

**WHEN 'MESSIAHS' TURN 'PERSECUTORS':  
REFLECTING ON THE BLOCKED TRANSITION OF LIBERATION  
MOVEMENTS IN AFRICA-CASE STUDY OF ZANU-PF**

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF  
THE DEGREE LLM**

**(HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATISATION IN AFRICA)**

**BY**

**NKUUBI JAMES**

**PREPARED UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF**

**PROFESSOR GILLES CISTAC**

**FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSIDADE EDUARDO MONDLANE, MAPUTO,  
MOÇAMBIQUE**

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## DECLARATIONS

I, **NKUUBI JAMES**, do hereby avow that this research is my individual work and that to the best of knowledge, has not been submitted or is not currently being considered either in whole or in part, at any other institution of learning. Where different works from assorted scholars have been used, acknowledgement has been dully accorded. To this effect therefore, this piece of work is my original creation. I hereby present it in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the LL.M Degree in Human Rights and Democratisation in Africa.

SIGNED .....DATE.....2009.

**NKUUBI JAMES**  
**(CANDIDATE)**

E-mail: [luyombyajames@gmail.com](mailto:luyombyajames@gmail.com)

I, **GILLES CISTAC**, being the supervisor, have read this research paper and approved it for partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Laws Degree, Human Rights a Democratisation in Africa, of the University of Pretoria.

SIGNED .....DATE.....2009.

**PROFESSOR GILLES CISTAC**  
**(SUPERVISOR)**

E-mail: [gilles.cistac@uem.mz](mailto:gilles.cistac@uem.mz)

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## DEDICATION

The African people, from Mozambique to Uganda, from Zimbabwe to Ethiopia, who have been let down by people they rallied behind in hope for a humane life after the liberation.

'I paid for this Freedom. They must never forget the little people like me-who make up the majority that has kept them in power and will still do so for a long time to come. We have dreams, too.'

*per* Sipho Makhaya (John Kani) in the Play  
'Nothing But the Truth' attended by the  
Author in Johannesburg, South Africa, 2009)

## ACRONYMS

A U	African Union
ANC	African National Congress
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertacao
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAP	Pan African Parliament
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADC	Southern African Development Community.
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
UN	United Nations
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
ZANLA	Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union
ZNLWVA	Zimbabwe National Liberators War Veterans' Association
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement

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# CHAPTER ONE

## TRACING THE RISE AND FALL OF THE 'MESSIAHS'

John called for two of his followers. He sent them to the Lord to ask, 'Are you the one we heard was coming or should we wait for someone else?' So the men came to Jesus. They said, 'John the Baptizer sent us to you with this question: 'Are you the one who is coming, or should we wait for someone else?...Then the Lord said to John's followers, 'Go tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind can see. The crippled can walk...The deaf can hear. The dead are being brought back to life. And the Good News is being told to the poor.'<sup>1</sup> (Luke 7; 18-23)

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Background to the study

Two thousand ago, the world waited upon the coming of the Lord, Jesus as had been proclaimed by John the Baptist in the Holy Scriptures. They say, He came to redeem the lost generation. He was crucified on the cross, died and was buried. On the third day, He rose again, went to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He delivered the promise of redemption. Today, those who accept Him enjoy the benefits as depicted in the above quotation.

Two thousand years later, in a continent called Africa, overrun by the colonialists for inter alia economic benefit, the enslaved African people waited for a 'messiah' to redeem them, lead them to the 'promised land' of independence from racist, exploitative regimes. Human rights violations were in profusion and the rule of law had lost meaning. The incessant, blanket suffering prompted the enslaved African people to unite behind charismatic leaders and/or movements to bring an end to this draconian suffering.

From 1908 to the 1980s, came what Africa thought were selfless, gallant individuals under the sunshade of liberation movements in Southern Africa with the African National Congress (hereinafter, ANC) fighting the white minority rule, Mozambique with *Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique* (hereinafter, FRELIMO) and in Angola, the *Movimento Popular de Libertacao* (hereinafter, MPLA) both, in antagonism with the Portuguese regime among others.<sup>2</sup> They had

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<sup>1</sup> Holy Bible; Easy to read version, World Bible Translation Centre (2006) Texas.

<sup>2</sup> TW Luke 'Angola and Mozambique: Institutionalizing Social Revolution in Africa' (1982) 44 *The Review of Politics* 413-436; R Weiss *Zimbabwe and the New Elite* (1994) 35; J Hanlon *Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire* (1990) for an exposition of FRELIMO liberation struggle; A Braganca & I Wallerstein *The African*

come with an agenda; for the people of Africa to enjoy the best possible life to the fullest.<sup>3</sup> This euphoria for liberation also reigned high in Zimbabwe, then Southern Rhodesia, characterised by ‘grievances and injustices of an economic, political, social and educational nature’ perpetrated by the white racist colonial regime.<sup>4</sup> Rival movements, the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (hereinafter ZAPU) under Joshua Nkomo and the Zimbabwe African National Union (herein after ZANU-PF) led by Robert Mugabe, battled with the colonial regime.<sup>5</sup>

A mass consciousness arose with people being mobilised across class, cultural and tribal divides.<sup>6</sup> Zimbabwe was awash with war songs and the chants of liberation. The people heeded to the appeals of the ‘African nationalism’ for its ‘people-centred outlook’, sacrificed their lives and property, and were imprisoned and tortured for freedom.<sup>7</sup> The liberation was a ‘people’s revolution’ meant to establish a ‘people’s state’ taking care of all the interests and aspirations of the various social groups.<sup>8</sup> Indeed it was visualized as a ‘movement for human rights and democracy.’<sup>9</sup> The movement enjoyed both moral and legal support from various organisations, both continental and international.<sup>10</sup>

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*Liberation Reader: Volume 1, The Anatomy of Colonialism* (1982). The Authors edit an interesting compilation of most of the decisive documents of the liberation movements in Southern Africa dating back to the 1950s.

<sup>3</sup> GW Shepherd ‘Humanitarian Aid to Liberation Movements’ (1974) 21 *Africa Today* 76-77; J Dunn *Modern Revolutions; an introduction to the analysis of a political phenomenon* (1989) xvii.

<sup>4</sup> P Pandya *Mao Tse-tung and Chimurenga; An investigation into Zanu’s strategies* (1998) 31. For a detailed compilation of the various documents issued by the nationalists to account for the agitation and the Rhodesian government in response, See E Windrich *The Rhodesian Problem; A documentary Record 1923-1973* (1975) xviii, xix; L Cliffe ‘Zimbabwe’s Political Inheritance’ in C Stoneman (eds) *Zimbabwe’s Inheritance* (1981) 10.

<sup>5</sup> LH Gann & TH Henriksen *The struggle for Zimbabwe: Battle in the Bush* (1981) 41-42. White captures the intrigue between the movements in L White *The Assassination of Herbert Chitepo; Texts & Politics in Zimbabwe* (2003).

<sup>6</sup> SJ Ndlovu-Gatsheni, ‘Dynamics of the Zimbabwe Crisis in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’ (2003) 103; D Martin & P Johnson *The Struggle for Zimbabwe: The Chimurenga War* (1981) 73, 82, 88. It is these peasants whom Dunn referred to as the ‘great political resource of aspiring revolutionaries in the 2nd half of the 20th century’ that were the oiling system of the struggle. See Dunn (n 3 above) 1; Gann & Henriksen (n 5 above) 40-55; A Braganca & I Wallerstein *The African Liberation Reader: Volume 3, The Strategy of Liberation* (1982) 12-13. The Authors chronicle the rise of the black consciousness in Zimbabwe

<sup>7</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 103.

<sup>8</sup> NN Georges, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Africa: Essays in Contemporary Politics* (1987) 75 as cited in Ndlovu- Gatsheni (n 6 above) 105; A Cabral *Return to the Source: Selected Speeches of Amilcar Cabral* (1973) as cited in Luke (n 2 above) 415.

<sup>9</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 103.

<sup>10</sup> The Organisation of African Unity (herein after OAU) at the time went against all odds and despite the repeated castigation from the Rhodesian government, it supported ZANU-PF and ZAPU movements through the OAU Liberation Committee based in Dar es salaam. See Windrich (n 4 above) 283; Martin & Johnson (n 6 above) 71.

A new land described as ‘a more democratic and human rights conscious political, economic and social dispensation was promised’ as the ultimate price for those who would keep the faith and uphold the cause no matter the inglorious challenges that stood before them.<sup>11</sup> Despite the might of the enemy, the black nationalists were ‘equally convinced that they and they alone, fought for liberty, justice, and the rights of man, and that the tide of history must flow in their direction.’<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the ZANU and ZAPU liberation movements in Zimbabwe were the ‘messiahs’ who had come to save the people from human rights abuses.<sup>13</sup>

Come the triumph of majority rule under ZANU in the 1980 national elections, the hopes of the people were immense; it was time to ‘build democratic institutions that would really put the people first and promote the much awaited human security.’<sup>14</sup> The moment had come for ‘a break with the tradition of nationalist and guerrilla violence, and (the people) were looking forward to the emergence of expanded democratic spaces, to the protection of human rights, and to basic, tangible material benefits ...’<sup>15</sup> The new Prime Minister, Mugabe declared, amidst applause and jubilation;

Independence will bestow on us a new personality, a new sovereignty, a new future and perspective, and a new history and a new past. Tomorrow we are being born again; born again not as individuals but collective as a people, nay, as a viable nation of Zimbabweans... Tomorrow we shall cease to be men and women of the past and become men and women of the future tomorrow then, not yesterday, which bears our destiny.<sup>16</sup>

Twenty eight years later of ZANU-PF rule, the situation in Zimbabwe is changing towards what has been described by different commentators as the tyranny of the liberators as the party

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<sup>11</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 105; Gann & Henriksen (n 5 above) 51-52. The Rhodesian regime was the biggest inglorious challenge. It employed various inhumane tactics to suppress the nationalists including laws such Law and Order (Maintenance) Act providing for detention without trial and poisoning ‘edible fruit and berries’ as well as ‘water holes and wells’ likely to be used by the guerrillas. See Weiss (n 2 above) 36-41.

<sup>12</sup> Gann & Henriksen (n 5 above) 51-52.

<sup>13</sup> To the Rhodesian regime, which bore the conviction that theirs was a just war to ‘preserve western standards’, these were ‘Godless ‘ters’, Robert Mugabe was an ‘evil Marxist,’ the ‘anti-Christ’ and propounded ‘international communism’ while his followers were ‘vicious thugs who preyed on the minds of peaceful tribesmen and submissive servants.’ See Weiss (n 2 above) 38-39, 43, 83. For a further exposition of the history of the rise of ZANU and ZAPU, see Gann & Henriksen (n 5 above) 41-44, 50-55.

<sup>14</sup> Ndlovu Gatsheni (n 6 above) 110; Martin & Johnson (n 6 above) 328-331. The authors detail the 1980 election culminating into the triumph of ZANU-PF much to the chagrin of the white community. Later, Prime Minister Mugabe delivered a statesman speech strongly couched in reconciliatory terms far from what the white community and the world at large had expected.

<sup>15</sup> A Jocelyn & M Joan, ‘Representing Violence in Matebeleland, Zimbabwe: Press and Internet Debates,’ in T Allen (eds) *The Media of Conflict: War Reporting and the Representation of Ethnic Violence* (1999) as cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 110.

<sup>16</sup> Prime Minister Mugabe’s speech at the Independence of Zimbabwe in 1980. [www.Kubatana.net](http://www.Kubatana.net) (accessed 30 March 2009)

continues to look in the past to seek legitimacy for its excesses.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the events that have prevailed in Zimbabwe in the period 1983-2008 have been a mockery of the speech above. The promised 'new personality' in the name of ZANU-PF, continues to be elusive. It has deviated from the course which projected the African pro-independence movements not only as affirmative 'schools of democracy and human rights that put the 'people first', but 'they were also negative schools of despotism, authoritarianism, violence and the cult of personality.'<sup>18</sup> But today, the messiahs have turned into persecutors akin to the colonial regimes they over ran. So what is the problem?

## 1.2 Statement of the research problem

While conceding that Africa is facing numerous problems—some of which have nothing to do with its leaders—there is a new intensifying quandary of liberation movements. They have thrown all the virtue and the ideals that initially motivated them to fight the malevolent regimes; they are 'sailing without ethical ballast.'<sup>19</sup> They have converted into 'reactionaries, tired revolutionaries exhausting the countries they claim they have liberated...They are no longer part of the solution but very central to the problem.'<sup>20</sup>

While some have metamorphosed into fully fledged national democratic, progressive political parties, others such as ZANU-PF continue to brandish the 'colonial card' while asserting its will on the masses holding them indebted to it for their 'liberation.'<sup>21</sup> Formerly hailed as African statesmen, Mugabe and his ZANU-PF liberation heroes are becoming Zimbabwe's

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<sup>17</sup> Various documentations of the tyranny synonymous with ZANU-PF abound. Among others, see D Blair *Degrees in Violence: Robert Mugabe and the Struggle for Power in Zimbabwe* (2002) 116-120; Human Rights Watch 'Country Summary; Zimbabwe'(2009); Human Rights Watch " 'Our Hands Are Tied; Erosion of the Rule of Law in Zimbabwe"(2008); Human Rights Watch "'Bullets for Each of You; State-Sponsored Violence since Zimbabwe's March 29 Elections" (2008) <http://www.hrw.org> (accessed 25 July 2009); P Kagwanja 'Zimbabwe's March 2005 Elections: Dangers and Opportunities' (2005)<sup>14</sup> *African Security Review*; R Smith 'Fear, Terror and the Spoils of power-Youth militias in Zimbabwe' (2005) *Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation*; Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace and the Legal Resources Foundation, 'Breaking the Silence, Building True Peace: A Report on the Disturbances in Matabeleland and the Midlands, 1980 to 1988', (1997); A Perry 'Zimbabwe Waits to Exhale' *Time Magazine*, 03 April 2008 1. <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1727552,00.html> (accessed 29 March 2009)

<sup>18</sup> B Ngwabi & R Terence (eds) *Nationalism, Democracy and Human Rights, Volume Two: Colonial and Post-Colonial Legacies* (2003) 2 as cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 103.

<sup>19</sup> A Koestler *Darkness at Noon* (1968) 79.

<sup>20</sup> 'What happened to the NRM revolutionaries?' *Daily Monitor* 3 December 2008 12.

<sup>21</sup> 'We shed a lot of blood for this country; we are not going to give up our country for a mere X on a ballot. How can a ball point pen fight with a gun?' Said President Mugabe directly undermining the need for elections in a country that fought for voting rights inter alia. <http://www.fifthinternational.org/content/how-mugabe-betrayed-national-liberation-struggle-zimbabwe> (accessed 10 October 2009)

predicament.<sup>22</sup> ZANU-PF has failed to make the much desired transition to a conventional political party from the liberation movement clothing that is no longer tenable in the new dispensation of independence.<sup>23</sup> In the past two decades, the people of Zimbabwe have suffered violence, intimidation, elections flaws, and torture among other evils, reminiscent of the colonial days.<sup>24</sup> It has brought alive the prophetic warnings of George Orwell's classic of *Animal Farm*. In there, the animals, led by the charismatic pig, conquered man, their oppressor and vowed never to treat each other like man had treated them. In one particular scene, upon the animals hearing voices shouting in anger all alike, 'looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again: but it was already impossible to say which was which.'<sup>25</sup> Their own, the pigs, had turned into their new masters, as oppressive as man.

Today, when the World looks from ZANU-PF and President Mugabe to the former Rhodesian colonial government and vice versa, apart from skin colour, they cannot make out the difference. As Ndlovu aptly puts it, 'the dominant nationalist ideology that guided the liberation struggle has become bankrupt.'<sup>26</sup> The revolution has gone wrong. The transition of ZANU-PF to a progressive political party has been blocked. The reasons why, are elusive. The study investigates them.

Indeed as Melber notes, each decolonization progression has a distinctiveness attached to it and as such, generalities cannot be accommodated.<sup>27</sup> Hence, the study using some questions discussed below, concentrates on the ZANU-PF; for what started as a likely vibrant democracy

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<sup>22</sup> President Robert Mugabe is ranked among the top five of the worst tyrants with Teodoro Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea, Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan, Thanshwe of Burma and Omar Bashir of Sudan. See 'The Power of Tyranny' *Newsweek, Special Double Edition* 29 December 2008- 5 January 2009 11. According to United Nations Watch Report 2009, Zimbabwe was ranked among the 16 worst UPR performers of all time and as thus rated as DESTRUCTIVE. They were characterised as countries that 'specifically praised, legitimised and encouraged country policies and practices that violate human rights'; A Puddington '*Freedom in the World 2009: Setbacks and Resilience*' (2009) 1. The primary innovation of the UN Human Rights Council is Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism which is meant to review the human rights records of all the 192 UN member states once every year. In 2002, the United States Committee to Protect Journalists ranked Zimbabwe 7th worst place to be a journalist. See *The Economist* 11 May 2002 as cited in K Good 'Democracy and the Control of the Elites' in H Melber (eds) *Limits to Liberation in Southern Africa: The Unfinished business of democratic consolidation* (2003) 18.

<sup>23</sup> J Makumbe 'ZANU-PF: A Party in Transition?' In R Cornwell (eds) *Zimbabwe's Turmoil: Problems and Prospects*. Monograph No.87. (2004) 33. [www.iss.co.za/pubs/monographs/no87/chap2.pdf](http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/monographs/no87/chap2.pdf) (accessed 1 October 2009).

<sup>24</sup> See International Crisis Group 'Negotiating Zimbabwe's Transition' Africa Briefing No.5, 21 May 2008 and sources (n 17 above).

<sup>25</sup> G Orwell *Animal Farm* (1989) 95.

<sup>26</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 100.

<sup>27</sup> Melber (n 22 above) 143.

with promises of reconciliation between the minority white and the majority blacks is now authoritarianism resultant of a blocked transition.

### **1.3 Research questions**

The core question of the study is why, after 28 years of being in power, has ZANU-PF liberation movement failed to effectively make the transition to a democratic ZANU-PF political party, without the liberation movement mentality, and how the hegemony of the liberation movement mentality has succeeded in overshadowing its alleged 'new identity' as a political party? A transition of whatever magnitude is affected by what the study shall adopt to be a 'four tier' set of aspects namely national, regional (in this case, SADC), continental (Africa) and the wider international community. However, for this particular discourse, we shall tackle only the first three. More specifically therefore, the study seeks to;

- a) Establish what internal factors (within Zimbabwe) have contributed to this blocked transition?
- b) Examine how the behaviour or response of Zimbabwe's regional neighbours (SADC), been a contributing factor to this dilemma.
- c) Question the extent to which the wider African continent been party to this mayhem of the ZANU-PF's stalled transition.

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

The study adds to the debate on the role of liberation movements in the furthering of human rights and democratisation in Africa by tackling the much ignored perspective of a blocked transition that the movements such as the ZANU-PF are culpable for. It moves the dialogue beyond listing the failures of ZANU-PF and its authoritarian nature, to the more critical question of why it has failed to make the transition to a conventional political party underlined with democratic values.

### **1.5 Literature review**

The principal text on liberation movement related notions in Southern Africa is the collaborative study edited by Melber: *'Limits to Liberation in Southern Africa: The Unfinished business of democratic consolidation.'* The authors depict how liberation movements in

Southern Africa 'have deviated from their originally declared democratic aims as well as largely abandoning their once-sacrosanct goal of socio-economic transformation aimed at reducing inherited imbalances in the distribution of wealth.'<sup>28</sup>

A crosscutting notion principal in the text leads to the incontestable conclusion that 'the much-celebrated attainment of formal independence is no longer reservedly equated with liberation, and neither with the creation of lasting democracy.'<sup>29</sup> This text provides a balance of what the people expected in the aftermath of the liberation and what they are getting now. The undemocratic and human rights violation disposition of ZANU-PF movement features profoundly in the analysis. Apart from pointing out how the government of ZANU-PF has deviated from the ideals of the liberation, the study is not exhaustive on why this deviation has occurred. Thus, we are left with questions concerning the factors and circumstances that have facilitated the short memory of ZANU-PF to the extent that it is now more feared than the regime they dislodged.

In *'Liberation and Opposition in Zimbabwe'*, Suzanne Dansereau provides some key signposts pivotal to understanding the liberation crisis in Zimbabwe.<sup>30</sup> The author documents the struggle in Zimbabwe between elite that is bent on consolidating its power relying on the rhetoric of the liberation struggle. The text aptly notes and takes us through the rise of the labour movement that has been a formidable opposition against the ZANU-PF government but more profoundly since 1999. Despite being central to Zimbabwe's crisis, the text falls short of accounting for the eventual opposition that ZANU-PF faces. It is the contention of the study that the opposition is resultant of unfulfilled promises by ZANU-PF coupled with ruthlessness only reminiscent of colonial days which is a symptom of a militaristic liberation movement rather than a democratic political party; a notion that is lacking in Suzanne's study.

In *'In Defence of National Sovereignty? Urban Governance and Democracy in Zimbabwe'*, Amin Kamete offers some fundamental insights into the failed governance of the former liberation movement.<sup>31</sup> More specific in subject matter, Amin, provides an appraisal of the 'informed urbanites' and how their abandoning ZANU-PF during elections resulted into the party adopting reactionary means of fighting back. It resorted to abusing and twisting the concept of democracy to 'suit selfish and corrupt agendas' and ultimately eroding away the

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<sup>28</sup> Melber (n 22 above) 2.

<sup>29</sup> As above.

<sup>30</sup> S Dansereau 'Liberation and Opposition in Zimbabwe' in Melber (22 above) 23-43.

<sup>31</sup> Amin Kamete 'In Defence of National Sovereignty? Urban Governance and Democracy in Zimbabwe' in Melber (22 above) 47-71.

gains of the liberation but conveniently hiding under the rhetoric of safeguarding them. The author details the stereotyping the opposition and the media, as possible tenets of transformation, have sustained being branded traitors for being critical of ZANU-PF. The study is essential for any student of Zimbabwean politics seeking to understand how ZANU-PF has deviated from the great ideals of the liberation. It does not explain why ZANU-PF has deviated or better still, maintained a militaristic character even in the aftermath of the celebrated independence.

The other of the fascinating records of the liberation struggles and their evolution is John Saul's *The Next Liberation Struggle: Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy in Southern Africa*. Saul rightly summarizes the post-liberation Southern Africa in the following manner;

...in the end, then, the positive implications of the removal of formal white minority rule have been muted for most people in the region: extreme socio-economic inequality, desperate poverty, and disease (AIDS most notably) remain the lot of vast majority of the population. Unfortunately too, the broader goals that emerged in the course of the liberation struggles-defined around the proposed empowerment and projected transformation of the impoverished state of mass of the population have proved extremely difficult to realize.<sup>32</sup>

The text adopts a multi-disciplinary approach central to which is the focus on the models of economic alternatives that the different countries adopted after liberation in the 'inhospitable state of the global economy.'<sup>33</sup> Saul and other commentators maintain the tune that reigned high during the liberation struggle that 'socialist construction is a necessary means to an end of development in Africa.'<sup>34</sup>

He argues that Africa's current crisis cannot be overcome unless the continent moves away from 'a capitalist trajectory.'<sup>35</sup> The text calls for 'the next liberation struggle'-liberation from the 'savage terms of Africa's present incorporation into the global economy and of the wounding domestic, social and political patterns accompanying it...'<sup>36</sup> Capitalism is projected as the inherent dilemma of the undemocratic tendencies that prevail in post-independence nations such as Zimbabwe. The text ignores the inherent weaknesses that are prevalent in the liberation movements such as ZANU-PF. Surely beyond capitalism, there should be other factors that are contributing to the current economic, democratisation and human rights crisis that engulfs

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<sup>32</sup> J Saul (eds) *The Next Liberation Struggle: Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy in Southern Africa* (2007) 6.

<sup>33</sup> Saul (n 32 above) 6.

<sup>34</sup> Saul (n 32 above) 7.

<sup>35</sup> Saul (n 32 above) 9.

<sup>36</sup> Saul (n 32 above) 6.



countries such as Zimbabwe. Indeed, it is the possibility of uncovering these additional factors that this study is based.

Interestingly, Makumbe, in *'ZANU-PF: A Party in Transition?'* deals expressly with the blocked transition. He argues that 'on entering the corridors of power, the former liberation movement (ZANU-PF) failed to transform itself into a democratic political party. The guerrillas have still not taken off their uniforms; they have not yet laid down their guns.'<sup>37</sup> He concludes therefore that ZANU-PF 'cannot be viewed accurately as a political party in transition to democracy but rather as one that is becoming even more authoritarian and dictatorial.'<sup>38</sup> He attributes this to the socialist tendencies within which the liberation movement was established. Whereas this may be a beginning point of reference, it is not exhaustive hence the need for this study.

The study contends that to analyse the blocked transition of ZANU-PF, the debate has to be taken beyond showing 'how,' 'when' and thanks to 'whom' the deviation has prevailed as has been aptly documented by various writers;<sup>39</sup> rather we also have to question 'why' the state of affairs is the way it is. Why has ZANU-PF failed to make the transition to a democratic institution of power?

## 1.6 Conceptualisation of working terms

### 1.6.1 National liberation

According to Melber, the objective of a national liberation is 'political independence in a sovereign state under a government representing the majority of the people, who hitherto had been excluded from full participation in society on racial grounds through the imposition of apartheid.'<sup>40</sup> Such a goal is executed by liberation movements who are representative of 'the victims of oppression who have no means for expressing their opposition other than through leaders who have been driven into exile or raised the standard of revolution at home.'<sup>41</sup>

Upon victory, it is hoped that the liberation movement will usher in a transformation of the power it fought for and also stand by the ideals that motivated it into resistance.<sup>42</sup> A

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<sup>37</sup> Makumbe (n 23 above) 33.

<sup>38</sup> Makumbe (n 23 above) 34-35.

<sup>39</sup> See sources (n 1 above); (n 4 above) and (n 6 above).

<sup>40</sup> H Melber 'From Controlled Change to Changed Control: The Case of Namibia' in Melber (n 22 above) 135.

<sup>41</sup> Shepherd (n 3 above) 76-77; Dunn (n 3 above) xvii.

<sup>42</sup> J Cronin 'Don't just transfer power, transform it' *The African Communist* (2003) 2nd /3rd Quarter 53-57.

transformation is 'regeneration or recreation' both at the individual level and of society as a collective at large.<sup>43</sup> Hence, the liberation should be the 'oxygen which creates and shapes a new humanity' both of the movement and the wider populace.<sup>44</sup>

### 1.6.2 Political party

According to Merkl, a political party is a;

...gathering of politically like-minded people, a social group with common goals, and a division of roles, communication channels, and a hierarchic authority structure. A party is a polity which recruits and socialises new members, selects leaders through internal processes of representations and elections, resolves internal disputes, and makes decisions regarding its policies toward the outside world.<sup>45</sup>

In this study, we give ZANU-PF the benefit of doubt and adopt the position that it is a political party exhibiting some of the above aspects but still struggling in a blocked transition.

### 1.6.3 A transition

The study adopts Sanguinetti's definition of a transition as 'a passage from one situation to another.'<sup>46</sup> Hence in Zimbabwe, there was a transition underlined by the passage from white minority rule to democracy incarnate in the majority rule. This I call the mainstream transition of the country symbolised with the magical word 'new' Zimbabwe. But we also have to question the often neglected transition which should be narrowed to the 'new' leaders, and divorced from the nation-wide transition.

Thus we inquire how new is the 'new' ZANU-PF in as far as the shedding off of the liberation, and guerrilla-like character is concerned. We are reminded that a transition cannot take place as a one-off, spontaneous event when we witness replacement of a 'de-facto government' with a majority democratically elected one.<sup>47</sup> It is gradual. So as we proceed, it is worth noting that the liberation did not usher in democrats. It brought guerrilla fighters into the state house hence the need for the gradual 'passage' from guerrillas under the banner of a

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<sup>43</sup> LA Jinadu *Fanon: In search of the African Revolution* (1981) 69.

<sup>44</sup> F Frantz *A Dying Colonisation* (1967) 81 as cited in Jinadu (n 43 above) 69.

<sup>45</sup> P Merkl *Modern Comparative Politics* (1977) 95 as cited in Makumbe (n 23 above).  
[www.iss.co.za/pubs/monographs/no87/chap2.pdf](http://www.iss.co.za/pubs/monographs/no87/chap2.pdf) (accessed 1 October 2009)

<sup>46</sup> JM Sanguinetti 'Present at the Transition' in L Diamond & MF Plattner (eds) *The Global Resurgence of Democracy* (1993) 58.

<sup>47</sup> Sanguinetti (n 46 above) 58.

liberation movement to statesmen or democrats under the banner of a political party.<sup>48</sup> It is this passage that remains blocked.

## **1.7 Methodology and Focus of the study**

The study is based primarily on desktop review of the available literature on the subject. In its analysis, a multi-disciplinary approach inculcating both notions of human rights, democratisation and political science is adopted.

The study oscillates between the three periods that underlie Zimbabwean political landscape; the colonial era, the liberation struggle era, and the ZANU-PF rule which has lasted for past 28 years now (post-independence era). The study is certainly not an analysis of the 28 years of ZANU-PF but there are certain events that have prevailed and are used to make an assessment of the blocked transition. The study is confined to ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe despite occasional comparisons with other liberation movement turned ‘political parties’ in Southern Africa.

## **1.8 Assumptions and limitations underlying the study**

It is assumed that the ‘liberators’ are still in power in Zimbabwe today and though President Mugabe is viewed individually, there is not much difference of opinion that he is essentially the personification of ZANU-PF liberation movement.

The Study is not necessarily a historical investigation into the colonial era suppression and the eventual birth of liberation movements. In as far it goes historical, it’s simply an overview to lay ground and propel a better understanding of the subject matter. Otherwise, a larger part of the study is geared towards analysing the reasons for the failed transition.

## **1.9 Overview of the chapters**

The study is divided in four chapters, the first being the structural lay out and introduction. The second chapter is an examination of various internal factors that have been central to the blocked transition of ZANU-PF. Under this chapter we question, inter alia, how the liberation movement itself has been its own biggest enemy and blocked its own transition mainly as a result of the inherited draconian character prevalent during the struggle. Chapter

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<sup>48</sup> Makumbe (n 23 above) 33.

three explores the various regional and continental notions that have been pivotal in the blockade of the transition. It probes how the canard of inventories such as ‘the African solution’, ‘the African Solidarity’, ‘the Brotherhood solidarity’ continue to stand in the way of attaining fully-fledged democratization and a human rights enhancing atmosphere in Africa’s post-liberation countries. The study ends with a conclusion, diverse recommendations and a post-script in chapter four.

## CHAPTER TWO

# NAVIGATING THE NATIONAL FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE BLOCKED TRANSITION

## 2. Introduction

As noted earlier, the transition of any political organisation from authoritarianism to democratic governance (and vice versa) is greatly shaped by the tide of events within the national borders. The national spectrum here entails two actors which are subjects of this chapter; the leaders, i.e. ZANU-PF, and the led, i.e. the 'liberated' populace of Zimbabwe. Each of these two groups has contributed either actively or passively, partly or wholly, to the blocked transition and eventual transformation of ZANU-PF, narrowing the question to how and to what extent have they done so.

Firstly, this chapter examines some of the underlying factors which currently inhibit the transition of ZANU-PF with exclusive focus to those 'inherited' from the colonial era and those that are 'self developed structural legacies' of the liberation movement.<sup>49</sup> The second part of the chapter is the analysis of how the people of Zimbabwe elevated individuals above institutions and strong policies and ceded their power to them. We question to what extent this state of complacency, (perhaps arising out of exhaustion of the people after years of strife) to push for a transformation in the wake of the hard worn independence, has been central to the blockade of ZANU-PF's transition.

### 2.1 ZANU-PF: looking 'inwards' the Movement on the quest for answers

#### 2.1.1 Nature, operation and leadership style of the guerrilla ZANU-PF

By nature, the way the liberation movements operated across Southern African generally, and ZANU-PF in particular, demanded a militaristic structure for various justified reasons at the time. Firstly, ZANU-PF had a military wing, the Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) which was responsible for the guerrilla warfare against the Rhodesian

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<sup>49</sup> Melber (n 22 above) xvi.

government hence militarism had to be the fundamental organising principle of this wing.<sup>50</sup> Secondly, the movement had to guard against infiltration both in its military wing but more importantly in its political wing which was more pre-occupied with the politicisation of the masses.<sup>51</sup> It was always on the lookout for the enemy within its ranks since not all black Africans supported it. Hence extra caution involving violence was not an option but a way of life.<sup>52</sup> Accordingly, the militarism was vital for 'strong co-ordination, discipline and direction' for the struggle.<sup>53</sup> Consequently, 'the exigencies of the armed struggle added the element of quasi-military tendencies' to the movement political wing as well.<sup>54</sup> Ultimately, ZANU-PF became centralised with a 'commandist and authoritarian' nature becoming an identifying symbol, a notion that continues to prevail.<sup>55</sup>

By operation, the movement 'was basically sweeping in what it claimed and annihilatory in what it rejected.'<sup>56</sup> It is this militaristic operation style that led Sithole to conclude that the nationalist movement was a 'revolution that ate its own children' with what he termed as 'revolutionary justice' being the weapon that was employed to liquidate nonconformists.<sup>57</sup>

By way of leadership style,<sup>58</sup> 'the liberation struggle instilled in many political leaders and their supporters a militaristic conception and perception of politics and political parties.'<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> An exploration of the draconian and inhumane methods of ZANLA have been summarised by Gann and Henriksen to the effect that, 'This campaign claimed vastly more black than white victims. Africans that were suspected, whether justly or not, of sympathizing with the white regime or subscribing to a competing movement became fair game. Black policemen, officials, and chiefs and their families were prime targets for beatings or assaults with gasoline bombs, an especially terrifying experience for villagers living in traditional round huts fashioned of wood and straw, which caught fire easily and were speedily consumed by flames...violence became the final and frequent arbitrator, against blacks as well as white opponents.' Gann & Henriksen (n 5 above) 89.

<sup>51</sup> As above. They feared village traitors since some portions of the populace such as the traditional chiefs, headmen, and black policemen got their salaries directly from the colonial government. Besides, there were always attempts by the black government soldiers to camouflage as guerrillas.

<sup>52</sup> The nationalist movements such as ZANU-PF 'persuaded the willing by stirring appeals, the hesitant by promise, the recalcitrant by terror.' Gann & Henriksen (n 5 above) 91-99.

<sup>53</sup> K Johnson 'Liberal or Liberation Framework? The Contradictions of ANC Rule in South Africa' in Melber (n 22 above) 210.

<sup>54</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 106; Melber (n 22 above) xiv. He argues that during the struggle, the liberation movements 'did not themselves always display sensitivity to human rights issues and democratic state.' They exhibited 'in-house authoritarianism' during the years of the struggle, a scenario tantamount to 'anti-democratic tendencies,' 'commandist notions.'

<sup>55</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 103.

<sup>56</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 106.

<sup>57</sup> S Masipula *Zimbabwe: Struggles Within the Struggle* (1999) as cited in Ndlovu (n 6 above) 106-107.

<sup>58</sup> The leadership style is 'a general concept that includes a leader's beliefs, decision making methods, and typical ways of dealing with others'. See M Martin *The First Dance of Freedom. Black Africa in the Post War Era* (1984) 289 as cited in JV Wyk *Political Leaders in Africa: Presidents, Patrons or Profiteers?* Occasional Paper Series: Volume 2, Number 1, (2007) 15.

Melber's description of SWAPO is similar to ZANU-PF in as far as this leadership style created leaders bred within a 'command-and-obey system' which cared not much about their 'democratic convictions as independent-minded, autonomous individuals.'<sup>60</sup> So what do we make out of the nature, operation and style of leadership of ZANU-PF during the liberation struggle? Melber has observed about Southern Africa liberation movements (such as ZANU-PF), in this respect;

...the armed liberation struggles operating along military lines in conditions of clandestinity were not suitable breeding grounds for establishing democratic systems of governance post-independence and that the forms of resistance employed in the struggle were themselves organised on hierarchical and authoritarian lines. In this sense, then, the new societies carried within them essential elements of the old system. Thus it should come as no surprise that aspects of the colonial system have reproduced themselves in the struggle for its abolition and subsequently, in the concepts of governance applied in post-colonial conditions.<sup>61</sup>

So the militaristic nature of the liberation struggle continues to influence the political landscape of Zimbabwe in general and the character of ZANU-PF in particular further barring its transition. Consequently, because of this character of militarism, the country has been governed by militaristic modes aptly referred to as 'governance by operations.'<sup>62</sup> Central to this militarism package has been the use of the gun and violence as tools against any perceived enemy and the non-conforming populace at large.<sup>63</sup> Accordingly, even tasks that have required political and diplomatic strategies have always been referred to the gun as the solver of all problems.<sup>64</sup> The impacts of this militarism on the transition have been appalling.

Firstly, this militarism takes no criticism however positive and central to the required reform. Thus, to dissent against ZANU-PF and/or President Mugabe is treasonable.<sup>65</sup> This

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<sup>59</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 103.

<sup>60</sup> Melber (n 40 above) 145.

<sup>61</sup> Melber (n 22 above) xvi.

<sup>62</sup> M Bratton & E Masunungure *Blocking Democracy in Zimbabwe* (2008) 8. Indeed, the so called operations that have wrecked havoc in people's lives date back to Gakurahundi in Matabeleland; 'Operation Murambatsvina' (Clean Out Filth; launched to bulldoze all unlawful inner-city structures), 'Operation Maguta' (army took over responsibility for food production), 'Operation Reduce Prices' (required retail seller to shrink consumer prices for various goods), 'Operation Mavhotera Papi' (How did you vote) unleashed in the aftermath of the 2008 march elections to retaliate against all those that were suspected of having voted MDC.

<sup>63</sup> M Meredith *Our Votes, Our Guns; Robert Mugabe and the tragedy of Zimbabwe* (2002) 14; Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 103.

<sup>64</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 14.

<sup>65</sup> R Muponde, 'The Worm and the hoe: cultural politics and reconciliation after the Third Chimurenga' in B Raftopoulos & T Savage (eds) *Zimbabwe: Injustice and Political Reconciliation* (2004) 176. Thus, the past 15 years have seen the expulsion and suspension of party members that call for reform. Among them is Margaret Dongo, who joined the guerrillas when she was only 15 years. After her suspension from ZANU-PF for openly criticising the party, she took to the people and stood as an independent in the parliamentary

intolerance creates a 'culture of violence and intimidation (rather than a culture of debate)...which has characterised the relations between the state and its people since colonialism and is seen as natural and thus beyond transformation.'<sup>66</sup> Indeed, an atmosphere with the people being central players and having the freedom to express themselves is essential for the 'regeneration of democratic ideas.'<sup>67</sup> For as Foucault rightly notes, 'the work of transformation can only be carried out in a free atmosphere, one constantly agitated by a permanent criticism.'<sup>68</sup> In Zimbabwe, this has been elusive under ZANU-PF's reign.

Regrettably, 'the marginalisation, if not suppression of dissent, therefore limits the capacity of the political system to reproduce itself through constant modifications based on corrective innovations...'<sup>69</sup> It is from these 'corrective innovations' that arises new ideals that would put the party in tandem with the current wavelength of democratisation and enhancement of human rights. Incarnate in these innovations would have come the transition of ZANU-PF. However, the militarism it exhibits as a mode of operation as inherited from the guerrilla struggle continues to stand in the way of this transition.

### **2.1.2 Military spill over; a judiciary and a media under fire amidst a partisan parliament**

More significantly, the effects of this militarism inherited during the struggle have spilt over to other tenets of government that can be harnessed as conduits of a transition. Consequently the parliament, the judiciary and the media have been muzzled into incapacitation or total oblivion.

#### ***The Partisan Parliament; Entrenching the guerrilla character through enactments***

Whereas the law if rightly harnessed can be a tenet that facilitates transition of even the most dictatorial regimes, in Zimbabwe, it has been the opposite. Unlike in South Africa where the oppressive laws were repealed at the end of apartheid, in Zimbabwe, they have been

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elections winning the seat after a court battle and a subsequent by-election; A Russell *Big Men, Little People; Encounters in Africa* (2000) 293-294. Another culprit is Edgar Tekere. He later formed Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) which participated in the 1990 presidential and parliamentary elections amidst intimidation from the State.

<sup>66</sup> M Neocosmos 'Neo-Liberalism Versus State Nationalism: Beyond State Thinking in Southern Africa.' *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 21 (2003) 341.

<sup>67</sup> Neocosmos (n 66 above) 355.

<sup>68</sup> LD Kritzman *Michel Foucault; Politics, Philosophy, Culture, Interviews and other writings 1977-1984* (1988) 154-155.

<sup>69</sup> Melber (n 40 above) 144.



instruments of militarism to frustrate all possible waves of change or transition.<sup>70</sup> Thus, draconian laws, some of which new creations while others have been inherited intact from the draconian regime of colonial Rhodesian government, have been unleashed as weapons of war.<sup>71</sup>

The partisan parliament has been very handy in facilitating this process. It has been dominated by ZANU-PF since 1980 hence creating a situation where 'the state often uses democracy to perpetuate hegemony rather than to advance rights, liberty and democracy.'<sup>72</sup> It has been a weapon in the hands of ZANU-PF, a den of change opponents conveniently amending the Constitution to maintain the statusquo.<sup>73</sup> It has continuously passed laws that block the transition and further entrench the militarism that is incarnate in ZANU-PF such as the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act used to clamp down on national strikes.<sup>74</sup> Akin to Nkrumah's regime in Ghana, in Zimbabwe, the law has been mere 'handmaidens of personal rule' of Mugabe and ZANU-PF.<sup>75</sup> When the law, however draconian is for the ruling regime, who can be against it?

### ***Gauging the media; stifling critical debate***

The past 28 years of ZANU-PF have been characterised by control of information.<sup>76</sup> The media, both electronic and print have been are either state controlled, functioning under strict rules or altogether closed or banned.<sup>77</sup> Offices of tabloids that are critical of ZANU-PF have in the past decade been physically attacked and bombed with casualties including the *Daily News*, the *Weekly Independent* and *Sunday Standard*.<sup>78</sup> The foreign press was constantly expelled using draconian media laws hence restraining international correspondence.<sup>79</sup> To turn the media against the populace, It is dubbed inter alia 'oppositional press', 'Rhodesian funded',

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<sup>70</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 162.

<sup>71</sup> As above.

<sup>72</sup> M Salih *Majority Tyranny in a World of Minorities* (2000) 24 as cited in Melber (n 40 above) 142.

<sup>73</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 128.

<sup>74</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 162-163. Other constitutional amendment included that empowering the government to confiscate farms and fix it own price of what it could be willing to pay. There was no right of appeal to the courts.

<sup>75</sup> HL Bretton *The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah: A study of Personal Rule in Africa* (1966) 147.

<sup>76</sup> S Eppel 'Gukurahundi'; The need for truth and reparation' in Raftopoulos & Savage (n 65 above) 49.

<sup>77</sup> Eppel (n 76 above) 49.

<sup>78</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 204.

<sup>79</sup> As above.

'British owned.'<sup>80</sup> In a nut shell, it has been 'propagators of neo-colonialist and imperialist propaganda.'<sup>81</sup>

This effectively left the populace with only one version of truth or information as posited by the ZANU-PF government through its mouth piece, the *Herald*.<sup>82</sup> With the clampdown on the medium of exchange of information, the populace cannot air out their dissent or any ideals that would be a contributing factor to the transition of the liberation movement into a fully fledged democratic political party. Hence when the media is gauged, debate aiming at correction for transformation is stifled and the transition of ZANU-PF aborts.

### ***A Judiciary under fire; progressive voices stifled***

Meredith's documentation of the past 10 years in Zimbabwe, which have been characterised by farm invasions and bashing of the opposition, reveals that the decisions of the judiciary have been ignored at will rendering the its ability to pressure for a transition bleak.<sup>83</sup> The intimidation of judges has been wide ranging from calling them racist names, pressuring them to retire, resign, threatening attacks on their home and physical ambush of the Supreme Court during hearings by the war veterans urging the populace to 'kill the judges.'<sup>84</sup> They have been described as 'vestiges of the colonial era' a scenario that was indicative of 'a semi-colonial state, half free, half enslaved.'<sup>85</sup> Hence they were the 'disciples and sympathisers and fellow travellers' of the 'racist ghost of Ian Smith' who had to be 'exorcised' from all institutions otherwise, their continued stay at the bench was 'an albatross around the necks' of the Zimbabwean population.<sup>86</sup> The whole legal fraternity was under attack as the President finally rubbed it in that no judicial decision would stand in their way.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Kamete (n 31 above) 65.

<sup>81</sup> As above.

<sup>82</sup> Eppel (n 76 above) 49-50

<sup>83</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 170.

<sup>84</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 202. The Zimbabwe National Liberators War Veterans' Association (ZNLWVA) has been at the fore front of causing the havoc with a blessing from Mugabe himself. Their loyalty is geared towards Mugabe as an individual and due to their violence; they have been elevated to a level where they are above the law. This allegiance to Mugabe has made him above the party structure and as thus unquestionable and unchallengeable. See PT Nyathi 'Reintegration of ex-combatants into Zimbabwean Society: A lost opportunity' in Raftopoulos & Savage (n 65 above) 72.

<sup>85</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 201.

<sup>86</sup> As above.

<sup>87</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 203. Borrowing a leaf from South Africa, the Judiciary has been influential in reminding the ANC, not only of its promises to the people in terms of freedoms and rights but also that despite its role in the liberation, it is not above the law. Whereas South Africa is not necessarily past the ghost of liberation movementism, we cannot downplay the progress made by ANC (or forced upon it) to change into a

The judiciary underwent 'restructuring' towards 'complete compliance' when it was subsequently filled with the cadres of the party after the state forced the progressive and fairly independent bench to resign at the height of the land invasions by the war veterans.<sup>88</sup> By this, the judiciary has been crippled as an institution meant to check on the excesses of the executive and disabled from passing critical, progressive judgements that could have been central to the transition of ZANU-PF. With the Judiciary, the custodian of justice and human rights tattered; ZANU-PF's militarism has been geared towards the media, yet another of the conduits that holds the key to its transition.

Clearly, one point is manifest; the failure at demilitarisation in all aspects ranging from state management and mind-set saw the transition being sidestepped from the onset. As Ndlovu rightly notes, 'such a de-militarisation was itself an indispensable pre-requisite for the entrenchment of a new culture of peace, human rights, democracy and human security.'<sup>89</sup> Two decades later, Zimbabwe has witnessed the worst of the militaristic character inherited from the liberation struggle. Not only has militarism by itself been a blockade to ZANU-PF's transition but it has also spilt over to other tenets that can facilitate a transition, namely the Judiciary and the media.

Militarisation gave way to yet another culture of inclusive-exclusive politics narrowing it down to the notions of 'we' v 'them', 'with us-against us' central to which is the relegation of the people whose ideas and criticisms are inseparable from cultivating a meaningful transition, to the periphery.<sup>90</sup> An examination of this trend and its effects as one of the reasons to explain the blocked transition is pertinent.

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conventional political party. The same is elusive in Zimbabwe because of the hegemony and censorship that continues, geared towards the central tenet of transition, the judiciary.

<sup>88</sup> Steve Kibble 'The government wants the people to give up hoping (2004) <http://pambazuka.org/en/category/features/21931> (accessed 26 July 2009).

<sup>89</sup> Ndlovu-Gatshehi (n 6 above) 114; M Radu & AJ Klinghoffer *The Dynamics of Soviet Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa* (1991) 9. Subsequently, there came elite protection guards such as the 5th Brigade, Presidential Guard, and the Artillery Regiment which were different from the regular national army. Their task was clear; to maintain regime security.

<sup>90</sup> Melber (n 22 above) xv.

## 2.2 The emergence of a new 'we'; how favourable to a transition?

Your argument is somewhat anachronistic,' said Rubashov. 'As you quite rightly remarked, we were accustomed always to use the plural 'we' and to avoid as far as possible the first person singular. I have rather lost the habit of that form of speech; you stick to it. But who is this 'we' in whose name you speak today? It needs redefining. That is the point.'<sup>91</sup>

Writing in the early 1940s about the revolution that had gone wrong in Russia, Arthur Koestler in the opening text above laments over the erosion of the 'we', a notion that had been used by the revolutionaries but upon getting into power, had discarded it and as thus no longer stood for the people who had ushered in the change. When the revolutionaries then distanced themselves from the people, they went amiss.

Thirty years later, in Zimbabwe, the nationalist movements led by ZANU used the people as the pivotal force to fight the Rhodesian regime.<sup>92</sup> The people were the eyes and ears of the ZANU guerrillas signifying a mutual existence between the two parties.<sup>93</sup> These organisations were called nationalist movements because their "principal ideological thesis was the 'rights of a people,' a 'nation'..."<sup>94</sup> The catch phrase during the nationalist struggle had been 'people first' and all the nationalists from ZAPU to ZANU, all professed to be 'people's movements.'<sup>95</sup>

Come victory in the post-1980 independence, the people ceded their trust and power to the new ZANU-PF government in hope that the 'we' as the people of Zimbabwe that had prevailed in the struggle would take priority in the new dispensation. They were wrong. Not long did it take for the 'we' to be redefined to an organ of a narrowly defined 'we' 'completely born again as a highly bureaucratized organisation of educated experts rather than keeping its qualities of an open, mass movement of morally committed rank and file activists...'<sup>96</sup> The creation of a 'caste system', the 'We' versus 'them' connotations, has been prevalent in

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<sup>91</sup> Koestler (n 19 above) 66.

<sup>92</sup> Pandya (n 4 above) 63-73. He also provides an account of ZANU/ZANLA structures. The structures went down to the grassroots level from branch, district and provincial committees to village committees which were elected by the entire population of the village. In what came to be known as the 'year of the people,' 1978, Mugabe made it clear that the roots of the party were within the people, the party and the people were to have the same meaning.

<sup>93</sup> Amin terms the different social classes and diverse communities behind the nationalists a 'vast movement'. See S Amin 'The Social Movements in the Periphery: An end to national liberation?' in S Amin et al *Transforming the Revolution: Social Movements and the World System* (1990) 96-97.

<sup>94</sup> I Wallerstein 'Antisystemic Movement: History and Dilemmas' in S Amin et al (n 88 above) 31.

<sup>95</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 22 above) 105.

<sup>96</sup> Luke (n 2 above) 435.

Zimbabwe in the form of the ‘povos’, made of masses on one hand and the ‘chefs’, the elitists on the other with the gap between them broadening ‘with each passing year.’<sup>97</sup>

Indeed the people have been ‘spectators’ watching the ruling class whose mode of life is akin to that of ‘celebrities.’<sup>98</sup> The new ruling elite class includes the ‘ministers, members of parliament, party officials, senior civil servants, defence and police chiefs’ who have been in the unending ‘scramble for property, farms and businesses.’<sup>99</sup> Joining ZANU-PF has been a ticket to being rich through ‘backhanders and bribes.’<sup>100</sup> It is this elite class that has been the ‘core group of the regime supporters, who find that their political, economic or institutional interests are best served under the statusquo.’<sup>101</sup>

In some cases, even the new ‘we’ has been surpassed leading to a shift from the grammatical plural to the singular punctuated with ‘I’ by the ZANU-PF leader and President of Zimbabwe, Mugabe. Ultimately, reminiscent of the nationalist struggle protectionism around the movement, the same has been regenerated, couched in notions of ‘regime security’ rather than ‘human security.’<sup>102</sup> The former is concerned about ‘the welfare, safety and protection of the ruling elite and its cronies’ while the latter is bent on putting people’s welfare above each and every thing.<sup>103</sup> This new definition of the ‘we’ has had two serious ramifications that have greatly hampered the transition of ZANU-PF as dealt with below.

## 2. 2.1 Shutting out the people, stifling participation; closing the conduits of change

To begin with, this society re-structuring meant that the people were separated from the movement that needs them for a proper transition to take place. This effectively erodes away the ‘emancipatory politics’ which is central to the thriving of a democratisation process inducing

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<sup>97</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 78; M Meredith *The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence* (2006) 628. The barricade away from the people was not only in the political arena. After independence, the leaders that had been with the local people canvassing for support now rode in ‘large motorcades surrounded by retinues of armed bodyguards with screaming sirens heard for miles around.’

<sup>98</sup> Good (n 22 above) 1.

<sup>99</sup> Meredith (n 97 above) 628.

<sup>100</sup> Meredith (n 63 above) 81.

<sup>101</sup> A Stepan ‘On the Tasks of a Democratic Opposition’ in Diamond & Plattner (n 42 above) at 62. Fanon aptly warned against these elitists who he referred to as a ‘useless and harmful middle class,’ which ‘should not be allowed to find the conditions necessary for its existence and growth.’ He thus called upon the masses under the leadership of the party and of what he called ‘intellectuals who are highly conscious and armed with revolutionary principles’ to prevail over them. See F Frantz *Wretched of the Earth* (1968) 174-175 as cited in Jinadu (n 43 above) 107.

<sup>102</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 14.

<sup>103</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 100.

reform of the government.<sup>104</sup> It is the people that can usher in the 'learning and correcting function' of their government ultimately creating or facilitating change. This they can only do if they are invited to give feed-back to the government, from which lies agitation for reform. As Bretton notes,

...a government learns by performance, correcting its actions as information on performance is fed back into the system. The ability of a government and an administration to *improve, to innovate, to modernize*, in all spheres of responsibility depends on the extent to which information is received by the decision makers, the quality of that information, and the extent to which it is blocked or lost in transit as it passes through the channels of communication.<sup>105</sup>

By locking outside the people from the wider participation within the affairs of the government and running the country, ZANU-PF has been locking away possible avenues of reform. In the end this has resulted in the creation of a fearful, uncritical populace that cannot prevail over the deviationist tendencies of the former liberation movement. Laza laments over such a situation and rightly notes that;

A culture of passivity and apathy, an obedient and docile citizenry are not consistent with democracy....Participation is also a necessary component as apathy and abstention are inimical to democracy....citizens cannot be required to take part in the political process, and they are free to express their dissatisfaction by not participating.<sup>106</sup>

He further concludes that a healthy democracy is centred on a vigorous, open participation of the populace in the public life. This is when democracy thrives, when citizens are not only enthusiastic to take part in public deliberations but when they are also able through the availability of a free atmosphere that recognises their worth and right as citizens.<sup>107</sup> We may ask then, how central is this popular participation to the transition of ZANU-PF?

By doing away with the 'we', it put to rest 'an ongoing process of popular empowerment from below' which is necessary to 'keep the process of transformation alive.'<sup>108</sup> It is from this democratic participation, this liaison, the continuous communication with the people that propels a break-down, transforms and sets the trend for the transition of the formally militaristic movement into a political party. Hence, when the people are relegated from the realm of power, which now becomes a reserve for a few, a new 'we' and debate is stifled, the transition of the movement to a democratic dispensation is compromised.

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<sup>104</sup> Necosmos (n 66 above) 343-346.

<sup>105</sup> Bretton (n 75 above) 140.

<sup>106</sup> L Kekic 'The World in 2007: The Economist Intelligence Unit's index of democracy' (2007) 2; Necosmos (n 66 above) 348.

<sup>107</sup> Kekic (n 106 above) 2.

<sup>108</sup> JS Saul *Millennial Africa: Capitalism, Socialism, Democracy* (2001) 86.

## 2.2.2 How the new 'we' continues to work against the transition of ZANU-PF

The Second and most dangerous effect of this new 'we' is the new class of political elite that 'ascended the commanding heights' on independence and as such is at the helm of what Melber rightly terms 'a transition from controlled change to changed control.'<sup>109</sup> With the people sidelined, the select clique right from 1980 made up of mainly liberation heroes continues to be sustained with a well endowed rewards scheme ranging from material, tangible hand outs to other forms of favours.<sup>110</sup>

This nucleus 'we' is an age band of politicians, military generals who owe their prominence to having taken part in the liberation struggle.<sup>111</sup> Human rights violations machined by them over the past 28 years bind them into 'a collective quest for political survival.'<sup>112</sup> Aptly described by Bretton, this clique is nothing but a 'screen of flatterers, sycophants, and amateur samplers of public opinion...assemblage of opportunists...' whose only concern is the 'cream' skimmed from the state treasury that is distributed to them by the president to maintain the patronage.<sup>113</sup> It is this elite bourgeoisie that Jinadu rightly brands 'political entrepreneurs' which lacks 'a sense of direction and national purpose' but seeks to 'maximise resources and rewards from the political market place' for their individual exploitation.<sup>114</sup> This class views state power as a rivulet through which one can get to economic prosperity.<sup>115</sup>

The political mission of this conservative elite class is not to bring genuine transformation to the whole nation and certainly not to ZANU-PF. Instead, it is a 'broader patronage network' that cannot benefit from any reforms especially if they are aimed at dismantling the chaotic, undemocratic and non-accountable system prevalent from which they are the principle beneficiaries.<sup>116</sup> Their loot can best be protected by authoritarianism against the Zimbabwean people. Such authoritarianism can best be maintained in a guerrilla like manner by striking violence and fear within the opposition and the citizenry. Pushing for a transition to a political party with no guerrilla character, a party paying adherence to democratic values and human rights both internally (within the party) and national wide, appears not tenable to these elites.

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<sup>109</sup> Melber (n 22 above) xiv.

<sup>110</sup> Melber (n 22 above) xvii.

<sup>111</sup> Bratton & Masunungure (n 62 above)10

<sup>112</sup> As above.

<sup>113</sup> Bretton (n 62 above) 156, 166.

<sup>114</sup> Jinadu (n 43 above) 173, 184.

<sup>115</sup> C Claphamd, 'Democratisation in Africa: Obstacles and Prospects', *Third World Quarterly* 14 (1993) 426. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3992479> (accessed 30 March 2009)

<sup>116</sup> Claphamd (n 115 above) 426.

They would lose the coercive machinery of the government that is best exercised militarily in a guerrilla-like manner.

Not only does this new 'we' fight off the transition, it has also prevailed over other counter forces of the statusquo through demobilisation and depoliticisation of the different mass groups that had been active during the struggle.

### 2.3 Demobilisation and depoliticisation of the social groups; the liberation hijacked

The inclination of relegating the people was epitomised in the demobilisation and depoliticisation of the pressure groups or, and social movements that were seen as a threat to the newly attained petit bourgeois rule.<sup>117</sup> Hence groups of women, youth, trade Unions, student organisations and veterans were depoliticized in the immediate aftermath of the independence.<sup>118</sup> These groups had been the main recipients of ZANU-PF politicisation education during the struggle.<sup>119</sup> The depoliticisation and demobilisation disarmed and disintegrated the populace and made them susceptible to manipulation and muzzling by the new elitist government.<sup>120</sup> This created a vacuum for a national ethos that would unite and continuously demand reform of the ZANU-PF.

The potential opposition, the trade unions that emerged after independence were mere appendages to the different political factions.<sup>121</sup> When they were amalgamated to form the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU), it was headed by Albert Mugabe, brother to Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe which effectively brought it under the authority of ZANU-PF.<sup>122</sup> Consequently, it was 'plagued with corruption, embezzlement, maladministration and authoritarianism.'<sup>123</sup> The above shortcomings combined curtailed the unions from holding ZANU-PF accountable and demanding a transition of the liberation movement in power. It is

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<sup>117</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni, J *Human Pasts: Prognoses and Visions on Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe in 21st Century*. (Book Manuscript) as cited in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 109.

<sup>118</sup> As above.

<sup>119</sup> As above.

<sup>120</sup> Wallerstein (n 94 above) 52. Compared to South Africa where to a certain extent social movements have continued to function however weak, they have consistently kept the ANC government under check. In some instances, the labour unions of Congress of South African trade Unions (COSATU) with their allies such as SACP have pushed for concessions from the government especially concerning workers' grievances.

<sup>121</sup> Dansereau (n 31 above) 28.

<sup>122</sup> As above.

<sup>123</sup> As above.



only in the late 1980s that ZCTU was revived, long after ZNAU-PF had entrenched itself in power with no viable challenger.<sup>124</sup>

Additionally, the demobilisation and depoliticisation of the people has over time been underpinned by violence and suppression. Accordingly, the government adopted the policy of ‘community destruction’ by use of violence such as in Matabeleland with far reaching emotional consequences and morale break down of the people, driving them into political capitulation and compliance.<sup>125</sup> Thus today, not only do we see an excluded mass from the movement that won the struggle but also the inescapable ‘apathy, depression, and an unwillingness to assume leadership roles in the Zimbabwean Community.’<sup>126</sup>

The fear incarnate in the survivor community curtails them from standing up to and demanding reform of ZANU-PF when they have been recipients of brutality by the very same people that remain in positions of power as beneficiaries of the long line of amnesties dating back to 1979.<sup>127</sup> Thus the people are left with only one mode of expressing their voice; through elections which are periodical with are no guarantees of fairness, and which do not allow the prevailing of the people’s voice as has been the case in the past 28 years of the ZANU-PF rule.<sup>128</sup>

Ultimately, with a subdued populace, ZANU-PF has ridden on with no need to shade off its skin of liberation movement clad with authoritarianism both within the party governance and the way the country is run at large. With the demobilisation, depoliticisation and eventual clamp down of people with untold suffering, the forces of change and challenge to the statusquo have continuously been held at check until 1999 with the coming of the MDC.<sup>129</sup> But even then, ZANU-PF had had enough time to consolidate its power and militarise the country effectively remaining a liberation movement in style, operation and nature but with a political party skin for public show.

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<sup>124</sup> Dansereau (n 116 above) 29.

<sup>125</sup> Eppel (n 76 above) 50.

<sup>126</sup> Eppel (n 76 above) 51.

<sup>127</sup> As above.

<sup>128</sup> Kagwanja (n 17 above).

<sup>129</sup> In the aftermath of independence, Mugabe embarked on crushing any opposition to ZANU-PF. Consequently, the opposition was ‘cobra in the house’ which had to be struck and destroyed on the head. Hence, the only credible opposition prevalent in the aftermath of independence, ZAPU led by Nkomo was dealt with decisively through violence and manipulation. Ultimately, it was ‘swallowed’ by ZANU-PF in 1987 when the two signed a unity Accord forming a new party, ZANU-PF! See Meredith (n 97 above) 621-625.

## 2.4 Mystification of the liberation:<sup>130</sup> the search for legitimacy

Central to the blocked transition of ZANU-PF has been and continues to be the glorification of the liberation and those who took part. The party's legitimacy is seen only in the lens of being liberation heroes who birthed the nation. Pivotal to this legitimacy claim has been the propaganda that the nationalist- ZANU-PF is the 'Alpha and Omega leadership' of Zimbabwe.<sup>131</sup> As Johnson notes, national liberation movements such as ZANU-PF follow a common theology, narrow in perspective, with one of the basic tenets being the belief that the liberation process ended with them. Once they get the power, they believe that;

...no further group can succeed them for that would mean that the masses, the forces of righteousness [whom they claim to not only represent but are] had been overthrown. That, in turn, could only mean that the forces of racism and colonialism, after sulking defeat and biding their time, had regrouped and launched a counter attack.<sup>132</sup>

This belief has been maintained by the projection and glorification of the past over the present where the party continuously goes back to 'where everybody is coming from...reverting to the history of the liberation war to justify its every (untenable) move...'<sup>133</sup> Thus liberation terminology features prominently in the vocabulary of the ZANU-PF party handbook prominent among which is tagging the opposition and dissenting voices as 'sell out', a term to define traitor, reminiscent of the struggle days.<sup>134</sup> The Military also joined the fray warning that they would only take commands from a commander in chief who has 'liberation credentials' which effectively locks out the opposition.<sup>135</sup> This mystification has been a blockade to the transition in two particular ways.

Firstly, it has led to the development of a 'national liberation paradigm' which the ruling party cannot abandon because it is the embodiment of their legitimacy, at least in their perspective. It endears them to the people as their saviours. Consequently, as Southall convincingly argues, this situation has led to two competing paradigms between 'liberation' and 'democracy.' The ingredients of both paradigms differ hence,

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<sup>130</sup> Term is first used by Melber. Melber (n 22 above) xv.

<sup>131</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 129.

<sup>132</sup> R Johnson 'The Final Struggle is to Stay in Power' (2002) as cited in Melber (n 40 above) at 146-147; Bratton & Masunungure (n 62 above) 3. The Authors call it 'an ideology of National Liberation.'

<sup>133</sup> Kamete (n 31 above) 64; Melber (n 22 above) xix.

<sup>134</sup> Kamete (n 31 above) 64.

<sup>135</sup> MR Rupiya 'Contextualizing the military in Zimbabwe between 1999 and 2004 and beyond' in Raftopoulos & Savage (n 65 above) 81.

'the paradigm of national liberation celebrates past leadership of, and involvement in, the nationalist armed struggle against colonialism and apartheid. It stresses the ruling party as the embodiment of the national will, its historic right to rule for and on behalf of the people, and critically, it effectively prioritises the past over the present.'<sup>136</sup>

As a result this paradigm is a breeding ground for the concealing of the "past errors, of deviations from the 'correct' path" as well as being non-accommodative of the self criticism and, or self assessment of the movement in its quest to transform.<sup>137</sup> Hence, instead of this paradigm facilitating the transition of the party, it sends it on a course that rests on 'untruth and self-delusion.'<sup>138</sup> This paradigm is maintained by a novel political leadership elite utilizing select storylines and reminiscences relating to their liberation struggles.<sup>139</sup> Additionally, this class has assembled 'a new set of traditions to establish an exclusive post-colonial legitimacy under the sole authority of one particular agency of social forces.'<sup>140</sup>

Contrary to the above, the democracy paradigm underlined by good governance is based on the 'present over the past.'<sup>141</sup> Central to this are free and fair elections in which the vanquished has to hand over power to the majority leader whether he is a liberator or not.<sup>142</sup> To ZANU-PF, the transition would demand and indeed come with a complete overhaul of the former liberation movement. It would dictate that the new party be judged not by its past successes however sacrificial they were but on their future plan for the country. With a tattered economy, massive capital flight, politicised and racial land problem, humanitarian crisis, human rights abuses, record breaking inflation among other dilemmas, ZANU-PF has nothing of the present to show. The past successes have been under scored by the political, economic and humanitarian crisis that continues to grip the country even at the time of this study. The legitimacy it seeks can only be gotten from getting back into the past, being a liberation movement and not a conventional present day political party. Survival politics of the past over the realities of the present have caught up with ZANU-PF and ultimately blocked its transition. They cannot afford to live in the future nor the present. It is not favourable for its grip on power and endearment to the people. They have to project the past.

Secondly, this mystification of the liberation struggle ushered in what is manifestly the 'you owe us' syndrome geared towards the people of Zimbabwe. Thus, the party leadership

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<sup>136</sup> R Southall 'Between Competing Paradigms: Post –Colonial Legitimacy in Lesotho' in Melber (n 22 above) 116.

<sup>137</sup> Southall (n 136 above) 129-130.

<sup>138</sup> Southall (n 136 above) 130.

<sup>139</sup> Melber (n 22 above) xiv-xv.

<sup>140</sup> As above.

<sup>141</sup> Southall (n 136) 116.

<sup>142</sup> As above.

continues to remind the wider populace (both current and forthcoming generations) of the perpetual debt they owe to all those that took part in the liberation struggle.<sup>143</sup> This Nyathi calls the 'war liberation psychosis.'<sup>144</sup> A clear depiction of this nostalgia is captured by Russell quoting President Mugabe;

We are a mammoth party, but do not forget the people know us for the revolution we waged in the country. They became part of that struggle and they cannot entertain another party without an equivalent record.<sup>145</sup>

The liberation victory, not in the strict sense of the word since the independence was negotiated, is the party's priority qualification. It is this 'refuge in war-time nationalist rhetoric and propaganda' that cannot be forsaken for it is viewed as a scoring rank over the opposition.<sup>146</sup> It is humane for one to hold on to that over which he or she has a comparative advantage over others especially if the circumstances are such that there is competition and hearts to win over. Using the advantage negatively is however a different issue altogether. ZANU-PF led the nation to independence and as thus asking it to change, to lose its old time liberation struggle character, structure and style of leadership is levelling it to all the other opposition parties mainly MDC which in ZANU-PF's perspective, are puppets of the former colonial regime.<sup>147</sup>

The transition therefore threatens their trump card as the liberation party, a situation which they cannot accept for it is tantamount to losing an insurance policy of legitimacy from the people. The talk of 'you owe us' has to continue being pumped into the people's heads. It however cannot work when ZANU-PF is like any other political party. The gist is in professing its identity of a liberation movement that saved the day during the oppressive days of Ian Smith. It is even been made more fashionable with the land problem the country faces; for now, the liberation has been extended. The land invasions and the accompanying violence that prevailed in the country unabated beginning in 2002 have been projected by ZANU-PF as the 'third Chimurenga,' liberation struggle to complete the victory of 1980 by giving the black Zimbabweans back their land.<sup>148</sup> This Mystification coupled with militarism, election fraud, fear

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<sup>143</sup> Nyathi (n 84 above) 66.

<sup>144</sup> Nyathi (n 84 above) 72.

<sup>145</sup> Russell (n 62 above) 291.

<sup>146</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 104.

<sup>147</sup> Blair (n 17 above) 116-120. MDC has been at the receiving end of violence ever since it proved a power in 1999. Accounts of MDC supporters being beaten 'senseless,' 'unconscious,' 'skulls being crushed,' and ultimate death are documented by Blair. As they carried out this brutality, the attacking gangs of war veterans sang in unison 'Father Mugabe, you are the owner of Zimbabwe, you should rule Zimbabwe forever.'

<sup>148</sup> During the 'third chimurenga' the whites become 'white bastards' and 'white pigs' while the perpetrators of the violence referred to Mugabe as 'our God Mugabe.' Blair (n 17 above) 71. Chimurenga 'is a shona term

and paranoia within ZANU-PF has left the winds of transition sealed. At this note, its pertinent that we also probe into the other national factors, not necessarily within ZANU-PF's confines, that have also been crucial in this blocked transition.

## 2.5 ZANU-PF: Looking 'outside' the movement; how the people blocked the transition

### 2.5.1 Elevation of Individuals to 'Messiahs'; the unforgivable 'sin'

The part played by the people of Zimbabwe in ZANU-PF's failed transition has been both by omission and commission. Dating back to the struggle days, the people united behind the nationalist, charismatic leaders such as Mugabe and 'spontaneously put their trust in this patriot' to fight off the racist colonial regime.<sup>149</sup> They showered these leaders with names signifying infallibility such as 'Father Zimbabwe', '*Shumba ye Zimbabwe*' (Lion of Zimbabwe), '*Chibwechitedza*' (Slippery Stone). They graced poems, songs, all worshipping them as the redeemers of the people.<sup>150</sup> Their propaganda and political rhetoric became the 'gospel' of the day and had to be believed without question.<sup>151</sup> The now gloried leadership developed egotism and self-assurance, a notion that continues to block the transition of the parties they lead causing mayhem in the countries they govern.<sup>152</sup> This elevation is responsible for the feelings of 'indispensability' and 'irreplaceability' that developed thereafter. From then on, they saw

...themselves as divine messiahs who had taken the African people across the Red Sea of oppression and were leading them to the promised land of opportunities. They now saw themselves as demi-gods substituting themselves for the State and cladding themselves in robes like 'Father of the Nation', 'Apostle of Peace', and 'Presidents for life.' Any criticism against the nation was misconstrued as a criticism against the leader.<sup>153</sup>

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used to describe the black uprising of the 1890s in Rhodesia. The modern Liberation Movements saw their campaign as a continuation of that struggle and as thus used the same word to describe the revolutionary guerrilla wars between 1967 and 1979.' See Pandya (n 4 above). In the 1990s, it was summoned again opportunistically by ZANU-PF. For an exposition into the land grabbing and the suffering of the white community and their black employees branded 'sell outs,' see generally C Buckle *Beyond Tears; Zimbabwe's Tragedy* (2002).

<sup>149</sup> Frantz (n 101 above) 167.

<sup>150</sup> They grace 'presidential speeches, street names, public holidays, political education courses and television shows on patriotic history.' Bratton & Masunungure (n 62 above) 3; Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 108.

<sup>151</sup> As above.

<sup>152</sup> As above.

<sup>153</sup> MG Ngwane, 'Youths and Democracy in Africa' *Eden Newspaper* 7, 13 & 15 February 2007 4. <http://www.gngwane.com> (accessed 30 March 2009)

In Zimbabwe, amidst this individual elevation, “Robert Mugabe has come across as the tormented, self righteous messiah, a father and strong armed figure whose life is an instance of a mythopoeic narrative of suffering and fighting for ‘the people.’ ”<sup>154</sup> Possibly this elevation in relation to Mugabe is an offshoot of admiration by many commonplace Africans who view him as an icon that stands up to western pressure and refuses to relent. Hence he attains the enviable biblical picturesque in the mind of many as the young ‘David standing up to Goliath.’<sup>155</sup> Accordingly, this is an inherited legacy of the liberation struggle when everyone was expected to support the war which ushered in and ‘institutionalised...conformity and unquestioning support.’<sup>156</sup> And in what currency has this elevation paid back the people? Two ramifications all with far reaching implications on the transition of ZNAU-PF are manifest.

### ***Loss of Veto power by the people***

Firstly, the people lost their veto power which is their greatest weapon that could have been used to harness change and hence an eventual transition of the party to a more democratic establishment. They were indirectly, unconsciously or otherwise telling their new found ‘messiahs’ that there is none like them, sanctioning them to rule for ever, for they had the people’s trust. Russell captures this undying but blind, unquestioning loyalty noting that ‘in his early years Mugabe could do no wrong among his supporters. When the first cases of government corruption and incompetence came to light, they were excused: after all this was the man who had ended long years of white rule.’ In the meantime, Mugabe continued to play ‘international statesman.’<sup>157</sup>

This in essence ushered in the syndrome of ‘I am the majority’s choice’ and as thus the people bound themselves in an unending contract which would later haunt them. A contract in which they would always be subjects of the new leaders without any sigh of dissent or criticism. A people who have lost leverage and ceded their power over to an individual and his machinery incarnate in ZANU-PF- cannot be seen to effectuate any pressure to create change, to sanction the much desired transition of a centralist liberation movement into a democratic political party.

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<sup>154</sup> Muponde (n 65 above) 177.

<sup>155</sup> B Baker ‘When to Call Black White: Zimbabwe’s Electoral Reports’ *Third World Quarterly* 23 (2002) 1156.

<sup>156</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 103.

<sup>157</sup> Russell (n 62 above) 292-294.

### *The resultant personality and de-facto 'one-party state' cults*

Secondly this elevation ushered in the notion of personal rule under the auspices that it would be efficient, stable and progressive.<sup>158</sup> Consequently, one heard more talk about the individual or party leader than the party itself.<sup>159</sup> It led to 'leaderism', 'Presidentialism', 'Clientelism', of the leaders with powers over and above what they should be exercising.<sup>160</sup> It ushered in 'personal politics, personality politics and politics by leadership' all characterised by a 'godfather' at the apex of a 'centralisation of all political powers in the executive.'<sup>161</sup> The above is coupled with the malaise of 'lifelong chairpersons and patrons' and the 'frowning upon internal dissent.'<sup>162</sup>

Then the party also became untouchable. Consequently, akin to ANC in South Africa, in ZANU-PF, comrades became 'loyal to a party rather than to principles of justice...'<sup>163</sup> In Ndlovu's summary of SWAPO is true of ZANU-PF where, 'the elevation of the nationalist party above everything else generated rigid party loyalties and a preparedness to kill and be killed in defence of the party.'<sup>164</sup> Meredith summarises this cult;

The one party-system that Mugabe developed, following the demise of ZAPU in 1987, lasted for twelve years. He accumulated huge personal power, ensuring that ZANU-PF's grip extended into every corner of the government's apparatus. One by one, the state media, parastatal organisations, the police, the civil service and, eventually, the courts, were subordinated to Mugabe's will, giving him control of a vast system of patronage.<sup>165</sup>

Ultimately, 'putting faith in individuals,' other than building 'strong institutions that outlast' them is one of the continued failures of liberation movements such as ZANU-PF.<sup>166</sup> Indeed 'if there are strong policies, individuals do not matter.'<sup>167</sup> With elevation, the leader assumes a position that would have been naturally filled by institutions whose procedures are easily

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<sup>158</sup> Bretton (n 75 above) 139.

<sup>159</sup> EG Boadi 'Political Parties, Elections and Patronage; Random Thoughts on Neo-Patrimonialism and African Democratisation' in M Basedau, G Erdmann & A Mehler (eds) *Votes, Money and Violence: Political Parties and Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa* (2007) 25.

<sup>160</sup> Wyk (n 58 above) 12.

<sup>161</sup> Wyk (n 58 above) 10.

<sup>162</sup> Boadi (n 159 above) 25.

<sup>163</sup> R Kadalie 'Citizenship, Living Rights and the Public Intellectual-the role of the public intellectual in South Africa.' (2002) as cited in Melber (n 22 above) xvi.

<sup>164</sup> Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n 6 above) 109.

<sup>165</sup> Blair (n 17 above) 36; Meredith (n 63 above) 227, 79-80. In December 1987, the personality cult of Mugabe was entrenched with full executive powers in an event dubbed 'You Are the Only One.' With the eroding away of the twenty seats for the whites in the Parliament, the possible opposition to ZANU-PF was effectively erased.

<sup>166</sup> 'Ruined by Liberation Aristocrats' Mail & Guardian 6-12 March 2009 9

<sup>167</sup> As above.

correctable in case of deviationist tendencies from the peoples' aspirations. The leader's assertions, perspectives, propaganda and speeches on functions are elevated to state policy. Hence the notion of 'rally around the leader' creeps in and as such followers become 'yes' men who cannot stand up to demanding or directing the transition and eventual reform of the party.<sup>168</sup>

This laxity at criticism and quickness at elevation of leaders to infallibles can be traced back to the aftermath of the independence. The goodwill of Zimbabweans and the world at large towards the new ZANU-PF unity government in 1980 was abundant. This was partly due to the very commendable and impressive beginning with the reconciliatory speeches by new Prime Minister, Mugabe.<sup>169</sup> Even when the massacres in Matabeleland went on in 1983 'many gave the new Zimbabwe the benefit of doubt...as in parts of Zimbabwe many positive developments were taking place, such as improved access to health and education.'<sup>170</sup>

ZANU-PF continued to thrive on this benefit of doubt as the people remained glued on the 'new developments.'<sup>171</sup> The people went into a stage of 'quietism.'<sup>172</sup> As this went on, 'the democratic space' began digressing slowly but surely.<sup>173</sup> This digress would later affect a possible transition of the liberation movement to a political party. Instead of being winds of change, the people become shock absorbers of the agitation for change in the bid to endear themselves to their leader turned master. In so doing, the people continuously blocked the transition, at least in the initials days after the liberation.

## 2.6 Conclusion

Part one of this chapter, by looking in-wards at ZANU-PF, has shown that the seeds for ZANU-PF blocked transition are ingrained within the movement and indeed were sowed during the liberation struggle. The terrain then was very different and required commandist means to fight the colonial regime. Thus, the nature, operation and leadership style acquired

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<sup>168</sup> Bretton (n 75 above) 146.

<sup>169</sup> Makumbe (n 23 above) 35. He summaries this era: 'There were no retributions, no trial of prisoners of war or identification of war criminals. Neither was there a truth and reconciliation commission, however.'

<sup>170</sup> Eppel (n 76 above) 48.

<sup>171</sup> Prime Minister boasted that Zimbabwe was the 'darling' of the World and was on a 'honeymoon.' The international community pumped total aid close to over nine hundred pounds following independence. Meredith (n 63 above) 46-47.

<sup>172</sup> Good (n 22 above) 16.

<sup>173</sup> Eppel (n 76 above) 49.



then, militaristic in making was carried in its raw form into another terrain, away from the battle field which is inappropriate in such a post-colonial dispensation.

This militarism, as has been showed, has also spilt over to other tenets of transition and transformation and clamped down on the judiciary and the media. The two are supposed to keep ZANU-PF in check in case of any manifest power excesses. The parliament instead continued to pass laws that embed the guerrilla-like character of the movement rather than those that help shape its transition into political party upholding civil liberties. The already precarious situation continues to be exacerbated by the failed demilitarisation. The fruit being reaped is the blocked transition. ZANU-PF, the guerrilla liberation movement continues under the guise of a political party.

In part two, the chapter has exposed that the people through their unquestioning loyalty ceded their power of veto to the liberation heroes. They elevated these individuals to positions above reproach at a time when they had to demand, through a critical voice, further transformation of the newly acquired power and the movement. This unquestioning loyalty at a time when there was vacuum of a counter voice or credible opposition gave ZANU-PF time to consolidate rather than transform the power. As a result, a party and personality cult with a strong patronage network developed and continues to reign on the forces of change and transformation in Zimbabwe, the coalition government with MDC in place, at the time of writing this piece, notwithstanding.

## CHAPTER THREE

# GOING BEYOND THE NATIONAL BORDERS: QUESTIONING THE VALUES OF OUR NEIGHBOURS

### 3. Introduction

We cannot blame wholly the woes happening in Zimbabwe on foreign powers. Yet, at the same time, we do no justice to the debate if we conclude that the neighbours of Zimbabwe in SADC have not played any role either by omission or commission in keeping ZANU-PF at the crossroad of a blocked transition. The Southern African countries share a history of colonialism manifest gruesomely in the oppressive institutionalised scheme of apartheid and ‘parallel or separate development.’<sup>174</sup> Almost all these countries fought guerrilla wars under the command of liberation movements. This resistance prompted negotiations with the colonial regimes leading to elections in Zimbabwe and South Africa, inter alia, hence ushering in majority rule.<sup>175</sup> This chapter probes into the contribution made by the SADC member states and the wider African continent in blocking the transition of ZANU-PF. It also accords exclusive attention to South Africa as the regional economic and political might and as such positioned advantageously to exert pressure on ZANU-PF leadership to reform but miserably failing at it.

#### 3.1 South Africa; when the neighbour becomes a part of the problem

Pivotal to ZANU-PF’s blocked transition has been the support, indirect and direct that the party has been receiving from South Africa, the continental economic and political super power. The resolution of the impasse that has prevailed in Zimbabwe, more prominently in the after post-2000 period, was indeed within South Africa’s ambit.<sup>176</sup> Arguably, not even the seemingly progressive ideals of the African Renaissance and the NEPAD vision that South Africa stands for more particularly former president Mbeki, were invoked to reign on the excesses of power by ZANU-PF. Despite the promised foreign policy by former President Mandela, which would forward human rights, good governance and democratisation, South Africa has

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<sup>174</sup> Apartheid was applied in South Africa, the notion of ‘parallel development’ prevailed in Zimbabwe while in Mozambique, the Portuguese applied the ‘assimilado’ policy. In all, the underlying feature was exploitation and suppression of the black Africans with varying degrees of brutality, South Africa emerging on top.

<sup>175</sup> For a detailed account of the Lancaster House negotiations about Zimbabwe see N Kriger *Guerrilla Veterans Post-War Zimbabwe: Symbolic and Violent Politics 1980-1987* (2003) 36-50.

<sup>176</sup> I Phimister ‘South African diplomacy and the crisis in Zimbabwe; Liberation solidarity in the 21st century’ in Raftopoulos & Savage (n 65 above) 271.

continued to oscillate between the now infamous ‘quiet diplomacy’ and ‘open support’ for the ZANU-PF dictatorship in Zimbabwe that has continuously breached the above notions.<sup>177</sup> As a result, the ANC through its top governing members have not spared words over their adoration for the internationally ostracised ZANU-PF. Phimister captures some of these sentiments aptly with leaders such as Mavivi Manzini depicting the ANC-South Africa relation with ZANU-PF-Zimbabwe as being ‘sealed in blood’, the two being ‘historical counterparts.’<sup>178</sup>

In the various elections that have been held in Zimbabwe over the past decade, SADC with South Africa at the centre have always been receptive of the results however flawed. In 2002, as the whole world condemned the unfair presidential elections in Zimbabwe, the then South African Deputy President, Zuma, declared them ‘legitimate and valid.’<sup>179</sup> As international sanctions were being levelled against Zimbabwe to force the authoritarian regime to capitulate and transform its style of governance, South Africa prepared aid packages to the country.<sup>180</sup> Times without number, South Africa has often denounced the international election observers’ reports as western oriented and as thus against liberation movement run governments of Southern African.<sup>181</sup>

The opposition, in this case, MDC has always been denounced as likely ‘puppet regimes’ and ‘surrogates’ that the West aims at installing to exploit the resources of Africa once again.<sup>182</sup> At the height of the economic crisis and the increased militaristic state suppression of civil liberties to contain the situation, Phimister captures Mbeki’s choice of action on ZANU-PF and aptly summaries that;

what opponents of the regime saw as the increasingly authoritarian nature of the state and its massive abuse of human rights, Mbeki preferred to see as the inevitable consequences of the actions of well intentioned authorities struggling with dwindling resources to contain ‘social instability as the poor respond to the pains of hunger.’<sup>183</sup>

He chose to believe and re-assert that indeed, Britain was the problem, who had upheld the colonial wrongs of the land grabbing by their ‘kith and kin’ and now here they were, resolved to ‘treat human rights as a tool for overthrowing the government of Zimbabwe.’<sup>184</sup> He concluded by calling upon all African intellectuals to ‘always refuse to ‘rationalise the upside-

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<sup>177</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 272.

<sup>178</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 273-275.

<sup>179</sup> As above.

<sup>180</sup> Good (n 22 above) 8-9.

<sup>181</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 274.

<sup>182</sup> As above.

<sup>183</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 277.

<sup>184</sup> *ANC Today* 12 December 2003 as cited in Phimister (n 171 above) 281-282.

down way of looking at Africa' a legacy that had been left behind by imperialism.<sup>185</sup> Such an approach seemingly pro-African, punctuated by solidarity overtones has not done much good apart from entrenching impunity and curtailing reform of draconian African governments such as that of ZANU-PF. Arguably, the trend has transcended to the region of SADC further sealing off any doubts that indeed, a transition of these movements is far from becoming a reality.

## 3.2 The wider SADC; a club of 'brother presidents', 'sister movements'

### 3.2.1 An over view of the SADC; a region devoid of a transformation?

Southern Africa has for the past 20 years been besieged by the liberation movements and/or parties over-staying in power under one leader, mostly with liberation credentials.<sup>186</sup> Almost all these leaders have manipulated Constitutions using their majority numbers in their national parliaments and have continued the consolidation of power over its transformation. Among others, in Malawi, after life-President Kamuzu Banda came Bakili Muluzi 'who presided over a corrupt and mismanaged government.'<sup>187</sup> In Angola, President Jose Eduardo dos Santos prevailed for over 22 years in power, at the 'centre of an oligarchy of vast corruption.' With oil money, he run a system of patronage for the loyal and willing while for those that dissented, he dealt with sternly.<sup>188</sup> Until recently, liberation hero, Joaquim Chissano of FRELIMO in Mozambique has been at the helm for over 18 years with not so much progress.<sup>189</sup>

The 'brother presidents' in Southern Africa have always had convenient tales clad in notions of serving the people as a means to manipulate their Constitutions and rule well over their constitutionally mandated term periods.<sup>190</sup> Seemingly different, Botswana has been fairly progressive as seen in its trend of 'generally good governance and in the regularity and openness of its elections...'<sup>191</sup> South Africa continues to ride on the Mandela miracle which has been coupled with a superior, progressive, egalitarian Constitution guarded by a fairly free media and highly independent forward-looking Judiciary with the Constitutional Court at its pinnacle. Whereas the picture painted about South Africa is rosy, not all is well. Nobel Peace

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<sup>185</sup> As above.

<sup>186</sup> See generally B Baker 'The class of 1990: How Have the Autocratic Leaders of Sub-Saharan Africa Fared under Democratisation?' (1998) 19 *Third World Quarterly* 115.

<sup>187</sup> Good (n 22 above) 6.

<sup>188</sup> Good (n 22 above) 6-7.

<sup>189</sup> Good (n 22 above) 7.

<sup>190</sup> As above.

<sup>191</sup> As above.

Prize winner, Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu has occasionally revealed and hit at the growing culture of non-tolerance for dissent in the ANC lamenting that;

It's becoming very difficult to condemn (the government) as this would make one appear unpatriotic. We are in a bad place at the moment in this country. We have let our guard down and we have quickly forgotten the struggles of our past...This is not a laughing matter; it's as if they are telling us to go to hell if we dare to differ. Is this why people were tortured and killed?...Please allow us to go to the grave smiling, not with hearts broken.<sup>192</sup>

It remains to be seen if the eminent Man of God will be accorded this request. In the meantime, the liberation hegemony continues often overshadowed by free and fair elections which consolidate the power of the ANC. Not that the voters have any real choice in the elections. Despite all the above, according to Good, Mugabe and his ZANU-PF out compete the rest in for, the 'intensity of state lawlessness, economic destructiveness, and contempt for their people' is beyond measure.<sup>193</sup>

Such an environment is where Zimbabwe finds itself. The strategic question under such circumstances therefore becomes, can ZANU-PF transform? And to what extent is such a neighbourhood of movements' seemingly political parties with cosmetic democracy, a good breeding ground for the much desired transition of ZANU-PF?

### 3.2.2 Comradeship at play; mutual protectionism on the offensive

The member presidents of SADC have shown their solidarity with ZANU-PF either through explicit or passive support.<sup>194</sup> The recent economic and political crisis in Zimbabwe dating back to 1994 and escalating in 2008 provided the most opportune moment to look into the values of the liberation parties in Southern Africa. Consequently, even when the obvious call should be reform of the ruling leadership, the sister movements have always shot down any chances of such a restructuring of ZANU-PF; a show of blind solidarity.<sup>195</sup> Former Mozambican President, Chissano's perspective summarises this blind solidarity;

...today, just like yesterday, our strength lies in our ability to act together. We are like vital organs. We can only live or die together. Our experience of the common liberation struggle of our peoples and of safeguarding our independence, whose roots date back to the glorious experience

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<sup>192</sup> 'Tutu tells of his shame over Zuma' *Pretoria News* 2 April 2009 1.

<sup>193</sup> Good (n 22 above) 8.

<sup>194</sup> BD Schaefer & ML Tupy 'Africa's Zimbabwe Problem: Why do African nations line up in support of such a disreputable nation?' 25 May 2007. <http://www.heritage.org/press/commentary/ed05250b.cfm> (accessed 20 June 2009)

<sup>195</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 290.

of the Front Line States, gives us the conviction that we will be victorious...None has a possibility to succeed while another fails.<sup>196</sup>

Similarly, the speech of former President, Mkapa of Tanzania during the August 2004 SADC summit held in Mauritius is revealing. 'Let SADC speak with one voice and let the outside world understand,' he began his speech. He went on to lament about the tiredness, the fatigue that they were undergoing due to constant lectures on 'democracy by the very countries which, under colonialism, either directly denied us the rights of free citizens, or were indifferent to our suffering and yearnings to break free and to be democratic.'<sup>197</sup> Other dignitaries that took up the podium thereafter went on to praise the sub-continent's thriving democracy as well as standing behind Mugabe in this quest.<sup>198</sup>

This mutual outlook for each other has gone beyond 'just a matter of solidarity' in the past decade; it has taken on a more firmer stance comparable to a matter of 'fundamental interest.'<sup>199</sup> This mutuality has left them to 'remain overwhelmingly unselfcritical and also acutely reluctant to criticise the obvious failings of their fellow movements, which are viewed as historically progressive organisations which successfully fought colonialism and oppression.'<sup>200</sup> The SADC leaders have remained silent despite their commitment under the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections adopted in Mauritius in 2004 to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Bruce summaries this camaraderie which to me is blind and ought to be selective; 'They (SADC leaders) are bound to feel a certain solidarity with a neighbour and perhaps have indulged in some of his electoral 'tricks' themselves.'<sup>201</sup> Their efforts to bring the Zimbabwe crisis to an end by firstly prevailing over ZANU-PF's militarism, have been 'too feeble and insincere' to convey any transformation.<sup>202</sup>

So what do we make out of such profound solidarity? Indeed such solidarity has nothing wrong per se. The problem comes in when it becomes blind to atrocities and human rights violations that continue unabated in Zimbabwe. Such support upholds the beliefs and the

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<sup>196</sup> As cited in L Freeman 'Unravelling the Contradictions-South Africa's Zimbabwe Policy' (2004) *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*; later cited in Phimister (n 171 above) 291. Chissano shares this perspective with former Namibian Head of State who lamented; 'Today it is Zimbabwe, tomorrow it is Namibia or any other country. We must unite and support Zimbabwe. We cannot allow imperialism to take over our continent again. We must defend ourselves. ...' See *The Namibian* 19 August 2002 as cited in Melber (n 34 above) 147.

<sup>197</sup> *Reuters* 16 September 2004 as cited in Phimister (n 176 above) 286-287.

<sup>198</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 287.

<sup>199</sup> Johnson (n 132 above).

<sup>200</sup> Southall (n 137 above) 115.

<sup>201</sup> Baker (n 186 above) 1155.

<sup>202</sup> Makumbe (n 23 above) 37.

tyranny incarnate in ZANU-PF and as such it is at no pressure to abandon its guerrilla-like, liberation tendencies and character for by doing so, it will cease perhaps to belong to the sister club of the messianic movements. This complacency on part of SADC, and more specifically South Africa under ANC has been an effective and compromising blockade in the way of the 'reform and renewal' of ZANU-PF.<sup>203</sup> The transition remains in balance for ZANU-PF. On the other hand, this behaviour has portrayed that the African leaders particularly those in SADC, hold dear their comrades, their fellow despots and not the people they preside over.

### 3.3 The Continental Response; 'Africanisation Syndrome' at play

The response in the wider Africa has not been much different from that of the SADC region in handling the ZANU-PF crisis. African leaders have been oscillating between dead silence, which too can be read to mean support but undeclared for public relations reasons, or open support.<sup>204</sup> Thus criticism has eluded the ZANU-PF government as it continues its repressive modes of governance under the gallant smokescreen of fighting against a new wave of colonialism that lingers in the midst of the country under the cover of MDC.

ZANU-PF is depicted as the impeccable saviour under Robert Mugabe, the African hero, trying to remedy what has failed most African leaders; colonial wrongs, and as such he is cherished by the African people and indeed the African Heads of States.<sup>205</sup> It is possible therefore that almost all are in support of 'a small third world nation' that is finally teaching the mighty 'coloniser Britain a lesson and takes back land from the whites.'<sup>206</sup> The criticism from the Western powers, geared towards the government in Zimbabwe calling for reform, has been downplayed on numerous occasions as inspired by 'ideals of white pre-eminence' as aired by leaders such as former president Mbeki who would have pressured ZANU-PF leadership for reform.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 290.

<sup>204</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 280.

<sup>205</sup> Phimister (n 176 above) 278. On September 2nd 2002 at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Sandton, Johannesburg, President, Mugabe averred; '...So Blair, keep your England and let me keep my Zimbabwe...' in a manifest of the uncritical approach and a show of solidarity among his peers, his statement was met with applause and cheers from fellow African Heads of State! See generally Catherine Buckle *Beyond Tears; Zimbabwe's Tragedy* (2002)170.

<sup>206</sup> Nyathi (n 84 above) 73-74.

<sup>207</sup> Baker (n 186 above) 1151.

The African Union continues to be a barking but not biting dog despite having the means to do the latter.<sup>208</sup> Consequently, its concern about ZANU-PF have been continuously expressed in its well drafted high sounding resolutions not going beyond the good terminologies that remain just at that; ‘concerned’, ‘deeply unsatisfied’, ‘takes note’, inter alia. It has called for Africa to solve its own problems ushering in the malaise of Africanising everything to lock out the West. These resolutions remain paper work; their practicalities and the Union’s daily claims to remain seized of the matters before it such as the crisis in Zimbabwe does not resonate with the heads of states’ silence or open support for ZANU-PF’s purely guerrilla-like nature.

This lack of stern action or pressure by A.U on ZANU-PF to reform and adhere to the cardinal principles of good governance, human rights protection and democratisation has been an indirect ‘go ahead’ signal to the government of Zimbabwe in its quest to hang on to power at all costs. A quest it cannot accomplish if it alludes to the pressures of a transition into a conventional political party without militarism reminiscent of the liberation struggle.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The chapter has depicted the problematic notion of ‘shared past’ and ‘brotherhood’ solidarity that continues to prevail in Southern Africa among the liberation movement led countries. This sense of belonging and allegiance to one another without criticism continues to prevail over any paths of reform and transformation of draconian parties such as ZANU-PF. The chapter has shown that South Africa has had the power both political and economic to pressure ZANU-PF leadership to reform from its guerrilla tendencies. Instead, the ANC led government opted to encourage ZANU-PF in its errands and became its protector wading off criticism and calls for reform from the international community. This has been solidified through the wider African support for the militarism of ZANU-PF though it’s clad in a seemingly necessary act of seeking social justice for the black Africans in Zimbabwe aimed at ‘returning’ their land. Noble as the gesture may be, it has been clearly hijacked by the opportunist ZANU-PF hence its failure.

With such an atmosphere in Africa where liberation heroism still pays dividends, where old scores of social justice - mainly land - are trump cards for seeking legitimacy, where scars and liberation stories are enviable, where exclusive clubs of liberation heroes turned presidents have blind protectionism for each other, being a liberation movement is unapologetically a

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<sup>208</sup> Kagwanja (n 17 above).



scoring trend. In such a situation, talking of ZANU-PF's transition to a political party from a liberation movement is a difficult task. The silence by African heads of state over ZANU-PF guerrilla-like rule has not only been a betrayal of the Zimbabwean people but also a vote of confidence and condoning ZANU-PF. The accommodation that has been accorded to ZANU-PF by AU despite the clear breach of almost all the values the organizations stands for is lamentable. Meanwhile, the blocked transition continues.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4. Conclusions

The study has been a quest for answers to account for the unarguably blocked transition of ZANU-PF liberation movement to a conventional political party despite its holding out as one. The study has singled out the two main players at the national level, the people and the leaders of ZANU-PF to partly account for this blockade. It has depicted that the long-protracted liberation struggle had a great effect on ZANU-PF in so far as it instilled militaristic tendencies by way of operation and style of leadership. Hence the operational nature of the movement basing on centralist notions would not have been a good breeding ground for any organisation that would assume leadership of a country in a democratic dispensation.

Consequently, we have seen this militarism extending its anti-democratic tentacles to other possible conduits of a transition. The Judiciary has not been spared hence halting any progressive judgements to check the party; the media has been under fire as a means to control the flow of information hence stifling debate; amidst and behind this, there has been a partisan parliament passing laws that facilitate militarism rather than cultivating ground for ZANU-PF's transition. This character, we can rightly conclude continues to haunt and indeed block the transition of ZANU-PF.

In the same vein, the relegation of the people from the annals of power and the creation of a new elite class continues to block the transition. By redefining the 'we', ZANU-PF blocks the people and their innovative ideas, and critical thoughts that would have had an impact on its eventual transition. We can also conclude that the mystification of the liberation struggle continues to hold ZANU-PF captive in the annals of a liberation movement. It is from the liberation struggle that the party derives legitimacy to rule and therefore to make a detachment from it is not only perceived as suicidal but spells loss of power and leverage with the much detested MDC that has no liberation credentials. So, the projection that ZANU-PF is a political party is a masquerade.

The study has also revealed that people of Zimbabwe are blameworthy for their elevation of ZANU-PF to a post of immortality and thus absolving it of any accountability especially in the first years of independence. This blind, unquestioning loyalty punctuated by 'quietism' would not have been a good breeding ground to a movement which just a few

months before 1980 was militaristic and violent. The people absconded from the struggle of nurturing the movement and leading it into a political party through demanding accountability among other notions. With no opposition in sight, ZANU-PF consolidated rather than transformed power. Indeed, this was facilitated by the demobilisation and depoliticisation of the social movements that would have proved to be a challenge and which might have demanded reform. This elevation ushered in personality and party cults which continue the authoritarianism. Instead of trusting strong popular institutions, the people opted for individuals in the name of ZANU-PF. The fruits are clear for all to see.

The quest went beyond the borders of Zimbabwe to the wider region of SADC with particular attention to South Africa and Africa as a whole. Apart from South Africa and Botswana which seem to be progressive, the SADC region remains devoid of transformation. The liberation protectionism and euphoria continues as the sister movements think that their populations owe them for ending colonialism. This mutualism is underpinned by non-criticism of each other, condoning election flaws and denouncing western criticism of the militarism incarnate in ZANU-PF as western propaganda aimed at re-colonisation. The study concludes by noting that to think that the fellow liberation movements masquerading as political parties within Southern Africa can prompt a transition through pressure on Zimbabwe is mere naivety. This complacency in SADC and AU continues to condone and treat ZANU-PF's leadership style of violence, intimidation and fear as acceptable hence prompting no transformation. For these reasons, the blocked transition is accounted for. So what is the way forward?

#### **4.1 Recommendations**

The transition of ZANU-PF lies in a widespread demilitarisation of the movement. The country's security sector needs reform. The need to professionalise the army is long overdue and as such should be a priority for the coalition government in place.

The opposition MDC now in a coalition government with ZANU-PF should work towards non-conformity and resist being muzzled into ZANU-PF. The presence of the coalition government, though not ideal for democracy, has nevertheless helped to make inroads into the hegemony of ZANU-PF. The different social movements making up the MDC should be strengthened to do a job they would have done 20 years ago; demand transition and eventual transformation of ZANU-PF from a liberation movement into a political party.

A new Constitution is required to check the draconian powers of the President that have been at the core of the personality cult maintained by the patronage which have been overwhelming blockades in the transition of ZANU-PF. The process of making this new constitution should be as inclusive as possible to rejuvenate the feeling of citizenry that the people of Zimbabwe have been denied in the past two decades treated as second class citizens.

All the repulsive, abhorrent laws both colonial and new which have been central to eroding civil liberties and entrenching militarism and violence against government critics should be repealed.

The judiciary of Zimbabwe which is currently filled with ZANU-PF cadres should be reformed to allow for a non-partisan, impartial bench that is going to uphold the new Constitution and keep both the executive and the legislature in check.

A truth and reconciliation commission should be instituted to heal the nation of the atrocities dating back to 1983 in the offensive against the people of Matabeleland. It is ideal for a new beginning for the country which has been torn apart and reduced to a humanitarian case by ZANU-PF.

South Africa should in the future use its leverage both economic and political over Zimbabwe to prevail over ZANU-PF's excesses manifest in its guerrilla-like behaviour. The sentimentalities surrounding the liberation struggles should be put to rest for the present and future of Zimbabwe to take the centre stage.

#### **4.2 Post-script; issues to ponder over**

Whereas the study has attempted to deal with the topic extensively, it has only been a precursor. Central to such outstanding issues is whether the lack of a succession plan by the leaders in these movements is cause for their failed democratic embrace.

Secondly, there are questions on the issue of the youth leagues or wings of the movement. Is it possible that the lack of a radical, vibrant youth league to whom to pass the baton of leadership can account for the non-transformation of ZANU-PF?

We need to interrogate the notion of misconceptualisation of the liberation. Is it possible that the struggle was more pre-occupied with ending imperialism or colonialism as a top priority pursuit rather than democratisation per se? Is it tenable that the struggle was never envisaged to be transformative rather the nationalists were more bent towards the transfer of power? The debate continues. Over to you now. Word Count 17 974

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