strong counter-narrative, which was the reason why in 2008, ZANU-PF had no option but to get into the GNU after losing in the first round of elections.<sup>566</sup> He believes that it was the opposition’s positive narrative that resulted in urbanites voting for MDC since 2000 as it appealed to the unemployed but educated young people who dismissed the ZANU-PF’s liberation narrative.<sup>567</sup> According to Maziriri, the opposition MDC narrative was a product, just like a ZANU-PF product, which, nonetheless, did not get them into office, but got them something by way of participating in the GNU.

One of the challenges confronting opposition political parties in Zimbabwe has been their failure to associate their opposition with the liberation struggle. Kori argues that it was difficult to support the liberation narrative or the land reform programme since this would have seen them being labeled as ZANU-PF supporters, or at the very least, they would not have been distinguished from

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<sup>565</sup> Interview with Monica Mutsvangwa.

<sup>566</sup> Interview with Maziriri.

<sup>567</sup> Interview with Maziriri.

ZANU-PF.<sup>568</sup> Kori and Chung intimate that land is democracy and the reluctance by the opposition to support land, which in itself was a key element of democracy, went against what the name ‘MDC’ stands for. MDC did not have its roots in the liberation struggle and so it did not have a liberation struggle narrative. The basis of this argument is that if one is in opposition, supporting ZANU-PF-initiated programmes such as land redistribution and indigenisation of the economy would throw them into the ZANU-PF ‘enemy camp. Kori argues that the opposition could have been relevant to people if it did not oppose for the sake of opposition: it could have embraced land reform as a policy, developed its own land narrative within the framework of that which already existed, then tried to improve it in terms of what people wanted as well as what was in the best interests of the country. To summarise Kori’s views, for the opposition to be associated with the historical liberation narrative and gain support, there was need for it to improve on the existing ZANU-PF narratives of land and war.

ZANU-PF espoused three distinct narratives. The first on land revolved around the redistribution of land that was by 2000 still essentially under the control of white farmers in the Highveld which is the richest of all the regions in Zimbabwe in terms of soil type and mineral resources. The land narrative was presented in such a way that it appeared that the MDC was not interested in the land question, and once it got into power it would return land to the whites. The land narrative became important to the government under ZANU-PF as a reaction to its defeat in the referendum of 2000 which the opposition regarded as an outcome of a strong counter-narrative. The Southern African Development Corporation (SADC), at the height of the state orchestrated violent land campaigns in Zimbabwe, acted as if that country’s liberation struggle was still underway.<sup>569</sup> The South African ANC was also accused of ideologically supporting Mugabe’s undemocratic policies pertaining to land as a future land redistribution model for South Africa.<sup>570</sup>

The second narrative, the liberation narrative, was predicated on the Zanufication of the struggle for the independence of Zimbabwe, making ZANU-PF the sole liberator of the country from colonialism. This narrative also sought to deify ZANU-PF in perpetuity for ‘dying’ for the sake of independence. This suggests that the ruling party was still cast in the liberation mould, a development which made the party remain a liberation party, as opposed to a political party, after

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<sup>568</sup> Interview with Kori.

<sup>569</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 30.

<sup>570</sup> M. Adelman, (2004). Quiet diplomacy, p. 252.

independence.<sup>571</sup> The violence that became a characteristic feature in land restitution programmes was driven by such a narrative that regarded the war, or the revolution, as still incomplete and ongoing. Mandiwanzira argues that the liberation struggle was not won on the basis of firepower alone, but also because of mobilisation by freedom fighters, political prisoners and former detainees of the Smith regime who spread the messages that the people were able to internalize.<sup>572</sup> People in all regions of Zimbabwe already knew the importance of independence and what it meant to them, according to this argument, so they could not abandon a party with liberation war credentials.

Contrary to this argument, Chisi dismissed all interpretations of liberation, and posits that the only liberation narrative, by definition, is the one that includes what is contained in the 2013 Constitution that is operative currently. He also reviews the ZANU-PF liberation narrative as elitist not only because it supersedes the general sentiments of the citizens, but also because it was propaganda disseminated to reach the electorate using state-controlled media and an abusive state machinery to enforce wrong narratives. The opposition parties have not been able to outwit ZANU-PF's liberation war rhetoric because ZANU-PF has continued to do what it had promised to do during the liberation war.

The third narrative was that of regime change with which all opposition parties were linked. It is interesting to note how ZANU-PF used it to undermine opposition and to give itself title deeds to the state as protector and guarantor of the sovereignty and values of the country. Coltart argues that even in a free and fair election, it was unlikely that any other political party would have fared well against ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU because of their legacy of ending minority rule in the country and that earned them respect from a majority of the electorate.<sup>573</sup> He further intimates that ZANU-PF could not rely on its liberation credentials during 1997 and 1998 when opposition to its rule gathered strength following the country's participation in a war in the DRC<sup>574</sup> in which Zimbabwe was spending over thirty million Zimbabwe dollars daily in financing a war in support

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<sup>571</sup> J. Makumbe, (2003). ZANU-PF: A party in transition? p. 19.

<sup>572</sup> Interview with Mandiwanzira.

<sup>573</sup> Interview with Coltart.

<sup>574</sup> Interview with Coltart.

of Laurent Kabila.<sup>575</sup> That was not sustainable in a country facing diminishing foreign currency reserves due to ESAP that had led to the closure of many big foreign-owned companies.

Edgar Tekere and Margret Dongo, both of whom were war veterans in the Second Chimurenga, broke away from ZANU-PF to form ZUM and ZUD respectively when land was not an issue because the government still honoured the Lancaster constitutional provisions in relation to property rights. The MDC was formed in 1999 under the leadership of charismatic trade unionists Morgan Tsvangirai and Gibson Sibanda, both of whom had experience in labour politics and appealed to urban workers who had no interest in land. The MDC's urban support base unsettled the government that conversely had rural constituencies on its side for political support. It can be argued that the MDC gained urban support at a time when ZANU-PF's popularisation of the land and liberation narratives reached peak levels and when, after the referendum, emotions were allowed to reign over reason, resulting in events becoming 'real war.' As Mashakada puts it, ZANU-PF has played these narratives to their advantage, capitalizing on the yesteryear fears of the rural people about war and whites and the brutality of the Smith regime.<sup>576</sup>

The 'no' vote in the 2000 referendum was interpreted by ZANU-PF as a reflection of the potential of opposition forces to unseat it. The MDC, according to Mashakada, made the "mistake" of winning the referendum, hence alerting ZANU-PF of the possible demise that awaited it in the 2000 parliamentary and 2002 presidential elections.<sup>577</sup> This analysis partly underscores the violent nature of these elections. Violence was used as a justificatory myth to subvert the opposition that was allegedly being sponsored by the western countries to effect regime change. The government led by ZANU-PF could not adopt a new constitution because of this defeat. It has been argued that most people in rural areas did not have time to read the heavily-worded draft constitution which demanded much more time to read than was available before the plebiscite. The 'no' response to the plebiscite was a protest vote ostensibly not against the contents of the draft, but against the incumbent regime for presiding over a country with worsening economic conditions due to ESAP. The MDC got 57 against 62 for ZANU-PF and one seat for Ndabaningi Sithole's ZANU Ndonga in the 120-member parliament in the 2000 parliamentary elections<sup>578</sup> in the face of state

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<sup>575</sup> *Democratic Governance in Zimbabwean Citizen Power*, p.12.

<sup>576</sup> Interview with Mashakada.

<sup>577</sup> Interview with Mashakada.

<sup>578</sup> D. Compagnon, (2000). Briefing Zimbabwe, p. 450.

orchestrated violence against the opposition, which strategy worked more in the rural than in urban areas.

To the MDC-T, gaining 57 parliamentary seats was a “victory” for democracy in that the legislative hegemony that ZANU-PF had enjoyed unchallenged for twenty years was finally broken. It was a sign that the balloon of ZANU-PF’s invincibility could be pricked if opposition was organised around a narrative that was more appealing to the electorate than the one on land that were made aware of. The decline of ZANU-PF support in parliament was perhaps an indication that the land narrative was losing significance and did not have the same potency for support mobilisation even in rural areas. Evidence of the continuation of the protest vote was exhibited in the same 2000 parliamentary elections in urban areas where opposition candidates who were totally unknown were elected with margins as wide as 70 to 80 percent, and this was a prediction for the likely outcome for the 2002 presidential elections.<sup>579</sup> The Tsvangirai-led MDC beat ZANU-PF under Mugabe again by 47.9 percent to 43.2 percent in the Presidential results of the harmonised elections held in March in 2008.<sup>580</sup> The opposition used the declining importance and popularity of the incumbent regime to build their own counter-narrative.

Dzinashe Machingura, a war veteran and former senior commander of ZANLA forces, joined the opposition MDC arguing that there was need for a reinterpretation of the liberation struggle outside the ZANU-PF narrative that premised it on land alone. To him, the liberation struggle encompassed political, social, economic and cultural aspects and those who shouted the slogan ‘land is the economy’ were the real opponents of the land reform programme.<sup>581</sup> Quite importantly, Chung refers to ‘Dzino’ Machingura who, despite being a war veteran, crossed over to join Tsvangirai’s MDC, but was not given a post in the party. She concludes that Tsvangirai had many opportunities which he did not utilize, including having Machingura on his side, and argues that MDC never had its roots in the liberation struggle.<sup>582</sup> Such an analysis becomes problematic given the fact that MDC was a post liberation political outfit and, as such, did not claim to have its roots in the liberation. More importantly, however, having a war veteran in the MDC party and giving

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<sup>579</sup> Ibid., p. 452.

<sup>580</sup> J. Barrica, (2008). Preliminary Statement of the SADC Election Observer Mission (SEOM): SEOM report on Zimbabwe run-off elections issued June 30 2008. <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/documents/preliminary-statement-of-the-sadc-observer-mission> Accessed 12 July 2017.

<sup>581</sup> *Financial Gazette*, 8 September 2001

<sup>582</sup> Interview with Chung.

that person the vote would not have automatically and necessarily have benefited give party, for some, in fact, contend, that such individuals infiltrated the MDC which, in fact, contributed to the 2005 split within the MDC.

Opposition parties argued that they, indeed, had alternative narratives to the ones that ZANU-PF had repeatedly used to remain in power. There are numerous manuals in opposition party offices that contain counter-narratives such as democracy, human rights, freedom of expression, new generation issues, non-violence, christianity, love, forgiveness, national healing and health among others.<sup>583</sup> These, according to Coltart, are said to be narratives couched in neo-liberal democracy discourses and are deemed to be more powerful than liberation narratives which could hardly be understood by people born after the war.<sup>584</sup> The challenge for the opposition parties, Coltart insisted, was their inability to access the electronic media which was wholly controlled by ZANU-PF. Coltart also described the conditions under which the opposition political parties had to communicate their policies to the electorate as exceptionally difficult, and this was compounded by the fact that they had limited resources to disseminate their views or to have their manifestos published for public consumption.<sup>585</sup> Radio stations in Zimbabwe are all owned by ZANU-PF politicians and the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of state-controlled newspapers are also all ZANU-PF aligned, and around half the civil society groups are Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) members who are appendages of the state.<sup>586</sup> *The Herald*, *Chronicle*, *Manica Post*, *Kwaedza*, and *The Zimbabwean* are all state newspapers which do not strike a balance in their reporting and no one from outside can penetrate these media houses that are rigidly controlled by the state. There is a very strong media setup run by government Ministers on the one hand, and Executives recruited based on party loyalty, on the other. One such radio station is Z-FM owned by Super Mandiwanzira, the Minister of Information Technology. Thirty to forty percent of the so-called Independent media was run by people who were wedded to ZANU-PF.<sup>587</sup> Independent media was only independent to the extent that newspapers were privately owned, but ZANU-PF controlled their editorial policies and this act alone took away that independence.

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<sup>583</sup> Interview with Komichi.

<sup>584</sup> Interview with Coltart.

<sup>585</sup> Interview with Coltart.

<sup>586</sup> Interview with Komichi and Chisi.

<sup>587</sup> Interview with Komichi.



Because of limited space for opposition political parties to disseminate their political views to counter ZANU-PF narratives, use was made by opponents of ZANU-PF, and continues to be made, of diasporic radio stations such as the VOA Studio 7 which broadcasts from Botswana and USA, the Short Wave and Radio Africa that beamed into Zimbabwe from US and UK. Even then, these stations were jammed by means of Chinese-sourced jamming technology which Biener (2008) referred to as Bob's Fire Dragon.<sup>588</sup> That involved erecting communication barriers to block alternative media influences and make it difficult for consumers to benefit, and for the opposition to articulate its counterpoise. What further worsened the situation for the opposition, particularly the MDC, was that Studio 7 as a broadcasting station was controlled by its broadcasting ethics and it did not want to be portrayed as an opposition radio station. That was the reason the station interviewed politicians from across the political spectrum in Zimbabwe, including both the MDC and ZANU-PF. The MDC increased its visibility internationally when ZANU-PF was still reluctant to be associated with a station that reported on it negatively. When it finally elected to also participate in the Studio 7 radio programmes, the decision stifled the MDC as its ideological monopoly was lost. Studio 7 programmes that pitted ZANU-PF and MDC against each other in debates transferred the battle for control of the state of Zimbabwe to Botswana, as presenters took the opportunity to size each other up and outwit each other. The opposition parties have always proffered counter-narratives which, however, failed to reach out to the people because this single station was insufficient to counter the state monopoly of the media within Zimbabwe itself. Opposition parties can do little other than reaching out to people in their own local communities and hoping to spread the message widely. In contrast, ZANU-PF has had monopoly over the media, both electronic and print, as well as over the use of force to induce acceptance of its narrative on the electorate.

## **5.5 MILITARISATION OF ELECTORAL PROCESSES: STATE-SANCTIONED OPERATIONS, VOTER DISENFRANCHISEMENT AND PARTISAN POLITICAL IMPUNITY**

Hardliners within the ranks of the war veterans made repeated references to the liberation and land narratives as the cornerstone for the survival of ZANU-PF when the opposition challenge grew

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<sup>588</sup> E. Ndlovu, (2014). The re-emergence of diasporic radio in independent Zimbabwe. *Ecquid Novi: Journalism Studies*, 35(3), p. 67. 'Bob' is a pseudonym for Mugabe given to him for his ability in a game to skilfully outwit his political opponents.

stronger. General Zvinavashe, the Zimbabwe Defence Forces (ZDF) commander, with support from the military and state security personnel, became a crucial cog in the ZANU-PF machine when it was almost certain that Tsvangirai would win the 2000 presidential elections. He made the following declaration:

We wish to make it very clear to all Zimbabwean citizens that the security organisations will only stand in support of those political leaders that will pursue Zimbabwean values, traditions and beliefs for which thousands of lives were lost in pursuit of Zimbabwe's hard-won independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and national interests. The highest office in land is a straitjacket. Whose occupant is expected to observe the objectives of the liberation struggle. We will...not accept, let alone support or salute anyone with a different agenda that threatens the very existence of our sovereignty, our country and our people.<sup>589</sup>

This was the first public statement from the military and security organisations since independence. It indicated that the army and the police, other security services notwithstanding, had abandoned the barracks to become fully engaged in exclusionary politics. The stated position of military leaders and high-ranking security personnel not to salute anyone 'with a different agenda' from theirs as stated above, remained in force up to the 2008 run-off elections which saw the opposition MDC losing about 300 of its activists who were murdered allegedly by ZANU-PF agents. Among those murdered were Tonderai Ndira, Godfrey Kauzani and Cain Nyevehe.<sup>590</sup> There was, however, no one caught and proven to be from ZANU-PF. Such information remains secretive which makes Raftopoulos argue that given the extra-judicial killings and displacements following the defeat of Mugabe in March 2008, the impunity with which people perceived to support the political opposition have been murdered suggests that this was an official policy of the state.<sup>591</sup> One of the elements of impunity<sup>592</sup> in Zimbabwe, according to Amnesty International was the role of the government in taking steps to obscure or prevent the identification of the state agents

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<sup>589</sup> CCJPZ. (2002). *The presidential elections; March 9, 10, 11 2002*.

<sup>590</sup> J. Fontein, (2010). Between tortured bodies and resurfacing bones: the politics of the dead in Zimbabwe. *Journal of material culture*, 15(4), p. 434.

<sup>591</sup> B. Raftopoulos & S. Eppel, (2008). Desperately seeking sanity: What prospects for a new beginning in Zimbabwe? *Journal of East African Studies*, 2(3), p. 383.

<sup>592</sup> Amnesty International, (2002). *Zimbabwe: The toll of impunity*. p. 2.

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/112000/afr460342002en.pdf> Accessed 28 October 2017. Impunity is defined as the failure to bring to justice, those people who commit serious violations of human rights,

in perpetrating human rights violations and human rights defenders and the independent media were barred from investigating and publishing such accounts.<sup>593</sup>

The rigid political stance that the military pursued, which did not hide the quasi-military formation of ZANU-PF at the time, held sway through to the GNU in 2009 when Tsvangirai became PM. The Council of Ministers that he chaired in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was predominantly ZANU-PF and it declined to acknowledge him as such. It is therefore important to consider the military factor in the politics of the country after 2000, and how it interfered with election outcomes. The voter apathy that crept into Zimbabwean elections since 2000 was believed to have been caused by the involvement of the military in politics which made elections ‘exercises in wasting time’ because results were preordained before people voted.

The influence of the military leadership in passing decisions about who was to rule the country has its precedence in the events surrounding the nomination of Robert Mugabe in 1975 by the ZANLA High Command as president of ZANU. Mhanda and Chung concur that members of the ZIPA, among whom were Wilfred Mhanda, Elias Hondo, Augustus Mudzingwa, James Nyikadzinashu, Tendai Pfepherere and David Todlana were imprisoned for demanding transparency in the running of ZANU’s affairs following the ouster of Ndabaningi Sithole in 1975.<sup>594</sup> Mhanda writes from the point of view that he was personally involved in the fracas and he was imprisoned for his complicity in the plot to undermine Mugabe’s nomination to the leadership of the party. The much talked about elections of 2008 in March and June for the first round and re-run respectively, in a way, generated criticism about the validity of the electoral system in the country, and the openness of the institutions that regulated them, such as ZEC and the RG’s office. Following the June 2008 run-off election, the Zanufication of state institutions became an obstacle for opposition parties to challenge state power because the people in key positions were ZANU-PF loyalists and apologists, one of whom was Tobaiwa Mudede, the Registrar-General and outspoken pro-Mugabe official responsible for all national elections in the country and, according to Smiles, the man who knew the secrets about Mugabe’s re-election over years.<sup>595</sup>

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<sup>593</sup> Amnesty International, (2002). *Zimbabwe: The toll of impunity*, p. 6.

<sup>594</sup> W. Mhanda, (2011). *Dzino: Memories of a freedom fighter: Memories of a Freedom Fighter*: African Books Collective, Oxford, p.139.

<sup>595</sup> J. Smiles, (2003). Zimbabwe: review of the 2002-presidential election. *Journal for Contemporary History*, 28(3), p. 157.

A statement by Joseph Stalin that in elections, people who cast the votes decide nothing, and people who count the votes decide everything aptly describes election scenarios in Zimbabwe since 2000. It was not for nothing that Dorman wrote an article entitled ‘Make sure they count nicely this time’ to refer the 2005 elections.<sup>596</sup> In the 2008 re-run elections, democracy was put to shame when Mugabe asked in protest: “Should one just write an X and then the country goes like that?”<sup>597</sup> The statement testifies to his belief in the uselessness attached to elections in general, and to multiparty voting in particular. It defied the logic of holding the same elections in the first place. The electorate was likely dispirited knowing that they would be voting to change nothing, and when it was implicit in the president’s stupefying statement that elections were merely window-dressing public national exercises calculated to proffer an aura of democratic participation in a system that was essentially seen as being averse to ballot outcomes. It was a question of the ballot and the bullet, or perhaps both in this case. The army adopted a militaristic approach to the conduct of elections, leading to military operations that targeted the opposition. These operations included Operation Wavhotera papi? (“Who did you vote for?”), Operation Murambatsvina (Clean up the mess) in 2005, Operation Dzikisai Madhishi (Pull down satellite dishes), Operation Chigunwe chakatsvuka here? (Is your finger red), Operation Chimumumu (Operation [pretend] you were born speechless) in 2010. The military was involved in all the operations.

Operation *Murambatsvina* was a government project to forcibly evict potential voters who had been driven by poverty from rural areas into urban centres. The reason, ostensibly, was that increasing urban populations generated enormous pressure on urban resources and infrastructure leading to anti-social behaviour in the densely populated locations. From a moralistic point of view, the move was meant to de-congest urban areas which had become havens for illicit deals by the unemployed youths. Sceptics such as Clarke<sup>598</sup> and Musoni<sup>599</sup> have queried the timing of this operation which was meant to coincide with hotly contested urban elections throughout the country. It was carried out when opposition support in urban areas had risen to greater heights. This view is shared by Harris who views Operation Murambatsvina as a symptomatic of various governmental anxieties about loss of control of the urban population irrespective of political affiliation.<sup>600</sup>

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<sup>596</sup> S. R. Dorman, (2005). ‘Make sure they count nicely this time’.

<sup>597</sup> L. Sachikonye, (2011). *When a state turns on its citizens*, p. 83.

<sup>598</sup> Clarke, J. E. 2008. Operation Murambatsvina: Urban governance in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Unpublished master’s thesis. Ontario: Carleton University.

<sup>599</sup> F. Musoni, (2010). Operation Murambatsvina and the politics of street vendors in Zimbabwe, p.307

<sup>600</sup> A. Harries, (2008). Discourses of dirt and disease in Operation Murambatsvina. In M.T.Vambe, (2008). *Hidden Dimensions of Operation Murambatsvina*. The African Books Collective, Oxford, p. 40.

From the official government position, Operation Murambatsvina was designed to eliminate flea markets that had become the havens of illegal foreign currency dealings and to prevent the country from being subjected to the economy of accumulation.<sup>601</sup> Politically, the operation served to weaken or dilute opposition power bases by disenfranchising potential urban voters, first by destroying their shacks and secondly, by demanding residence documents as pre-requisite for voting in the 2008 election. Operation 'Pull Down all Satellite Dishes' followed the defeat of ZANU-PF in the March 2008 elections. It was designed to prevent the electorate from accessing news from across the borders, forcing civilians to listen to local news and programmes as ZANU-PF planned for a major comeback in the June re-run of the same year. There was wide coverage on the political situation in Zimbabwe by various local and foreign media houses and the government wanted to shut out all this from the public. Operation 'Chimumumu' forced voters to pretend on the voting day in June 2008 that they were unable to read so that the election personnel would choose the candidate to vote for on their behalf. Operation 'Is your Finger Red' being a follow-up to the voters to check whether every eligible voter had cast a vote by having his finger dipped in red ink.

## **5.6 THE GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY (GNU), 2009-2013**

Zimbabwe and Britain were deadlocked when the land reform programme was fast-tracked even when the Cotonou Agreement that Zimbabwe was part of, provided for a transparent process that respected property rights. The FTLRP alienated whites to begin with, in order to give legitimacy to the farm dispossessions that subsequently followed. Mugabe and his close lieutenants used land as their main campaign theme, but the massive farm invasions and organised violence that went with them were a direct consequence of the 2000 referendum.<sup>602</sup> According to Cawthra<sup>603</sup> that was when Mugabe followed hard on the formation of the newly-formed MDC alliance. The path to a violent land redistribution programme was set by Chenjerai 'Hitler' Hunzvi who led war veterans and ZANU-PF youth, backed by party militias and CIO to administer selective violence on white farmers, farm workers, MDC activists, rural teachers, and rural nurses suspected of belonging to the opposition.<sup>604</sup> Such violence became the trademark for ZANU-PF land campaigns as the Third Chimurenga intensely unfolded after 2000.

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<sup>601</sup> Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, Tuesday 6 March 2007, Vol.33, No.36.

<sup>602</sup> D. Compagnon, (2011). A predictable tragedy, p. 52.

<sup>603</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 29.

<sup>604</sup> N. Kriger, (2003a). War veterans: Continuities between the past and the present. *African Studies Quarterly*, 7(2-3), p. 145.

The SADC position on the crisis unfolding in the country was ambivalent. It concurred with Mugabe that the crisis was principally over land, and once the land question was resolved, the crisis would be resolved. That stance was exhibited when at a SADC summit congratulated Zimbabwe on the successful land redistribution, yet it remained silent on the human rights abuses<sup>605</sup> which impacted directly on these countries as it led to the diaspora phenomenon by Zimbabwean citizens into neighbouring South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Mozambique and even abroad. In the 2000 and 2002 elections, repression, violence against civilians, harassment and intimidation of media personnel went far above that in all other countries in the SADC region, and scored higher than even Angola and DRC, two countries in the region with a reputation for such abuses.<sup>606</sup> The 2005 elections were also declared free and fair by SADC based on reports from its observers.<sup>607</sup> It is, therefore, important to highlight the mandate of SADC to show the extent of its effectiveness or lack thereof, when member states made breaches of its protocols. Zimbabwe is a case in point that can be used to measure SADC's responses to the impunity with which the governing elite in ZANU-PF had used state resources and institutions to encourage lawlessness.<sup>608</sup>

When the standoff between ZANU-PF and the opposition MDC reached peak levels after the 2005 elections, in 2007, SADC appointed Thabo Mbeki to become the principal mediator at an emergency summit held in Dar es Salaam although the MDC doubted his impartiality.<sup>609</sup> Of interest was the June 2008 run-off from which the MDC withdrew citing violence. Botswana and Zambia broke ranks with Zimbabwe as a result and for that reason, SADC was widely criticised for intentionally condoning human rights violations, breaches of the rule of law and repression particularly when, in 2009, Zimbabwe was not on the official agenda of the SADC 2009 meeting, despite its continued gross violations of human rights.<sup>610</sup> Mugabe threatened the organisation that if it tried to do 'silly things', Zimbabwe would pull out of SADC.<sup>611</sup> It can be said with

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<sup>605</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 29.

<sup>606</sup> D. Hansohm, C. Peters-Berries, W. Breytenbach, T. Hartzenberg, W. Maier & P. Meyns, (2002). *Monitoring regional integration in Southern Africa, Yearbook Volume 1*. Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit. (NEPRU), Windhoek. p. 141.

<sup>607</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 25.

<sup>608</sup> D. Hansohm, et al, (2002). *Monitoring regional integration in Southern Africa*, p. 122.

<sup>609</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 25.

<sup>610</sup> R. E. Howard-Hassmann, (2010). Mugabe's Zimbabwe, 2000-2009: Massive human rights violations and the failure to protect. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 32(4), p. 911.

<sup>611</sup> T. Samukange, (2013). Mugabe threatens SADC pull-out... labels Lindiwe Zulu "street woman". *Newsday*, 6 July 2013. <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2013/07/mugabe-threatens-sadc-pullout-labels-lindiwe-zulu-street-woman/> Accessed 20 March 2017.

reasonableness that SADC remained essentially a conservation organisation which relied for its survival on the goodwill and consensus of its members. It can also be argued that Mbeki had to settle on ‘Quiet Diplomacy’ as the only viable approach to deal with Mugabe since Britain and USA failed to create in Mugabe the person they wanted him to be. The overall framework of quiet diplomacy was predicated on the use of diplomacy, not sanctions or military action against Zimbabwe. With time, such diplomacy was construed to mean silent approval of what Mugabe was doing.<sup>612</sup> Implementation of the policy by Mbeki was evident in the manner that both South Africa and SADC continued to defend Zimbabwe in international institutions such as the UN, Commonwealth, and the Africa-Caribbean Partnership (ACP) against western sanctions (ibid.).<sup>613</sup> It can be argued that Mbeki, referred to as ‘the point person’ by then US president George Bush when both UK and USA had failed to deal with Mugabe following an altercation between Mugabe and Tony Blair,<sup>614</sup> played into Mugabe’s hands by supporting the nationalist rhetoric on land, which critics saw as having a corrupt element to it.

The Cotonou Agreement that Zimbabwe was signatory to proclaimed that political and economic governance conditions were pre-requisite for development aid and free trade privileges.<sup>615</sup> The good governance approach meant that the government of Zimbabwe was expected to deal with the land issue in a manner that was mutually inclusive and fair to all parties involved. Zimbabwe failed the test on this approach resulting in smart sanctions (which included travel bans and freezing of overseas assets) targeted at the inner circle of the Mugabe regime.<sup>616</sup> In response, Mugabe announced that Zimbabwe was pulling out of the Commonwealth to which it was a member by virtue of it being a former colony of Britain. Mbeki adopted a new policy of “containment” to deal with the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe because it negatively affected the economies of SADC member states. Zimbabwe was put on the SADC agenda and Namibia, Angola, South Africa, Botswana and Mozambique were tasked to deal with the problem of the breakdown of the rule of law resulting from ‘farm invasions’.<sup>617</sup> This line of thinking is alleged to have influenced the results of the 2002 Presidential poll that was characterised by violence and

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<sup>612</sup> M. Adelman, (2004). Quiet diplomacy, p. 252.

<sup>613</sup> Ibid., p. 262.

<sup>614</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 25.

<sup>615</sup> M. Adelman, (2004). Quiet diplomacy, p. 251.

<sup>616</sup> Ibid.

<sup>617</sup> M. Adelman, (2004). Quiet diplomacy, p. 260.

vote rigging, yet South Africa and many other African countries declared them legitimate, but not free and fair.<sup>618</sup>

The transformation from Southern Africa Development and Coordination Committee (SADCC), which was formed to reduce economic dependence on apartheid South Africa, to SADC in 1992, led to the transfer of sovereign rights of individual states to the regional level.<sup>619</sup> Its focus shifted from regional cooperation to regional integration with priority being given to the politics of resistance to apartheid and colonialism.<sup>620</sup> One of the weaknesses of SADC lay in its constitutional provision about elections within the member states. Each member state has veto power which it can exercise to defend what it considers as its sovereign rights and interests within SADC. The constitution gives national interests precedence over regional interests and priorities.<sup>621</sup> SADC guidelines commit members states to follow agreed election practices, but these guidelines call for the resolution of election-related disputes such as those in Lesotho in 2007 and in Zimbabwe in 2008 in accordance with their own national laws.<sup>622</sup> In line with the SADC guidelines, the election crisis in Zimbabwe was a domestic issue which did not call for SADC intervention. The violence, torture, rape and other vices that were election-related could not be discussed at a SADC caucus because that would be a breach of the SADC guidelines. The fact that SADC was hamstrung in this regard meant that the democratic deficit remained a far cry for the people of Zimbabwe as SADC was powerless to influence the democratisation processes affecting one of its member states. Given the above debates, SADC's record in dealing with the crisis in Zimbabwe has been questionable.

It has been argued that South Africa was complicit in the unraveling of Zimbabwe and that the crisis may have been averted in Zimbabwe if South Africa had acted swiftly to contain Mugabe.<sup>623</sup> It has also been argued that it was South Africa that prevented other member states within the organisation – Tanzania, Zambia and Botswana – from seeking a peaceful settlement of the

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<sup>618</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). *The Role of SADC in Managing political crisis and conflict*, p. 24.

<sup>619</sup> D. Hansohm, et al., (2002). *Monitoring regional integration in Southern Africa*, p. 7.

<sup>620</sup> C. Alden, (2010). *A pariah in our midst. Regional organisations and the problematic of western-designated pariah-regimes. The cases of SADC/Zimbabwe and ASEAN/Myanmar. London School of Economics-Working Paper Nr. 73*, p. 4.

<sup>621</sup> D. Hansohm, et al., (2002). *Monitoring regional integration in Southern Africa*, p.132.

<sup>622</sup> T. Murithi & A. Mawadza, (2011). *The African Union (AU) and the Southern Africa Development Community. Zimbabwe in Transition: A View from Within*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, p. 290.

<sup>623</sup> M. Dube & R Midgley, (2008). *Land reform in Zimbabwe*, p.33.



Zimbabwean crisis (ibid.). They wanted the mediation team to be enlarged and that way, its decisions would be collectively made in a much more transparent manner than having Mbeki to deal with Mugabe alone. If both South Africa and SADC had opposed Mugabe at an early stage, several interviewees conjectured he may have listened.

The Global Political Agreement that came into existence in 2008 was brokered by Mbeki. It proposed the sharing of power between ZANU-PF and the opposition MDC, which had split into MDC-T and MDC-M in 2005. Tsvangirai became the PM, and was deputized by Arthur Mutambara, the leader of the other faction, MDC-M. Tsvangirai would chair the Council of Ministers and Mugabe, who retained the post of President, chaired the cabinet. There was fierce contestation for ministerial posts and ZANU-PF made sure it retained control of key ministries such as Defence and Security. Without going into the details of the GNU, what is important is to understand is that ZANU-PF retained power in the new dispensation, and the opposition was given ministries that were meant to clear up the mess that ZANU-PF had created, such as Finance and Local Government.

Some issues remained contentious and unresolved, which led to growing suspicion within the uneasy coalition. The MDC demanded the replacement of the Attorney General (AG), who, in its view, had been responsible for the persecution of opposition members and their supporters in different parts of the country. To the MDC formations, the AG was a symbol of ZANU-PF impunity and brutality that had characterised the 2008 June run-off election which consequently led to Tsvangirai's pulling out. The battle continued until and MDC gave up altogether. Another area of disagreement was the replacement of Security Service Chief by others who could be amenable to all parties to the coalition deal. As highlighted earlier, they were responsible for the militarisation of politics resulting in mayhem and despondency in the country. What incensed the opposition was that some of their key members who had played part in the formation of the MDC in 1999 had died under gruesome political circumstances and some had become disabled due to torture at the hands of state security agents. Again, this matter remained unresolved together with issue of the replacement of the Reserve Bank Governor, Gedion Gono. Roy Bennet, who had been arrested on treason charges for having been allegedly found in possession of illegal firearms before the Global Political Agreement (GPA), could not be released to participate as a free man in the GNU. The MDC had chosen him as their Agriculture Minister in the GNU which was another

Ministry that was allocated to the opposition. The decision not to release him defied the good working spirit that the GPA was supposed to generate.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter examined the Third Chimurenga around which issues of democracy and political pluralism revolved. It analysed factors that made ZANU-PF reluctant to budge on the land issue and how policies such as indigenisation and empowerment were closely linked to the land issue. The Third Chimurenga was portrayed as a continuation of the colonial struggle for independence which would move Zimbabwe from its neo-colonial status to the achievement of full economic liberation for black Zimbabweans. The Lancaster House Constitution of 1979 was used as background to the political and economic crisis that affected Zimbabwe when President Mugabe used his Presidential powers to redistribute white -owned farms after the government suffered its first ever defeat in the 2000 plebiscite. The events between 2000 and 2008 were characteristic of a country in a “civil war” when it had become clear to ZANU-PF that its political support had diminished, and that the urban electorate had transferred its allegiance to the opposition MDC party that was formed in 1999.

ZANU-PF narratives to do with land, the liberation war, and the threat of neo-colonialism masquerading as the opposition MDC party were disseminated through various media, both electronic and print. That involved the removal of whites from the definition of ‘citizens’ to ‘enemies’. Public media became the channel to castigate the opposition in all the election campaigns that took place periodically in the country up to 2013. The opposition counter-narratives appealed to the urban populace but failed to make real inroads into rural constituencies which had become no-go areas for opposition political parties. In fact, ZANU-PF supporters felt that they could act with impunity against opponents since no penalties were imposed on them if the victims were regarded as being from the opposition. The defeat of ZANU-PF in the harmonised 2008 March elections led to the results of the presidential elections being withheld for five weeks. The people had spoken, but ZANU-PF, through the influence of the military, accepted the results as long as they did not give the opposition the electoral mandate to rule the country. The military establishment ensured that the re-run scheduled for June 2008 would not produce a repeat scenario by threatening the electorate with a resumption of war if they did not vote ‘correctly’ in the second round. The violence and intimidation of the voters and the opposition supporters led to a one-man

race after Tsvangirai withdrew. An analysis of how the state subverted the will of the people by means of coercion and repression, and how the government became an institution for the dispensation of selective justice on its enemies attracted world focus on Zimbabwe. That confirmed the view that elections in Zimbabwe are window-dressing national events for what is essentially a one-party state. It is noted that the post-independence electoral system reflected orientation towards one-party hegemony.

The 2008 re-run internationalised the Zimbabwean conflict leading to the intervention of SADC, with Mbeki, the South African president, as mediator. The GPA was reached despite allegations that Mbeki and SADC openly supported the land redistribution that ZANU-PF was undertaking. The GNU that was formed in 2008 continued to be deadlocked in the distribution of posts, with ZANU-PF refusing to let go those ministries that represented power such as Defence among others. The alliance was not holy as ZANU-PF sought to create parallel structures outside the GNU and that stifled the operational and organisational capacity of the opposition. It was a chess-football or 'black-white' anecdote, with ZANU-PF playing the more complicated chess while the opposition played football, a simpler sport. The debates by the respondents also helped to shape some of the arguments pertaining to democracy and multiparty politics in Zimbabwe. From the archival and oral materials consulted in compiling this chapter, the legacy of violence, impunity, intimidation and repression is likely to live on post the Mugabe era as it has become deeply entrenched, and it will be challenging to create an environment conducive to free and fair elections and the development of robust multiparty democratic traditions.

## CHAPTER SIX: ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DEMOCRATIC FORMATIONS WITHIN ZANU-PF (1980-2015)

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

ZANU-PF's hegemonic control of the state since independence in 1980 gives the impression that there was little real opposition to its rule. Subsequent elections in 1980, 1985, 1990 and 1996 were contested by different parties and the results confirmed ZANU-PF's electoral hegemony. Historical literature on multiparty democracy in Zimbabwe since 1980 has been submerged by the emergence of the post-liberation MDC party in 1999. The only serious challenge to the ruling ZANU-PF party in first decade after independence was PF-ZAPU which by 1987, ceased to exist after its co-optation into a broader ZANU-PF under the Unity Accord that was brokered by Canaan Banana.

Fissures in the original ZANU, which were based on ethnic lines, were revealed in 1974 in Zambia when a group of disgruntled guerillas led by Dakarai Badza and Thomas Nhari plotted against their commander, Josiah Tongogara. The conspiracy was timed to coincide with the absence of Tongogara, the war commander, and Herbert Chitepo, the Chairman of the party at the time, who were in Romania, and when other members of the Dare (Supreme Revolutionary Council) such as Kumbirai Kangai, Rugare Gumbo and Rex Nhongo were also away, in China. Two ZANLA commanders, Lovemore Chikadaya and Peter Ngwenya were buried alive at Chifombo, the rebels base, for refusing to take part in the rebellion. Tongogara described the Nhari-Badza rebellion as an attempt to destroy the armed struggle. The conspiracy was aborted with the arrest and execution of Badza, Mataruse, Chemist Ncube, Cuthbert Chimedza, Nhari, Tichatonga and Matthew Ndanga at their new rebel base at Chifombo near Mozambique under an operation code-named 'Gukurahundi', involving Tongogara with 250 newly trained cadres on Christmas Day.<sup>624</sup> Tekere argues in his book that neither Mugabe nor Muzenda intervened to stop the executions until he [Tekere] addressed the people gathered at the trial saying:

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<sup>624</sup> F. Chung, (2007). *Re-living the Second Chimurenga*, p. 91.

May I implore you not to carry out this judgement. Let us agree now that we stop this execution and any other attempt to kill each other. The spirits which guide us in this war do not agree with these killings. Please let's stop.<sup>625</sup>

Chung suggests that Tongogara, from the Karanga group did not trust Chitepo, a Manyika, whom he accused of siding with the rebels, and the brewing tension culminated in the horrid circumstances under which Chitepo was killed in 1975 when a bomb planted in his car exploded. Kaunda arrested all key members of ZANU such as Earnest Kadungure, Josiah Tongogara and Kumbirai Kangai among others, having been convinced that the death of Chitepo was an 'inside' matter. Chitepo's death is said to have disrupted the war effort for close to a year.

The rebellion, according to Simbi Mubako, Law lecturer in Zambia at the time, was the result of a sudden expansion in recruitment from 300 to 5000 cadres. Administrative deficiencies compounded this recruitment drive as well as infiltrations by the Rhodesian enemy, the existence of disgruntled politicians and failure by the OAU Liberation Committee to respond swiftly to the demands of an expanding war.<sup>626</sup> He further indicated that the disgruntlement was over the luxurious lifestyle that the leadership enjoyed when all other fighters, because of the massive recruitment drive, were languishing in poverty with nothing to eat. In Zambia, the death of Herbert Chitepo, the Chairman of ZANU and the first black lawyer in Rhodesia, which ZANU blamed on the Rhodesian espionage campaigns, reflected the cleavages within the party.<sup>627</sup>

The death of Chitepo led to the formation of the ZIPA and heralded an era where the party followed the gun,<sup>628</sup> implying that it was the army thence that directed all operations, thus subordinating the party to military interests and priorities. Mugabe's 'clean up the rot' campaign in Mozambique in 1977, which was meant to eliminate military cadres in ZIPA suspected of undermining his leadership of both the party and High Command, is said to have almost led to a coup, thanks to the intervention of the military who stood solidly behind him. Mugabe's words to celebrate the

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<sup>625</sup> E. Tekere, (2004). *A lifetime of struggle*. SAPES Books, Harare. pp. 101-2.

<sup>626</sup> C. Moyo, (2014). Détente: When the Nhari rebellion was crushed. *The Patriot*, 23 October 2014. [https://www.thepatriot.co.zw/old\\_posts/detente-when-the-nhari-rebellion-was-crushed/](https://www.thepatriot.co.zw/old_posts/detente-when-the-nhari-rebellion-was-crushed/) Accessed 3 September 2017.

<sup>627</sup> D. Y. Mangani & T. N. Mahosi 2017. An Uneasy Legacy of the Chimurenga Struggle: Zimbabwe Relations with Zambia 1974–1990, *Conference of the International Journal of Arts & Sciences*, 10(01):329–334 <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316562732> Accessed 22 January 2018.

<sup>628</sup> G. C. Mazarire, (2011). Discipline and punishment in ZANLA: 1964-1979, p. 579.

destruction of ZIPA in 1977 “We warned any person with a tendency to revolt that the ZANU axe would fall on their necks”<sup>629</sup> This background is useful and important to the study of ZANU-PF and its application of violence with military backing against opposition to its rule after independence. It illuminates Mugabe’s heavy reliance on the military to buttress his regime and to impose an uncritical acceptance of ZANU-PF policies.

Chung points out that the Zambian government led by Kenneth Kaunda supported Joshua Nkomo’s ZAPU and not ZANU and did not want divisions.<sup>630</sup> That was the reason a flabbergasted Zambian government, when ZIPRA fighters captured the ZAPU vice president, James Chikerema and threatened him, forced them to acknowledge his leadership at a time when Nkomo was in prison. Apart from having renounced the use of violence, Chung also intimates that Ndabaningi Sithole had rejected Josiah Tongogara as ZANLA High Commander when ZANU bases were relocated to Mozambique following FRELIMO’s victory over the Portuguese military machine in 1975.<sup>631</sup> The rejection was based on the fact that Tongogara was murderer and a Karanga. In a bid to secure his release from prison, Sithole refused to support the continuation of war, preferring negotiations as a possible solution to the Rhodesian political crisis. Chung, who was in Tanzania when Sithole’s renunciation of violence against the Rhodesian system was made public, relates how one ZANU leader in Dar es Salaam literally wept: “Why did I do so much for Ndabaningi Sithole when he has rejected the whole liberation struggle for which many people are dying...”<sup>632</sup> Traditional ZANU nationalists were educated, and, as Chung puts it, Samson Mutambanengwe had several university degrees and Nathan Shamuyarira had a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), which became reason for them to show concern over the election and elevation of people they regarded as semi-illiterates, such as Tongogara, into important posts.<sup>633</sup> Tongogara, who participated in the Lancaster Conference, was killed in a car crash in Mozambique on the eve of Christmas in 1979 when ZANU-PF was preparing to launch its election campaigns inside the country in preparation for the first multiparty elections scheduled for 1980.

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<sup>629</sup> M. Vambe (2008), cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S. J. (2012). Rethinking Chimurenga and Gukurahundi in Zimbabwe: A critique of partisan national history. *African Studies Review*, 55, p. 10.

<sup>630</sup> Interview with Chung.

<sup>631</sup> Ibid.

<sup>632</sup> Ibid.

<sup>633</sup> M. Huni (2016). A shocking description of Cde Tongogara. *The Sunday Mail*, 31 December 2017.

<http://www.sundaymail.co.zw/a-shocking-description-of-cde-tongogara/> Accessed 20 June 2018. Josiah Tongogara had standard six qualifications, (i.e. one year after primary school).

Like most nationalist parties in Africa that fought for political independence against their former colonisers, ZANU members were united in their fight for freedom, being guided by a false sense of unity of purpose. The background about ZANU, which became ZANU-PF after the Lancaster Conference, is marred by many ethnically-motivated factional fights that history has played down. Elite cohesion in ZANU-PF before and after independence was driven by the need to win the historic 1980 elections, the lack of trust that it had over the intentions of the white political elite and their African allies, and most importantly, the political threat coming from its traditional political opponent, PF-ZAPU.<sup>634</sup> The 1980 elections were ethnic in the sense that Nkomo's party won 20 National Assembly seats in Matabeleland but lost one Bulawayo urban seat to ZANU-PF. That urban seat was won by the then ZANU-PF Political Commissar, Doctor Herbert Sylvester Masiyiwa Ushewokunze (Mangurenje). Despite being from the Shona ethnic group, Ushewokunze was quite popular in Bulawayo because he had operated some surgeries in the city before joining the ZANLA forces in Mozambique in 1975 after the ill-fated Geneva Conference. The ethnic factor remained salient in the politics of the enlarged ZANU-PF and played a key role in the splits that took centre stage after 1987 when Tekere was sacked from ZANU-PF and decided to form ZUM. Coupled with the 20 seats that were constitutionally reserved for whites, it meant that the combined votes of the two groups, PF-ZAPU and the whites, could block ZANU-PF decisions in parliament. A one-party state looked very likely after the Unity Accord and, if it succeeded, that would have meant the death knell to multiparty politics in the country.

This chapter is grounded on empirical qualitative research based, to a greater extent, on interviews as well as parliamentary debates for both the Legislative Assembly and the Senate in the Hansard. It shifts focus from analysing the opposition such as the MDC that was a social movement, to opposition formations that originated from within ZANU-PF itself. Intra-party opposition historiography that traces the growth and development of opposition parties in the ruling ZANU-PF party is rarely articulated in a continuous narrative. The impression that people get as a result, is that ZANU-PF has always been intact as a party, characterised by cohesion and guided by the socialist ideology. This chapter addresses challenges ZANU-PF has had to its rule, and how in a characteristic demonstration of its power, the party succeeded in dealing decisively with opposition that emanated from within.

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<sup>634</sup> M. Sithole & J. Makumbe, (1997). Elections in Zimbabwe, p. 123.

## 6.2 INITIAL POST-INDEPENDENCE CHALLENGES TO ZANU-PF CONTROL OF THE STATE FROM WITHIN (1980-1990)

When PF-ZAPU clinched twenty seats in Matabeleland in 1980, it was a political imperative for the ZANU-PF government to allocate to it, posts commensurate with its runner's-up position in the electoral contest. The government that was formed after independence in 1980 was a de facto coalition comprising ZANU-PF, PF-ZAPU and the former white Rhodesians who had reorganised themselves to form the Conservative Alliance of Zimbabwe. Nkomo was made Minister of Home Affairs and key members of his party such as Josiah Chinamano and Joseph Musika among others, were offered governmental responsibilities. Skirmishes occurred in Chitungwiza and Entumbane in 1982, involving shoot-outs by former ZANLA and ZIPRA guerrilla fighters barely two years after independence. The discovery of arms cache on a PF-ZAPU farm in Matabeleland coincided with an upsurge of violent killings by dissidents in Matabeleland and the Midlands Provinces. These developments confirmed the ruling party's fears about Nkomo's intentions. The ferocity with which the government deployed a North-Korean-trained Fifth Brigade that was predominantly Shona-speaking to execute Gukurahundi in PF-ZAPU strongholds became a justificatory myth to destroy the opposition PF-ZAPU's military power. A series of demotions ensued, with Nkomo first becoming a Minister without Portfolio before his elimination from the cabinet on 17 February 1982.<sup>635</sup> This was followed by a crackdown on former ZIPRA leaders such as Dumiso Dabengwa, Lookout Masuku, Nicholas Nkomo and Tshaka Moyo.<sup>636</sup>

The government decided to suspend all development projects in Matabeleland for security and political reasons<sup>637</sup> Despite the crackdown on PF-ZAPU, the ruling party failed to make inroads in Matabeleland in the 1985 elections, which reinforced the notion that ZANU-PF was not wanted in the Ndebele-dominated provinces. It was for that reason that ZANU-PF viewed elections as 'battles' and opponents as 'enemies' to be annihilated rather than as competitors through the use

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<sup>635</sup> M. Ndakaripa, (2014). Ethnicity, narrative, and the 1980s violence in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces of Zimbabwe. *Oral History Forum, D'histoire Orale*, p. 29.

<sup>636</sup> Ibid.

<sup>637</sup> M. Musemwa, (2006). Disciplining a 'dissident' city, p. 242.



of the Gukurahundi strategy.<sup>638</sup> Taken to extremes, Gatsheni-Ndlovu<sup>639</sup> describes the strategy as a Shona crusade against the Ndebele.

In 1984, following the discovery of arms cache in PF-ZAPU owned farms, Joshua Nkomo fled into exile in England.<sup>640</sup> It was under these circumstances that Nkomo had to concede to a Unity Accord. The Unity Accord signed in 1987 between the two revolutionary parties, PF-ZAPU and ZANU-PF, eliminated opposition to ZANU-PF's determination to be the sole rulers of the state. Even if the 1987 Unity Accord ended the period of military conflict in the country, the development created a de facto one-party state.<sup>641</sup> Chisi argues that the major focus of the ruling ZANU-PF party after independence was to consolidate its power and do away with opposition politics. He further intimates that Gukurahundi was a government-orchestrated campaign with ethnic overtones to ensure that there was a one-party framework in post-independence Zimbabwe by wiping out the Ndebele people who were alleged to be supportive of dissident destabilisation activities in the Matabeleland regions as well as parts of the Midlands Province. Despite having served as co-Vice President, Joshua Nkomo was only acknowledged in the state media as 'Father Zimbabwe' in honour of his contributions to the liberation of the country after his death in 1999.<sup>642</sup>

The Conservative government in Britain led by Margaret Thatcher did not react to the massacres in Matabeleland and the Commonwealth also remained silent<sup>643</sup> as if to give legitimacy to government's military manoeuvres in that part of the country. However, the British government did not cut aid destined for Zimbabwe, but actually increased it by ten million pounds around the time of the massacre.<sup>644</sup> If both the British government and the Commonwealth had reacted swiftly against the terror campaigns, or if they had tried to oppose the Zimbabwean government by a token show of military force, Mugabe might have been checked earlier in his policies of ethnic aggression which, as time went on, was one of the trademarks of the ruling party. In any case,

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<sup>638</sup> J. Muzondidya, (2011). Zimbabwe's failed transition? An analysis of the challenges and complexities in Zimbabwe's transition to democracy in the post-2000 period. In Murithi, T. & Mawadza, A. (Eds). *Zimbabwe in transition: A review from within*, Jacana Media, Johannesburg, p. 9.

<sup>639</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2008b). Patriots, puppets, dissidents and the politics of inclusion and exclusion in contemporary Zimbabwe. *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review*, 24, p. 95.

<sup>640</sup> M. Sithole & J. Makumbe, (1997). Elections in Zimbabwe, p. 134.

<sup>641</sup> F. Chung, (2015). *Zimbabwe: Looking east*, p. 135.

<sup>642</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). 'In the beginning was the land', p. 222.

<sup>643</sup> I. Taylor & P. Williams, (2002). The limits of engagement, p. 552.

<sup>644</sup> Ibid.

having cut aid would have endangered the spirit of reconciliation that clouded black and white relations in postcolonial reconstruction. As Du Toit<sup>645</sup> puts it, the disturbances in Matabeleland became prototypical of state policy in dealing with any form of opposition to its rule, and ruling party dissidents were treated on the same basis as opposition members.<sup>646</sup>

Chisi<sup>647</sup> describes Nkomo's nickname 'Chibwechitedza' ('Strong and solid rock') as not being Ndebele but Shona, whereas Ndlovu<sup>648</sup> refers the nickname to the softness and slipperiness of a stone which makes it hard to hold in one's hand. The nickname exhibited not only the extent of his influence across the country during the heydays of the nationalist struggle, but also his patriotic zeal, power and commitment to fight and eliminate colonialism in the whole country. Chisi<sup>649</sup> also argues that ZAPU was national but ZANU-PF created a narrative that was calculated to portray Nkomo's party as Ndebele and only confined to Ngezi, his home area. Chisi takes the debate further by arguing that the Gukurahundi campaigns orchestrated by the ZANU-PF government did not spare known Shona people in Matabeleland from the ongoing massacres and that was proof to show that ZAPU was not tribal but cut across all ethnicities in the country. Shona-speaking people in Matabeleland, or in regions affected by Gukurahundi, were also killed once it was suspected that they supported dissidents. Mashakada supports this line of thinking and holds that beyond 1980, the nationalist movement [ZANU-PF] did not have an economic or a government programme to roll out the promise of the liberation struggle. He points out that one area of deficit was governance which manifested itself in Gukurahundi to exterminate the Ndebeles as evidenced by multiple abductions and disappearances which were carried out with impunity. The Gukurahundi campaigns in Matabeleland must be understood in the context not only of ZANU-PF destroying dissidents' support base, but also of eliminating PF-ZAPU as a power factor. The ruthlessness with which the Gukurahundi campaigns were executed was predicated on ZANU-PF's full knowledge that dealing with ZIPRA forces required a great deal of military precision because it was a sophisticated military outfit equipped with conventional strategies of military engagement. Joshua Nkomo, between 1983 and 1987, was affected by the Gukurahundi campaign

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<sup>645</sup> P. Du Toit, (1995). *State building and democracy in Southern Africa: Botswana, Zimbabwe, and South Africa*. US Institute of Peace Press, Washington, D.C., n. p.

<sup>646</sup> D. Compagnon, (2000). *Briefing Zimbabwe*, p. 451.

<sup>647</sup> Interview with Chisi.

<sup>648</sup> S. J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2017). Introduction: Writing Joshua Nkomo into history and narration of the nation. *Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo of Zimbabwe*: Springer, Dordrecht, p. 8.

<sup>649</sup> Interview with Chisi.

as large numbers of PF-ZAPU supporters were killed in that part of Zimbabwe. PF-ZAPU, under immense pressure from the ruling ZANU-PF party, and in a desperate bid for its continued survival within the unity framework, practically signed itself out of existence and only had nominal presence in another coalition government that emerged after the Unity Accord of 1987.

There has been criticism of the Accord by some ZAPU supporters, given that ZAPU was forced into it as a condition for its members to be allocated posts in the government.<sup>650</sup> These critics, such as Masipula Sithole (1993) in 'Is Zimbabwe poised for a liberal path...?' Terence Mashingaidze (2005) in his article entitled '.....a case of peace without reconciliation', and Edgar Tekere who formed ZUM in 1989 as a protest against the possibility of a one-party state political strategy being declared because of the absence of an opposition party after the signing of the Unity Accord.<sup>651</sup> These critics believed that key members of PF-ZAPU sold out when they participated in the deal that resulted in the party signing its 'death certificate' because supporters of the party were not consulted. It was an accord between ZANU-PF and the PF-ZAPU leadership, the latter of which was compelled to appreciate the futility of escalating a power struggle. The argument is that the new name for the party should have reflected the reality of two parties that had come together to become one, and that it should not have remained as ZANU-PF. The former ZAPU Chief of intelligence<sup>652</sup> argues:

Gukurahundi was never put to an end by the signing of the Unity Accord. It simply mutated from being direct violence into structural and systematic violence underpinned by glossily centralized system of governance that is grotesquely corrupt and self-serving, characterised by gross marginalization of the same communities that were affected by Gukurahundi. ... Dabengwa further intimates that the Accord created the sad era of a one-party state that benefited Mugabe and ZANU at the expense of democracy.

It must be noted that the armed disturbances by dissidents in Matabeleland and the Midlands provinces, from the ZANU-PF perspective, were being planned by ZAPU. Chung highlights ZANU-PF suspicions over huge arms caches that ZAPU had husbanded to execute a conventional

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<sup>650</sup> L. Laakso, (2003). *Opposition politics in independent Zimbabwe*, p. 4.

<sup>651</sup> M. Sithole & J. Makumbe,(1997). *Elections in Zimbabwe*, p. 128.

<sup>652</sup> Zimyeeye, (2017). *Dabengwa takes aim at Mnangagwa*. <https://www.zimeye.net/2017/12/27/dabengwa-takes-aim-at-mnangagwa/> Accessed 19 June 2018.

war which it was good at, with the ruling party. The 20 seats reserved for whites were removed in 1987, subsequent to the signing of the 1987 Unity Accord which implied that Zimbabwe was to all intents and purposes a “de facto one-party-state” thus, obstacles in the way of the one-party state were removed as it became apparent that Zimbabwe was on the verge of being ruled singlehandedly by the ‘liberation party’.<sup>653</sup>

In 1988, there was what is considered the worst corruption scandal since independence at Willowvale Motor Industries in Bulawayo.<sup>654</sup> The scandal chronicled the triumph of investigative journalism as it forced two of the most senior ministers in Mugabe’s cabinet and four other powerful politicians to resign.<sup>655</sup> The Chronicle newspaper in Bulawayo with editor Geoffrey Nyarota fearlessly reported this high-profile corruption even though it was state-owned. President Mugabe pardoned those implicated in this scandal despite revelations of massive corruption by the Sandura Commission that was tasked by government to investigate the matter. Cabinet Ministers were summoned to give open testimonies of extralegal practices that they had used to gain wealth, but that was as far as democracy could go. The Minister of Education, Sports and Culture, Dzingai Mtumbuka, who retorted ‘one fool at a time’<sup>656</sup> when the public audience simultaneously made interjections following his inconsistent testimony, exhibited the arrogance that most implicated ministers had at the public hearings. Of interest to note is that being ZANU-PF did not necessarily entail every member was for a one-party state and therefore a socialist. One case in point is when the Investment Code came into existence 1989 to liberalise conditions under which foreign investors could be accommodated in a characteristic dismissal of the socialist path to economic development.<sup>657</sup> Tekere challenged ZANU-PF’s deviation from the socialist principles and from the party’s leadership code. In his book, Tekere caricatures Mugabe whom he orders to leave office, as a coward only taught by him how to handle a gun towards the end of the liberation

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<sup>653</sup> P. Dzimiri, T. Runhare, C. Dzimiri & W. Mazorodze, (2014). Naming, identity, politics and violence in Zimbabwe. *Studies of Tribes and Tribals*, 12, p. 233.

<sup>654</sup> E. Windrich, (2007). Zimbabwe lives: autobiography as history. *Third World Quarterly*, 28(7), p. 1407. Chronicle reporters revealed corruption by government ministers, top civil servants and businessmen involving buying new Cressida vehicles at Willowvale cheaply before adding extortionate profits and selling them in a market short of cars.

<sup>655</sup> The case of Maurice Nyagumbo and Dzingai Mtumbuka, both key members in Mugabe’s administration and implicated in the scandal, is discussed in chapter six.

<sup>656</sup> F. Kwaramba, (2013). Imported used cars flood Zim Market. *Dailynews*, 19 August 2013. <https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2013/08/19/imported-used-cars-flood-zim-market> Accessed 19 June 2018.

<sup>657</sup> F. Gwenhamo, (2009). *Foreign direct investment in Zimbabwe: The role of institutional factors*. University of Cape Town, Cape Town. p. 3. It was to increase the proportion of after-tax profits that Multinational Companies (MNCs) could repatriate from 50% to 100%.

struggle; yet after independence, Mugabe personalised the liberation struggle.<sup>658</sup> Tekere<sup>659</sup> further criticises Mugabe:

[for] humiliating our women and children. He has humiliated trade unionists and ululated about this.... I am calling Mugabe to go and go quickly. We have to reconstruct this country, but without Mugabe.

This criticism of Mugabe was by one of his closest allies, a man with whom he had spent eleven years in a Rhodesian prison and escaped together into Mozambique. Tekere's memoirs highlight his contribution to creating the Mugabe phenomenon when he and others in Mozambique nominated him as the party's president ahead of Ndabaningi Sithole. He blamed Mugabe for building a nation that lived in constant fear of its own government which is a negation of the principles of democracy that were the cornerstone of the revolutionary war. Tekere is not a neutral observer in this story. He started as ally of Mugabe and eventually became his fiercest critic, as we discuss below.

The broadcaster who conducted an interview with a UZ lecturer on the Willowvale scandal was suspended and summarily detained for putting the interview on air. A ZANU-PF MP<sup>660</sup> who sympathised with the detained broadcaster, argued:

...take this view that my own liberties and freedom are safe as long as my neighbours. We are our brothers' keepers just as much as our brothers are also keepers in issues of our liberties, freedom of the press, right to inform and right to be informed, and the right of speech. Individuals should not be detained at the whim of an individual person.

Those implicated and pardoned by Mugabe remained indebted to him<sup>661</sup> and those who were a threat, such as Maurice Nyagumbo, were eliminated allegedly by death under the guise that he committed suicide. Mugabe used the scandal to consolidate his power within his party and by extension within the country, by creating patrimonial connections with corrupt leaders within the ruling party. This occurred at a time when the thrust of the party was towards creating a one-party state. Tekere, who was an outstanding critic of the party's policies, strongly opposed the move. He

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<sup>658</sup> E. Tekere, (2004). *A lifetime of struggle*, p. 174.

<sup>659</sup> Ibid., p. 174.

<sup>660</sup> Parliamentary Debates, (1989). 5 July 1989, p. 87.

<sup>661</sup> E. Tekere, (2004). *A lifetime of struggle*, p. ?

fearlessly challenged the party to adhere to the revolutionary principles and attacked the leadership for the web of corruption involving many politicians, Asian businessmen, multinational and local companies, white individuals and state institutions resulting in the resignation of five Cabinet ministers.<sup>662</sup>

The Leadership Code put in place in 1984 was an instrument to limit wealth acquisition through corrupt deals by the ruling elite<sup>663</sup> and its promulgation pointed to the predatory behaviour of the new rulers. Tekere overtly opposed the one-state strategy idea and gained support from university students whose demonstration in 1988 was crushed by the government. For openly expressing his views, Tekere was expelled from ZANU-PF and he formed the ZUM in 1989. After the 1990 elections, in which his party only won two seats in the National Assembly, it was Mugabe who blocked Tekere's bid for re-admission into ZANU-PF to run as its candidate in the 2005 Senate elections.<sup>664</sup> That explained why Tekere joined Mavambo Kusile Dawn and supported Simba Makoni's presidential candidature in the March 2008 elections.

According to Coltart,<sup>665</sup> opposition parties have been their own worst enemies whether they are formed from the ruling party as breakaway organisations or are political formations with no links with the ruling party. Kori supported this observation<sup>666</sup> and also intimated that ZUM did not do much in terms of taking itself to the people, and he regards this as a crisis of all opposition political parties in the country. It became a party based in urban areas because rural constituencies were sealed off by the ruling ZANU-PF party. That means rural people were not consulted about ZUM's policies. Maziriri contends that ZUM, among other parties that formed after it, was geographically set in Manicaland, Tekere's home province, and this made it less national in character. ZUM was formed at the height of student politics at the UZ and the government was quick to associate their activities with Tekere's party. Mashakada,<sup>667</sup> who was a university student at that time, relates how students were muzzled, beaten and brutalised for voicing their concern over the crippling dictatorship. Tekere capitalised on the failed promises that ZANU-PF made during the war, particularly, government's abandonment of the revolutionary ideals. One of the ideals of the

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<sup>662</sup> L. M. Sachikonye, (1989). The debate on democracy in contemporary Zimbabwe, p.118.

<sup>663</sup> Ibid., p.120.

<sup>664</sup> *NewsDay*, Why Mugabe 'hated' Tekere, 15 June 2011.

<sup>665</sup> Interview with Coltart.

<sup>666</sup> Interview with Kori.

<sup>667</sup> Interview with Mashakada.

struggle was democracy, and the government's commitment to declaring a one-party state was antithetical to the realisation of democracy. That was the reason Tekere had support from university students who were enlightened and could quickly lend their support to any party that served to protect their own democratic freedom as students.

One of the challenges that awaited ZUM was that it was not a project rooted in a social movement, according to Mashakada. That means that ZUM did not have grassroots support, nor did it have the support of civil society and religious groups because it was formed out of emotions. "ZUM was a grievances outfit so they failed to dislodge Mugabe in their quest to bring democracy".<sup>668</sup> ZUM won two out of 106 parliamentary seats amidst state brutality, partiality, discriminatory procedures, harassment, censorship and government's system of monopoly, all of which closed the democratic space. It is also argued that ZUM did not have a coherent ideology nor a clear political programme.<sup>669</sup> This perspective is supported by Chisi<sup>670</sup> who posits that except for the MDC, all other parties that were formed to oppose ZANU-PF were reactionary because they were formed by politicians who had been chased away from ZANU-PF and did not have a clear ideological thrust to take on the country's economic agenda. They were also amateurish in statecraft and on the alliances that needed to be built to defeat ZANU-PF in an election. Mashakada also alluded to the opposition parties' lack of political experience and acumen by referring to them as people 'trying to play football with ZANU-PF that was playing chess'.

ZANU-PF won the 1990 presidential elections by 83% against ZUM's 18%. Patrick Kombayi, a former ZANU-PF loyalist who defected together with Tekere, was shot and seriously wounded for challenging the Vice President, Simon Muzenda, in the 1990 electoral contest for the Gweru urban seat.<sup>671</sup> He sustained serious injuries from the shots fired by the ZANU-PF MP for Chiundura, Kizito Chivamba, and had to seek medical treatment in Britain.<sup>672</sup> In 1987, Eddison Zvobgo as

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<sup>668</sup> R. Matikiti, (2008). The church and the struggle for multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe, p. 33.

<sup>669</sup> L. M. Sachikonye, (1989). The debate on democracy in contemporary Zimbabwe, p. 119.

<sup>670</sup> Interview with Chisi. Mashakada alluded to the fact that ZANU-PF is a much more complicated party and like in any game of chess, the opposition needs to seriously calculate their moves when it comes to the struggle for control of the state with ZANU-PF.

<sup>671</sup> M. Sithole & J. Makumbe, (1997). Elections in Zimbabwe, p. 135.

<sup>672</sup> ***New Zimbabwe, Kombayi shooter denied national hero status, declared provincial hero, 21***

**April 2017, <https://news.pindula.co.zw> > Politics Accessed 6 October 2017.**

Minister of Legal and Parliamentary Affairs had drafted a constitution that he argued was meant to re-democratise the Zimbabwean Constitution. Emphasis was on powers to be bestowed on the Executive President if the country was to become a one-party state. It was suspected that Zvobgo held presidential aspirations when he delivered his speech at an international conference in Harare in November 1995. He was injured in a staged car accident and was subsequently demoted to the post of Mines Minister while seeking treatment in London in 1996. It is important to underscore the fate that befell ZANU-PF members who fell out of favour with the president. Zvobgo, Nyagumbo and Tekere are case examples of how attempts were made on their lives. Other critics expelled from the ruling party for their negative outspokenness and for being critical of ZANU-PF included Margret Dongo in 1995 and Lawrence Mudehwe in 1996.<sup>673</sup>

ZUM members did not remain united after the electoral defeat of 1990 as Emmanuel Magoche and Zembe broke away to form their Democratic Party. The former Chief Justice, Enock Dumbutshena, formed the Forum Party after breaking ranks with the ruling party. What emerges from these analyses is that early democratic formations that came from ZANU-PF did not galvanise the electorate adequately because they did not come up with a new narrative of change. One of the weaknesses of these opposition parties was that they were still pitted in the liberation mould, and organisationally and ideologically resembled ZANU-PF. Lack of ideological clarity among ZUM, Forum Party, Democratic Party and other smaller parties that emerged from ZANU-PF gave the ruling party the benefit of the doubt. People were still enjoying the euphoria of independence and they did not require to think that the regime was a rogue one.

It can be argued that ZANU-PF allowed disgruntled members to break away and form their own opposition political parties as long as they remained small in terms of membership, and when they did not threaten the ruling party's hegemonic control of the state. Part of the debate is the allegation by the opposition that ZANU-PF assisted in the creation of certain parties resulting in a pseudo-multiparty democracy. This argument can be sustained if consideration is given to Shakespeare Maya who was a presidential candidate for his party but did not get votes that exceeded the size of his family. Chisi speaks critically about Dzinemunhenzva in Wedza constituency, who is a presidential candidate in every election, but beyond the people employed in his grinding mill, no

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<sup>673</sup> M. Sithole & J. Makumbe, (1997). Elections in Zimbabwe, p. 135.



one hears about his African National Party.<sup>674</sup> Such parties present deceptive outward trappings of a democracy, yet meaningful multiparty democracy cannot just be measured by the presence on the political scene of a multitude of parties that exist outside ZANU-PF. Instead, democracy is measured in terms of the contributions that these parties can make in transforming people's lives, including, of course, the competitiveness of the election campaigns and the actual election itself. Parties that were formed on a whim and lacked a coherent ideology to distinguish themselves as truly new, remained essentially ZANU-PF in all but name. As argued earlier, competing groups in electoral politics in many countries on the continent of Africa do not seem to have substantial policy alternatives, and, in the case of Zimbabwe, the proliferation of breakaway parties from ZANU-PF in the guise of multiparty democracy before the arrival of the MDC, led to what Akinrinade<sup>675</sup> called 'voting without choosing.'

Zimbabwe, through the stewardship of ZANU-PF, maintained a modicum of multiparty democracy, evidenced by the existence of breakaway parties that formed from it as well as the increasing number of independent candidates who had severed links with the mainstream parties. In trying to expose the inherent weaknesses that accompanied the hurried globalisation of democracy as defined in western terminology, Africanist historians writing from the perspective of Africans, argue that given the unique situation that the continent presents, democracy has been reduced to the crude simplicity of multiparty elections to the benefit of some of the world's most notorious autocrats who were able to parade democratic credentials without reforming their repressive regimes.<sup>676</sup> Africanist historians also argue that democracy is in theory and practice a European phenomenon that grew out of European history and is built on European social ideals and political movements.<sup>677</sup>

In support of the above perspective, Clark<sup>678</sup> addresses how the forward march of democracy in Africa is often halted by the ruling elite who rely on the abuse of public resources, bureaucratic manipulation and a biased state-owned media to deliver the results they want. Using this premise,

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<sup>674</sup> Interview with Chisi.

<sup>675</sup> S. Akinrinade, (2000). Single or multi-party system, n. p.

<sup>676</sup> A. M. Magbu & M. Budeli, (2008). Democracy and elections in Africa in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Lessons for Africa, *Law, Democracy & Development*, 12(1), p. 108

<sup>677</sup> S. Pausewang, et al., (2002). Ethiopia since the Derg, p. 657

<sup>678</sup> D. Clark, (2015). *The forward march of democracy halted? World politics and the rise of authoritarianism*, p. 6. [www.henryjacksonsociety.org](http://www.henryjacksonsociety.org) Accessed 21 November 2017.

it can be argued that globalising democracy defined in western terms became a constraint to the true exercise of multiparty practice in Africa in general, including Zimbabwe. The United States Secretary of State in 2011, Hilary Clinton, defined liberal democracy not as a matter of only holding elections, but she also spelt out the need for free, fair and transparent elections, a free media, independent judiciary, the protection of minorities, delivery of results for people by providing economic opportunities, jobs and a rise in living standards.<sup>679</sup> The criteria above need to be measured against Zimbabwe's performance in democracy, a concept which simply describes multiparty electoral competition in behavioural terms.

### **6.3 THE DEMOCRATIC STRUGGLE FROM WITHIN ZANU-PF (1990-2000)**

After the 1990 elections, ZUM ceased to exist as a party. The Democratic Party and the Forum Party emerged as offshoots from ZUM in readiness for the 1995 elections. Like ZUM, the Forum party had urban subscribers and was little known in rural areas where the majority of voters resided. According to Coltart,<sup>680</sup> the Forum Party received substantial financial support from foreign entities and private organisations. The legal framework of the 1995 elections severely limited the operational capacity of opposition parties in the following respects. First, opposition parties were not granted equality with ZANU-PF in that mail voting by ZANU-PF personnel on foreign diplomatic missions as well as the army posted on peace-keeping missions throughout the world was permitted, but no one else living or working abroad was given the same permission. Second, the Political Parties Finance Act of 1992 provided that the government would give funds to registered political parties with at least 15 seats in Parliament, and the irony of it all was that ZANU-PF with 117 out of 120 seats was the only party to be legally funded by the national treasury.<sup>681</sup> Third, the Broadcasting Services Act guaranteed government monopoly on national media platforms in the country whereas the LOMA, which changed to Public Order and Security Act (POSA) in 2002, was transplanted from the colonial system<sup>682</sup> and it proscribed public meetings unless they were sanctioned by the police.

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<sup>679</sup> US Department of State, (2011). *Hilary Clinton, Remarks at African Union, AU Headquarters, Addis Ababa*, 13 June 2011. <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2011/06/166028.htm> Accessed 19 June 2018.

<sup>680</sup> Interview with Coltart.

<sup>681</sup> Commonwealth Foundation, (2000). *Democratic governance in Zimbabwe: Citizen power*. Commonwealth Foundation, London, p. 15.

<sup>682</sup> Zimbabwe Country Report (2003). Country Information and Policy Unit: Immigration and Nationality Directorate Home Office, United Kingdom, n. p.

Five opposition parties boycotted these elections on allegations that the political playfield was not even, including the Democratic Party under Magoche and United Parties led by Muzorewa. The parties that participated were ZANU Ndonga with two seats in Chipinge, Ndabaningi Sithole's rural home area, and the Forum Party under Dumbutshena which received 6% of the votes whereas ZANU-PF garnered 82%.<sup>683</sup> One of the candidates who stood as an Independent was Margret Dongo. She effectively was expelled from ZANU-PF, but when a by-election was conducted in Harare South constituency, she won and became the third opposition MP in parliament.<sup>684</sup> Her influence was circumscribed within the high-density locations of Sunningdale, not far away from the Central Business District of Harare. After breaking away from ZANU-PF over irregularities in the primaries, 27 independent candidates participated.<sup>685</sup> The increase in the number of Independents in parliament from seven in 1990 to 41 in 1995<sup>686</sup> was exceptional and this must have sent shock waves to the ZANU-PF hierarchy that internally, party cohesion was in jeopardy and that its parliamentary hegemony was diminishing.

The struggle for democracy after 1990 coincided with the era of ESAP introduced by government in 1991. According to Chung,<sup>687</sup> democracy, the economy and education are inseparable and people cannot talk of democracy when 90% of a country's population is starving and the majority of people do not have houses and jobs. Chung describes democracy from many angles, arguing that ESAP made the rich get richer, which is part of the philosophy of structural adjustment. It must be noted that ESAP, with its emphasis on liberalising the political environment, opened the floodgates of criticism of ZANU-PF dominance and promoted more open attacks on the government by members in the ruling party during parliamentary sessions. Tendai Biti, the opposition MDC Secretary-General and later Finance Minister in the 2009-2013 GNU, refers to the year 1996 as one of record strikes by the junior doctors in the country's major hospitals such as Parirenyatwa, Mpilo and Harare Hospitals on 20 August, three days after President Mugabe had celebrated his second wedding. Apart from presenting opposition views on the declining living and working conditions of urban workers, Biti's speech in parliament drew the attention of

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<sup>683</sup> R. Matikiti, (2008). The church and the struggle for multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe, p. 33.

<sup>684</sup> M. Dongo, (1995). *The Indian Ocean Newsletter*, <https://www.africaintelligence.com/ion/power-brokers/.../margaret-dongo,34486-ar> Accessed 15 September 2017.

<sup>685</sup> L. Laakso, (1997). Why are elections not democratic in Africa? Comparison between the recent multiparty elections in Zimbabwe and Tanzania. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 6, p. 22.

<sup>686</sup> Refer to Tables 1.1. and 1.2 in chapter 1.

<sup>687</sup> Interview with Chung.

parliament to the worsening economic conditions in the country. Biti also referred to five parties that pulled out of the 1995 elections citing a Zanunised political playfield, and the lavish spending by the president on hosting a colourful wedding dubbed the ‘Wedding of the Century’ in Zimbabwe, an extravagant Catholic affair<sup>688</sup> when the doctors’ salary demands needed government attention, and when the nation in general was suffering due to the economic meltdown. Chung argues that the multiparty system that obtains in the country is inadequate to classify Zimbabwe as being democratic because democracy is much more than just going to elections once every five years. The 1995 elections suffice to illustrate Chung’s analysis of the Zimbabwean elections. Low voter turnout in the 1995 elections, discussed in chapter 2, showed high voter apathy which was indicative of the fatigue and frustration among voters due to the continuous and systematic repression of any political dissent in the country.<sup>689</sup> The absent majority was perhaps an instance of voting without choosing.

Thousands of ZIPRA cadres who had been trained in Botswana and Zambia were supposedly inadvertently excluded from the vetting exercise that took place in 1997. Indeed, their exclusion could not have been incidental, but a ploy premised on destroying and discrediting PF-ZAPU’s military capacity to organise war and take revenge. That means that there was a progressive civilianisation of all ZIPRA combatants who failed to timeously register on the war veterans’ list.

#### **6.4 THE TSHOLOTSHO DECLARATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR INTRA-PARTY DEMOCRACY**

In keeping with the spirit of unity engendered by the 1987 Unity Accord between ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU, the constitution was amended to entrench a proviso for two vice presidents. This led to the elevation of Joshua Nkomo to partner Simon Muzenda as the two vice presidents representing not only ZANU-PF and PF-ZAPU, but also the Shona and the Ndebele as the two major ethnic groups in the country. Nkomo died in 1999 and was succeeded by Joseph Msika who was a member of PF-ZAPU before its cooptation into ZANU-PF. When Muzenda died in 2004, his replacement was not as smooth as had happened in PF-ZAPU. It is important to highlight that

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<sup>688</sup> J. Robinson & N. Tweedie, (2017). *How 'Gucci' Grace Mugabe spent cash as Zimbabweans starved...* [www.dailymail.co.uk/news/.../How-Gucci-Grace-splashed-cash-Zimbabweans-starved.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/.../How-Gucci-Grace-splashed-cash-Zimbabweans-starved.html). Accessed 15 April 2018.

<sup>689</sup> R. Matikiti, (2008). *The church and the struggle for multi-party democracy in Zimbabwe*, p 33.

tension within ZANU-PF was brewing and factional camps evolved which, to a large measure, appeared to challenge the legitimacy of Mugabe as president of the country. The succession crisis for a replacement to fill the void created by the death of Muzenda culminated in what became known as the Tsholotsho Declaration in 2004 led by the Mnangagwa loyalists against the Mujuru faction. Tsholotsho is Jonathan Moyo's home area. Six ZANU-PF provincial chairmen and members of the Politburo, Central Committee, and members of parliament met at Dinyane Secondary school to install Mnangagwa in the Presidium ahead of the ZANU-PF Congress due to be held in 2004. Key participants included Jonathan Moyo, Jacob Mudenda, Mabel Chinomona, Mike Madiro, Daniel Shumba and July Moyo, among many others.

The Tsholotsho Declaration was made up of four principles. The first reiterated that the presidium ought to be representative of the four ethnic categories in the country. The second stated that the position of the president should not be monopolised by one ethnic group, but should be on a rotational basis, taking into cognizance the Shona, Ndebele, Karanga and Manyika. Thirdly, it made a position that the filling in of presidium vacancies should be done through democratic procedures involving secret ballot, as opposed to having them imposed by the party hierarchy. Lastly, any position that arose in the presidium was to be occupied in terms of the party's constitutional provisions. The principles are said to have received the support of six out of the ten provinces in the country, with Mugabe, a Zezuru, as president, and Mnangagwa, a Karanga, as Vice President, together with a Ndebele co-Vice president Joseph Msika, and Patrick Chinamasa, a Manyika, assuming the role of the party chair. The ethnic permutation focusing on the presidium explains the importance of maintaining an ethnic balance within the presidency. That can be interpreted as an attempt by the bigger faction of ZANU-PF to bring into existence some democratic tenets which were conspicuously absent as evidenced by the principles set down as framework for representativeness in the presidency.

Like other parties that formed outside ZANU-PF, the Tsholotsho Declaration was construed or misconstrued as undermining Mugabe's authority as the state president because the procedures it proposed for selection, and the quest for ethnic representation in the presidium that it advocated, were some of the shortcomings in the nature and functions of the presidium as constituted. Mugabe made the appointments singlehandedly without consulting anyone. Instead of giving recognition to the principles enunciated at Tsholotsho, participants were suspended from the party

with the exception of Mnangagwa who was appointed Minister of Rural Housing and Social Amenities while his party portfolio as Secretary for Administration was given to Didymus Mutasa. The party constitution was amended to accommodate the demand of the Women's League to have a female as Mugabe embraced one of the two vice presidents. A series of demotions and suspensions followed the annulment of the Tsholotsho Declaration, or conspiracy as seen in official circles. Jabulani Sibanda, a former ZIPRA war veteran and participant in the illegal meeting, together with Jonathan Moyo, who was a member of the party's Politburo and Minister of Information, were expelled from ZANU-PF.

Mugabe expressed his suspicion and a growing sense of mistrust of key members of the party when he commented: "There is everything wrong when chairpersons of the party go and meet secretly without the knowledge of the leadership of the party and worse still, what would they be discussing there?"<sup>690</sup> The developments in Tsholotsho in 2004 continue to have reverberatory effects on the ZANU-PF succession matrix, resulting in the mysterious death of Solomon Mujuru in 2011 in an inferno that was not properly investigated. Leadership battles along ethnic fault lines were characteristic of the post-Tsholotsho saga era as ZANU-PF increasingly became more authoritarian in dealing with internal dissensions, and as Mugabe acquired the title of 'Godfather of the African revolution', was deemed infallible and equated with the biblical Jesus. The former Deputy Minister of Local Housing, Tony Gara, made the statement in the National Assembly that President Mugabe is another son of God hence the song:

I will never cry (Handimbochemi)  
When Mugabe is there (Kana VaMugabe varipo)  
To cry is cowardice (Kuchema utera).<sup>691</sup>

Nolbert Kunonga of the Anglican Church hailed and likened President Mugabe to Jesus the Messiah and overtly supported the chaos and violence that characterised the land reform programme in 2000.<sup>692</sup> He was a generalisable case example of a church leader who, after having

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690 D. Matyskac, (2014). *Tsholotsho Declaration and the bid to stop Mujuru ascendancy*. <https://www.theindependent.co.zw/2014/10/10/tsholotsho-declaration-bid-stop-mujuru-ascendancy/> Accessed 19 June 2018.

691 E. Chitando, (2002). Down with the devil, Forward with Christ! A study of the interface between religious and political discourses in Zimbabwe. *African Sociological Review*, 6, p. 8.

692 M. Manyonganise & C. Chirimuuta, (2011). Christians' participation in politics in Zimbabwe: A privilege or a right. *Missionalia*, 39 (3), p. 292.

been allocated a farm under the land distribution exercise, preached in his church in favour of Mugabe, whereas Bishop Pius Ncube of the Roman Catholic Church was viewed as a tribalist and ‘enemy’ of the state for disagreeing with the government’s land distribution programme.<sup>693</sup> Apostolic churches in the country, together with the indigenised factions of mainstream churches such as Kunonga’s Anglican Church were used at the height of serious political contestations to buttress the incumbent ZANU-PF regime. They became an indispensable social base for support mobilisation for ZANU-PF to the exclusion of opposition parties.

## **6.5 REGIME CHANGE NARRATIVES WITHIN ZANU-PF SINCE 2000**

Protagonists of the nativist or Afrocentric school of thought present an argument on the uselessness of a western neo-liberal political tradition which prioritises the multiplication of political parties as the only indicator of democracy. Rather, they intimate that democracy serves to maintain the political status quo in any given African country. Such a view holds sway in Zimbabwe as more parties that were legally permitted to register and participate in national elections, be they from outside ZANU-PF or from within it, contributed to sustaining the ZANU-PF hegemony by splitting the opposition vote.

The intensification of farm invasions after the 2002 disputed presidential elections marred by violence and selective justice meted out to opposition activists and party supporters, brought SADC into the orbit of Zimbabwean politics, particularly when Britain and the USA abandoned their original plan to remove Mugabe’s ZANU-PF regime from power militarily, citing the negative consequences that could accompany such a move. Tony Blair’s plans for a military strategy on Zimbabwe to rid of the Mugabe phenomenon are said to have been exposed by Field Marshall Guthrie in John Kampfner’s book entitled *Blair’s Wars*.<sup>694</sup> It was realised that the move would be disastrous because, firstly, due to Zimbabwe’s landlocked geography, it would pose problems in bringing in or replenishing military and other supplies. Another reason was that isolated white farmers scattered all over the country would be killed once the war was declared; and it was unlikely, given Mugabe’s reputation on the continent as the ‘Godfather of the anti-

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<sup>693</sup> E. Chitando, (2005). ‘In the beginning was the land’, p. 232.

<sup>694</sup> B-M. Tendi, (2014). The origins and functions of demonisation discourses in Britain–Zimbabwe relations, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 40(6), p. 1265.

imperialist struggle' that was assumed to have taken new forms and dimensions, that African countries would approve of such an operation against Zimbabwe.<sup>695</sup>

Revelations of an aborted alleged military plan on a sovereign state by a former colonial power hardened the government's stance against Britain and consequently led to persecution of opposition members and limitations on their freedom because they were deemed to be conspiring with the British. The revelations enable us to understand the emergence of the instrumental demonisation discourses that pitted Mugabe and the British government against one another, especially during the era of Tony Blair's Labour government, and why multiparty democracy, where people would freely belong to parties of their choice, became a façade in subsequent elections since 2002. Mugabe is said to have mentioned Blair's name at least 43 times at presidential campaign rallies in 2002.<sup>696</sup> Instrumentalism worked to foster the idea that the 'evil' British government was sponsoring the MDC in delegitimising domestic opposition and that sealed off Mbeki's attempts to mediate constructive negotiation between ZANU-PF and MDC about the formation of a power-sharing government.<sup>697</sup> Such a position explains why Mbeki repeatedly declared his support for Mugabe by reducing the Zimbabwean crisis to the nationalist discourse of land reform.<sup>698</sup> The position also explains Tsvangirai's loss of trust in Mbeki's "quiet diplomacy" and his doubts over Mbeki's impartiality in mediating in the Zimbabwean crisis;<sup>699</sup> and why Mbeki at times echoed Mugabe's sentiments in lambasting Britain and the west as the root cause of the social, economic and political challenges facing the country.<sup>700</sup> Lord Douglas Hurd, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1989–95), described Mugabe thus:

He is one of those people the British Empire created who specialized in knowing how to twist the British government's tail. He was well trained in the art of annoying the British if he needed to. He knew our ways. He understood British domestic policy very well, so could press the right buttons if he wanted a reaction.<sup>701</sup>

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<sup>695</sup> Ibid.

<sup>696</sup> Ibid., p. 1262.

<sup>697</sup> Ibid., p. 1264.

<sup>698</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 24.

<sup>699</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>700</sup> D. Dube & R. Midgley, (2008). Land reform in Zimbabwe, p. 33.

<sup>701</sup> Interview with Lord Douglas Hurd (11 October 2012) cited in B-M. Tendi, (2014). *The origins and functions of demonisation discourses*, p. 1263.



From the statement above, it appears that the British were unsure about how to deal with Mugabe, and that the uncertainties that influenced them to deal with the crisis with equivocation exhibited failure of British foreign policy with regard to Zimbabwe. It was for that reason that Cawthra<sup>702</sup> argues that both Britain and the USA faced a blank wall and then decided to pass the button to Mbeki whom George Bush referred to as ‘the point person.’ It can also be argued that the decision to have Mbeki as principal mediator in the Zimbabwean political crisis that rested on the state war on citizens as highlighted by Sachikonye’s<sup>703</sup> book title could not have been the brainchild of SADC. Britain and USA might firmly have believed that the supposed strength of South Africa in the region could help resolve the impasse. Lord Hurd’s statement is an admission that Mugabe’s instrumental demonisation of Tony Blair won the support of Africa and other countries in the world that were not well disposed towards Britain and the USA. This was around the time of the 9/11 attacks on the Twin Towers and the subsequent “War on Terror”, which included the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq by a western coalition led by the USA, and there was general anger against Blair and Bush who were portrayed as war criminals in many parts of the world.<sup>704</sup>

Mugabe also took advantage of the presence of gay politicians in Blair’s cabinet to aggressively attack the homosexual practice as un-African. For example, he skillfully branded Blair’s cabinet as morally decadent because it included Peter Mandelson, Chris Smith and Nick Brown, who were gay.<sup>705</sup> On the other hand, news headlines like ‘Evil Mugabe stole our farms’ and ‘Death knell for a despot’ made diplomatic engagements between Zimbabwe and Britain difficult and inconceivable and, as Tendi<sup>706</sup> posits, [mutually] aggressive measures became the only alternative form of relations. Under these prevailing circumstances, after Mugabe had forced an electoral victory for president, Emerson Mnangagwa was allegedly secretly invited to represent ZANU-PF at an ANC Congress in Stellenbosch in 2002 with a view to negotiating Mugabe’s exit scheme in 2003, brokered by the retired Colonel Lionel Dyck and supported by the USA and the UK.<sup>707</sup>

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<sup>702</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 24.

<sup>703</sup> L. Sachikonye, (2011). *When the state turns on its citizens...*

<sup>704</sup> S. Childs, (2012). *George Bush and Tony Blair are officially war criminals.*

[https://www.vice.com/en\\_uk/article/yv54dj/george-bush-and-tony-blair-are-war-criminals-obv](https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/yv54dj/george-bush-and-tony-blair-are-war-criminals-obv) Accessed 19 June 2018.

<sup>705</sup> B-M. Tendi, (2014). The origins and functions of demonisation discourses, p. 1262.

<sup>706</sup> Ibid., p. 1265.

<sup>707</sup> M. Adelman, (2004). Quiet diplomacy, p. 263..

Mnangagwa was complicit in a plot that promised to grant Mugabe immunity or asylum in Malaysia, that provided for the formation of the government of national unity, reminiscent of the GNU that was formed later in 2009, and that also provided for the British resuscitation and financing of a legal land reform programme. When the plan leaked, Mnangagwa was spared the wrath of president Mugabe, ostensibly because he was the pillar of ZANU-PF strength,<sup>708</sup> and therefore indispensable in the fight against a supposedly ‘neo-colonial’ MDC opposition challenge that had to be contained, if not eliminated. It is therefore not surprising that in 2004, at the Tsholotsho Declaration, six out of ten provinces in the country put their weight behind Mnangagwa as possible co-vice president after the death of Muzenda. Although the ZANU-PF Congress in 2004 elected Joice Mujuru, allegedly through constitutional manipulation<sup>709</sup> to grant the post to a woman, Mnangagwa still harboured presidential ambitions and that became a reality when he succeeded Joice Mujuru in 2014 after her expulsion from the party. One of the weaknesses inherent in the ruling party was that the bigwigs were afraid to come out openly to challenge Mugabe for the post of president. What they succeeded in doing was forming factional alliances and/or contesting elections as Independents and taking the risk of expulsion from the party.

Simba Makoni’s breakaway from ZANU-PF on ‘Super Tuesday’ is a case in point. He was one of the youngest ministers in Mugabe’s first Cabinet after independence in 1980, having served as SADC Secretary-General from 1983 to 1993 before he became the Minister of Finance. Makoni’s personality which was admired by many politicians from the two opposition parties – Tsvangirai’s MDC-T and Arthur Mutambara’s MDC-M formations – as well as ZANU-PF, had effects on the March 2008 harmonised election outcomes. Emmerson Mnangagwa, Mugabe’s righthand man since the hey days of the liberation struggle, pointed out that Makoni had expelled himself from the ZANU-PF party on 6 February 2008 whereas Mugabe lambasted him as a [political] prostitute.<sup>710</sup> ZANU-PF denounced Makoni as a pawn of the British whose presidential candidature was viewed as an attempt to split the party to pave way for an MDC victory.<sup>711</sup> Such fears were confirmed when Dumiso Dabengwa, a former Minister of Home Affairs from the PF-

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<sup>708</sup> X. Ncube, (2017). Mugabe’s five likely successors, *The Standard*, 12 March 2017

<https://www.thestandard.co.zw/2017/03/12/mugabes-five-likely-successors/> Accessed 19 June 2018.

<sup>709</sup> The ZANU-PF party constitution was amended to include the demand of the Women’s League that one of the two vice presidents should be a woman who, by implication, was Joice Mujuru.

<sup>710</sup> *News Day* 26 September 2017.

<sup>711</sup> *Ibid.*

ZAPU side who had left ZANU-PF to revive the old ZAPU, as well as Cyril Ndebele, were present at the launch of the Mavambo Party, and endorsed Makoni's presidential candidature and when Mutambara also chose not to run for president but would support Makoni. Makoni became the Minister of Finance in 2000, when Mugabe had trust in his handling of the state's finances after the 2000 parliamentary elections which unsettled ZANU-PF. It can be intimated that the Minister of Finance was expected to ensure adequate funding for ZANU-PF activities ahead of the presidential elections in 2002 to ensure Mugabe's return to power. Tekere declared his support for Simba Makoni, who participated as an Independent in the 2008 presidential race.<sup>712</sup>

The formation of Mavambo Kusile / Dawn (MKD) in 2008, and its participation in the harmonised elections, attested to the existence of democratic space for political opposition. However, the mere existence of Mavambo as a party created confusion among the electorate from both the ZANU-PF and MDC camps. MDC-T suspected that the party was the brainchild of ZANU-PF in order to split MDC-T votes. ZANU-PF, on the other hand, suspected the British of having played a part in creating the party to split ZANU-PF votes and give an easy win to the opposition. Literature on Mavambo suggests that its presence further weakened a divided opposition which had split into MDC-T and MDC-M in 2005. Like other opposition parties before it, Mavambo remained little known outside the realm of urban constituencies as evidenced by the 8.2 % vote it received in the March 2008 elections.<sup>713</sup> The party's lack of nationwide visibility was blamed on a deliberate media blackout by state-controlled media and because of the fact that the party lacked resources because it did not have diamonds to loot, as was happening with the ruling ZANU-PF party.<sup>714</sup> Its major financial support to procure party vehicles and sustain its operations came from Europe, especially from the Scandinavian countries.<sup>715</sup> One of the challenges that confronted Mavambo was its characterisation as an urban party with no grassroots support. Efforts were made to de-brand the party so that it remained obscure and less of a threat to ZANU-PF.

One of the talking points in the history of ZANU-PF was the death of the retired Zimbabwean Army Commander, Solomon Mujuru, on 15 August 2011 in a mysterious fire accident at his home

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<sup>712</sup> NewsDay, 15 June 2011.

<sup>713</sup> K. Vollan, (2008). *Zimbabwe: The elections on 29 March and the later runoff event and by-elections on 27 June*, The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, Oslo, p. 25.

<sup>714</sup> *Bulawayo 24News*, Mavambo is a poor party, 16 June 2013.

<sup>715</sup> Interview with McLaughlin.

in Beatrice, about 60 kilometres from Harare along the Harare-Beit Bridge highway. The former Cabinet Minister, Didymus Mutasa, argued that the death of Solomon Mujuru, husband of the former Vice President Joice Mujuru suggested that there was more to the death than the official [ZANU-PF] version indicated, and that the government officials responsible for security, such as the CIO should tell what happened to him to all Zimbabweans.<sup>716</sup> At his funeral, MDC-T supporters are said to have made up a sizeable group of mourners and this confirmed ZANU-PF fears of the existence of an electoral pact reached between Solomon Mujuru and Tsvangirai which was a culmination of several encounters.<sup>717</sup> Nathaniel Manheru, the state media columnist wrote: “*The Herald* has it on good authority that the late General had several meetings with the MDC-T leader and agreed on a scheme of taking over and a power-sharing formula that would incorporate the General’s interests”.<sup>718</sup> It is argued that a scheme of taking over power and a power-sharing formula between Tsvangirai and Solomon Mujuru ahead of the 2013 harmonised elections was designed to accommodate the General’s political ambitions to rule the country.

**Stephen Jakes reported revelations surrounding the death of General Mujuru that he oversaw running the country when Mugabe became scared and unstable after his legitimacy as president of the state was seriously challenged by the opposition MDC-T faction.<sup>719</sup> . Cephass Msipa who was also ZANU-PF Politburo member revealed that a day before his death, General Mujuru’ traveled to the Midlands Province to meet Makombe, the Provincial governor, and informed him that some ZANU-PF ‘vultures’ were plotting to oust his wife from the vice presidency. It is alleged that General Mujuru had direct influence on his wife which then raised ZANU-PF scepticism about his political interests to run the country.<sup>720</sup>**

It should also be noted that General Mujuru as former army commander was revered by the military and so his taking over power from Mugabe by coercive means was a high probability. He had

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<sup>716</sup> *DailyNews*, ‘Fresh questions emerge on Solomon Mujuru’s death’, 16 August 2016

<sup>717</sup> *DailyNews*, 16 August 2016.

<sup>718</sup> T. Mugabe, (2016). Gen Mujuru’s role in union exposed... as Tsvangirai, Mujuru go public. <https://www.herald.co.zw/gen-mujurus-role-in-union-exposed-as-tsvangirai-mujuru-go-public/> Accessed 25 February 2018.

<sup>719</sup> *Bulawayo24*, The reasons why Solomon Mujuru was burnt alive to death 14 April 2015 <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-sc-national-byo-66033-article-the+reasons+w> Accessed 28 September 2016

<sup>720</sup> **A. Meldrum, Zimbabwe News: Death of Gen Solomon Mujuru sets off political turmoil, *GlobalPost*, 16 August 2011.**

become a threat to the party to which he belonged. The brewing tension between General Mujuru and his wife on the one hand, and Mugabe on the other, is said to have led to his death which left many questions unanswered and, according to Maxwell Saungweme, the nation deserves to be told the truth about his death.<sup>721</sup>

Allegations that there were plans to oust Joice Mujuru from the post of vice president had a weak basis around 2011 when her husband died, but she was officially expelled from the government and party three years later in 2014. Allegations for the expulsion were that she was “mischievous” and “insubordinate” to president Mugabe for the decade she had been vice president. If that is the case, the reason ZANU-PF kept her for so long is hard to fathom. Jakes<sup>722</sup> intimates that that was Mugabe’s modus operandi as he states: “Mugabe is like a lion after its prey. It watches. It waits. Sometimes the lion even looks as if it is not interested in the prey until it feels it is the right moment and it pounces and catches its prey”.

In the 2013 harmonised elections, a discernible and consistent pattern in the results compared to 2008, was the implied growth in support of ZANU-PF in what were formerly opposition urban constituencies.<sup>723</sup> The exit of Vice President Joice Mujuru from ZANU-PF led to tribal meetings, and speculation was that, since she was from the Zezuru tribe, a Karanga should take over that post to ensure the post rotated along tribal considerations.<sup>724</sup> By this, it can be inferred that Maziriri was making an analogue of the other Vice President, Emmerson Mnangagwa, a Karanga, vying for the presidential seat after Mugabe’s retirement because of his advanced age. The ZANU-PF National Disciplinary Committee gave reasons for Vice president Mujuru’s expulsion as stemming from collaborating with her husband General Mujuru against the interests of the party since her election to the post at a ZANU-PF Congress in 2004. There was some unease at having Rex Nhongo Mujuru, a powerful husband to Joice Mujuru, in the background.<sup>725</sup> Mujuru was expelled on allegations that she had formed parallel structures to challenge Mugabe for the presidency of

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<sup>721</sup> M. Saungweme, Nation deserves the truth, *Daily News*, 16 August 2016.

<sup>722</sup> S. Jakes, (2015). The reasons why Solomon Mujuru was burnt alive to death. *Bulawayo24*, 14 April 2015. <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-sc-national-byo-66033-article-the+reasons+why+solomon+mujuru+was+burnt+alive+to+death.html> Accessed 19 June 2018.

<sup>723</sup> S. Makoni, (2013). *2013 Harmonised elections statement* by Simba Makoni, President, Mavambo.Kusile.Dawn (M.K.D) <http://www.mavambokusiledawn.org/2013/08/14/2013-harmonised-elections-statement-by-simba-makoni/> Accessed 7 January 2018.

<sup>724</sup> Interview with Maziriri

<sup>725</sup> Chung, F. (2010). Emergence of new political movement. *The Round Table*, 99(411), p. 663.

ZANU-PF and she was also accused of being corrupt, fanning factionalism and no longer suitable to remain in the Presidium.<sup>726</sup> This description of Joice Mujuru contradicts earlier accounts of her as a courageous woman fighter during the liberation struggle because the state broadcaster stopped using the ‘comrade’ honorific and referred to her simply as Mrs. Mujuru.<sup>727</sup> She was stripped of the recognition she was accorded before ZANU-PF viewed her as a threat.

Former vice president Mujuru decided to form a political party known as ZPF, which acronym almost rhymed with ZANU-PF. In the party were politicians who had worked with and for ZANU-PF since independence and even before, such as Sylvester Nguni, Arthur Mutambara, Didymus Mutasa, Ray Kaukonde, Dzikamai Mavhaire, Brighton Matonga, Rugare Gumbo, Friday Mleya and John Mvundura, Kudakwashe Bhasikiti, Colonel Claudius Makova and Henry Muradzikwa among others.<sup>728</sup> The party was registered with the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) in 2016 and officially entered opposition politics.<sup>729</sup> The party proclaimed to be home-grown, inclusive and geared towards promoting the wishes and aspirations of Zimbabweans ‘first.’ Attempts were made in the constitution of ZPF to make the party democratic and no one would hold any portfolio for more than ten years, with a party manifesto: Blueprint to Unlock Investment and Leverage for Development (BUILD).<sup>730</sup> The acronym, taken literally, meant that ZPF was dedicating itself to the building of a new Zimbabwe, with priority given to the people first in terms of their welfare and economic advancement as opposed to the culture of accumulation espoused by individual politicians. It could also be interpreted to mean building and solidifying new relations out of the chaos that rocked Matabeleland during the Gukurahundi era, and out of the repression, political killings and a culture of intolerance that had become a characteristic feature of Zimbabwean elections since 2000. BUILD acknowledged the lack of investment opportunities

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<sup>726</sup> C. Sabao and M. Visser, (2016). Tearing up nationalist discourses? Appraisal analysis of representation of Joice Mujuru and the ZANU-PF dialectic in Zimbabwean Newspapers in D. O. Orwenjo, O. Oketh, and A. H. Tunde, (Eds.). *Political Discourse in Emergent, Fragile and Failed Democracies*, Information Science Reference, p. 95.

<sup>727</sup> J. Tarusarira, (no date). Revisiting Zimbabwe’s celebratory political history in pursuit of healing and reconciliation. academia.edu Accessed 9 March 2018.

<sup>728</sup> Pindula, (n.d.). *Zimbabwe People First*. [https://www.pindula.co.zw/Zimbabwe\\_People\\_First](https://www.pindula.co.zw/Zimbabwe_People_First) Accessed 6 September 2017

<sup>729</sup> O. Manayiti & N. Jena, (2016), *Mujuru’s party registered*. <https://www.thestandard.co.zw/2016/02/14/mujurus-party-registered/> Accessed 6 September 2017

<sup>730</sup> *The Standard*, Mujuru’s party registered, 14 February 2016.

because of the country's indigenisation and empowerment policies that inhibited foreign investment and promoted black racism.<sup>731</sup>

One of the challenges ZPF faced as a party resonated with the constraints that ZUM experienced as a party formed from ZANU-PF out of emotions rather than out of a clear ideological standpoint to drive the development agenda of the country. The leadership of the party comprised renegades from ZANU-PF who had been dismissed, together with former vice president Mujuru for conniving to topple Mugabe. They were responsible for challenging the status quo during the many years they had been ministers and national leaders. Didymus Mutasa and Rugare Gumbo are examples of long serving members of ZANU-PF, dating back to the formative years of the nationalist struggle. They had been schooled in the ZANU-PF political etiquette, and so could not be trusted by many people who saw in ZPF, a replica of ZANU-PF in all but name, to lead the country when they had failed to do so since 1980. The background history of the ZPF party leadership compromised its legitimacy and had the potential to scare away prospective political party supporters given that Gumbo was the ZANU-PF spokesperson who abused the whole media platform to denigrate and delegitimise the MDC ahead of the 2013 watershed elections. Mutasa had been Mugabe's closest ally until the 2008 elections when the factional *bhora musango* phenomenon ('kick the ball into the forest') when ZANU-PF won the parliamentary elections but lost the Presidential elections to the MDC. Solomon Mujuru's (Rex Nhongo's) faction orchestrated this *bhora musango* stratagem to try and get rid of Mugabe, whom he appeared to have been fed up with. Towards the 2013 harmonised elections, the *bhora musango* faction was represented by Joice Mujuru, Gumbo and Mutasa, among others. The *bhora mughedhi* faction (kick the ball into the net) representing Mugabe's key allies in the party, was used to distinguish and deal decisively with those party members who wanted to see Mugabe lose in the 2013 elections.<sup>732</sup>

From the point of view of the interviewed war veteran, Reuben, the *bhora musango* faction had false patriots because the MDC was formed in the house owned by a ZANU-PF member with a high-ranking position in the party with a view to using the MDC to take over power.<sup>733</sup> This is one dimension of the growing internal opposition to Mugabe's ZANU-PF. By 1999, consequences for

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<sup>731</sup> Ibid.

<sup>732</sup> Interview with Reuben.

<sup>733</sup> Interview with Reuben. He refused to disclose the name of the ZANU-PF member whose house he alleges to have been used

ZANU-PF members being identified with the opposition MDC that had just been formed, it was feared, would result in elimination from the party and termination of one's political career. It was only after his expulsion from ZANU-PF that Mutasa, commenting on the 2008 March elections in which Mugabe was defeated by Tsvangirai, described Mugabe as a nonagenarian who remained in power through chicanery and brute force.<sup>734</sup> When the MDC lost the 2013 elections, people wrote it off as 'spent and finished' and when 'Mai' (Mother) Mujuru joined opposition politics, the whole opposition media started writing about her as if she was the *Mater dei saviour* of Zimbabwean politics.<sup>735</sup> Her image was portrayed, like that of the Virgin Mary, as a symbol of compassion and sanctity.<sup>736</sup> Because of her close association with ZANU-PF, and having been a woman freedom fighter who survived the Nyadzonia massacre, Mai Mujuru's entry into opposition politics was regarded as a 'tsunami' to Zimbabwean politics because it tainted opposition politics.

## 6.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter has made a case against internal cohesion within ZANU-PF since independence in 1980. The euphoria of the first few years after independence gave a deceptive feeling of unity that cloaked deep divisions inherent in the party. ZANU-PF was a broad-based party in terms of its membership that cut across the ethnic divide and factional politics within the party. The struggle for democracy from within the party was apparent after the Unity Accord in 1987 when PF-ZAPU ceased to exist as a party as its key members were drafted into the structures of government. The political and structural challenges that had led to the dissident menace between 1982 and 1987 were not resolved but were transposed into the new dispensation under the enlarged ZANU-PF government.

The former opposition PF-ZAPU members were temporarily silenced, but outright criticism from the party came from Tekere who overtly attacked the government for its drive towards a one-party state, corruption, dishonouring the revolutionary ideals of democratic governance and its failure to equitably distribute land. He launched ZUM, which became the first official opposition against ZANU-PF from within the party itself. Tekere's party was demonised and objectified as a disaster

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<sup>734</sup> F. Kwaramba, (2017). *ZANU-PF wants Tsvangirai dead*. <https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2017/03/13/zanu-pf-wants-tsvangirai-dead> Accessed 19 June 2018.

<sup>735</sup> Interview with Sydney Chisi

<sup>736</sup> T. J. Johnson, & B. Ottaviani-Jones, (2014). The Virgin Mary on screen: Mater Dei or just a mother in Guido Chiesa's *Io Sono con Te* (I Am with You). *Journal of Religion & Film*, 18(1), p. 2.



for the country through state-controlled media propaganda as a party that represented foreign interests and drove an external political agenda. The party got little leeway to freely campaign in rural areas and so remained little known outside urban constituencies. Grassroots communities were vulnerable, and ZUM and other opposition parties that followed it could not penetrate rural constituencies, however they tried, because of how receptive they were to pro-government information about opposition parties that was being disseminated by the ruling party. After the defeat of ZUM in the 1990 presidential elections, there was voter apathy in the 1995 and subsequent elections, the electorate possibly feeling that there was little point in voting. There was no strong and widely-supported break-away opposition party to demystify ZANU-PF political power electorally as labeling, violence, intimidation and institutionalised fear were deployed against opposition supporters.

The PR system used in the 1980 general elections, deemed by many whites as conducive to democratic representation in that political representation in government positions was in proportion to the number of votes cast for any party, and which logically facilitated a coalition government in the 1980-1985 period, was abandoned in 1985 to pave way for the Single Member District or 'First past the post winner-takes-all' system. If the PR system had been used in the 1990 elections, Tekere's ZUM could have gained 20 parliamentary seats.<sup>737</sup> Makumbe and Sithole<sup>738</sup> also argue that the ruling party experienced a gradual decline in elite cohesion which resulted in electoral challenges by independent candidates from the ruling party itself, and that this independent candidate phenomenon could have far-reaching consequences in overcoming the weakness of organised opposition to ZANU.

The sanctions era from 2001 to 2008 impacted negatively on the government and the ruling ZANU-PF party. It can be argued that many people in ZANU-PF targeted by the smart sanctions, including those not affected by them, were frustrated with being isolated from the rest of the world. This dynamic could have heightened factional fights within the party between the hardliners and moderates. Other opposition parties that emerged from within the ZANU-PF fold, such as MKD under Simba Makoni, Margret Dongo's ZUD, Dumbutshena's Forum Party, and other individual ZANU-PF members that elected to participate in elections as Independents had their activities

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<sup>737</sup> M. Sithole & J. Makumbe, (1997). Elections in Zimbabwe, p 128.

<sup>738</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

circumscribed as other parties were compelled to pull out from the electoral competitions because the playing field favoured ZANU-PF. The Tsholotsho Declaration of 2004 was a show of dissent. It emanated from many key members of the ruling party. Mugabe's highhandedness in dealing with the leadership crisis for the vice President threatened potential party dissidents with expulsion from the party while at the same time 'the cult of personality', or *personalismo*,<sup>739</sup> made Mugabe demonstrate his political acumen in defusing what seemed to be a serious threat to his own position as president.<sup>740</sup> Jonathan Moyo, who together with others was expelled from the party for the conspiracy, was later re-admitted when on two separate occasions he won the Tsholotsho seat as an Independent. The proviso that upon rejoining ZANU-PF Jonathan Moyo would take the seat to ZANU-PF subverted any meaningful opposition that could be organised in Matabeleland. The ousting of Joice Mujuru in 2014 was preceded by the death of her husband, Solomon Mujuru, in an inferno in 2011. Joice Mujuru's expulsion from the ruling party led to the formation of ZPF which, like other parties before it, was accordingly lambasted as a party bent on giving the country back to whites, and as a party that wanted to remove Mugabe from power by force.

It can thus be argued that opposition from within ZANU-PF failed to make any political headway because the parties were formed out of emotions and anger at their treatment within the party, and that they differed little from the mother party that gave rise to them. They have been largely criticised for their lack of clear political agendas and philosophical thrusts to drive the country forward. They appeared to be mini-versions of ZANU-PF and exhibited continuity traits that made the electorate shun away from them because they replicated ZANU-PF ways of political engagement and failed to liberate themselves. Above all, ZANU-PF had Mugabe, an intellectual and a shrewd politician of international stature who used his eloquence and instrumental demonisation of the British to hold onto power amidst internal party dissensions and external threats to his quasi-military regime. Further proof that ZANU-PF contains tensions within it is that, as I am writing this conclusion, political purges of those suspected of allying with the G40 in the army, police, the CIO and government departments continue under the Mnangagwa regime. These issues are discussed in the following and final chapter.

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<sup>739</sup> K. K. Prah, (2003). Multi-party democracy and its relevance in Africa, p. 3

<sup>740</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY IN ZIMBABWE: CONCLUDING ANALYSIS

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

A week before the March 2008 harmonised elections,<sup>741</sup> Mugabe warned the country that a vote for Tsvangirai would be a wasted vote because he would never be allowed to rule the country.<sup>742</sup> Such a statement went far beyond electoral rhetoric and was viewed as a specific threat that the state would deploy all means possible to keep Tsvangirai out of power even if he won. Speculation was rife that this was the case after the presidential results, in an election that pitted Mugabe, Tsvangirai and Simba Makoni against each other, were withheld for over a month as if to confirm a manipulated presidential ballot. The Joint Operations Command (JOC) comprising three heads of security agencies-Augustine Chihuri (Police Commissioner General), Major General Paradzai Zimondi (Commissioner of Prisons) and Commander of the Defence Forces (General Constantino Chiwenga), as well as Emmerson Mnangagwa (Chair), Happyton Bonyongwe (representing the Central Intelligence Organisation) and Perence Shiri (representing the Airforce) had publicly declared on 27 February 2008 their support for Mugabe ahead of the elections.<sup>743</sup> They argued that Tsvangirai and others in the opposition MDC were ‘mapuruvheya’ (sell-outs) serving the neo-colonial agenda of the British and Americans.<sup>744</sup> General Chiwenga referred to Tsvangirai as a psychiatric patient suffering from hallucinations.<sup>745</sup>

This concluding chapter summarises the status of multiparty democracy in Zimbabwe after many years of ZANU-PF hegemony. It captures critical developments in the history of opposition politics in the country and evaluates attempts by the ZANU-PF government to forestall meaningful political participation by other parties that differed ideologically with it. Opposition factionalism defined in ethnicised criteria of Ndau, Zezuru, Manyika and Ndebele has prevented a strong

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<sup>741</sup> These were elections in which for the first time, Council, Mayoral, Parliamentary and Presidential elections were held together and not separately as before, hence ‘harmonised elections.’ The electorate was subjected to a cumbersome voting exercise in which each voter had to come up with four candidates of choice to represent these categories and the process was complicated in urban areas where constituencies had been reduced making it difficult for others to vote. Note that only urban areas elected mayors and this disenfranchised many potential voters.

<sup>742</sup> K. Vollan, (2008). Zimbabwe: The elections on 29 March and the later runoff event and by-elections on 27 June., p. 2.

<sup>743</sup> S Jakes, (2017). Chiwenga declared he will never meet with Tsvangirai, *Bulawayo24*, 5 December 2017. <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-sc-national-byo-123662.html> Accessed 10 December 2017.

<sup>744</sup> Ibid.

<sup>745</sup> Ibid.

opposition alliance against the more experienced and tested ZANU-PF. The increasing role of the military establishment, which was key to the sustenance of ZANU-PF power through electoral manipulation, is discussed to intimate that progress towards democratic change by means of elections could be a long way from becoming a reality. Structural challenges that the opposition had to grapple with during the GNU era are highlighted with a view to contextualising the circumstances that inevitably created a downward political trajectory for the opposition ahead of the 2013 harmonised elections.

Finally, this chapter briefly traces the unprecedented and unexpected developments that took place at the time of writing this dissertation. One of these developments is the resignation of Mugabe in November 2017 under pressure from the same military leadership upon whom he had relied to retain power for 37 years. It analyses the fast-tracking of Emmerson Mnangagwa as new president whose cabinet was a military cabinet code-named ‘coupcabinet.’<sup>746</sup> He had been dismissed by Mugabe in November 2017 from being vice president in a fierce political contest with the G40 ‘cabal’ led by Jonathan Moyo, Saviour Kasukuwere, Grace Mugabe and Patrick Zhuwawo. The ‘coupcabinet’ comprised the military men who had executed the ‘soft’ coup d’état. An analysis of military interventions in ZANU-PF succession issues since 1975, as well as their influence on the choice of the country’s president, both of which are inconsistent with ideal democratic behaviour, attest to the presence of serious impediments to a democratic transition process in Zimbabwe ahead of the 2018 harmonised elections. The dissertation also takes a swipe at the increasing role of the army in Zimbabwean politics and argues that multiparty democracy cannot be built and sustained on a legacy of militarisation of politics. Giroux views identity politics as lying within a broader crisis of political culture and democracy that connects the militarisation of public life with the collapse of the welfare state and the attack on civil liberties.<sup>747</sup> There cannot be feasible multiparty democracy in the absence of strong democratic political parties.

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<sup>746</sup> Jonathan Moyo’s tweets that he posted after escaping from Zimbabwe criticised the developments in the country as a military coup and the Cabinet with a strong military edifice was a Cabinet by the coup plotters.

<sup>747</sup> H. A. Giroux, (2005). The terror of neoliberalism: Rethinking the significance of cultural politics. *College Literature*, 32, p. 3.

## 7.2 FACTIONS BASED ON ETHNICITY WITHIN THE OPPOSITION

Ethnic politics did not spare opposition parties, particularly when a split occurred in the MDC movement in 2005 over the government's decision to create a bicameral legislature with the traditional Legislative Assembly and the Senate. Tendai Biti from the main MDC-T commented in 2008 on the replacement of the 'old and ailing' Mugabe and posited that it was time for politicians from the Shona dialects to take over power.<sup>748</sup> Welshman Ncube's MDC party was criticized as pro-Ndebele because when it broke away from the original labour-oriented MDC movement, it had its political support concentrated in Matabeleland. As such, Ncube confined his campaigns to rural parts of Matabeleland where he was sure to get support; hence, Tsvangirai called him 'a village politician.'<sup>749</sup> Ncube also argued that Tsvangirai paraded himself as a paragon of democracy while MDC-T continued to offer token positions to people from Matabeleland.<sup>750</sup>

The Ndebele came to view both Mugabe and Tsvangirai as anti-Ndebele. According to the former MDC Secretary-General, Moses Mzila Ndlovu, the MDC-T support base had become more Shona-centred than it had been in 2010 as it got support from the Karanga, Ndau, Zezuru, Manyika.<sup>751</sup> Mzila was later sacked from the MDC led by Welshman Ncube for allegedly plotting to topple the party president.<sup>752</sup> Mzila equated the party leader Ncube with most leaders in Zimbabwean politics who do not brook any opposing views, and was critical of his dictatorial leadership.<sup>753</sup> In a separate development, Didymus Mutasa and Rugare Gumbo were expelled from Joice Mujuru's Zimbabwe People First on allegations of being ZANU-PF agents with a mission to topple Mujuru from her interim position as president.<sup>754</sup> This resonated the sacking language in ZANU-PF which Mugabe used on different occasions against Edgar Tekere, Ndabaningi Sithole and Abel Muzorewa, suggesting continuities of ZANU-PF practices within the opposition parties. Mujuru broke ranks with Mutasa and Gumbo and proceeded to form the National People's Party (NPP) with a

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<sup>748</sup> M. Phiri, (2013). Ethnic politics on the Zimbabwean campaign trail: do voters really care? 19 February 2013. <http://africanarguments.org/2013/02/19/ethnic-politics-on-the-zimbabwean-campaign-trail-do-voters-really-care-by-marko-phiri/> Accessed 18 October 2016.

<sup>749</sup> T. Shava, (2016). Deposed Secretary General hits back, accuses Ncube of incompetence, 8 February 2016. [www.voazimbabwe.com](http://www.voazimbabwe.com) Accessed 19 September 2017.

<sup>750</sup> M. Phiri, (2013). 'Ethnic politics on the Zimbabwean campaign trail.

<sup>751</sup> Ibid.

<sup>752</sup> T. Shava, (2016). Deposed Secretary General hits back.

<sup>753</sup> Ibid.

<sup>754</sup> F. Kwaramba, Deadly turmoil hits Mujuru, ZPF, *DailyNews* 9 February 2017.

<https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2017/02/09/deadly-turmoil-hits-mujuru-zpf> Accessed 27 October 2017.

constitution identical to that of ZPF as she continued to face many desertions by Sylvester Nguni, Agrippa Mutambara and Ray Kaukonde among others.<sup>755</sup>

The Ncube-led MDC was rocked with a spate of resignations such as that of Priscilla Misihairambwi, Nhlanhla Dube and national spokesman Joshua Muhambi in 2015.<sup>756</sup> These developments took place at a time when Zimbabweans were expressing their dissatisfaction with opposition parties for their failure to proffer solutions to the socioeconomic and political challenges facing the country. It was the failure of opposition parties to unite that led Joice Mujuru, leader of the NPP party, to conclude that coalescing of multiparty opposition was not easy since it required disciplined engagement of competing ideological thought processes, mature evaluation of the intended destination and the need for bona fide reflection and association.<sup>757</sup> This weakness on the part of the opposition has always given ZANU-PF an advantage in electoral contests.

### **7.3 THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY IN DEMOCRATIC PREFERMENT**

The Zimbabwean story provides a stark reminder that the most dangerous thing that democrats can do is to take the military for granted.<sup>758</sup> For political change to occur, Williamson<sup>759</sup> predicted that the door to democracy could be opened if war veterans' support was won, if the military leadership was replaced and if legal and political reforms were made. The Zimbabwean army has a long political tradition and the events that took place in November 2017 were a stark reminder to opposition parties that ZANU-PF's philosophical mobilisation mantra emanates from the historical interconnectedness of the gun and politics. When ZANU-PF started to build a protective hegemonic wall to buttress its control of the state dating back to the 1985 elections, the role of the military was clearly visible in Matabeleland and in sections of the Midlands Province. The electorate in those provinces either withdrew from electoral politics or involuntarily voted for the ruling party out of fear of the consequences of not voting 'correctly' for ZANU-PF.

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<sup>755</sup> M. Tafirenyika, Mujuru launches new party, *DailyNews*, 4 March 2017.

<https://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles/2017/03/04/mujuru-launches-new-party> Accessed 10 May 2017.

<sup>756</sup> T. Shava (2016). *Deposed Secretary General hits back*.

<sup>757</sup> R. Chidza, (2017). Mujuru rips into Tsvangirai. *NewsDay*, 3 July 2017.

<https://www.newsday.co.zw/2017/07/mujuru-rips-tsvangirai/> Accessed date.

<sup>758</sup> J. I. Williamson, (2010). Seeking civilian control: Rule of law, democracy, and civil-military relations in Zimbabwe. *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 17(2), p. 390.

<sup>759</sup> R. R. Mahomva, (2017). Another timely S.B. Moyo intervention. *The Sunday Mail*, 17 December 2017. <http://www.sundaymail.co.zw/another-timely-sb-moyo-intervention/> Accessed 22 January 2018.

Border Gezi from Mashonaland Central Province became a very powerful figure in ZANU-PF and most feared by the opposition politicians and activists for his ruthlessness. In honour of his ability to coordinate election violence and intimidation, and as Minister of Gender, Youth and Employment, Border Gezi Training camps for ZANU-PF youth militias, popularly known as ‘Green Bombers’,<sup>760</sup> were set up across the country. The first of such institutions set up in Mount Darwin, Gezi’s home area and inaugurated by Mugabe in 2001<sup>761</sup>, provided pioneering work for training the country’s youths. By 2008, the training camps had churned out about 80 000 ‘graduates’ ostensibly aimed at instilling fear into the electorate, although Mugabe argued that these training camps were ideological schools for instilling discipline, national pride and moral uprightness among the youth.<sup>762</sup> Instituting a National Youth Service in Zimbabwe, as is the case in many countries throughout the world, happened at a time when ZANU-PF support in many rural constituencies had declined sharply and that gave credibility to opposition fears that the graduates from the Border Gezi camps were the functional equivalent of the Storm Troopers in Germany in the 1930s<sup>763</sup>, that did not balk at murder when tasked with identifying and silencing opposition supporters. Lecturers were mostly retired teachers, retired army personnel, war veterans and others with a military background.<sup>764</sup> The course content, which covered aspects of African History, Health Education, Community Development, International Humanitarian Law and Entrepreneurship, was also introduced in Teachers’ Colleges and Polytechnic Colleges, and priority in government employment and in securing teacher training places was given to graduates from the Border Gezi National Youth Service.<sup>765</sup>

Militarisation was the posting by ZANU-PF of military men to state institutions and their engagement in partisan politics and networks of accumulation and patronage.<sup>766</sup> The first rule of

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<sup>760</sup> The term was derogatory and was used to vilify the National Youth Service at the Border Gezi training camps as a partisan programme meant to promote and protect ZANU-PF against the rising opposition MDC at that time. Green bombers are green flies that, if allowed to settle on perishables like meat, make it go bad by laying eggs that hatch so quickly into pupae.

<sup>761</sup> *The Herald*, National Youth Service: 16 years down the line, 29 December 2017.

<sup>762</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>763</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>764</sup> Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, Vol. 34, No. 3, 22 August 2007.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>766</sup> J. Alexander & J. McGregor, (2013). Introduction: Politics, patronage and violence in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 39, p. 752.

survival for a sitting president [in Africa] according to Chitiyo,<sup>767</sup> is to keep the security forces happy by paying them. In order to placate the military and make it ZANU-PF's key support prop, Mugabe's regime always had an inflated military budget, and, during the era of money shortages, monthly pay dates for the army came earlier than those for civil servants. The commander of the ZDF, Zvinavashe, in 2002 made an infamous straitjacket statement against Morgan Tsvangirai, the opposition MDC leader, to the effect that the military would not tolerate him for president even if he won an election.<sup>768</sup>

In the first round of presidential elections in March 2008, Mugabe is said to have conceded defeat and was prepared to relinquish power to Tsvangirai, but the Generals prevented him from leaving<sup>769</sup> because his departure would have exposed them to prosecution for their crimes of international reputation.<sup>770</sup> The JOC led by Paradzai Zimondi, Perence Shiri, Happyton Bonyongwe and Constantino Chiwenga had monopolistic control over the instruments of political violence. Joseph Chinotimba was not a member of the JOC, but he exerted a lot of influence as one of the outspoken leaders of the War Veterans Association. Williamson<sup>771</sup> focuses on Huntington's theory of objective civilian control which seeks to nurture and establish civil-military relations through legal, political and institutional reforms that allow for democracy in the state. Politicising the military has not engendered healthy civil-military relations in Zimbabwe.

The security service, because of its proclaimed entitlement to the liberation legacy, could only respect an election outcome that pinpointed ZANU-PF as the winners. Douglas Mwonozora, the opposition MP, reiterated that while events in Mali in 2012 against Amadou Toumani Touré and in Ivory Coast in 2017 against president Alassane Ouattara were direct coups, Zimbabwe was under a 'soft' coup after the disputed 2008 presidential elections when politicians fell under the influence of the gun.<sup>772</sup> Mwonozora lamented how after the defeat of ZANU-PF in the 2008 elections, the gun directed Zimbabwean politics, and the Head of State was not one in real terms as he was under siege from the military.<sup>773</sup> All strategic entities of government such as parastatal

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<sup>767</sup> K. Chitiyo, (2009). *The case for security sector reform in Zimbabwe*. Royal United Services Institute, London, p. 15.

<sup>768</sup> D. Moore, (2017). *SABC News Interview*, 18 November 2017.

<sup>769</sup> G. Cawthra, (2010). FES Peace and Security Series, p. 25.

<sup>770</sup> J. Clayton, (2008). Why the military keeps this ageing dictator in power. *Times*, London, June 2008.

<sup>771</sup> J. I. Williamson, (2010). Seeking civilian control, p. 398.

<sup>772</sup> Hansard Parliamentary Debates, (2012). 38, (44). *Douglas Mwonozora, MDC legislator*, 21 June 2012.

<sup>773</sup> *Ibid*.



and strategic ministries were under the direct control of the military. This explains why the road to constitutionalism through the writing of a new constitution to allow for free, fair and inclusive elections was painstakingly slow and honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Madzimore, an opposition MP in the Mbizo constituency of the town of Kwekwe, equated Zimbabwe with a police state where opposition members and their supporters were arrested before they committed crimes, a practice that is antithetical to a functioning democracy in which the police are, instead, the face of justice. Madzimore<sup>774</sup> had this complaint to make in the National Assembly of the Parliament of Zimbabwe:

We cannot have a situation where you [ZANU-PF] say we can go for an election, but if we lose, we cannot hand over power. Then why do we subject our people to this process? If it is not possible for power to be transferred, it must be made clear that in Zimbabwe, there is no opposition politics. If you have opposition politics, you must be prepared to hand over power.

Subjecting people to elections whose results they think are premeditated allowed for voter apathy to creep in. Lebas<sup>775</sup> contention that in a police state people do not need a party that is democratic, but they need a party that is an army is probably an accurate characterisation of ZANU-PF during the post 2000 referendum. Mitchell and Booth<sup>776</sup> refer to the anti-electoralism fallacy which assumes that multiparty elections do not matter for democracy since it is possible to have them without democracy, but we cannot have democracy without elections. From this observation, multiparty elections do not necessarily lead to democracy, and democracy and elections are different concepts in electoral competitions.

It can be argued that one of the constraints to multiparty democracy in the world is the different interpretations that individual states give to Article 2.7 of the International Law. It recognises the ‘sovereignty’ of states, and dictators and despots have opportunistically utilised the article to trample on human rights on the basic premise that other countries cannot intervene since doing so

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<sup>774</sup> Hansard Parliamentary Debates, (2012). 38 (44).

<sup>775</sup> A. Lebas, (2006). Polarisation as craft: party formation and state violence in Zimbabwe. *Comparative Politics*, 38, p. 419.

<sup>776</sup> A. M. B. Magbu & M. Budeli, (2008). *Democracy and elections in Africa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: Lessons for Africa*. Also D. Ronen (Ed.). *Democracy and pluralism in Africa* in Magbu and Budeli (2008) p. 100. Magbu and Budeli provide a minimalist conception of democracy represented by S. Huntington and Sandbrook among others, which argues that multipartyism does not guarantee democracy.

would be construed as interference in the sovereignty of other independent states.<sup>777</sup> The Zimbabwean political violence ahead of the June 2008 re-run elections, it being essentially a case of black against black, was also meted against SADC monitors who were beaten at the Sheraton grounds by the Border Gezi-trained militia,<sup>778</sup> yet SADC and the AU ignored the violence and proceeded to confirm Mugabe's victory. The period between the re-run presidential elections held in June 2008 and the harmonised elections of 2013 after the expiry of the GNU witnessed unrelenting violence against opposition supporters in rural areas. In response to a question posed in the National Assembly, the Deputy PM Arthur Mutambara remarked:

Our chiefs... should be above party politics. Chiefs must be non-partisan. They must not campaign for one party. Chiefs re a unifying custodian of a community's tradition and culture. It is completely unacceptable for our chiefs to pursue the agenda of one party. Land reform was a revolution and revolutions by definition are not pretty: they are untidy. There has never been a bloodless revolution in history.<sup>779</sup>

The ideology that political power comes from the barrel of a gun has had its influence on the revolutionary armies of ZANLA and ZIPRA. The Minister of Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs in 2003, Patrick Chinamasa, referred to the existence of only one party – ZANU-PF – in the country, before alluding to the contribution ZAPU that made to the liberation of Zimbabwe when he remarked:

...as a country we have a very unique stage of history where the people who contributed to the liberation struggle of this country come from one party. The people who liberated this country did so under the banner of ZANU and ZAPU. For quite some time the people who will know who did what and where will be coming from ZANU-PF ... the party will continue to determine who is a hero. If we are to ask who betrayed the revolution ... we will know where to go. We can ask MDC to form that committee and tell us to what extent they betrayed the revolution.<sup>780</sup>

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<sup>777</sup> Hansard Parliamentary Debates, (2012). 38 (44)..

<sup>778</sup> Hansard Parliamentary Debates, (2012). 38 (44), 21 June 2012.

<sup>779</sup> Parliamentary Debates, House of Assembly, Vol. 39, No. 11, Wednesday 20 February 2013

<sup>780</sup> Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 30, No. 20, Wednesday 19 November 2003.

Legal reforms to create democratic space for opposition voices are inadequate even if the National Defence Policy published in 1997 through an Act of Parliament stipulated that the military was subordinated to civilian authority and that the military personnel were prohibited from active participation in politics, but that they could exercise their democratic right to vote and were not permitted to hold office in any political party or political organisation.<sup>781</sup> Williamson predicted that because of the reluctance of the military to relinquish power, Zimbabwe could only hope for a coup within the ranks of the military with outside assistance.<sup>782</sup> Conspiracy theorists implicate China for complicity in the coup that deposed Mugabe in Zimbabwe in November 2017 because the military General Chiwenga met with the Chinese Defence Minister, Chang Wanquan, in Beijing at the People's Liberation Army headquarters to discuss what the Chinese Foreign Ministry portrayed as a 'normal military exchange' a few days before the army seized power in Zimbabwe.<sup>783</sup>

#### **7.4 GNU POWER POLITICS AND THE BLAME GAME (2009-2013): STRUCTURAL CHALLENGES FOR THE OPPOSITION**

In conflict situations, it is often very hard to force two groups that are in opposition to work together and get positive results. Given the demonisation discourses that had characterised the period between 2000 and 2008 between ZANU-PF and the opposition, political tension was so high to the extent that the AU mandated South Africa to mediate in the political conflict over control of the state. The first task for Thabo Mbeki, then South African president and mediator, was to bring the three warring parties – ZANU-PF under Mugabe, MDC-T under Tsvangirai and MDC-M under Mutambara – to the negotiation table where conciliation could take place. The decisions reached by the three principals became known as the GPA which came into existence on 15 September 2008 as a marriage of convenience<sup>784</sup> or inconvenience depending on the political perspective of analysts.

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<sup>781</sup> K. Chitiyo & M. Rupiya, (2005). Tracking Zimbabwe's political history: The Zimbabwe defence force from 1980-2005. In M. Rupiya, (Ed.). *Evolutions and Revolutions: A Contemporary History of Militaries in Southern Africa*. Institute of Security Studies, Pretoria, p. 348.

<sup>782</sup> Williamson, J. I. (2010). Seeking Civilian Control, p. 403.

<sup>783</sup> J. Rogers, (2017). *Zimbabwe coup: Did China influence military takeover from Robert Mugabe?* <https://www.express.co.uk> Accessed 25 January 2018.

<sup>784</sup> G. Mokhawa, (2013). Examining Zimbabwe's global political agreement. *Southern African*, 23, p. 28.

Power-sharing became the preferred strategy to bring the political impasse to an end and a GNU was set up to implement GPA resolutions among which was the drawing up of a new constitution to be used in the 2013 elections. The chairman of the NCA, Lovemore Madhuku, castigated the constitutional outreach programmes to gather people's views about what they wanted included in the constitution as flawed, chaotic and a waste of time. Politicians fed their respective supporters with what to say, and Madhuku questions whether that can suffice as a description of a constitution.<sup>785</sup> Sharing power in the so-called Inclusive Government<sup>786</sup> involved establishing an inclusive governance institution that represented a broad range of concerned parties as well as providing for bureaucratic posts and new rules regarding the subsequent management of the security forces.<sup>787</sup> This background is important in that it allows for the problematisation of the implementation of the agreement as suspicions ran deep.

One of the aspects that created deep distrust of ZANU-PF manoeuvres by the opposition resulted from the security reform deficit. Mnangagwa, who was the Minister of Defence, avowed that the military would not undergo reform while he remained in government.<sup>788</sup> Mokhawa,<sup>789</sup> in discussing the distinctive nature of the Zimbabwean situation and its exclusionary politics that is instituted within a military epistemic authority that shaped political militarism, concludes that the use of military power to solve political problems, led to the development of officer corps that were close to the ruling party. That made it a very vital cog in the ZANU-PF machine when it comes to releasing election results. Coltart<sup>790</sup> alludes to the opposition's struggle for democracy and critiques the role of the political extremists in ZANU-PF of whom the military is part, in subverting Zimbabwe's chances of realising its potential. The SADC-initiated GPA played well into ZANU-PF hands as the party recuperated from the doldrums of growing illegitimacy. According to Raftopoulos, the GPA was a passive revolution in which a ZANU-PF that was facing political and economic crisis, used the space created to reconfigure and re-negotiate the terms of its [renewed]

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<sup>785</sup> The Herald, (2010). *I'm not relinquishing power – yet – Madhuku*. <https://www.herald.co.zw/im-not-relinquishing-power-yet-madhuku/> Accessed 17 October 2016.

<sup>786</sup> The other name by which the Government of National Unity (GNU) was known because it was inclusive of all the key political players from different parties.

<sup>787</sup> G. Mokhawa, (2013). *Examining Zimbabwe's global political agreement*, p. 23.

<sup>788</sup> International Crisis Group, (2013a). *Zimbabwe: an opportunity to reform?* <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/southern-africa/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-opportunity-reform> Accessed 6 October 2016.

<sup>789</sup> G. Mokhawa, (2013). *Examining Zimbabwe's global political agreement*, p. 23.

<sup>790</sup> Coltart, D. (2016). *The Struggle Continues: 50 Years of Tyranny in Zimbabwe*, Jacana Media.

existence with the opposition, civil society and the international community.<sup>791</sup> In line with this thinking, Kriger<sup>792</sup> also states that there was an orchestrated informalisation of political networks by ZANU-PF which cohered sufficiently to run a parallel government that effectively sabotaged the Inclusive Government.

Opposition councillors from both rural and urban areas were allegedly deprived of resources, mobility and political efficacy that could assist them to discharge their duties during the GNU era.<sup>793</sup> Many opposition interviewees contend that the ruling ZANU-PF party was not wholly in the GNU framework but was mainly concerned with the retention of state power through control of key ministries. That was the reason that ministries concerned with social service delivery were reserved for the opposition. ZANU-PF's use of informal networks and parallel structures aligned to the party created a different source of power with more influence on the activities of government than the GNU itself. Mandiwanzira<sup>794</sup> is critical of the opposition's participation in the GNU, arguing that opposition ministers projected themselves as very greedy people who got embroiled in looting and acquiring property. To support his view, Mandiwanzira cited the example of Tendai Biti, who, before becoming the Finance Minister in the GNU, is said to have threatened to sell all Mercedes Benzes owned by ZANU-PF ministers if he got into power but proceeded to buy more during the GNU era. He also bemoans the hypocritical tendencies of opposition politicians and concludes that many people concluded that they would rather stick to ZANU-PF, a party that they were familiar with, and work to improve it from within.

Competition for corruption by both MDC and ZANU-PF intensified during the GNU era. McLaughlin contends that Tsvangirai's personal life left a lot to be desired, although it is not clear to what extent that influenced people's voting decisions. McLaughlin admitted that she liked the former vice President Joice Mujuru personally but regrets her tarnished image after so many years with ZANU-PF. MDC-T's willingness to use violence, which Coltart documents in his book *The struggle continues: 50 years of tyranny in Zimbabwe*, was fatalistic for the entire opposition movement in the country as it led to the split in 2005.<sup>795</sup>

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<sup>791</sup> N. Kriger, (2012). ZANU PF politics under Zimbabwe's 'power-sharing' government. p. 12.

<sup>792</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>793</sup> J. Alexander & J. McGregor, (2013). Introduction: Politics, patronage and violence in Zimbabwe, p. 753.

<sup>794</sup> Interview with Supa Collin Mandiwanzira, 31 May 2017.

<sup>795</sup> Interview with Janice McLaughlin, 23 October 2017.

In trying to expose Tsvangirai's social life outside marriage, McLaughlin claimed to know one of Tsvangirai's earlier wives with whom he had two children that he did not support financially or emotionally. Tsvangirai was also involved with several girlfriends after the death of his wife Susan in a motor vehicle accident when he was at the wheel. McLaughlin also argued that while Tsvangirai's personal life was not admirable that factor may not have influenced many people in a negative way, citing as an example Donald Trump's chequered personal life which, while also open to criticism, did not prevent him winning the presidential elections in the USA in 2016.<sup>796</sup> McLaughlin is critical of the opposition party members in the GNU who, she argued, tarnished their image by being corrupt, living in big houses and accepting expensive vehicles, thus distancing themselves from the ordinary people who were their support base.<sup>797</sup>

Interviewees tended to blame the opposition for complacency when they tested power. Maziriri was of the view that the opposition became disoriented and lost their trajectory once power in a GNU framework got into their hands.<sup>798</sup> Kori intimates that the opposition was caught in a trap: it should not have joined the GNU because opposition ministers were given posts to clean up the mess that ZANU-PF had created and resultantly they were exposed in the scandalous allocation of residential stands.<sup>799</sup> On the other hand, ZANU-PF, during the entire GNU era, was instituting a strategy of retaining presidential, military and security sector power, using a policy change around issues of [black] empowerment, indigenisation and patriotic nationalism.<sup>800</sup>

Based on the election results of the 2013 elections, Lebas concluded that ZANU-PF emerged from the power-sharing period strengthened because it found new means of deploying patronage to the military officials and loyalist as well as vulnerable MDC-T voters.<sup>801</sup> Booyesen<sup>802</sup> takes the debate further and links opposition decline after the 2013 elections to a weak leadership that subjected itself to ZANU-PF during the GNU, poor ethics in local government and the destruction of trade union anchors of the opposition MDC-T through de-industrialisation, all of which resulted in a

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<sup>796</sup> Interview with Janice McLaughlin.

<sup>797</sup> Interview with Janice McLaughlin

<sup>798</sup> Interview with Freedom Maziriri, 23 May 2017.

<sup>799</sup> Interview with Arkmore Kori, 29 May 2017.

<sup>800</sup> S. Booyesen, (2014). The decline of Zimbabwe's Movement for Democratic Change – Tsvangirai: public opinion polls posting the writing on the wall. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, 84, p. 54.

<sup>801</sup> O. Hodzi, (2014). Commodification of elections: the future of elections in Zimbabwe. *Modern Africa: politics, History and Society*, 2, p. 40.

<sup>802</sup> S. Booyesen, (2014). 'The decline of Zimbabwe's Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai, p. 61.

shift in Zimbabwe's political orientation away from MDC-T. Pro-opposition interviewees contended that the two MDC formations joined the GNU and concentrated on improving the well-being of the people – education and health – which had deteriorated, while ZANU-PF was putting on brakes and concentrating on building political infrastructure which involved establishing pillars of support and strengthening the influence of chiefs in the rural electorate.<sup>803</sup>

The upward trajectory of the MDC formations suffered on the heels of incessant splits, with the first one in 2005 and the most damaging ones after the 2013 elections that saw Tendai Biti and Elton Mangoma forming their own parties, after having split from Tsvangirai's MDC. It can be argued that opposition unity during the GNU was destroyed by ZANU-PF that used its networks to influence key people in the party to split, hence the breakaways by Tendai Biti and Elton Mangoma after 2013.<sup>804</sup> Nyamutsungira<sup>805</sup> implicated the state machinery in creating cleavages within the opposition, arguing that the two were given huge sums of money by ZANU-PF to destroy the opposition MDC, and that they were threatened with arrest if that did not happen.

From the above discussion, I argue that the opposition did not distinguish itself from ZANU-PF in terms of its approaches to doing state business. MDC became as tainted as ZANU-PF as its members were systematically bought into upper-class corruption.<sup>806</sup> Tsvangirai was not outstanding as PM of the GNU aside from chairing the Council of Ministers, and from McLaughlin's point of view, he could have been thwarted by ZANU-PF's parallel structures if he tried to do more.<sup>807</sup> Outstanding issues that the opposition wanted addressed fully, and which almost wrecked the GNU, remained unresolved. These included demands such as the replacement of the Reserve Bank Governor Gideon Gono, whom the MDC accused of releasing state funds to sponsor ZANU-PF violence and political killings, and the AG Tomana who was partisan in his dispensation of justice, granting ZANU-PF perpetrators of political violence immunity so that they

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<sup>803</sup> Morgen Komichi, Arkmore Kori, Faith Nyamutsungira, David Coltart and Monica Mutsvangwa all allude to this opposition weakness.

<sup>804</sup> Interview with Faith Nyamutsungira, 15 May 2017.

<sup>805</sup> Interview with Nyamutsungira. She intimates that Elton Mangoma was dragged to court for issues that occurred during the GNU allegedly for not fulfilling the task at hand, although he had succeeded in forming his own party and weakening the opposition.

<sup>806</sup> Interviews with McLaughlin, Nyamutsungira, Coltart, Mandiwanzira, Mutsvangwa and Maziriri all concur that the opposition was even more corrupt than ZANU-PF as it was excited with getting into government.

<sup>807</sup> Interview with McLaughlin.

would not face the consequences of their actions, and the removal of the warrant of arrest issued to Roy Bennett, the MDC Deputy Minister of Agriculture in the GPA.<sup>808</sup>

ZANU-PF and MDC-T viewed the Bennett case differently. He was the MP for Chimanimani constituency in Manicaland Province and had just been released from prison for an altercation he had had in parliament with Didymus Mutasa and Patrick Chinamasa. In the view of MDC-T, Bennett was not allowed to assume office under the new GNU dispensation on allegations from ZANU-PF of possessing weapons that he wanted to use to unseat it. For Raftopoulos, the MDC in the GPA struggled to position itself in a state whose structure was still largely moulded by the imperatives of ZANU-PF's military economic elite.<sup>809</sup> It can be concluded that ZANU-PF refused to concede defeat in 2008 and was still reluctant to yield to opposition demands as mutually agreed to in the GPA because that could have given the MDC parties more visibility, more respectability and an upward political trajectory.

## **7.5 THE 2013 HARMONISED ELECTIONS AND THE OPPOSITION'S TRAJECTORY**

The post 2000 referendum period as well as the 2002 parliamentary elections witnessed an upward trajectory for the opposition MDC support base when it broke the traditional ZANU-PF parliamentary hegemony by gaining 47% of the vote in the 2002 elections. The level of repression and violence against civilians in these elections, coupled with unprecedented harassment and intimidation of media personnel, ensured a ZANU-PF election victory.<sup>810</sup> The 2013 elections gave ZANU-PF the two-thirds majority that it needed to form a government wholly controlled by it. The MDC-T election manifesto – JUICE – was an acronym for Jobs, Upliftment, Investment, Capital, and Environment that it hoped to address upon getting the driving seat after the elections.

The downward trajectory of the opposition is difficult to measure since 2013 because it was no longer in government. Biti complained that there was a 10-15% variance between ZEC figures and those collated by the MDC-T agents across the country who covered all the polling stations.<sup>811</sup>

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<sup>808</sup> G.Cawthra, (2010). The role of SADC in managing political crisis and conflict, p. 26.

<sup>809</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (2010). The global political agreement as a 'passive revolution': Notes on contemporary politics in Zimbabwe. *The Round Table*, 99(411), p. 713.

<sup>810</sup> D. Hansohm, et al., (2002). Monitoring regional integration in Southern Africa, p. 141.

<sup>811</sup> ZESN Report, (2013). *Zimbabwe Constitution referendum report and implications for the next election*. March 2013, [http://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas\\_d/files/ZESN-2013-Advance-Harmonised-Election-Report.pdf](http://www.veritaszim.net/sites/veritas_d/files/ZESN-2013-Advance-Harmonised-Election-Report.pdf) Accessed 29 July 2017.



According to Biti, allegations of rigging were confirmed by the fact that ZEC printed 12 million ballot papers, twice the number of registered voters, and just a million fewer than the total population of Zimbabwe, which was under 13 million based on the 2012 national census.<sup>812</sup> However, what emerges from the elections is that the opposition was beaten and supporters of the MDC began to doubt themselves. Political opportunists began to dissociate themselves from the MDC-T to form their own as Biti and Mangoma, indeed, weakened the party by breaking away.<sup>813</sup> Splits and power struggles destroyed the credibility that people had bestowed on the opposition and procuring funding for party activities became more difficult. The only source after fundraising trips to the United Kingdom, Australia and the USA failed was the government grant for political parties in Zimbabwe.<sup>814</sup>

Chisi posits that many opposition politicians did not expect to lose in the 2013 elections, and so were not focused on an all-out campaign against the ruling establishment which was never going to be easily removed overnight. The 47 percent that the MDC had garnered in 2008 was reduced to five percent in 2013.<sup>815</sup> Chung argues that the opposition betrayed its supporters, whether it is the British, Americans, the unemployed or local people who had supported it in its formative days. Her argument is premised on the fact that although the land redistribution programme was badly done in her view, ZANU-PF delivered land and politicised food as a democratic tool because land is democracy as people finally owned it.<sup>816</sup>

In 2013, social media were awash with political news disseminated by the fictitious Baba (Father) Jukwa. The opposition was misled into believing his message of alleged pandemonium within ZANU-PF, which gave it the deceptive feeling of electoral triumph in the forthcoming elections. Many posts on cellphones depicted ZANU-PF's inevitable demise at the hands of the opposition MDC, creating in the process, a façade of ZANU-PF's hopelessness.<sup>817</sup> People were assured that the prognosis would translate into political reality and no effort was made to identify what Baba Jukwa's real name was. After the defeat of the opposition in the elections, people began to suspect

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<sup>812</sup> Ibid.

<sup>813</sup> Interview with Sydney Chisi, 7 April 2017.

<sup>814</sup> Interview with Faith.

<sup>815</sup> Interview with Chisi.

<sup>816</sup> Interview with King Fay Chung, 30 June 2016.

<sup>817</sup> I attended a very colourful rally organised by the MDC at the current Robert Mugabe Square where reference to Baba Jukwa's analyses of the prevailing political situation was made.

that it could have been a ZANU-PF strategy to create complacency within the opposition ahead of the elections as no real campaigning was done to win votes by the MDC on the assumption that people were on their side.

McLaughlin and Komichi make repeated references to an Israeli Company by the name NIKUV, that they allege was hired to rig the 2013 elections and to facilitate ZANU-PF's election victory.<sup>818</sup> The elections were the almost violence-free even though people expected the traditional violent campaign that had become the hallmark of ZANU-PF's political mobilisation techniques. According to McLaughlin, South Africa is said to have warned ZANU-PF against using violence as it had done in 2008 so it used other 'electronic things' from a supportive Israeli company.<sup>819</sup> This is a presumption that Jeremy Cronin, a South African Communist Party member and key member of the South African Alliance in 2004, concurs with. He interprets South African foreign policy in relation to Zimbabwe, and views the opposition MDC not only as a symptom of weaknesses and errors committed by ZANU-PF, but also as a challenge that should be warded off and to achieve this, the South African government encouraged ZANU-PF to use a modernized electoral strategy that would avoid violence and allay the danger of regime change through the ballot.<sup>820</sup> If South African policy towards Zimbabwe was premised on preventing a ZANU-PF humiliation at the polls, the mediators, both Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, remain complicit in the political crisis and the democratic deficit in Zimbabwe.

The main MDC-T opposition, ever since its participation in elections in 2000, did not accept the results. It argued that results were fraudulent and did not represent the will of the people. Allegations of state monopoly over instruments of rigging could be confirmed when, on the eve of the 2013 elections, Tsvangirai informed people gathered at an open space adjacent to the ZANU-PF Headquarters known to the opposition as Freedom Square (now formally called Robert Mugabe Square) that the ZEC had still not availed the voters' roll to MDC-T, nor to any other opposition party, two days before the elections.<sup>821</sup> It is a matter of electoral procedure that before an election

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<sup>818</sup> Interviews with Janice McLaughlin and Morgen Komichi.

<sup>819</sup> Interview with McLaughlin.

<sup>820</sup> B. Raftopoulos, (2010). The global political agreement as a 'passive revolution', p. 710.

<sup>821</sup> A. Laing, (2013). Morgan Tsvangirai eyes victory at huge Zimbabwe election rally. *The Telegraph*, 29 July 2013. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/zimbabwe/10209680/Morgan-Tsvangirai-eyes-victory-at-huge-Zimbabwe-election-rally.html>. Accessed 13 May 2017. That was with reference to the June 2008 re-run elections under the JOC so that they got the results they wanted. Fears were that the absence of a voter's roll was indicative of yet another electoral fraud to secure a ZANU-PF victory

takes place, all parties concerned have copies of voters' rolls to allow time for inspection and to gain knowledge of the location of polling stations. That was in violation of the Electoral Act Section 21 (4) which states that within a reasonable period after the calling of an election, ZEC shall provide every political party that intends to contest, one copy of every voters' roll, in print or in electronic form.<sup>822</sup> With no voters' roll, parties could not reconcile the number of voters and the quantity of ballot papers supplied, which was why Biti regretted the volumes of ballot papers that far outstripped the number of registered voters in 2013. Elections dates were called on 13 June, but six weeks later there was still no voters' roll. That meant that there was grossly insufficient time to study and make effective use of the voters' roll. The conclusion by both MDC formations that the electoral process was shambolic as it denied many eligible voters the right to vote, much to the advantage of ZANU-PF.<sup>823</sup>

The opposition MDC-T was prohibited from holding rallies in urban areas where its support was strong. The police broke the huge rally that the MDC-T was supposed to convene in March 2013 in the Zimbabwe Grounds in the Highfields location was broken up by the police.<sup>824</sup> Having the final 'star' MDC rally very close to ZANU-PF Headquarters a few days before the election was a sign of defiance to Mugabe's rule.<sup>825</sup> Chief Police Superintendent, Titus Chagwedera, commanding Harare central district, disallowed an MDC-T rally citing inadequate ZRP staff to muster enough security deployments for the rally, prompting Biti to brandish the elections as not free nor fair, illegitimate, illegal and immoral.<sup>826</sup> It suggests that ZEC did not reveal and had not revealed details of polling stations two days before elections.

Tsvangirai attributed the delay in availing the voters' roll to his party to ZEC's complicity in the alleged rigging plot, or that ZEC had abdicated that responsibility to other forces.<sup>827</sup> Tsvangirai went on to make another statement: "Kana vakada kundisunga hameno kuti vanosunga ani nekuti

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<sup>822</sup> D. Coltart, (2013). *MDC-Ncube Legal Affairs Secretary*. [www.zimbabwesituation.com/old/july30\\_2013](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/old/july30_2013)

<sup>823</sup> [www.zimbabwesituation.com/old/july30\\_2013](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com/old/july30_2013)

<sup>824</sup> Robert Mugabe's first ever campaign rally in 1980 after the Lancaster Conference was held in the Zimbabwe Grounds in the African location of Highfields where ZANU was founded in 1963.

<sup>825</sup> The police lifted the ban on opposition rallies in urban areas, thought to be MDC-T strongholds, a few days before the elections

<sup>826</sup> I. Chifera, (2013) *Police ban Tsvangirai's last election rally*. <https://www.voazimbabwe.com/a/zimbabwe-tsvangirai-rally-banned-harare-rainbow-towers/1711257.html> Accessed 21 June 2018.

<sup>827</sup> A. Laing, (2013). Morgan Tsvangirai eyes victory at huge Zimbabwe election rally. That was with reference to the June 2008 re-run elections under the JOC so that they got the results they wanted. Fears were that the absence of a voter's roll was indicative of yet another electoral fraud to secure a ZANU-PF victory.

ini ndinenge ndava kutonga ndava President.” (If those in authority [ZANU-PF] want to arrest me, it would not work because after elections I will be in power as president).<sup>828</sup> He could have been provoked into making this statement when he was threatened with arrest by president Mugabe if he revealed poll results before the official announcement by ZEC.<sup>829</sup> His message to the people was predicated on having the electorate to choose between a bleak future and a better future: between authoritarianism and democratic governance.<sup>830</sup> It was the biggest opposition rally in post-independence Zimbabwe attended by hundreds of thousands of MDC-T supporters who thought they would finally unseat Mugabe through the power of the ballot.<sup>831</sup> Pedzisai Ruhanya, Director of the Zimbabwe Democracy Institute posits that the rally was unprecedented in terms of its size and if all the people present turned out to vote, no amount of technical manipulation of the polls would have affected the results.<sup>832</sup> This analysis is skewed in favour of the opposition, yet it ignores the fact that not all of the people might have been registered to vote, nor were they staunch MDC-T supporters and that this was just too small a sample upon which to make a bold claim of the election results at national level.

People’s confidence in the opposition began to fade, political despondency and apathy crept in and the electorate did not believe elections would change the political landscape because of tactical mistakes in the past, such as MDC-T’s willingness to participate in the 2013 elections without a voters’ roll. The government remained steadfast that they would not allow election monitors from outside Africa, a decision the opposition believed could allow for a latitude of electoral manipulation. Fears were that SADC and the AU which openly declared their solidarity with the incumbent ZANU-PF party would, in the spirit of brotherhood, work against opposition parties that they viewed as receiving financial and ideological backing from western powers. There were

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<sup>828</sup> Statement by Tsvangirai at his last rally at the now Robert Mugabe Square two days before the 2013 elections. Samora Machel Avenue that leads to the site of the rally was turned red-the colour of the opposition attire-and the massive march in support of Tsvangirai was met with no activity on the ZANU-PF side which gave the opposition the false impression that ZANU-PF would not win in these elections.

<sup>829</sup> T. Karimakwenda, (2013). *Thousands throng MDC-T Red Power Monday rally*. <http://swradioafrica.com/> Accessed 21 December 2017. In the March 2008 elections, the MDC-T Secretary General, Tendai Biti, was arrested for announcing that his party already had 50 percent plus votes even before counting had started and stated that there would be no need for a run-off election because his party had romped to victory.

<sup>830</sup> [www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/07](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/07)

<sup>831</sup> A. Laing, (2013). Morgan Tsvangirai eyes victory at huge Zimbabwe election rally.

<sup>832</sup> Ibid.

6000 local monitors and 600 foreign monitors drawn from African countries to observe the electoral proceedings.<sup>833</sup>

The argument by MDC-T supporters was that someone riggable on many occasions, like Tsvangirai, was not qualified to lead and that change seemingly might not come through the MDC-T party. MDC was collapsing under the weight of its own inherent contradictions as a coalition, or through the lure of power and wealth as happened in ZAPU in 1987 when it signed a unity accord. Roy Bennet, Eddie Cross, David Coltart, Arthur Mutambara, Lovemore Madhuku and Tsvangirai were no longer vibrant after the 2013 defeat at the polls. MDC parties refused to sign the anti-sanctions petition in 2011 because to them, it was a ZANU-PF project to extricate the ruling party members under the targeted sanctions.<sup>834</sup> That could have weakened it ahead of the 2013 elections. After the 2013 elections, an undisclosed colonel was quoted as saying to Tsvangirai: “Until when will you want to become president? Just wait and see what we will do to you. ZANU-PF disciplines mad people like you. Five years from now you will have become useless.”<sup>835</sup> *The Daily News* stated that the only thing achieved by the MDC in the coalition was to further strengthen ZANU-PF’s hold on power as people endorsed the 2013 constitution that was a ZANU-PF manifesto.<sup>836</sup> In terms of the new constitution that guided the 2013 elections, ZANU-PF dominated parliament, and this further pushed the opposition into political oblivion. There was lack of vision and alternatives by the opposition parties<sup>837</sup> that appeared only united in wanting Mugabe to step down but did not envisage another rallying strategy to win people’s support should that fail to happen, as it did.

## 7.6 CONCLUDING ANALYSIS

Partisanship, interpreted in this dissertation to mean making decisions based on partisan loyalty, or unquestioning obedience to a political party either by individuals or entities as an institutionalised strategy for the dispensation of patronage resources using highly selective criteria,

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<sup>833</sup> [www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/07](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2013/07)

<sup>834</sup> D. Masaka, (2012). Paradoxes in the ‘Sanctions Discourse’ in Zimbabwe: A Critical Reflection, p. 62.

<sup>835</sup> F. Kwaramba, (2013). ‘Tsvangirai reveals Mugabe’s fears’, *Daily News*, 28 November 2013 <http://www.dailynews.co.zw/articles2013/11/28>. Tsvangirai’s struggle with colon cancer leading to his death five years after the statement (2018) somehow confirms allegations that he was poisoned during his time as Prime Minister of the Inclusive Government.

<sup>836</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>837</sup> Email interview with Innocent Madenga, 24 March 2017.

has been an ingrained trait in Zimbabwean politics since independence in 1980. The need to create non-partisan state institutions is a necessary political imperative that was hampered by the long legacy of quasi-one-party state under Robert Mugabe. It is feared that his legacy of *Dodaism* and *Mugabeism*, defined in terms of the use of violence, intimidation and electoral manipulation by ZANU-PF with reckless abandon against opposition leaders and their followers, will live on for generations to come unless a new political culture is built around a new set of value systems. That would need a radical transformation and orientation of all the institutions that have given safety props for three decades to ZANU-PF political hegemony. Electoral accountability has been undermined by patronage pressures that border on corruption, thus creating a weak institutional base for multiparty democracy.

ZANU-PF rule can be considered to be a militarised form of electoral authoritarianism built to outlast Mugabe's political career and this is likely to affect the nature of any political transition and future prospects for democracy in Zimbabwe.<sup>838</sup> Use of state resources by ZANU-PF to dig in for power is entrenched in the Zimbabwean electoral system. The challenge of uprooting *Mugabeism* even after his departure is quite real because it has become institutionalised. It is an entrenched philosophy that requires the elimination of the whole Mugabe generation, together with the institutional safety props upon which the regime was anchored, so that new political and economic paradigms can be adopted and implemented for the common good.

This study underscores the need for a professional judiciary and for mechanisms to manage ethnic diversity. Democracy movements in Africa need to place more emphasis on concrete social and economic rights as opposed to abstract political rights.<sup>839</sup> In Zimbabwe, democratic conditions seem difficult to sustain given the revolutionary background upon which the ruling ZANU-PF leadership is based. Mugabe's intellectual prowess and his understanding of micro and macroeconomics, and his political understanding of Zimbabwe, Africa and the world were all crucial to his retaining power.<sup>840</sup>

The 'big brother syndrome' by SADC dashed all hopes of a peaceful democratic transition in Zimbabwe. Together with the AU and UN, SADC acknowledged that Tsvangirai and the MDC

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<sup>838</sup> M. Bratton & E. Masunungure, (2008). Zimbabwe's long agony. *Journal of Democracy*, 19(4), 41-55.

<sup>839</sup> W. G. Moseley, 2012. *Taking sides: clashing views on African issues*, McGraw Hill, Boston, p. 313.

<sup>840</sup> Interview with Maziriri.

won the 2008 presidential elections and were denied victory, yet they did nothing to correct this. The ZANU-PF feud between Generation40 (G40) and Team Lacoste (Crocodile) reached uncontrollable heights in the last quarter of 2017 when the First Lady, Grace Mugabe, took the liberty at the so-called ‘interface rallies’ with the youths led by Kudzanai Chipanga to castigate vice president Mnangagwa. Mugabe in support of his wife responded:

I am getting insulted in the name of Mnangagwa daily. Did I make a mistake to appoint Mnangagwa as my deputy? If I made a mistake I can even drop him tomorrow. If he wants to form his party with his supporters, he can go ahead. We can't have a party riddled with insulting each other daily. We heard this booing [of the First Lady in Bulawayo] was organised before we came. Those who want to be under me should behave, and those who don't should go. We don't persuade people. It doesn't matter who.<sup>841</sup>

This turmoil led to a military coup ‘to clean up the mess in the party’ with Ignatious Chombo, Jonathan Moyo, Saviour Kasukuwere and Grace Mugabe as the usual military list of bad people surrounding and ill-advising president Mugabe and who had to be sacked from ZANU-PF. The resignation of Mugabe after 37 years in power was negotiated in the context of a military coup. Opposition reacted to the ascendancy of Mnangagwa as president, and to the fate of multiparty practice in future elections beginning 2018 in different ways. There were those in the opposition who hoped to be included in an inclusive transitional government and others who were sceptical about participating in state institutions born out of a coup. The army that prevented Tsvangirai from assuming office as president after his election victory in March 2008 is the same institution that got at the helm of political power after the November 2017 military coup. Can the coup government be entrusted with creating a roadmap for democratic transition in the country given its straitjacket declaration that Zimbabwe is beholden to the war veterans who brought independence in 1980?

The military seems to be dampening the hope of a free and fair election in future. Having soldiers as part of the political architecture cannot help in facilitating a genuine all-inclusive democratic transition process given the fact that their *raison d'etre* is to perpetuate one-party rule under a leader it prefers and to popularise the liberation legacy. The military has sent a clear message to

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<sup>841</sup> *Africa News*, (2017) ‘WATCH: Mugabe threatens to fire Mnangagwa as Grace is heckled at rally’, 6 November 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQyB0IK2qIQ> Accessed 20 December 2017.

the electorate that it reserves the right to turn down election outcomes it disapproves of and, as Hamill notes, it has secured veto powers over the leadership of the ruling ZANU-PF party, and even over the political process on a broader spectrum.<sup>842</sup> He refers to Mnangagwa's administrations as an effective 'barracks democracy'<sup>843</sup> subjected ideologically to the whims of the soldiers and characterised by command-oriented national development policies.

The historical role of the military in deciding the man (it has always been a man!) at the helm of power in ZANU-PF dating back to the era of the liberation struggle, demonstrates that multiparty democracy cannot be guaranteed by means of the ballot. The entitlement mentality by the war veterans that the country belongs to them by right of the armed struggle and the institutional legacy of their military involvement in politics dating back to the liberation days does not augur well for electoral democracy in Zimbabwe.<sup>844</sup> Military interventions have been known to block electoral democracy and the Zimbabwean scenario cannot be excepted. There is a likelihood that the military will either fail or succeed entirely with Mnangagwa in the 2018 elections. The military, like it has done before, will likely intervene during election campaigns in rural areas and in the management of election results should Mnangagwa get beaten in the first round of elections.

The renewed ZAPU under Dumiso Dabengwa commemorated Gukurahundi on 22 December 2017, which is a national holiday in Zimbabwe to mark the Unity Accord of 1987 that ended the ZANU-PF and PF ZANU hostilities of the first decade of independence. The significance of that development was that it reminded the Ndebele that the Unity Accord was fake and that instead of celebrating it, they should be kept reminded that justice did not prevail when close to 20 000 people were murdered by an army that was instructed to do so by the very people who usurped power in November 2017. Commenting on the new political dispensation ushered in by the alliance between the military led by Chiwenga and Mnangagwa, Dabengwa remarked in December 2017:

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<sup>842</sup> J. Hamill, (2018). The 3 barriers blocking Zim progress: Zanu PF, Mnangagwa and the military. *Newsday*, 3 January 2018. <https://www.newsday.co.zw/2018/01/the-3-barriers-blocking-zim-progress-zanu-pf-mnangagwa-and-the-military/> Accessed 10 March 2018.

<sup>843</sup> Ibid.

<sup>844</sup> Bulawayo24 News, (2017a) *Dabengwa takes aim at Mnangagwa's government*, 28 December 2017. <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-sc-national-byo-124980.html> Accessed 10 January 2018.



We continue to suffer silently. We continue to live in fear and the same crocodiles that devoured our people [during Gukurahundi] are still in power...they recently changed faces and names... the system and the attitudes only mutated yet they remain the same.<sup>845</sup>

Implicit in this statement is the role that both Mnangagwa and Chiwenga played in the killing of the Ndebele people in Matabeleland and the Midlands regions during the infamous Gukurahundi era of the 1980s. Mnangagwa was Minister of State Security, the overall commander of the ZNA then was Solomon Mujuru and Chiwenga was the Brigadier-General of 1 Brigade during the Gukurahundi atrocities. By its very nature a crocodile (by which name Mnangagwa is popularly known and his official signature resembles a crocodile) attacks its prey ruthlessly. The replacement of Mugabe by the so-called 'crocodiles' suggests that ZANU-PF is still in power despite changes in leadership, and the people still have to grapple with continuities that have only metamorphosed without affecting the key aspects that maintain the ZANU-PF machinery. This political fault line will likely weaken attempts at reconciliation in future as affected Ndebele people see in the country's leaders, architects of the previous killings who maintain hostile attitudes towards them as an ethnic category. The developments that ushered in a military dispensation helped to concretize feelings of "Ndebele-ness" and generated secessionist tendencies with the capacity to entrench divided loyalties premised on ethnic considerations.

Vote-buying is another problem that constitutes a potentially serious threat to multiparty democracy in Zimbabwe. Political rivals for power are wont to distribute resources in return for votes and favours. Admittedly, the practice is rampant in many countries in Africa, where it is blatant, but also elsewhere, including in European countries where it may be less conspicuous. Zimbabwe represents a unique scenario where a party like ZANU-PF, with so many years of uninterrupted rule, enjoys monopoly over the distribution of patronage resources and deployment of the coercive apparatus to gain popularity. This has led to the placement of incompetent party loyalists in positions of authority because they have been beneficiaries of a longstanding culture of accumulation and can dispense with resources to gain votes. One of the sad stories aligned to the politics of patronage and clientelism has been the recycling of people nominated into ministerial positions since 1980 and this seems to give them a feeling of indispensability.

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<sup>845</sup> Ibid.

Many people left Zimbabwe due the economic meltdown and political violence dating back to the ESAP era of the early 1990s. There is massive disenfranchisement as the government of Zimbabwe consistently denies these diasporans the postal ballot facility. Abductions, disappearances and displacements of political victims have, since the era of violent politics that started in earnest in 1999 with the formation of the MDC, negatively affected people who may have wanted to vote as they would be forced out of their voting constituencies for them to be able to cast their votes. This is exemplified by teachers who register to vote in specific wards but get deployed outside these wards to participate in the election exercise in various capacities, making it practically impossible for them to vote.

POSA and AIPPA are pieces of legislation that were put in place to support ZANU-PF state structures at the height of opposition MDC ascendancy in 2002. They have been discussed at length in one of the chapters and they ought to be legislated out of existence to allow for tolerance, freedom of political conviction and association and other rights that are generic to all multiparty democratic systems. International credibility, long since lost during the mayhem of the 2000 elections and the controversial land redistribution programme that targeted white farmers, could be restored if international observers and monitors are allowed into the country to oversee the conduct of elections at least six months before they take place.

Although many African leaders have expressed dismay at the fact that they are not called upon to do the same in faraway European election processes, they do so cautiously in case they get disqualified for financial and other forms of assistance from international institutions. Mugabe has been popularly known at the United Nations and other international fora for lambasting the British and Americans. He was regarded as an outstanding defender of Pan-Africanism and the sovereign rights of the African people using demonisation discourses that made the British and the MDC together appear as implacable enemies of the state. Though not officially declared so, I have argued in this dissertation that Zimbabwe since 2000 has been in a state of emergency where rules of political behaviour were rescinded, where imposed political unanimity, despite the difficulties in making it work, was preferred by the ruling ZANU-PF over the politics of compromise and plurality, and where one even feared to whisper about the tumultuous tendencies of ZANU-PF's institutions and its functionaries.

State-directed violence and intimidation of political opponents impinge on meaningful participation of different parties in an election. Arming the militia and war veterans to frighten rural voters into endorsing choices dictated to them under threat of losing their land or facing retribution for voting for the opposition candidates is an age-old tactic of political coercion that has tainted the country's human rights record with Amnesty International and other rights organisations. The de-Zanufication of national institutions can open avenues for more open political dialogue among political contenders, demystify the ownership of the country by one party based on a liberationist ethos and create a society in which political stability exists and where economic development takes place as a positive consequence of a competent bureaucracy based on meritocratic considerations as opposed to nepotistic political appointments.

Ward-based elections and ward-based-counting procedures reminiscent of the old practice where voters stood behind their choice, have the effect of intimidating potential voters unless voter education is done to ward off misconceptions. Even then, people might still not be convinced that nothing happens to them if they vote 'incorrectly' for the opposition. Ward specific electoral methodologies, though they have the intention of preventing manipulation of sealed ballot boxes during their transmission process to the National Command Centre currently headquartered in Harare, scare the voters because such a system exposes their political affiliation. Calls in the past have been made to periodically update the voters' roll so that names of those voters who either died or emigrated between the two elections are deleted. The Registrar-General, Tobaiwa Mudede, was viewed by the opposition as a senior member of the ruling party for his instrumental role in facilitating ZANU-PF victories at the polls<sup>846</sup> as these 'ghost voters' names remained on voter's rolls. A transparent system to remove the dead from the rolls must be put in place for credible elections and uncontested results to be realised.

The curtailment of public spheres undermines the development of democratic institutions. Dorman notes that when confronted with conditions of political crisis and vulnerability, leaders' concerns with control take precedence over either liberation or democracy leading to increasingly authoritarian and exclusivist policies.<sup>847</sup> This is a fitting characterisation of the Zimbabwean

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<sup>846</sup> E. Chitando. (2005). 'In the beginning was the land', p. 55.

<sup>847</sup> S. R. Dorman, (2006). Post-liberation politics in Africa, p. 1086.

political history when the country was plunged into political crisis. The government formed by ZANU-PF gave priority to its own existence to avoid becoming irrelevant, and it ostensibly embarked on a frontal attack on democracy. The signing of the Abuja Agreement (2001)<sup>848</sup> by the Zimbabwe Government and Britain under the auspice of the Commonwealth meant that Mugabe's government had voluntarily committed itself to peaceful mechanisms for land redistribution as if to mark the termination of the standoff between Zimbabwe and Britain.<sup>849</sup> The *Guardian* newspaper described the Agreement as a remarkable piece of diplomacy whereas Tsvangirai commented in a doorstep interview with Jack Straw, the then British Foreign Secretary, that "... flowery declarations are made without commitment and when leaders are reminded of what they have signed, they retreat into the sovereignty of nations."<sup>850</sup> The country's leaders must, perforce, embrace new governance strategies that lead to the development of democratic institutions.

ZANU-PF has for a long time relied on its social bases that are fundamental in the mobilisation of political support at election time. It also politicised the land reform programme which became partisan. It created four social bases which are the youth peasant group, cross-border traders, combi (taxi) drivers [*mahwindi*] and artisanal miners [*makorokoza*].<sup>851</sup> The peasantry group was a social base that was maintained through the presidential input scheme, food programmes and farm implements. Another social base of artisanal miners could mine freely in return for its electoral support to ZANU-PF. The third and fourth social bases are the association of combi drivers and cross-border traders. The culture of impunity is deep-rooted and must be confronted boldly so that opposition activists and opposition leaders, together with members of the ruling party, are uniformly subjected to the rule of law and made answerable to their political actions that are not in tandem with the country's laws.

Grace Mugabe, who wanted to take over from her husband Robert Mugabe as president and thereby create a Mugabe dynasty, was too young to have fought in the liberation war. Political analysts and many people following political developments in the country in 2017 were convinced that the removal of Mnangagwa on 7 November 2017 meant that Grace Mugabe would be

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<sup>848</sup> The Abuja Agreement set out the conditions for resolving the political crisis in Zimbabwe that hinged on land reform with due respect to the rule of law.

<sup>849</sup> I. Taylor & P. Williams, (2002). *The limits of engagement*, p. 556.

<sup>850</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>851</sup> These are usually illicit miners who are not registered as miners and do not have the requisite skills and machinery to carry out the activity on a large scale.

appointed as vice president at the ZANU-PF Congress to be held in December<sup>852</sup> because the Women's League that she led was demanding the appointment of a female vice president.<sup>853</sup> ZANU-PF was reduced to a personality cult that revered Mugabe who had become more important than state institutions. The November 2017 coup in Zimbabwe reminded some students of history of the November Revolution in Russia in 1917 that ushered the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialisation of the means of production. It must be noted that with respect to the Zimbabwe military's insatiable appetite for politics, the 'soft coup' that ousted Mugabe in November 2017 was not the first attempted coup by Zimbabwe's military in post-independent Zimbabwe. Another thwarted coup was attempted on Mugabe's regime in 2007 and it led to the deaths of Brigadier Armstrong Gunda, Fakazi Muleya and Gideon Lifa.<sup>854</sup> One would have thought that the bloodless military takeover of the state-owned ZBC radio station was a means to that end. The new government elite must pass the test of its acceptability lest people continue to view it as a continuation of Mugabe's regime, bent on protecting the prebendal economic interests of the old guard in ZANU-PF that was under threat from the young G40 from within the party. At seventy-five, Mnangagwa is less likely to undergo a benign metamorphosis having made public pronouncements that he still admires Mugabe for mentoring him, and that had it not been the young G40 whom he feels ill-advised Mugabe, the latter would not have fired him. The history of Mugabe and Mnangagwa can be linked to tribal politics ordered around Zezuru and Karanga ethnicities and probably has little to do with generational perceptions because it is not clear how old Mnangagwa is. He could be well over 75, as has been claimed. The current developments are meant to provide more efficient dictatorship in Mnangagwa's military-backed leadership. The British PM, Theresa May, for one, was convinced that the resignation of Mugabe provided Zimbabwe with an opportunity to forge a new path free of the oppression that characterised his rule.<sup>855</sup>

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<sup>852</sup> The Center for Applied Nonviolent Action and Strategies, (2017). *Zimbabwe coup November 2017 – Developments and analysis* [canvasopedia.org/zimbabwe-coup-november-2017-developments-analysis/](https://canvasopedia.org/zimbabwe-coup-november-2017-developments-analysis/) Zimbabwe coup-November 2017 developments and analysis Accessed 22 February 2018.

<sup>853</sup> *Bulawayo24* News, 'WATCH: Mugabe threatens to fire Mnangagwa as Grace is heckled at rally', 6 November 2017.

<sup>854</sup> T. Samukange, *Newsday*, Gunda assassination by state security agents: Matapo, 3 March 2014.

<sup>855</sup> *Newsday*, (2017a). British PM May says Mugabe's resignation gives Zimbabwe a chance to be free, 21 November 2017.

The misfortune of the jubilation that began on 17 November 2017 at the departure of Mugabe after serving for 37 years as Head of State, was the misinterpretation that the marchers were all supporting Mnangagwa. In any case, the anticipated GNU after the resignation of Mugabe, reminiscent of the one that ended in 2013 between ZANU-PF and the two MDC formations, did not materialise. Ibbo Mandaza had proposed a transitional organisation composed of technocrats, not politicians, to run the affairs of the state pending elections, whereas SADC initially hoped for a transition government pending free and fair elections, but the idea collapsed once the planned meeting was called off after Mugabe's resignation.<sup>856</sup> The most unfortunate development was that the military reduced the factional feuds to a ZANU-PF affair, making it clear from the beginning that they wanted to eliminate political malcontents from within the ruling party who were on a national campaign to purge the party of all former liberation fighters leading to the erosion of the party's revolutionary legacy.<sup>857</sup> The view that the military overruled the desire by some members from the political spectrum in government for a transitional arrangement can hardly be dismissed. It can be discerned from the military remarks that the opposition had no role to play in the new political dispensation ushered in by the coup, and that instead of a coalition between ZANU-PF and the opposition, Mnangagwa's cabinet was, indeed, a GNU between the6 army and ZANU-PF.<sup>858</sup>

One of the weaknesses in Zimbabwe's political landscape under ZANU-PF tutelage is to identify an elected leader with the liberation struggle. It is a loophole that ZANU-PF will continue to take advantage of. It puts closure to the opposition's call for competitive multiparty democracy and makes it difficult for the opposition parties to justify their existence. Worse still, opposition support tends to be diluted by the constituency zero sum system where, despite marginal differences in vote counts in certain constituencies, the winner takes all. This constituency system that began in 1985 to replace the PR system, gives advantage to the incumbent that has unfettered access to state resources for the dispensation of patronage. There is need for drastic transformation in Zimbabwe's political, security and economic sectors for sustainable democracy to emerge. There

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<sup>856</sup> *NewsDay*, (2017b). Mnangagwa leading a coup government, 9 December 2017.

<sup>857</sup> Radio statement by the armed forces when they took over the Radio Station to announce their 'Operation Restore Legacy.'

<sup>858</sup> *ZimEye*, Mnangagwa's Cabinet is "a GNU between Army and ZANU PF" - *ZimEye*, <https://www.zimeye.net> › *National* Accessed 3 February 2018.

is also need for government to bring in policies that promote economic growth and repair and to rebrand Zimbabwe's damaged image especially with western countries, and prioritise political tolerance for inculcating and sustaining a liberal democratic tradition in Zimbabwe.

Mugabe was deemed to be a master of political manipulation when it came to SADC's mediation efforts in the political crisis in Zimbabwe. He responded to SADC pressure on his government by promising change which he did not deliver. For example, Mugabe fast-tracked a constitutional court ruling to confirm a premature elections date, thus shutting down prospects of reforms that the MDC and SADC wanted to see before the 2013 elections.<sup>859</sup> The announcement of an election date was made when the country was not adequately ready for elections as evidenced by a shambolic voters' roll, an unreformed security service and grossly unbalanced media platforms.<sup>860</sup> The 2017 change of leadership in ZANU-PF might suggest a different role for Zimbabwe within SADC. Arthur Mutambara, Deputy PM in the GNU, remarked that Zimbabweans should never again allow an individual to hold the country to ransom following the departure of Mugabe from the helm of power.<sup>861</sup>

The 2013 constitution had its own inherent weaknesses: it was borne out of power politics to the exclusion of views from other vital players such as local NGOs and the broader civil society. It would appear there was no political will to ensure democracy prevailed as no proper mechanisms were put in place to ensure strict adherence to the constitution apart from creating JOMIC that comprised members of the three main parties in the GNU-ZANU-PF, MDC-T and MDC-M- with each team striving within the coalition framework to advance and protect its own political interests. The constitution-making process was hijacked by politicians in 2013 as outreach programmes in rural constituencies were led by teams of party representatives and the electorate in rural areas had been drilled to provide responses to tie in with their party positions on national issues. One of the most interesting constitutional matters was that on the terms of the president, where ZANU-PF participants during the outreach were trained to say that the president should rule until he died or (*kusvika madhongi amera nyanga*) until donkeys grew horns, the assumption being that the 2013

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<sup>859</sup> International Crisis Group. (2013b). Zimbabwe's elections: Mugabe's last stand. *Africa Briefing No. 95*. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/southern-africa/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-s-elections-mugabe-s-last-stand> Accessed 15 December 2017.

<sup>860</sup> Ibid.

<sup>861</sup> *SABC Digital News*, (2017). Arthur Mutambara, Former Deputy Prime Minister in the GNU, 17 November 2017.

presidential results would be won by Mugabe.<sup>862</sup> The Media Monitoring Observer Mission noted that the media was dominated by the ‘vote yes’ campaigns instead of focusing on educating the electorate on the contents of the new constitution.<sup>863</sup> This was the second referendum on a new constitution to replace the Lancaster Constitution that had been amended nineteen times,<sup>864</sup> after the failure of the first one in 2000.

The events of 17 November outmatch the conceited mantra of the opposition being the sole liberal interlocutor for democratising the country.<sup>865</sup> What this means is that what the opposition MDC-T promised about democratic change is being implemented by Mnangagwa’s regime and this has seriously affected its credibility and continued existence as a party. The MDC failed to understand the philosophical mobilisation gravitas which emanated from the historical interconnectedness of the gun and politics.<sup>866</sup> Operation Restore Legacy (ORL) and the people’s triumph pushed the opposition against the wall. ORL was described by the military as embodying their informed nationalist defence of collective African interests in global dialogue and policy-making.<sup>867</sup> Mashakada noted that people in Zimbabwe are tired of elections because ZANU-PF ‘steals’ elections and posits that as opposition, they could have toppled the Mugabe government long ago if they had preferred non-constitutional means.<sup>868</sup> It is apparent that the democratic path to regime change will be difficult in Zimbabwe, especially when the opposition is fighting a revolutionary party like ZANU-PF, and when SADC and other African governments are complicit in the maintenance of the political status quo in Zimbabwe.

In the first chapter, this dissertation proposed in this qualitative research to formulate a theory based on the findings of this study. This study suggests that the longer an opposition party remains in opposition, the less likely it is to remain relevant to the people, and the more susceptible are the political behaviours of opposition politicians to the political tendencies of the party they oppose. The framework to enable me to relate research results, or my conclusion, to existing knowledge, is predicated on the military choice theory. It is applicable in the analysis of military involvement

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<sup>862</sup> I was eye-witness to one such outreach exercise at Svinurai School in Chikomba district, Mashonaland East Province.

<sup>863</sup> ZESN Report, (2013). Zimbabwe Constitution referendum report and implications for the next election, p. 16.

<sup>864</sup> Ibid.

<sup>865</sup> R. R. Runyararo, (2017). ‘Another successful S.B. Moyo intervention’, *The Sunday Mail*, 17 December 2017.

<sup>866</sup> Ibid.

<sup>867</sup> Ibid.

<sup>868</sup> Interview with Tapiwa Mashakada, 26 April 2017.



in politics dating back to the formative years of the nationalist struggle in the 1960s. The decisions of the army leadership in ZIPRA and ZANLA as military wings of ZAPU and ZANU respectively have had influence on the choice of the party president. Elections in Zimbabwe from 1985 up to 2013 witnessed military intervention in varying forms of intimidation and coercion to influence election outcomes in favour of ZANU-PF candidates. The ascendancy of Mugabe to position of party president in 1975 in Mozambique was a military *coup de grace* that terminated Ndabaningi Sithole's leadership of ZANU. Those 'comrades' who disapproved of the decision were eliminated by execution in a 'clean-up' campaign of ZIPA in 1977.

The securocrats overturned election results and prolonged Mugabe's terms of office by purportedly rigging the vote each time presidential elections were held, according to CCJP and Amnesty International reports. The 2002 Presidential elections were authored by the security services involving the army, police and prison service and results were preordained when they threatened the nation with war if Mugabe lost. The 2008 March elections results were annulled on a flimsy reason that there was no outright winner in order to pave way for a re-run in June in the same year whose pro-ZANU-PF election results were dubbed 'a military coup by stealth'.<sup>869</sup> The security forces also bestowed upon themselves the unconstitutional prerogative of 'kingmaker', making impunity a culture ingrained in the politics of the ruling ZANU-PF party. The 2017 'soft coup' by the military in November was bloodless, hence the use of the word 'soft'. It enthroned Mnangagwa as Zimbabwe's president and made him beholden to the military as his source of legitimacy and power to rule the country until elections could take place on a date to be determined by the president. However, Andy Cross's interview with a radio broadcaster, Star FM, was opposed to having Constantino Chiwenga, a lifetime soldier, to lead the country and intimates that the so-called 'new dispensation', viewed as a departure from *Mugabeism*, should focus, instead, on having a new generation of leaders.<sup>870</sup>

Violence clearly undermines foundational rights which must be defended. From a maximalist definition of violence, Schwarzmantel discusses what he calls systemic violence which is seen as inherent in the working of a social or political system.<sup>871</sup> The military choice theory is, therefore,

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<sup>869</sup> E. Masunungure, (2009). A militarised election, p. 85.

<sup>870</sup> Bulawayo24. News, (2017b). *MDC disorganised, not prepared for 2018 elections, says Eddie Cross* <https://bulawayo24.com/index-id-news-sc-national-byo-125056.html> Accessed 12 March 2018

<sup>871</sup> J. Schwarzmantel, (2010). Democracy and violence: a theoretical overview. *Democratization*, 17(2), p. 218.

a theory that studies the decision-making behaviour of securocrats, and traces the political economy of militarism in which politicians are indebted to military interests for their own survival. It is the military that masterminded democide<sup>872</sup> during elections to pursue a minoritisation agenda characterised by the disenfranchisement of the current diasporans, the curtailment of opposition voting and the doctoring of results at the National Command Centre to satisfy the interests of a few individuals in the army.

Linked to this military choice theory is the democracy perversion theory. Democracy has been caricatured in Zimbabwe in a way to create a false impression about the political impartiality of the security services in the country, yet they overtly paraded their partisanship as ZANU-PF loyalists. This theory seeks to broaden the parameters on democracy so that lack of food, shelter, jobs, meaningful participation, and other basic human needs are viewed as limitations on the exercise of genuine democracy.

The conflict in Zimbabwe has been portrayed mostly in terms of ethnic conflict. This dissertation would argue that such conflict is not inevitable. Despite decades of virtual anarchy, the Zimbabwean state has managed to hold, and there is every likelihood that if the old pre-independence revolutionaries around provided policies that are just and equitable, it can forge a nation state that may just hold. What is key would be to have the current leadership out of the way, including the present military leaders, and replace it with more responsible and equitable leadership capable of turning this decades-old rivalry into an inclusive political arrangement for economic and social justice. Of course, it is accepted that central to the democratic political process is competition, but in fragile states such as Zimbabwe, balance must be found. Calls for electoral reforms are always there simply because the political field is never a constant terrain. Opposition parties in Zimbabwe ought to realise that these electoral reforms cannot be tailored to handhold opposition parties into power and this explains the reluctance by the government to implement in full some of the contentious provisions of the 2013 constitution with regard to the devolution of power. The example of South Africa in 1994, where the ruling white minority National Party government and the liberation movement, the ANC, formed a government of national unity, is an example of the importance of inclusion until the political process is more robust. A situation where

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<sup>872</sup> The word refers to government insinuated murders and the military has always been an essential cog in the ZANU-PF machine.

only the victor has access to the ‘spoils of war’ will lead likely result in conflict and instability, especially where parties are clearly divided along ethnic lines. The right balance must be found between competition and inclusion so as not to stifle the democratic process, although this balance will vary from country to country, depending on such factors as history, economic strength, demography, ethnic relations and other criteria.

The author argues that multipartyism politics is not the only gateway to democracy in the context of African governance systems. There could be other avenues through which African governance realms can be investigated and evaluated outside of western conceptions of democracy with their narrowed focus on multipartyism as a sufficient condition. One of the ideas that political scientists have put forth is ‘consociational’ democracy.<sup>873</sup> The idea underlying this from Cheeseman’s explanation, is that ‘political systems are more likely to be seen to be legitimate, and hence stable, if different communities feel they are included in government and their core interests are protected by the status quo’. Cheeseman, drawing on the political scientist, Arendt Lijphart, whose own work is based on the example of the Netherlands, Belgium and Lebanon, points to four ways to facilitate inclusion. These are: a power-sharing cabinet in which all of the main political parties can experience a taste of executive power; the extension of this principle of accommodation throughout the political system, with all state positions from the bureaucracy to the police force distributed in proportion to the size of ethnic groups within the wider population; a minority veto to be constitutionally entrenched to provide smaller ethnic groups with the power to block the implementation of policies that they find unacceptable; and a form of federalism in which communities would be given a degree of self-government over issues that affect only them.<sup>874</sup>

This model is not without problems but may help to achieve some semblance of stability and be perceived to be more equitable from the point of view of losing factions, than a ‘winner-takes-all’ model. This model may not work but clearly some experimentation is required as existing arrangements are perceived to be problematic. Federalism and power-sharing have been tried

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<sup>873</sup> N. Cheeseman, (2017). Democratic breakthroughs in Africa: time to celebrate but worries still linger. *The Conversation*, University of Birmingham, 14 September 2017.

<sup>874</sup> The Zimbabwe Constitution (2013) section 264 (1) on devolution of governmental powers and responsibilities has this aspect lucidly entrenched but a centralist approach remained in practice, giving rise to grievances in Matabeleland. See Ndakaripa, M. (2014). Ethnicity, narrative, and the 1980s violence in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces of Zimbabwe. *Oral History Forum d’histoire orale*, 34 Special Issue on Human Rights and Oral History <http://www.oralhistoryforum.ca/index.php/ohf/article/viewFile/546/624> Accessed 20 June 2018.

elsewhere in Africa (for example, in Nigeria and Kenya respectively) and lessons can be drawn from them in the endeavour to increase prospects for political stability in the Zimbabwean case. Mauritius, Nigeria, Somali, Sudan, Rwanda, and other African countries have all experimented with political models and it is imperative that “African lessons” be drawn rather than just attempt to impose western models. No one-size-fits-all model can be applied in African political systems because of their varied colonial experiences, and the unique circumstances of Zimbabwe must be factored in, when devising an institutional political design for the country. The researcher concurs with Cheeseman’s view that African political systems [Zimbabwe included], should be less majoritarian and suggests that they can do well by protecting the rights and interests of minorities so that the true benefits of democratic government are realised.<sup>875</sup>

The figure of the leader and his or her personal qualities are also crucial. If the leader enjoys the support and trust of the masses, can reach out to his opponents, is a visionary and can see the bigger picture beyond him or herself, and is a unifying symbol, it can make a difference. Leaders like Nelson Mandela of South Africa and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, in the African context, come to mind. The development, political and economic trajectories of these states may have been under different leadership at the outset, as these leaders were very focused on nation-building. This is not to say that leaders can make a major difference in every context since the geography and history differ, but leadership does make a difference. In the African context, unfortunately, divisive leaders continue to attempt to change the constitution to extend their stay in power. Examples here include Sam Nujoma in Namibia, Paul Kagame in Rwanda, Paul Biya of Cameroon, Obiang-Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, José Eduardo Do Santos of Angola, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, DRC President Joseph Kabila, and Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi. This extension of rule often derives from wanting to cling on to power, which brings with it the ability to continue to gain access to state resources, wealth, patronage, and the ability to loot state coffers. Turning to a continent-wide body like the AU has little benefit since its membership includes many presidents who are themselves clinging to power and their messages would not carry moral weight. For example, one could not take Mugabe seriously when he was chair of the AU that has generally opposed military coups but ignored constitutional change, which if implemented, has the capacity to introduce new leadership.

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<sup>875</sup> N. Cheeseman, (2017). Democratic breakthroughs in Africa.

This dissertation would also suggest that a free and responsible press is crucial to any democratic state. The press, be it newspapers, television, or social media, should serve the public interest. However, in a country like Zimbabwe, which is deeply divided by party politics along ethnicity as evidenced by the power struggle and subsequent split in MDC-T between the two vice presidents, Thokozani Khupe from Matabeleland and Nelson Chamisa from Masvingo, the media should not only take its role seriously but also responsibly. The press should be able to expose corruption, patronage and illiberal tendencies and also to exercise responsibility when doing its work. No democratic process can function effectively unless people can communicate their views to the public. The Zimbabwean public is relatively well-educated, and an informed citizenry will undoubtedly be better placed to participate responsibly in the democratic process. The tendency of authoritarian voices to shut down opposition voices does not do anyone any good in the long term.

## **INTERVIEWS**

Interview with Arkmore Kori, CCJPZ National Coordinator, 29 May 2017.

Interview with Faith Kamutsungira, MDC-T Women's League member, 15 May 2017.

Interview with Fay King Chung, Deputy Secretary for Administration in the Ministry of Education from 1980 to 1988 and Minister of Education from 1988 to 1993, 30 June 2016.

Interview with Freedom Maziriri, State security agent, 23 May 2017.

Interview with Gandhi Mudzingwa, advisor to MDC-T leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, 7 April 2017.

Interview with Innocent Madenga, PhD student in Peace Studies, 24 March 2017.

Interview with Janice McLaughlin, Maryknoll Sister of St. Dominic, a congregation of women religious missionaries that was founded in the United States in 1912 and President of the congregation from 2009-2015, 23 October 2017.

Interview with Monica Mutsvangwa, Minister of State for Manicaland Province, a ZANLA war veteran, 31 May 2017.

Interview with Morgen Komichi, Deputy National Chairperson for Morgan Tsvangirai's MDC-T, Deputy minister of Transport in the Inclusive Government (2008-2013), 25 April 2017.

Interview with Reuben Mureyani, ZANLA ex-combatant, 4 April 2017.

Interview with Supa Collin Mandiwanzira, Minister of Information Communication Technology and Cyber Security and founder of ZiFM Stereo Radio Station, 31 May 2017.

Interview with Sydney Chisi, leader of the MDC-T Youth Initiative for Democracy in Zimbabwe and political analyst 7 April 2017.

Interview with Tapiwa Mashakada, MDC-T Member of Parliament for Hatfield, Harare, and GNU Minister of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion, 26 April 2017.

Interview with Togarepi Zivai Mhetu, ZINASU president, 26 April 2017.

Skype interview with David Coltart, Zimbabwean lawyer, founder member of the MDC and its founding Secretary for Legal Affairs, Member of Parliament for Bulawayo South in the House of Assembly from 2000 to 2008, and Senator since 2008, 11 May 2017.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### Demographic information

Question number	Question	Response set	Skip Pattern
1	What is your sex?	1. Male 2. Female	
2	To which age group do you belong?	1. Less than 25 2. 25-40 years 3. 41-50 years 4. 51 years and above 5. Decline to answer	
3	What is your current marital status?	1. Single (never married) 2. Married 3. Living together, but not married 4. Divorced/separated 5. Widowed 5. Decline to answer	
4	Can you read and write?	1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know 4. Decline to answer	



5	What is the highest level of education you completed?	1. Never attended school 2. Primary 3. Forms 1 – 2 4. Ordinary level 5. Advanced level 6. Completed diploma 7. Completed degree 8. Other (specify)_____ 5. Decline to answer	
6	What is your occupation?	_____	
7	What is your monthly personal income in US dollars?	1. No income 2. Less than \$100 3. \$100 - \$500 4. Above \$500 5. Decline to answer	

**Political history**

8	What is your political affiliation?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Non-partisan or Neutral</li> <li>2. ZANU PF</li> <li>3. ZANU Ndonga</li> <li>4. MDC-T</li> <li>5. PDP</li> <li>6. ZANU People First</li> <li>7. Other (specify)_____</li> <li>8. Decline to answer</li> </ol>	<i>If non partisan or neutral, skip to Qn 10</i>
9	At what age did you join active politics?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Less than 25</li> <li>2. 25-40 years</li> <li>3. 41-50 years</li> <li>4. 51 years and above</li> <li>5. Decline to answer</li> </ol>	
10	Does politics affect you in any way?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. Don't know</li> <li>5. Decline to answer</li> </ol>	
11	If answered yes to the above question, please explain how	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

12	Have you experienced any problems in belonging to any party?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. Decline to answer</li> </ol>	
13	If the answer to (12) is yes, explain	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
14	Have you ever been coerced into voting for a party you did not like?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. Decline to answer</li> </ol>	
15	Has the issue of sovereignty been clearly understood by ordinary Zimbabweans?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> <li>3. Not so sure</li> </ol>	
16	Do you believe in spirit mediums?	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>	
17	If answer to 32 is Yes, did they play a role in the political history of Zimbabwe at all?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To a greater extent</li> <li>2. To a limited extent</li> <li>3. Not at all</li> </ol>	
18	Does democracy exist in Zimbabwe?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yes</li> <li>2. No</li> </ol>	
19	Sanctions on Zimbabwe are calculated to effect regime change.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agree</li> <li>2. Strongly agree</li> <li>3. Disagree</li> <li>4. Strongly disagree</li> </ol>	

20	Media over the years have been used to articulate the ideological position of the ruling party.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agree</li> <li>2. Disagree</li> </ol>	
21	How can factionalism in the opposition parties be explained?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The west has withdrawn its support</li> <li>2. The parties have been infiltrated</li> <li>3. Parties lack clear political and ideological positions</li> <li>4. It happens in almost every political party</li> <li>5. All the above.</li> </ol>	
22	South Africa's 'Quiet Diplomacy' on the Zimbabwean political crisis weakened the opposition formations and strengthened ZANU-PF.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. True</li> <li>2. False. (Explain your answer)</li> </ol> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	

## **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. How effective were the objectives, strategies and modus operandi of opposition political parties in Zimbabwe in their quest for democracy since independence?
2. To what extent were opposition parties sponsored by western countries to effect regime change and to what extent were they driven by internal factors?
3. What factors militated against substantive multiparty politics and a smooth political transition process in Zimbabwe since 1985?
4. How significant were ZANU-PF liberation narratives in influencing multiparty voting trends since 1985?
5. Why were opposition political parties unable to provide counter narratives?
6. What role did media play in the portrayal of opposition parties and the ruling ZANU-PF party since independence?
7. Why was the opposition unable to maintain its upward trajectory after the expiry of the Government of National Unity (GNU)?

**Each interview will take approximately one hour and will be recorded.**

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