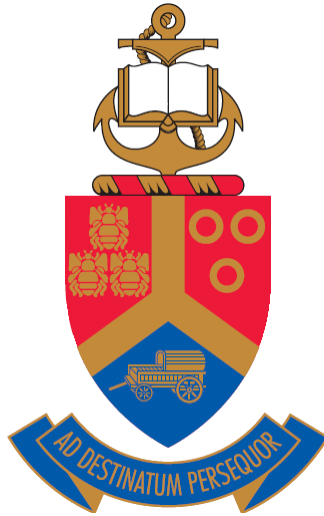


UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA



**THIRD CHIMURENGA AND REVOLUTIONARY
JUSTICE: A LIBERATION PRAXIS IN POST-
COLONIAL ZIMBABWE**

2019

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ABSTRACT

This thesis provides a historical analysis of the history of violence that was associated with the land dispossession in Zimbabwe and its impact on the *Vakaranga* people. It contributes to an understanding of the historiography of the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe with special focus on the first and second Chimurenga and the ensuing forms of political sabotage associated with the struggle for land.

The thesis unmasks the violent racial policies which were established by the Rhodesian government to facilitate that the issue of land from its rightful owners and submitting it into the hands of the colonizers. The land Apportionment Act was a watershed Act which divided the Zimbabwean land into racial zones with the most fertile land being taken by the colonizers while the *VaKaranga* were relegated to the reserves (*maruzevha*). The thesis also evaluated the role played by the Church as handmaids in the land theft in Zimbabwe as evidenced by vast pieces of mission land which was allocated to churches by the colonial regime.

Post-independence strides to allocate land to the poor *VaKaranga* based on the Lancaster House Agreement failed to yield the much-anticipated results. The willing seller willing buyer clause became the greatest stumbling block in post-independence efforts to redistribute the land. The experience of the *VaKaranga*'s loss of land remains under-researched in Zimbabwean historiography. The thesis contends that the *VaKaranga* land question deserves serious historical investigation in order to understand and appreciate the reason they engaged in the Third Chimurenga (Jambanja) or Fast Track Land Redistribution (FTLR).

The thesis also demonstrated empirically, that women no longer take their plight for granted as evidenced by a group of women who climbed the highest mountain peak in Zimbabwe mount Nyangani in protest against the unbalanced land tenure system. Women demonstrated that the centre no longer holds when they demanded gender equality in land ownership against the backdrop of the *VaKaranga* patriarchal society which only allocates a small piece of land to a wife called *tsevu* to grow women related crops such as groundnuts (*nzungu*) and roundnuts (*nyimo*).

Finally, the thesis engaged a liberation theological paradigm, making use of the praxis cycle as a methodology. Anchored in a deconstructive approach, primary and secondary sources were used in the construction of a new narrative. The research presents a challenge to Black Theologies of Liberation for failing to propagate a theology which challenges the colonial and post-colonial Empire, with a specific emphasis on the exclusion of women.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the incalculable contribution of my supervisor, Professor S.de Beer, who was very kind with me along the way. He read numerous drafts, giving insights and direction. He encouraged me when I was overwhelmed. Had it not been for him, this work would not have been completed. I am grateful to the staff at the University of Zimbabwe who took part in moulding me, including Professor Ezra Chitando, Professor Tapiwa Praise Mapuranga, the late Professor Richard Maposa, the late Professor Nisbert Taringa, and Doctor Ainos Moyo.

I am indebted to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe for granting me permission to study at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. I am also grateful to the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Warren Park Circuit for enduring my absence during my visit to South Africa and the support they rendered to my family.

Lastly, I want to greatly thank my family for support, especially my dear wife Hilda, my two sons, Munyaradzi Michael and Tinotenda Trevor and my beautiful daughter Michelle Makanaka who missed my attention during this period of study. They allowed my study to take away some of their needed attention.

DECLARATION

I, **Daniel Muzenda** (16383444), declare that the research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, and is my own original work. No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been previously submitted in support of an application for a degree or qualification at this or any other University or institute of learning. All the citations, references, and ideas borrowed have been dutifully acknowledged. Where other written sources have been quoted, their words have been rewritten but the general information attributed to them has been referenced. Where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks. The thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the references section.

DANIEL MUZENDA

As the Candidate's Supervisor I hereby approve this dissertation for submission.

PROF S. de BEER

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BSAC:	British South Africa Company
DA:	District Administrator
DRC:	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRC:	Dutch Reformed Church
EATWOT:	Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians
EFF:	Economic Freedom Fighters
ESAP:	Economic Structural Adjustment Program
FTLR:	Fast Track Land Reform
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LAA:	Land Apportionment Act
LAA:	Land Acquisition Act
LHA:	Lancaster House Agreement
LHC:	Lancaster House Constitution
LMS:	London Missionary Society
MDC:	Movement for Democratic Change
MDC-A:	Movement for Democratic Change-Alliance
NLHA:	Native Land Husbandry Act
NPA:	Native Purchase Area
MCZ:	Methodist Church in Zimbabwe
SADC:	Southern Africa Development Community
TTL:	Tribal Trust Land
USA:	United States of America
ZANU PF:	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZAOGA:	Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Chimurenga: The word Chimurenga is a Shona word which means to fight or to struggle, and connotes a revolutionary struggle. Traditionally, Chimurenga or *Bongozozo* is a fight which everyone at hand participates. It also means rising against the intruder. The word's modern interpretation has been extended to describe a struggle for human rights, political dignity and social justice. *Bongozozo* can also mean to cause harmful force to fall upon someone you dislike.

Empire: It is the dominant force or power which continues to exploit the people in the postcolonial period along racial, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, cultural and religious orientations. The agents of Empire can be elected governments, social leaders, and religious leaders. It is the continued extension of the colonial hegemony in the lives of those purported to be independent.

Gender: Gender is a social construction that is given meaning to either a man or a woman in any society which incorporates the expectations that society holds as to the character. Attitude and likely behaviour of men and women are also identified with that ascribed gender. As differentiated from sex which is biological, gender is socially constructed. Gender has the effect of influencing the different behaviours, the roles, responsibilities, identities and treatment of males and females in a given society. Gender is dependent on the culture and history of any specific society and is different as we move from one culture to another.

Land: It is the space which humanity was given by God to dwell in. Land does not consist only of hard surface, but also, of all the things visible such as forests, mountains and water bodies, and invisible things such as the abode of the spirits. Land cannot be separated from its inhabitants and its space for soteriology.

Patriarchy: this is given as an ideology favouring male supremacy resulting from socially constructed gender roles that are used to justify the social, economic and political access between men and women. Patriarchy can also be viewed as a system of social structures in which practices are male dominated with an allowance for the oppression and exploitation of women. This is as a concept which was introduced in order to sanctify the forces maintaining gender oppression and discrimination against those forces such as capitalism or socialism.

Revolution: A revolution is fundamentally and relatively a sudden change in socio-political and economic power or order which happens when people revolt against the order typically, due to oppression. It is a forceful overthrow of a social order in favour of a new system.

Ubuntu/Unhu: Ubuntu is derivative of the word *muntu*, meaning a person, a human being. The word defines a positive quality supposedly possessed by a person. It is not only about human acts; it is also about human beings; it is the disposition and it concerns values that contribute to the well-being of others and of the community. *Unhu* enables human beings to become *vanhu* or humanized beings.

VaKaranga: the *VaKaranga* are one of the clusters among the Shona which includes the *Kalanga*, *Zezuru*, *Korekore*, *Manyika* and *Ndau*. By the eleventh century, a clan of the *VaKaranga* had achieved ascendancy over a loose confederation of chiefdoms that encompasses most of the Shona people. Its dominance was based not only on the clan's military prowess and accumulated wealth in cattle, but also in the reputation of its priests as oracles of the spirit world. The royal clan commonly known as the *Rozvi* established a Mwari

cult at Matopo Hills. The centre of the royal clan's influence was at Great Zimbabwe; the ruins which lie near present day city of Masvingo.

Vanguardism: Vanguardism is type of protection usually done by those in power to protect their interests. They create a fence around themselves through military, youth leagues, women`s league and any state machinery at their disposal. Even in the Church, some religious leaders may create a vanguard to protect their own interests.

Violence: It is an elusive concept of force framed by personal, social, cultural or religious ideals of existence which are actualised in various ways that inhibit or destroy the existence, freedom and fulfilment of another person. In the same way one person`s terrorist is another

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The issue of land occupies a central position in the history of human beings. It has been a source of life, sustenance, hope, freedom and redemption. From a historical perspective, Zimbabwe is coloured with blood because of land. It has become a sensitive issue of life and death. Many people have been displaced and others totally uprooted from their original and traditional places of settlement. Therefore, it is a key issue which needs to be handled with care. Zimbabwe received global attention for redistributing land to its citizens in the post-colonial era. The issue of land in Zimbabwe is a hot and explosive debate as politicians, economists and civic organizations weigh in with their opinions.

In this research, the critical and explosive land debate in Zimbabwe is brought into dialogue with a liberational theological and Biblical concept of land that emphasises justice. “Justice and only justice you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the Lord your God is giving you” (Deuteronomy 16:20). A theology of the land according to the Hebrew Bible acknowledges that:

The land mediates the presence of God as such demands holiness, the land is covenanted hence it is always a mandate and not a possession, as such it requires accountability and that the land is where the reign of God takes place and it calls for God’s agenda to be applied through God’s vicegerents (Oiktree Movement 2016:55).

The Bible is against the injustice of amassing land by transforming free peasants into day labourers and slaves and also refusing them their wages. Justice and land are interlinked throughout the biblical traditions. The biblical view of land strongly asserts that the land is

something that should be shared and not to possess. Land is a gift given for the use by the community demanding that it be shared equally among the members of that community. The principle of shared and inclusive land means that an ideal land is a place where people of all ethnicities and social backgrounds are treated equally (Oiktree Movement 2016:62).

Metaphors used on land such as “mother” which depicts the intimacy between the land and its inhabitants will be closely investigated. There are quite a number of biblical dimensions of the land which include among others: Social justice which entails the theology of land reminds us that land is a place where the vulnerable in society, such as widows, orphans and sojourners are cared for. Reconciliation with the gift of land is viewed in the bible as a step towards the restoration to Eden where humanity exercised their vicegerency for the good of the creation. The land theology is a wakeup call to good stewardship. It points to the fact that human beings are only, but, stewards of God`s creation and must take good care of it (Oiktree Movement, 2016:64). This follows that land as a commodity, should not be bought or sold.

Ostrom (1990: XI) notes that there are a number of Biblical dimensions of land which need to be retrieved. A social justice dimension in a theology of land will place emphasis on the inclusion of the vulnerable in society, such as widows, orphans and sojourners. A reconciliation dimension will consider the restoration of humanity and the good of all creation. A stewardship dimension will focus on the fact that human beings are entrusted to be stewards of God’s creation and must take good care of it. This is more similar to the concept of commons. The commons represent a practice in which access to all cultural and natural resources is open to all members of a society. Such resources as the air, water and the habitable earth (land) should be accessible to all. These are resources which are held in common and not owned privately. Commons can also be understood as the natural resources managed by groups of people for individual and collective benefit.

An insight into Land Legislation Acts from the colonial era such as the Rudd Concession (1888), Land Apportionment Act of (1930), Native Husbandry Act (1951), Land Tenure Act (1969), Lancaster House (1979), and Land Acquisition Act (1992) will also be investigated, and the main focus will be on the Third Chimurenga (2000), the climax of liberation for the *VaKaranga* people. The role of the church in general, in facilitating the issue of Land as handmaids of colonialism, will be highlighted.

A critical reflection of the Third Chimurenga struggle for land will enable one to view this struggle in the context of revolutionary justice. The word ‘Chimurenga’ means to fight or Struggle in Shona. It connotes revolutionary struggle. The word is traditionally associated with *Bongozozo* which is a fight where everyone present participates (Kahari 2016). The word has assumed a modern interpretation which has extended to incorporate a struggle for human rights, political dignity and social justice.

Justice is a central theme in the Scriptures with major importance for all human life. It runs like a golden cord throughout the Scriptures. This centrality and vast richness of the term makes it difficult to come up with a simple definition in the biblical context. Justice can be defined as legal codes and ordinances that govern communal life (Dyrness & Karkkainen, 2008: 442). Justice describes the proper relationship which should obtain between humanity in their social life (Harvey, 1970:115).

Third World Theologies consider justice as a central concept putting it down as an intrinsic element of the gospel message. It is one of the main goals of Christian living. Basic positions of justice in Third World Theologies are more than interested in establishing more than one general theory which is grounded in the reality of the marginalised and oppressed peoples. They strongly point to liberative theological or ethical praxis with an aim to undo oppression among relationships, structures and societies (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:115)). Cries

from the poor and the oppressed are the starting point for justice. Oppression refers to the constraints and deep injustices that are part of unquestioned norms, habits, symbols and assumptions present in the ordinary behaviour of people, in media and cultural stereotype. Using oppression of the poor and marginalised as a source and locus, Third World “Theologies accounts for justice attempt to be discourses specific enough to force options and concrete enough to play a central role in devising strategies to bring about radical change” (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:115).

Third world accounts for justice articulate concrete historical projects in which oppressed people have a protagonist role, contributing to what is normative for the society. Third world accounts for justice are not only about rights, but also about responsibilities. They are about the rights of the oppressed people as moral subjects and agents, as well as about their responsibilities for the social consequence of personal behaviour and institutional policies (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:115). This implies that the oppressed have a role in bringing about a just society.

Having looked at the concept of justice, it is therefore important to unpack the word revolution. Meagher (1979:3042) define revolution as a radical change in which the order of things is displaced by another. The concept of revolution bears political overtones, but has been extended to the understanding of measures aimed at spelling the definite end of an old order and bringing about the birth of a new order. In essence, the elements of novelty; beginning and violence are all more or less intimately connected with what has become the current understanding of revolution but these factors are realised in various ways and degrees in different instances.

Revolution is spoken of in some circles when any radical reform is in question, provided the effort for may encounter massive resistance and require drastic measures. The upheaval of

poor and oppressed people in many places on earth has a genuine revolutionary character and brings about serious moral and theological questions (Meagher, 1979:3042).

Revolutionary justice can therefore, be defined as a radical change in which the order of things is displaced with the aim of establishing a society or community of proper relationships between humanity in their social life. On the centre of the revolution are the poor and marginalised fighting for selfhood, integrity and dignity.

1.2 Motivation and Background of the Study

When I was still at the tender age of six I witnessed the injustice of the colonial regime when in 1979 all our huts were burnt to ashes for supporting the liberation struggle. My father was at the centre of the support system and our home had been turned into a liberation base organising the supply of food staffs and clothes to the liberation struggle. I witnessed my father being taken by the colonial soldiers, and later on being imprisoned and eventually dying in prison for supporting the liberation struggle. It is also this background which comes to mind when the question of land in post-colonial Zimbabwe is discussed. A lot of injustice occurred in the struggle for land which needs to be critically analysed.

Land reform in Zimbabwe is a very sensitive issue. The Karanga people have a proverb which says “*chinokanganwa isanhu asi muti wakatemwa haukanganwi*” (An axe can easily forget the tree it has cut, but the stump will never forget the axe that cuts it). Memory and history are very important when dealing with land reform in Zimbabwe (Daka, 2013:15). This proverb is true to the relationship between postcolonial justice and the healing from trauma and violence. There is need for healing and reconciliation from past wounds of the colonial era and postcolonial era. The Third Chimurenga inflicted pain and suffering to farm workers and commercial farmers as well as opposition supporters. If there is no healing, it remains a vicious cycle.

It rapidly became apparent in the period after decolonization that although colonial armies and bureaucracies would withdraw, Western powers were still intent on maintaining maximum and direct political control over former colonies. They also intended to retain cultural, and above all, economic channels of control, a phenomenon that was later to be known as neo-colonialism (Childs & Williams 2012:7). For a growing number of analysts, it was clear that the overriding concern was the ability to go on extracting profit from formerly colonized areas. “There is a form of perverseness in taking the label post for a state which is not fully present and linking it to something which has not fully disappeared, but in many ways that paradoxical in-betweens precisely characterizes the post-colonial world” according to Childs and Williams (2012:7). While Britain, withdrew its army and machinery in 1980, the grip remained in areas of cultural and economic exploitation. This grip had a very negative impact on the life of the VaKaranga people such that it was like a melting pot.

Due to the deplorable record of the West in simultaneously denying the existence of any worthwhile prior history in areas it colonized, they are responsible for destroying the cultures which embodied that history. This became an important dimension for post-colonial work in order to recover or revalue all indigenous ideological history. Europe had the intension to maintain its sovereign control over all its colonial subjects of all histories. “There is a peculiar way in which all those other histories tend to become variations on a master narrative that could be called the history of Europe” (Childs and Williams 2012:7).

The colonizers purported to have discovered a people, denying the pre-history of the *VaKaranga* people. How can you discover a people? The *VaKaranga* people had been in their land for time immemorial, yet their history is said to start with the arrival of the colonizers. It seems the *VaKaranga* people have no history, if any; it starts with the coming of the colonizers. Outside the European history, there is nothing for the *VaKaranga*, yet the history of the *VaKaranga* lies in their land. It is their land which gives them identity and dignity. One

would imagine that history records that David Livingstone discovered the Victoria Falls. How can such a wonder be discovered by a foreigner yet the Tonga people lived just a stone throw from the falls. The same applied to some of the land which was designated as empty forests yet there was a strong connection between those forests and the *VaKaranga* people.

Kee (1974:135) argues that, any transformation to the conditions of power can only come through the use of power as well. If power is not justified, we would be unable to separate it from naked violence. This implied that the use of revolutionary violence had to be justified by reference to some humane goals of the action whilst also unmasking the existing power structures as inhuman and as naked violence. How do you bring about the kingdom of nonviolent brotherhood with the help of violence? Is it ethically valid? These and other issues are examined in greater detail in this thesis.

The issue of revolutionary justice sometimes comes with violence. The question of violence in modern times is extremely complex. “In order for Jerusalem to exist, obviously Babylon must be destroyed, and the poor, the heroes, the saints and the martyrs rejoice at its fall.” “He has condemned the great prostitute ... and has lost count of the blood of her slaves” (Revelation 19:1-2) (Dussel 1986:48). These images suggest some form of justification to the use of violence in the construction of Jerusalem and the fall of the Babylonian Empire. No empire exists without violence! The land dispossession of the Zimbabweans was violent and the Third Chimurenga was violent but one wonders what will happen to other vulnerable groups such as women in their fight for land rights. Can they use violence? Is violence only physical or is the very denial of rights and exclusion from land, also a form of violence already? Is it always the case that revolutionary justice is through violence? These are the issues to be unpacked in the progression of the research.

The Church in Zimbabwe has been, to a very larger extent, a silent observer of the mounting problems of land reform. Daka (2013:28) argue that on a few occasions the Church has cautiously issued statements of warning but each time the church issues such statements, political leaders have reminded the Church to consider her role at the pulpit as one of inculcating morals and not one of interfering with politics disguised behind the cloth. The church in Zimbabwe is a beneficiary of the land seized by the colonial masters. Because of this, she has interests in the stakes as well as an obligation to defend the rights of people to have to land.

Most missionary churches like Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and others have vast farms which entails that they are also accomplices in the land expropriation and the dehumanizing of the local people. From an analytic point of view, the church was part of the service arm of the colonial agenda. The symbiotic relationship between the church and the state was meant to advance the colonial agenda. As evidence to the view above, the church actively participated in the distribution of land during the colonial era (Kaulemu 2010:32) as a result, they also got a fair share of their rewards.

The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe was given Epworth Mission, dispossessing Chief Chiremba and his people who lived there and established a Theological Seminary, the Roman Catholic Church was rewarded with Chishawasha mission and also established a Seminary and the Anglican Church got its own share in the Marondera area. The material evidence of the church's involvement in the violent dispossession of the Zimbabwean people questions the very understanding of what the church is in our context, and thus, its role in the land question especially for the liberation of the people of Zimbabwe. The research is motivated

by the desire to overcome poverty and reaffirm the dignity of Zimbabweans. It is an awareness of the power of the poor in shaping and determining their destiny.

Notably, due to the church's involvement in the dispossession of land in Zimbabwe I sense the lack of a clear theological imagination of land for the VaKaranga people and want to instigate it in this research.

It is however, critical at this juncture to highlight that the current situation after the land redistribution still leaves a lot to be desired. The problems encountered in the Third Chimurenga may come again to haunt Zimbabweans if it is not properly addressed. It would seem colonial and post-colonial challenges continue to resurface. “Daka (2013:36) argues that the land reform in Zimbabwe is an on-going crisis with new developments emerging all the time. The government has been resisting court orders”. When the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe ruled that the Third Chimurenga approach used by the government was unconstitutional, the government ignored the ruling. During the past two decades disputes have been brought to court without final resolve.

Furthermore, issues of land corruption, double allocation of farms, and multiple ownership of farms, boundary disputes and absentee landlords tops the agenda in the on-going struggle for land justice in Zimbabwe. For almost two decades, some are still on the waiting list. A new phenomenon that has also developed is that of cell phone farmers. These are farmers who have remained in town, but provide instruction over the phone. Churches continued to enjoy the privilege of the State, since church farms were not designated under the third Chimurenga. These challenges pose a threat to the fruits of the third Chimurenga. Against this background, I interrogate the Third Chimurenga and revolutionary justice in post-colonial Zimbabwe through a liberation theological paradigm.

The attainment of political independence in 1980 in Zimbabwe did not immediately improve the majority's quality of life. It quickly became clear that "the lowering of the colonial flag did not result in a dramatic transformation of the socio-economic situation of the majority of Zimbabweans" (Chitando 2009:107). A theological reflection of the post-colonial Zimbabwe shows that poverty has continued to dehumanize the majority of the people. The poor continue to sink in poverty while the rich continues to enjoy life at the expense of the poor.

The Land Tenure Act imposed on the black people by the colonial government had a great negative impact on the economy. As a former colony of Britain, Zimbabwe inherited agricultural patterns such as the concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few and the introduction of cash crops for export market. This colonial pattern left an indelible mark in the society, especially the grassroots people (Bakare 1993: 66). These Land Tenure Acts continued to bear a negative impact on the life of the *VaKaranga* people.

Zimbabwe's land distribution under the Third Chimurenga is perhaps the most controversial and most bitterly contested political issue of our time. It has been criticized by most Western countries within the European Union due to the violence and intimidation which characterised the process. Zimbabwe has been placed under economic sanctions for distributing land to the landless Zimbabweans, a process which did not receive recognition from the former colonial masters yet the *Karangas* find value and meaning of life in their land.

1.3 Problem Statement

The thrust of the research is a revisit of the Third Chimurenga a monumental agrarian land reform which took place in Zimbabwe in 2000 and resulted in widespread condemnation of the exercise and sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe. The Third Chimurenga or Fast Track Land Reform (2000) led Tony Blair government to organise sanctions, which they termed as

restrictive measures, not only by Britain but also the European Union, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (Chung, 2015:154). The main thrust of the sanctions was the removal of all donor and investment funds from Zimbabwe with the multilateral banks such as International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, African Development Bank not being allowed to lend money to Zimbabwe (Chung, 2015:154). The United States passed the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZIDERA) in 2001. It outlined the major characteristics of the sanctions, which included cutting all outside funding from the country and targeted travel ban and freezing of bank accounts of ZANU PF leaders and supporters. ZIDERA explicitly states that sanctions were imposed because of Zimbabwe's participation in the DRC and the takeover of White commercial farms. It also made it clear that armed forces should be placed under civilian control. Imports and exports were forbidden. Regime change became openly expressed as the eventual aim of the sanctions (Chung, 2015:154).

How land was redistributed during and after the Third Chimurenga leaves a lot to be desired as land was politicized and poverty continued to dehumanize the majority of the *VaKaranga* people men and women included. The problem of the emergency of new black political elites who have become oppressors of the poor through corruption is like adding an insult to the injury. The new black elite are composed of the political rulers, senior civil servants, the commercial and trading elite, the few African commercial farmers and the professional class. Independence reinforced the social class stratification of the society. There was a rush to inherit and assume the life style of former colonial masters. Making money and "moving on" became a critical objective of the black elite. The objective of these elite was to attain entry into the former colonial social and economic system (Maloba, 2007:151).

Land Corruption

Locally, there is also criticism on the exercise, especially that some with political muscles ended up manipulating the system. This problem speaks to land corruption. Corruption is a challenge everywhere, but more so in Africa where the majority of the people are steeped in poverty while the wealthy and powerful elite class is very small. In Zimbabwe, little has been done to control corruption despite the regular rhetorical condemnation of corruption whether it is the large-scale corruption by the political elite or small-scale corruption by police at road blocks. The system in Zimbabwe is such that corruption is condoned if it is carried out by a fellow party member and exposed when it is done by an opposition party member (Chung, 2015:152). Corruption on land is a set back to the gains of the Third Chimurenga.

Women and the Third Chimurenga

Women emerged as a minority in the formal land access process with only 18% of the women acquiring land during the process as individuals. The government failed to meet its target of 50% of women accessing and owning land as individuals (Murisa & Chikweche, 2015:126). Chung (2015:152) support the claim that women were not treated fairly in the Third Chimurenga. Two groups which have not fared well under the Third Chimurenga reform programme are the farm workers, including women. A minority of farm workers managed to obtain land only when they joined in the exercise of land invasions. Few women managed to obtain improved land rights although about 40% of the A1 farms are actually farmed and controlled by women.

Lack of theological imagination of land justice by the church

The lack of a clear theological imagination of land for the VaKaranga people is a problem investigated in this research. “For the Karangas, land offers and facilitates some form of dignity, integrity and ego towards prosperity” (Vengeyi, 2013:76). Being robbed of the land

is synonymous to being stripped of your selfhood. Land is a priceless possession that provides meaning. Land is the main means of sustenance and the main vector for investment and accumulation of wealth that can be transferred to the next generation. Access to land is the cornerstone for poverty eradication (Vengeyi, 2013:76).

The spiritual realm of Africans cannot be divorced from land. The Shona religion which the *VaKaranga* are part to is biased towards keeping the people on the land and in close touch with nature. Gelfand (1970) argues that the practice of this religion is difficult on urban atmosphere. The Shona worldview pictures land as the space in which all creation finds meaning more as the absolute space. The land is the space of human formation for the creator-creation relationship. The land is the religious space where the deceased and the living connect. It is sacred and it's not a commodity; it is also a birth right and cannot be sold. The *VaKaranga* people are identified by their land: *Mwana wevhu* (son or daughter of the soil). Abandoning the ancestral land is anathema. The theology of land restoration in Zimbabwe could be better understood for the pursuit of restorative justice which brings back reconciliation and prosperity through *VaKaranga* cosmological ethics of life (*kubata makuku*).

The *VaKaranga* people were dispossessed of their land by the whites in bloody wars, and hence, to take back what rightly belongs to them must not cause a global outcry. Land is something which is worth dying for, for the *VaKarangas*. The research sought to come up with a clear theological framework on land which speaks to *VaKaranga* world view.

The *VaKaranga* believe that land is sacred and is a gift from God that connects the living, the timeless-living and the future generation. It is the space for Soteriology, hence land should not be used even for development purpose without due consideration to those who inhabit it. The dispossession of land from the blacks by the Whites left a negative indelible mark on the

integrity, dignity and humanity of the *VaKaranga* people (Bakare 1993; Vengeyi 2013). There is no comprehensive liberation for the *VaKaranga* without claiming back their land, and this is what the research postulates. In the post-colonial era Zimbabwe made several efforts to rectify the land imbalances without much success until the year 2000 (Third Chimurenga) when the hungry and angry citizens invaded white owned farms.

A study which investigates the Third Chimurenga (Jambanja) in relation to revolutionary justice through a liberation paradigm may come up with insights and proposed liberating praxis for land justice in Zimbabwe. The research is motivated by the desire to contribute to insights to the theological imagination of land for the *VaKaranga* which affirms their integrity, dignity and humanity after dispossession of their land by the whites. The other motivating factor is the social conditions of the black majority as they thrive to overcome poverty and reaffirm the dignity of Zimbabweans, and to raise awareness to the readers on the power of the poor in shaping and determining their destiny through the ethics of liberation praxis

1.4 Aim

The aim of this research is to examine the Third Chimurenga (Jambanja) and revolutionary justice in post-colonial Zimbabwe in a bid to establish whether the struggle lived up to its expectations of addressing poverty and transforming the lives of ordinary *VaKaranga* people of Zimbabwe including women, and how Christian praxis contributed to the liberation of the oppressed through the lenses of liberation praxis.

1.5 Research Questions

This research is guided and modelled by the following key research question:

In how far does the Third Chimurenga contribute to revolutionary justice and liberation of the *VaKaranga* people in the post-colonial Zimbabwe with special reference to women?

The following sub questions are derived from the above key research questions

1.5.1 What is the history of violence and land dispossession for the *VaKaranga* people in the post-colonial Zimbabwe?

1.5.2 How should the meaning of land for the *VaKaranga* people be understood theologically?

1.5.3 How can major themes in Liberation Theology assist in the critical appraisal of the Third Chimurenga?

1.5.4 How can a communal ethics of liberation be fostered to shape and sustain the on-going struggle for land justice in Zimbabwe?

1.5.5 What are the social, economic and political effects of the Third Chimurenga on women?

1.5.6 How should the Zimbabwean church today, contribute to a communal ethics of liberation?

1.6 Research Objectives

To critically appraise the Third Chimurenga, assessing in how far it contributes to the revolutionary justice for the *VaKaranga* people in post-colonial Zimbabwe with special reference to women

1.6.1 To describe the history of violence and land dispossession for the *VaKaranga* people in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

1.6.2 To develop a theological perspective on the meaning of land for the *VaKaranga* people.

1.6.3 To retrieve major themes in Liberation Theology for assessing the Third Chimurenga in terms of freedom oppression

1.6.4 To explore and propose a communal ethics of liberation to shape and sustain the on-going struggle for land justice in Zimbabwe

1.6.5 To describe the effects of Third Chimurenga on women socially, economically and politically

1.6.6 To explore how the church in Zimbabwe is contributing to a community ethics of liberation.

1.7 Research Paradigm and Methodology

This research falls within the liberation paradigm and will employ the praxis cycle as its methodology. Liberation theologies have emerged to address the problem of massive poverty and political oppression in various parts of the globe. They give voice to God's activity and transforming grace among the victims of modern history. Liberation theologies favour a praxis-based rethinking of Christian theology. They both view the relationship between theory and praxis as a dialectical one, they agree on the primacy of orthopraxis over orthodoxy.

Liberation theology constitutes a major shift away from dominant Western theologies. Segundo (1976:9) argues that liberation theology deals, not so much with content as with the method used to theologize in the face of our real-life situations. Theology must reflect and be directed to determinate situations, and this is called the social setting of theology. It is only at the epistemological level that the issue of liberation theology can be addressed.

Gutierrez (1983:37) contends that "theology is an expression of the awareness that a Christian community has of its faith at a given moment in history. This moment, dated and sealed, is a *locustheologicus* of the first importance." Theology is an attempt to understand more about the faith from the beginning in a determined way, as an insertion and involvement in history, from a particular manner of living, our encounter with the Lord in our encounter

with others. The theology of liberation attempts to visualise the people's faith within a concrete historical context, culminating in the liberation and subversive praxis of the poor of this world who comprise the exploited classes; despised and marginalised ethnic cultural groups. It is born of the struggles; the failures and the successes of the oppressed themselves.

The context of the history of theology in Latin America is a protest of the theology of the centre represented by Europe and the United States. Although the liberation theology we find in Latin America originated from European theology, it is different and separate, because it evolves in a peripheral world. "It is the theology of a colonial and neo-colonial world which often simply reflects the theology of the centre but in its more creative moments it has produced a new theology that has risen up against the great traditionally constituted theology" (Dussel 1973:40). It is a theological reflection that considered the concrete political commitment of Christians in their geopolitical situation in the periphery and their social position as the organic intellectuals of the oppressed classes or as full participants in the risks involved in the liberation of those classes. "The struggle is not what is desired, but the struggle is the fruit of sin which is perpetrated by the oppressor and suffered by the oppressed" (Dussel 1973:40). This shows that liberation theology presents a major shift from the traditional Eurocentric theology by its involvement of the poor and their context as the point of departure for doing theology.

The liberation theological paradigm is used to explore and justify the theological significance of land among the *VaKaranga* and how their tripartite conception of the world view depends on land. As eluded by Mbiti (1969) that Africans are notoriously religious; this is very true of the *VaKaranga*, for land is their God given space for religious rituals and practices. While the declaration that Africans are notoriously religious can be subjective, the claim is very true for most of the *VaKaranga*. Their land offers them space for their religious practices. A Black theology of liberation must be developed in line with a revolutionary ethical paradigm on the

justification of revolutionary justice to try to interrogate the land fights among the *VaKaranga* in post-colonial Zimbabwe.

“Black and other liberation theologies recognised that the Christian Church has probably been one of the most powerful instruments in making possible the political oppression of black people” (Moore, 1973: viii). Mofokeng (1988:34) takes the claim to a deeper level when he says that “it remains to be seen whether the church in particular, and religion in general, will continue blessing the well-known partnership between the gun and the Bible.”

Vellem (2016:155) asserts that:

It is unethical to claim that anyone living outside a system; anyone excluded outside a system or even better; anyone dead in one system, could be perceived as living within the system. Outside the totalitarian system of Empire, in the struggles of the marginalised and the impoverished of the world, there must we locate the artefacts of life in its truest forms? Inside the systems of Empire, the lived experience of the marginalised and the impoverished are quintessential examples of insurrectionist forms of life and resurrected ones in the presence of but outside the logic of Empire.

Cone asks pertinent questions (In Kee, 1974:119) about what the Christian gospel says to the blacks who are powerless men being threatened on a daily basis by the never ending tentacles of imperial powers. Is there a message from Christ to the countless number of blacks whose lives are smothered under white society? “Unless theology can become *ghetto* theology that is a theology which speaks to black person, for the gospel message has no promise of life for the black person.” The liberation paradigm also tries to articulate the reason why the church failed to side with the poor in Zimbabwe and also why theologians have failed to come up with a *ghetto* theology. The advantage of this paradigm is that it puts God at the center of the struggle for land among the *VaKaranga*. Land is not just ordinary space, but sacred space given to the *VaKaranga* by God commonly known as *Musikavanhu* (creator of humanity).

1.7.1 Praxis Cycle

Praxis refers to the on-going dance between theory and practice, or reflective practice action and activist reflection or reflection aimed at liberatory actions. Praxis suggests that the action and reflection, transformation and understanding, must be brought together. Chopp (1986:37) asserts that “this new marriage of action and reflection depends on accepting human life as fundamentally practical”. This is the foundation of praxis through which there may be a noticeable transformative influence of critique. The transformation will result in a powerful enrichment of pluralism and a continual adjudication of relativism.

One of the most powerful tools for change is called social analysis. Social analysis will help us to see why we have problems. It also helps us to work together in tackling these problems. The methodology will utilize a community-based praxis-approach (De Beer 2014) as developed in the pastoral cycle (Holland & Henriot 1983), as an expression of participatory action research.

I will adapt a pastoral circle proposed by Holland and Henriot (1983). The pastoral circle involves five movements of insertion; social analysis, theological reflection, pastoral planning and spirituality.

Immersion

At this stage an important question is asked directed at what is happening to the situation of the poor. This option for the poor places a priority on the experiences, views, needs, feelings, stories of the poor and the most vulnerable in the community. In this research, it involves the description of the struggle for liberation in Zimbabwe in relation to land redistribution in colonial and postcolonial period as highlighted in the research problem. The struggle for land in Zimbabwe has gone through three phases historically.

The phases are described by the Shona word Chimurenga, thus the First, Second and Third Chimurenga. The word Chimurenga is Shona for a fight or struggle. It connotes revolutionary struggle (Kahari 2016).

The First Chimurenga was the first reaction to settler land occupation which started in the late 1800s but was subdued by the settlers' superior firepower. Schmidt (2013:76) contends that in the Shona Uprising of 1896-7 destruction of crops was a major factor in forcing them to surrender as it had been done with the Ndebele in a violent move.

The second Chimurenga, as argued by Maradith (1979), was anchored on the influence of the spirit mediums who were believed to be the custodians of the land. To overcome doubts, the guerrillas in the second Chimurenga grievances were around high taxation, poor soils and overcrowding, and government conservation measures such as Alvodism.

Zimbabwe, after independence, failed to address the land issue which resulted in the deteriorating socio-economic life of the majority of the people. In the year 2000 Zimbabwe embarked on what became known as the Third Chimurenga, also known as the Fast Track Land Reform (FTLRP) (Derman & Kaarhus, 2013:9). The voices from the people on the margins will enrich the research as special attention is placed on a group of women who scaled the highest mountain in Zimbabwe in protest against the land tenure systems which oppressed women. What is the meaning of the phrase flourishing among the VaKaranga people *musha mukadzi* (the home is a woman)? Is it not the irruption of women into the sacred space?

Analysis

This stage analyses why conditions of oppression and suppression continue to exist and will be guided by the rights of those who are being violated and for whom a responsibility is being called upon to change the situation. The discourse of human rights is at the basis of

human dignity of all citizens in a given community. These rights and responsibilities pushes for attention that goes beyond the economic and political influence on social and cultural values.

The issue of corruption which has been raised in the statement of the problem is a challenge to equitable land distribution. Corruption in society has made a huge impact in keeping the oppressed under the yoke of oppression by the Black elite. Chiefs who are supposed to be the custodians of land were also caught up in this web of corruption by selling land to poor people, amassing wealth for selfish intentions in the process. The church remained silent because it benefited from the land dispossession during the colonial era. Corruption is also in the church since some top clergy who supported the Third Chimurenga were corruptly given large farms resulting in them turning a blind eye to the plight of the oppressed groups. The church finds at her ownership large acreages of land; an embarrassment, particularly when the African people complain of land hunger (The Land Tenure Act and the Church, 1970:21). From the documentary evidence of the Chimurenga Wars, it is clear that the poor and the marginalised are the interlocutors in the struggle for land. They are the foot soldiers who were responsible for all the dirty work in the struggle. It is however, quintessential to highlight that every revolution can be high jacked for wrong reasons and personal gain as shall be reflected in the research through land corruption.

Reflection

What is the meaning of our faith in relationship to the situation of oppression obtaining in the society? This stage is based upon the teaching that the church predisposes to teachings about human dignity and solidarity. The biblical principle is that man was made in the image of God. One does not earn dignity since it is a gift. The influence of scripture and theological thought is analysed at this stage of the cycle.

The lack of a theological imagination of land justice presents a serious problem for the church to affirm human dignity. The church in Zimbabwe has always been divided in as far as issues of justice are concerned. Samkange (1978:4) asserts that, while the African suffered from the loss of the land and lived the life of an embattled creature, he faced a very implacable foe from a totally unexpected quarter. This was the missionary who regarded blacks as people who had to be rescued from the age of superstition, savagery and barbarism. According to Katongole (2017), god is always up to restore hope in the midst of devastation. Christians are encouraged to persevere even in the midst of devastation because signs and seeds of hope are always being planted by God. Lament which leads to hope is not light and easy work. It is that deeper engagement with God when things are not right. How does the church interpret the scriptures in light of the oppression of the poor and women? A hermeneutical approach to the reading and interpretation of the Bible is a critical area of engagement.

Planning for action

This stage of the cycle places emphasis on the efficient, equitable and sustainable distribution and use of resources. It calls for good stewardship of God given resources by the people. The land question in Zimbabwe calls for deeper reflection of its meaning and value for the Vakaranga people. Kaulemu (2008:7) points out that “a deep sense of injustice caused by the inequalities and deliberate dispossession of Africans by the white settler regime was among the fundamental causes of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe”. The massive alienation of the African people from the land which formed the basis of their livelihood was top of the grievances. The process of land dispossession was legitimated through the enactment of a

series of legislation laws with the intention to entrench white privileges and control of the Africans colonially.

As highlighted by Kaulemu, above the land issue is a justice issue which aims at liberating the oppressed. The church must gear itself for propagating a theology which emphasises the stewardship of the resources given to humanity by God. Moreso, the church must also address gender disparities within its structures and push for gender equality in the stewardship and use of land. The outside forces must not determine the destiny of the VaKaranga and Zimbabweans through continued suffrage in form of sanctions, therefore, the church must unite in calling for the removal of sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe. There is need for a liberatory practice for mediating social and land justice that is radically inclusive.

Spirituality of liberation

African liberation spirituality is housed squarely at the base of African religiosity. It is the very source procedurally qualifying the search of this spirituality of liberation. This is why Vellem (2014) asserts that African religiosity is an important life-giving asset for African spirituality amidst the secularised eschatology of the global market. A revolutionary praxis guided by African philosophy of Ubuntu which emphasises human dignity, sanctity of human life and egalitarian communities. It is a revolutionary praxis without losing one's soul. Christian values and virtues of love, forgiveness and reconciliation must be prioritised in the quest for liberation.

Parsitau (2017) asserts the need for the church to unlock the power of woman as Jesus did. The Christian church must rethink and critically expose a theology that atones and realise the women as flourishing beings. This theology must unlock the power of women in Africa, and which brings transformation in the lives of women. The new thinking should unpack the centrality of women in a new perspective, ordering a new conversations anchoring on the

position of women that gives them a chance to flourish in the homes, as well as in the church and society. It is the responsibility of the church to reconstruct the spirituality of the people which have been violated by colonialism and patriarchy.

Specific methods

Within the broader praxis-based methodology, I will make use of specific methods to generate data. I will focus on literature survey, textual analysis and documentary analysis.

Literature survey

Literature survey is the broadest category which is going to be used in the research and is divided into four categories as follows: Zimbabwean texts, Black liberation texts, Womanist texts, Latin American texts and Asian texts. Zimbabwean texts reflect the importance of land and how land can be a source of liberation for the *VaKaranga* people. More so, these texts also highlight the struggle for land and the exclusion of marginalised groups such as women. Black liberation texts speak to the need for liberation through the oppressed as interlocutors in the struggle for emancipation. It raises the consciousness of the oppressed to move out of comfort zone and fight for liberation and also calls the church to come up with a theology which speaks to the African soul.

The voices of woman who advocate for gender justice will be interrogated through sources which address gender disparity in land distribution and lack of security of tenure for women. Latin American and Asian texts give the foundations of liberation theology and a framework for the theology of liberation. The preferential option of the poor and praxis are key axioms which relate to the thesis which are articulated in depth in these texts.

Textual analysis

The research utilises textual analysis where biblical sources which supports the argument of the research are engaged. Biblical texts which reflect on land as an inalienable resource such as the Naboth story in 1Kings 21v1-21 and the daughters of Zelophehad in Deuteronomy 21v15-17 will be explored. Land and justices enjoy a nexus relationship in the Bible.

Documentary analysis

Documentary analysis is also evaluated in this research such as the Gender policy in Zimbabwe, the Constitution of Zimbabwe, Newspapers and other survey documents which informs of land and liberation. Women and the VaKaranga stories in this research are considered from documentary sources.

Personal experience

I also made use of primary evidence in terms of trauma of the VaKaranga people for I am also a victim of colonial brutality and racial discrimination. The issue of oppression of women in VaKaranga society are issues which I personally know as a Mukaranga man who is socially oriented in a patriarchal society. The specific methods highlighted serves as both the theoretical and empirical basis for the analysis of the information collected.

1.8 Literature survey

This is an overview of the literature sources I am going to use to develop my argument in this research. The literature surveyed will provide the focal point of the research and more information will be provided in the progression of the research. The literature will be divided into sub sections as follows: Zimbabwean texts, Black African liberations texts, Women voices, Latin American texts and Asian texts.

1.8.1 Zimbabwean texts

Several scholars have dedicated large volume of literature on land and of particular significance is S Bakare who dedicated the whole book on land in Zimbabwe. In his book entitled *My Right to Land in the Bible and in Zimbabwe: A Theology of land in Zimbabwe*, the cleric man enumerated various themes of land such as the meaning of land in the Bible, the cry of the 8th century prophets on land and injustices, the colonial meaning of land, the Land Tenure Acts which were introduced by the colonial regime and the Shona meaning of land (1990: 48). The loss of land to a child of the soil means losing the graves of one's forebears and the home of one's childhood, the sense of community, the ordered pattern of nature, the sense of orientation and the continuity and meaning of life (1990: 48).

L Daka, in his book *Metz's Political Theology and the Catholic Social Teaching on Property* (2013) formulate four pillars of understanding land. The four pillars are; political, religious, economic, and social. For Daka, any understanding of land reform in Zimbabwe must take serious cognisance of the four pillars of land. In his argument, land reform in Zimbabwe is primarily a political issue for land is a sign of political power, dominance and control (2013:15). From a religious perspective, all-natural endowments such as land, mountains, rivers, trees and animals are sacred. Land is the most precious gift from the ancestors and it must be shared equally among the descendants (2013:17).

Bourdillon in his book, *Shona Peoples*, argues for the intimate association of the land with the history of chiefdom, with the ancestral spirits who live on it, and the chief of the land. "The chief, in some sense, is the owner of the land, but his rights are limited while he has some rites to perform." (Bourdillon, 1976:143). The chief has the duty to ensure good rains and good crops by performing the appropriate rituals to the spirit guardians of the chiefdom in return of his dominion. These include among others rain making ceremony (*mutoro*), land

fertility rites and keeping and protecting sacred days (*chisi*). “Land is traditionally however, never linked to individuals because the ownership of the land by the spirits is bound up with the relationship between them and the living community” (1976:143).

On the other hand, Sachikonye in his book *When a State turns on its Citizens: Institutionalised Violence and Political Culture* argued that violence during the Fast Track Land Reform had a dual role, that is; it was deployed to seize land from 4500 white farmers who owned about 11 million hectares of land in 2000, and to destroy the political base of Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) amongst farm workers whose households had a population of about 2 million. Precipitating the violence was the referendum defeat of February 2000 and genuine fear that Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU PF) could lose the forth coming election in June 2000 (2011: 33). The analysis of Sachikonye is biased toward political paradigm without looking at the land imbalances on a social justice perspective.

Derman and Kaarhus (2013:5) argue from an economic perspective in relation to the Third Chimurenga. Zimbabwe’s expensive involvement in the civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo crippled the economy. In addition, economic demand by the Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans contributed to a rapid depletion of the treasury. In turn, the accelerating economic crisis of 1997 led to unprecedented strikes, food riots and intensified pressure from civil society for opening up political space. This as a result forced ZANU PF to entice the people with land.

In a publication by Mufuka entitled *The Life and Times of Robert G Mugabe 1980-2015*, the author chronicled the history of Zimbabwe in the leadership of Robert Mugabe whom he described as a dictator of the equal status of Shaka the Zulu king. Of interest in the book is that the author sees the land occupation in the Third Chimurenga as a direct response to a

political turbulent raised by the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and loss of fame by Robert Mugabe due to the rise of Nelson Mandela in South Africa. It is true that opposition politics brings a wakeup call to ruling parties, but in the context of the Third Chimurenga, the land issue was long overdue but opposition politics fuelled the explosion.

Taringa (2013) argues from an environmental paradigm. Whilst he acknowledged that land redistribution was a noble exercise its effects on the environment was devastating. This is a fact which cannot be denied because it was not properly planned, for it was a revolution. The people had been bottling their anger for a long time so they had no time to waste and, in a revolution, there is bound to be causalities. For him, the Fast Track Land Reform exacerbated the ecological harm through unrestricted wanton exploitation of the environment (Chitando 2013:51).

Daneel (1987) argue that the rise of African Independent Churches was or is a quest for belonging. It was also a protest against the injustices in the missionary church. “The desire for the disinherited to own land gives rise to a particular type of leadership, namely a Moses figure who will lead his followers to the Promised Land where a church colony is then established, Robert Mugabe, for the majority of the Zimbabweans, was seen as a Moses figure. Church leaders such Ezekiel Guti of ZAOGA, Paul Mwazha of African Apostolic church and Obadiah Musindo of Destiny for Africa Network legitimized this claim on public platform by referring to Mugabe as black Moses” (Daneel, 1987:69).

Banana, in his work *The Gospel According to the Ghetto*, interprets the “Christian message within the context of experience of those who are victims of a hostile society; those who have been denied the development and legitimate enjoyment of the fruits of their human material resources; those who have been stripped of their humanity and reduced to level of chattels,

the prisoners of human inflicted, pervasive poverty” (Banana 1980:14). This position affirms the hand of God as liberator through the willingness of those in oppression allowing them to revolt against the negative forces pinned on them and keeping them as perpetual imprisonment.

The *Theology of Promise (1989)* is also another publication by Banana which heralds the need for both the black and white populace of the new Zimbabwe to reconcile in order to build a country that had been shattered by war. He called on both blacks and whites to put at the back of their minds the animosity of yesterday and concentrate on the rebuilding exercise. That process was only possible if true reconciliation could be cultivated. Banana was seeing reconciliation as the prerequisite for unity and the promise of salvation. He challenged the Churches’ attitudes to reconciliation (Banana 1983:11).

1.8.2 Black Liberation theology texts

Third Chimurenga (Jambanja) can also be interpreted in the spirit of Black Consciousness. Steve Biko is one of the many courageous black Africans who gave their lives for their conviction. He was very instrumental in the Black Consciousness movement which exhibited critical tenets. “The basic tenet of Black Consciousness is that the black man must reject all value systems that seek to make him a foreigner in the country of his birth and reduce his basic human dignity” (Ferm, 1986:64). The black man is challenged to build his own value system, a self-defined system which is not defined by others. This Black Consciousness concept implies an awareness due to the black people in light of the power they possess as a group, economically and politically. Only group cohesion and solidarity are important facets of black consciousness (Ferm, 1986).

Black theology, as advocated for by Desmond Tutu, Allan Boesak, Manase Buthelezi and others, asserts that liberation is not simply a matter of saving of the soul, rather salvation is

the liberation of the whole person from all the forces which oppress and exploit, so that people may be free to be truly human in the way that God intends them to be (Parratt, 1987:7). Black theology is a theology of orthopraxis that is right action or practice rather than simply orthodoxy that is right belief or teaching. It is a deep, concern for the full liberation of the whole man (Parratt, 1987:7).

Boesak (1970:170) asserts that Black consciousness gives black people a clear realization of their situation. Through black consciousness, black people discover that they are children of God and that they have the right to exist in this world. Black people discover that they are part of history and they share this history with God, which means they are responsible to act as human persons. This realization came to the *VaKaranga* people when they began to ask questions relating to why they were living in mountainous places, overcrowded, and living in abject poverty while the whites owned vast tracts of land.

Maluleke and Nadar suggest that the poor are Agents of their transformation. The poor and marginalized are not mere doormats for their oppressors, but astute if they are desperate agents engaged in a daily struggle for survival and liberation. Behind most notions of agency is the basic suggestion that “human beings, even the most oppressed, marginalized and seemingly destitute among them, have the potential possibility and even ability to act as agents of transformation and change in their own lives and in the lives of others”. In this regard, liberative transformation is best brought about by agentic actors rather than passive beneficiaries of aid and manual prodding by outsiders (Maluleke and Nadar, 2012).

Vellem (2016) concur with the *VaKaranga* religious beliefs when he asserted that in land, we see our mother and life. “The absence of the content of liberation for the dispossessed in theologies that seek to address the question of land is the original sin of the debate about land. History of the church and land dispossession is a bifurcated, dichotomised discourse of

annihilation and quarantine of the disposed.” (Vellem, 2016). The encounter between the whites and blacks resulted in the epistemological view of land by Africans being shifted, violated and dismantled. Vellem further asserts that there is no possible solution to the land issue without the symbolic significance of African values in the reconstruction of land imageries.

1.8.3 Women voices

Gaidzanwa (2011) argues that the Third Chimurenga land reform in Zimbabwe did not manifestly target gender equality but racial parity which was the most socio-economic and political issue of the time. The exercise perpetuated women’s insecurity of tenure. More so, the challenge of women was compounded by the fact that the exercise was not previously well ordered since it was based on politicking and the various social networking in which women were not presented as special in comparison to their male counterparts. In some cases where women were given the rights to use the land, it was not given to them as independent individuals. The user permits were aligned to male relatives because of the overarching importance accorded to men in the selection process.

Mugugu and Chimonyo (2004) argue that “the lack of consideration of gender implications in discussion on land issue and failure of subsequent land reform programmes instituted by government to take gender into account are rooted in the cultural context of the people. This culture oppresses women”. The issue of land and gender cannot be separated from the question of survival as the majority of Zimbabwean women live and depend on land for their livelihoods. Due to this fact, land becomes a very central and significant socio-economic resource for women.

Mapuranga (2013) argues that very little is recorded of women in the political front even during the Chimurenga wars in pre-independent Zimbabwe. Whilst most of the work on the political front in the armed struggle is accomplished by male, females are seen as playing second fiddle to men and are portrayed only as their supporters. Where names such as Herbert Chitepo, Josiah Chinamano, Josiah Tongogara, Robert Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo, Simon Muzenda and Ndabaningi Sithole are mentioned as nationalists, their wives are recorded simply as “**being there for their husbands**” and family. The woman’s role was simply to be there for her husband and perform the duties of the mother.

Elaborating on the fact that gender is culturally constructed, Musa Dube (2003:86) draws the following important conclusions: gender is not natural, gender is not divine, gender has to do with social relationships of men and women and gender can be reconstructed and reformed by the society, for since it is culturally constructed it can be socially deconstructed. She places emphasis on human agency in the formation of gender roles.

1.8.4 Latin American texts

The struggle for land in post-colonial Zimbabwe can be viewed in the perspective of revolutionary justice. Is the revolutionary use of violence justifiable as a means of establishing or promoting human freedom and happiness? Kee has established the ethics of revolution which justify the revolutionary struggle for liberation from all forms of oppression (Kee 1974:135).

Dussel (1988:58) asserts that the “theology or ethics of liberation interprets reality *sub pauperum lumine* that is from the point of view of the poor. The poor are the subject both of the reign of God and of the revolution of liberation.” Dussel further opines that “when the system of moral and social practices of domination realizes that the prophet is denouncing its wickedness, injustices by destroying the consent of the oppressed masses, calling into

question the ideological hegemony that justifies sin, it must physically eliminate the critic, the dissident, the martyr the one bearing witness to the future reign of justice.” (988:58) The Third Chimurenga land distribution in Zimbabwe can be interpreted from the point of view of the poor.

Frantz Fanon offers a powerful critique of colonial rule in his book, *Wretched of the Earth*. The book also provides a call to violent and revolutionary struggle against European imperialism. Fanon encourages the virtues of violence and christen it as a means by which the oppressed can only liberate themselves from colonial subjugation politically and physiologically. Fanon also provides a deep critique of the post-liberation nationalist movement, the elite who came from the liberation struggle who have become the oppressors and exploiters of the general masses (Presbey, 1996:283).

Gutierrez asserts that theology of liberation is to be done from the underside of history. Liberation theology should be viewed as being offered by the intelligentsia, or the affluent and the powerful who are on top. Rather, it should be observed as a theology from the bottom, the underside, as generated from the point of the victimised, and the oppressed. “It is not theology spun out in series of principles or axioms of timeless truth that are then applied to the contemporary scene, but a theology springing up out of poverty, the oppression, the heartrending conditions of the oppressed” (Gutierrez 1979: xi). The Third Chimurenga might be the irruption of the poor in shaping their own future and destiny through their religious understanding of land as their birth right.

1.8.5 Asian texts

Asian Liberation Theology brings pertinent insights in the struggle for liberation through the concept of Minjung theology. Minjung is a South Korean word which connotes people in a theology of liberation and born out of the concern of the people’s praxis. Who are the

Minjung and where are they? In a word, they are farmers, fishermen, unemployed labourers, soldiers, policemen and small producers. They suffer political oppression, economic exploitation, social humiliation and cultural alienation (England 1998: 20).

In an attempt to emphasise the Minjung Theology as a down trodden theology, Kim Yong-Bok attests that women belong to Minjung when they are politically dominated by men. “An ethnic group is a Minjung when it is politically dominated by another group, a race is Minjung when it is dominated by another powerful ruling race when intellectuals are suppressed by the military power elite, and they belong to Minjung” (Ferm 1986:76). The oppression of the VaKaranga people made them Minjung. The oppression of women within a patriarchal society also made them Minjung.

Koyama (1975) in his book *Water Buffalo Theology* asserts that the oppressed want justice not charity, the rich want to give charity not justice. “In particular, the powerful members of the community want to give religion to the poor, religion will take away complains of the poor, but God’s politics must be the unuttered cry of one fallen and unable to cry” (Ferm 1986:96).

Kaufman (1973:37) asserts that “justice is widely held to be objective if not absolute, precise and not subject to emotions, timeless and above mere preferences”. When justice demands something, it is no longer up to mere human beings to try to decide what to do but the individual is to submit and do the bidding of justice. During the Third Chimurenga in Zimbabwe it was no longer the *VaKaranga* speaking or fighting, but it was justice fighting for what was due to it, hence it becomes true to say when justice demands something no force can stop it. Justice was demanding its land back.

From the literature surveyed above the central themes which have emerged among others are; land is connected to the dignity and humanity of the VaKaranga people, the colonial regime

perpetrated land injustice, the church was heavily involved in the process of dispossessing the VaKaranga people of their land, women are a vulnerable group as far as land is concerned and that liberation is the work of the oppressed.

1.9 Scope of the Study

This research is being carried out in Zimbabwe; its main focus is the Third Chimurenga and revolutionary justice in the distribution of land from 2000 to date among the *VaKaranga* and their theological perspective on land. The findings of this research may not apply to other tribes within Zimbabwe. More so, the *VaKaranga* is one of the dialects among the Shona dialect which includes the *Ndau*, *ZeZuru*, *Korekore* and *Manyika* hence the research findings may not universally represent the beliefs of all the *VaShonas* on the land. While this research targets the VaKaranga, it is important to note that all the VaShonas participated in the third Chimurenga although their perception of land might differ.

In spite of the preparedness of the researcher to carry out a research of this nature, there are challenges and problem which are inevitable and those unforeseen. Zimbabwe is a politically volatile nation where almost every area of social life is highly militarized. This hampers the researcher from engaging some strategic people due to political phobia. The researcher may also be construed as a state security agent since the issue of land is highly politicized and highly sensitive to the lives of the *VaKaranga* people.

Civil society organizations strive to improve levels of political participation by Zimbabwean citizens, and also endeavour to ensure that the voices of citizens are factored into national and the government process. However, innumerable challenges still exist. These obstacles have hampered the effectiveness of civic and state institutions in enhancing popular political participation in governance issues. “An inhospitable operating environment and lack of tolerance by the government seem to be the greatest obstacle” (Kaulemu 2010:15). The

operating environment in Zimbabwe presents serious challenges in undertaking a research of this nature. This research is conducted within the frameworks of liberation theology. It is conducted by a male, black person from Zimbabwe. Its value is in social theological ethics and might contribute to other fields that show interest in the question of land and thus multi-disciplinary discourses on land.

1.10 Chapter Outline

Chapter One gives insight into the general introduction, background of the study, problem statement of the research, objectives of the research, research questions, the methodology employed in the research, literature survey, and limitations of the study and the scope of the research. The chapter also includes definition of key terms and phrases.

Chapter Two of the research traces and analyses the history of violence land dispossession and the theological meaning of land for the *VaKaranga* people in the post-colonial Zimbabwe against the backdrop of their understanding of the land. The chapter traces the historical land disputes between the colonialists and the *VaKaranga* and wars that were fought in relation to land disputes. Moreover, the land policies which led to the creation of reserves which in turn impoverished the *VaKaranga* people. This is done in line with the *VaKaranga* understanding of land and key reverences to the sacrality of land will take the Centre stage. The chapter also explores the strides which were made in redressing land imbalances post-independence and the current state of affairs in as far as land was distributed.

Chapter Three engages a theological imagination of land justice where the centrality of land in biblical theology is highlighted. Land and justice are inseparable in the Bible. Naboth's vineyard is brought into fold to demonstrate how land is intrinsically linked to one's birth right. The spirituality ethics of land from womanist perspective is also appraised in this

chapter. The church in this chapter is depicted in the midst of a crisis where it acted as hand maids in land theft.

Chapter Four identifies the liberation framework through identifying major themes or ethical tenets in liberation theology and the power of the oppressed in shaping their own destiny. This is done by developing a theological thread which springs from the underside of history with an overarching goal of a preferential option for the poor. Poor and marginalised people have the capacity to influence change in society through several ways of which revolutionary justice is one the ways. Some of the ways include mass protests, sit in and stay always and strikes. This chapter endeavours to develop a theological thread which is couched in the understanding of the poor and marginalised. This liberation theological framework has an overarching goal of analysing the structures which are accepted by a few political and economic elites but with a negative bearing to those who are on the underside of history.

Chapter Five deals with the ethics of liberation praxis which places the poor and marginalised at heart of liberation praxis. The actions of the poor and marginalised are the corner stone for bringing back self-dignity and full humanity and selfhood. The chapter also lays a foundation for the justification of an ethics of liberation which aims at revolutionary justice through transforming social structures. Liberation spirituality imagines justice in a way that overthrows the current order (revolution) and that social structure would be transformed.

Chapter Six reviews gender imbalances on land redistribution in Zimbabwe and how this has affected women socially, economically and politically. Gender dichotomies and theories of gender are sighted in this chapter. More so, the chapter looks at feminist approaches to gender issues particularly the liberal and radical feminist approaches under scrutiny and their short comings. Patriarch and male supremacy are also evaluated with the intention of trying

to liberate women because women`s sexuality can be used as a source of their own liberation. The role of the church in extending Eurocentric gendered influence as a post-colonial approach to women issues will be explored.

Chapter Seven proffers a proposed Black Liberating Praxis for Land Justice in Zimbabwe in the form of recommendations for a praxis-based church and nation. The recommendations speak to aspects of justice in the process, equal distribution of resources against the backdrop of corruption, gender balance, influencing a church with an African agenda and developing a theology of land which is Afrocentric. The chapter will conclude by tracing the utility of the Third Chimurenga in as far as intended purpose was achieved and highlight areas which may need further investigation and research.

Chapter Eight is the general conclusion of the research and suggested areas for further study.

CHAPTER 2

THE HISTORY OF VIOLENT LAND DISPOSSESSION IN COLONIAL ZIMBABWE

2.1 Introduction

Chapter one introduced the study by giving an outline to the background of study, problem statement, aim of the study, research questions that guide the whole study where the objectives were derived that shape the chapters of the study. The chapter also looked at the literature survey as well as the limitations of this study. This chapter therefore, traces the history of violent land dispossession in colonial Zimbabwe.

By the land, on the land, with the land and from the land, humanity survives. “Humanity comes from the land and it is inextricably fixed to it” (Genesis 2:7, 3:19; Ecclesiastes 12:7). The land, like a mother to her baby, gives all provisions which humanity needs in order to subsist. Scholars like Brueggemann (1977), Brueggemann (2000), Bakare (1993), Gottwald (1974), Mendenhall (1962), Mosala (1989) and Vengeyi (2013) Vengeyi (2014), support the view that land stand inseparably attached to the spiritual conviction, exclusivity, the past and security of a people. It can therefore be argued that it is the land that gives humanity their distinctiveness, and devoid of land, humanity has no distinctiveness. Land is an endowment from God and that makes it divine. The land is therefore, a legacy taken from the ancestors and thus, a birth right. No one must be dispossessed of the land or devoid of access to the Land.

Vellem (2010) shares the same sentiments by also asserting that land is seen as the mother and a sacred space. It is however, true that land has sacred, spiritual, cultural and religious features in black Africa, and this is how black Africans understand their land. Land

formulates an integral part in the constellation of black Africans which is difficult to separate into any compartments or spheres in the ethical view of African life.

However, on a sad note, the encounter between white and black in Africa degenerated into the epistemological view we now have on land and the resultant violently dismantling of Africans from the land. Many Black African people practice the burying of their umbilical cords, foreskins and the dead in the land. They practice their religion on their land. It is in this context that land is the rendezvous of their liturgical rhythms of dance and song in their celebration of life. Land is life. Land has a body. Land has a womb (Vellem 2010).

Land has remained the most highly contested political, social and economic matter throughout the history of Zimbabwe. The scenario is easily traceable back to the period when the Pioneer Column entered the country in the late 1800s. Subsequent white colonial legal Acts which were repressive were instituted in an effort to entrench divisions in the ownership of land between the blacks and whites in Zimbabwe (Mutasa 2019).

The loss of land, from a Zimbabwean perspective, is the loss of everything that defines a Zimbabwean (Vengeyi 2013). Brueggemann (1977) concluded that, “Land is central to all the Biblical faith.” The fact that Land touches all major elements of life such as political, socio-economic and religious issues makes it a premise of centrality in the Bible. This chapter introduces the *VaKaranga* people and their cosmology, traces the history of violence in land dispossession in colonial Zimbabwe, the *VaKaranga* understanding of land, the Colonial understanding of land and land rights, the first and second Chimurenga and post-colonial strides in redressing land hunger in Zimbabwe which resulted in the revolution of Third Chimurenga.

2.2 The VaKaranga People

Nelson (1983:28) provides the history of the coming of the Shona people to Zimbabwe. A new and significant wave of Bantu-speaking migration originating in the Shaba region of modern Zaire broke across the plateau in the tenth and eleventh century. This is associated with the coming of the Shona people to Zimbabwe. It was not until the nineteenth century when the name Shona was applied to cover several dialect clusters into which the Shona speaking people had traditionally been divided. These clusters had well-defined territorial bases and these include the *Kalanga*, *Karanga*, *Zezuru*, *Korekore*, *Manyika* and *Ndau*. By the eleventh century, a clan of the *VaKaranga* had achieved ascendancy over a loose confederation of chiefdoms that encompasses most of the Shona people. Its dominance was based not only on the clan's military prowess and accumulated wealth in cattle, but also in the reputation of its priests as oracles of the spirit world. "The royal clan commonly known as the *Rozvi* established a Mwari cult at Matopo Hills" (Nelson 1983:45).

The centre of the royal clan's influence was at Great Zimbabwe, the ruins which lie near present day city of Masvingo. The ruins remain an impressive monument to the technical capabilities of an indigenous African Culture. Although by far the most spectacular of them, Great Zimbabwe is but one of the hundred and fifty *Madzimbabwes*. It housed a large population, the royal court, markets, warehouses and religious shrines (Nelson 1983:45).

Asante and Mazama (2009:616) asserts that the *VaKaranga* religion is monotheistic in nature, and they have a firm belief in the one God called *Musikavanhu* (*Creator*) or *Mwari* which has roots in the Bantu *Mu-ari* which literally means that which is self-existent. The same *Musikavanhu* can also be expressed as *Nyadenga* which means one who owns the skies or heavens and *Musiki* meaning one who creates or the Creator.

Furthermore, the *Vakaranga* people are both patrimonial and patriarchal as this is reflected in the close network of relations among the *VaKarangas* who live together as a people. The *mudzimu* spirit is the one which is most concerned with the daily life and welfare of the community and *mudzimu* is one's own ancestors on the father's line. The ancestral spirit will all have the same clan name organized along a patrimonial order. The spirits or ancestors are made into being through a ceremony known as *Kugadzira* (Asante & Mazama 2009:616). During the month of August, most of the *VaKaranga* will be busy with these *Kugadzira* rituals.

Dacks (1973) further correlates that the *mudzimu* spirit is supposed to look after the health and welfare of their kinsman and their property, especially family land, family herd of cattle, persons embarking on a difficult enterprise such as hunting and in modern circumstances those travelling to look for employment in towns and cities. This is done by placing little snuff on the *huva* or *chikuva* and respectfully clapping the hands in honour of the ancestors. The *huva* or *chikuva* is a *VaKaranga* altar found in every kitchen and is so sacred that no one is allowed to sit on it. The *VaKaranga*, like any other Shona peoples, are involved in a range of religious interactions which begin at the level of the family, but cannot also extend to the polity and the region beyond (Maxwell 1999:17). Land occupies the central nervous system of the *VaKaranga* world view. Land is not the hard earth, but it consists of all what is visible and invisible, sacred and profane, and the physical world and the underworld. It is the abode of the spirits, hence land defines the *VaKaranga* people.

The meaning of land is attached to the religious and cultural dimensions that bring together the natural world and social relations. Land is the fundamental foundation of all claims of identity. People are emotionally attached to the birth place as a way of laying down a foundation of their identity. Land forms a part of a framework that embodies the process of

constructing identity as well as forming a platform underlying the claim of identity. Tarimo (2014:1) recalls how Former Kenyan President Jomo Kenyatta perceives of land

Land is sacred because it feeds the child for life and nurses the dead to eternity. Confirmation of the sacredness of land is also evident when land is transferred from one person to another. There would be a ceremony in the court of elders to approve the transfer, showing that it is a spiritual process rather than a market transfer. Land is not a mere economic reality. Land is the locus of identity, membership and self-determination. Land becomes one of the strongest variables that shape the attitude of attachment.

The above sentiments were also shared by another African leader Julius Nyerere (1987) who said that:

...to us in Africa land is always recognized as belonging to the community. Each individual within our society had a right to the use of land, because otherwise he could not earn a living, and one cannot have the right to life without also having the right to some means of maintaining life. But the African's right to land was simply the right to use it, he had no other right to it nor did it occur to him to try and claim one. The foreigner introduced a completely different concept, the concept of land as a marketable commodity. According to this system a person could claim a piece of land as his own private property whether he intended to use it or not. I could take a few square miles of land, call it mine and then go to the moon. All I had to do, to gain a living from my land was to charge a rent to the people who wanted to use it.

2.3 History of Land Dispossession

For close to 90 years, Zimbabwe was formally a colony of Britain, from September 1890 until the declaration of April 1980 independence. The colonial period relates the era of European settler occupation of present day Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) with ensuing dispossession

of land from millions of black farmers. “A number of land policies denied the majority of the Zimbabweans their land rights while giving rights to a few privileged white settlers” (Schmidt 2013:76). The deliberate marginalization of the blacks and the control by a system of state is remembered for its systemic repression, segregation and violence. The pioneer identity was violent in nature because its landscape appropriation, whether ideological or practical, was an act of asserting power over the land (Schmidt 2013:76).

Violence is excessive, unrestricted or unjustified force. There could be no violence without power. Dussel (1986:176) would want to argue specifically on institutionalised violence which is a more visible form of violence for everyday life. It is the violence of sin which produces weapons and forces the poor to donate and sell their work to the oppressor. This is the violence which was exerted on the *VaKaranga*, and they ended up being cheap farm labourers for the colonizers.

The British South Africa Company (BSAC), through the leadership of Cecil John Rhodes from around 1890 as a settler colonial government, was well known for its systematic land dispossession achieved mostly through violence, war and legislative instruments. Hughes and Richardson (2019) view the enactments as resulting in skewed racial land distribution and ownership. The BSAC, which was a private company, was allowed to take charge of a colony. This gave power to the British to set up an unjust colonial administration system. “This resulted in 23730 white settlers owning more than 19 million acres of land while an estimated 752,000 Africans occupied a total of 21,390,080 acres of land by the end of 1914” (Hughes and Richardson, 2019). This brutal treatment of the *VaKaranga* resulted in Chimurengas.

2.3.1 The Chimurenga Wars

The word Chimurenga is a Shona word which translates to fight or struggle. When the Shona people say *chave Chimurenga* they mean ‘it’s now a revolution’ and most *zvimurenga* lacks order. The word also brings the idea of an abrupt engagement in a struggle. It connotes revolutionary struggle. Chimurenga or *Bongozozo* is traditionally a fight in which everyone at hand takes part (Kahari 2016). The idea that everyone participates in Chimurenga means even women, children, and even those with disability are involved. Some give moral support; others are informers, and while others engage in the real fight. It also means rising against the intruder (Dale 1960). The struggle for human rights, political dignity and social justice can also be referred to as Chimurenga. *Bongozozo* can also mean ‘to cause harmful force to fall upon someone you dislike’.

2.3.2 The First Chimurenga

The first reaction to settler land occupation started in the late 1800s, but was subdued by the settlers’ superior firepower. Schmidt (2013:76) contends that in the Shona Uprising of 1896-7, destruction of crops was a major factor in forcing them to surrender as it had been done with the Ndebele in a violent move. Banana (1989:118) argues that throughout the colonial years, white power oppression was felt on two critical areas of life. The first instance was on the occupation of land and the resultant subjugation of the indigenous population. The second was on administrative expedients which resulted in racial laws barring Zimbabweans to exercise their rights in certain places and institutions. It is argued that driving the 1896-7 Uprising, white suppression of the uprising had been slow and piecemeal and very destructive. Many *Vakaranga* people had fled from their homes to take refuge in the high lands and some never returned to settle in their old areas. In 1898 many of the leaders of the uprising were brought to trial and hanged including the mediums of the Kaguvi and Nehanda spirits who had been the chief religious’ leaders of the uprising (Banana 1989:119). Kahari

(2009:87) argues that Kaguvi died on the cruel gallows erected by White Christians. When Nehanda, sniffing tobacco came next, she was led to the same Christian scaffold erected by likewise confessing Christians. There stood Nehanda, with a death noose around her neck. The hangman activated the gallows but to the utter amazement of all, it failed to work until they took the snuff from her. This is violence at its worst practised by the colonizers.

While the African suffered from the loss of the land and lived the life of an embattled creature, he faced a very implacable foe from a totally unexpected quarter. This was the missionary who regarded blacks as people who had to be rescued from the age of superstition, savagery and barbarism. The missionary was convinced that the aspects of native life had to be wiped out and replaced by the Christian gospel (Samkange 1978:4). “Father Biehler proposed that the only way to deal with the hopelessness of the *MaShonas* was to exterminate all those people, both male and female above the age of 14 years so as to create a new generation” (Samkange 1978:4). This shows that the church was heavily involved in violence and violence of that nature is both genocide and spiritualcide. It was the African religious way of life that the Holy Father wanted to exterminate all adults and create a new generation which is Europeanised.

Mlambo (2014:46) argues that even more galling was the settlers’ land grabbing which dispossessed the indigenous people of their land and transformed them into squatters and farm labourers overnight. On the basis of British Jurisprudence regarding property ownership and rights, the incoming colonial rulers determined that Africans did not have legal ownership of the land on which they lived. They also maintained that most of the land was empty since there was no one occupying the particular stretches of land at the time of colonization.

Subsequently, this violated the indigenous peoples' sense of land ownership and traditional jurisprudence which did not recognize individual land ownership but regarded land as communally owned under the spiritual and customary guardianship of the chief (Mlambo 2014:46). As the time progressed, Zimbabwe was turned into labour and slave reserve economy reliant on cheap domestic labour and foreign migrant labour from countries like Zambia and Malawi for the construction of roads/rail and urban factories as well as farms. During this period, blacks were expected to have a travel pass to be in urban areas and the period witnessed the advent of racial discrimination in jobs for certain jobs were reserved for whites (Mutasa, 2019). Besides land as the main source of resentment, were the hut tax, a dog tax and tax on wives in excess of one.

The victory of the British brought with it a steady growth of white farms in which Africans were seen as the natural workers more than owners of their own land. In order to incorporate some as workers, the VaKaranga people were driven off productive land, taxes imposed on them and their domestic animals (Mlambo 2005). And thus, ensued a process of resistance from many African people; the main episodes being the Anglo-Ndebele War of 1893 and the Ndebele-Shona uprisings of 1896 -1897 (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009; Mlambo 2005). African resistance to these unreasonable laws was thwarted because the colonial authorities possessed superior weapons. Some scholars and the black elite that rose to power in 1980 have called these episodes as the "First Chimurenga", the earliest known struggle for land against alien powers (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2009). The BSAC aided by a Council issued by the Queen, created native reserves which were designated as land fit to be inhabited by indigenous people.

The indigenous people occupied the most arid parts of the country and the European minority, most fertile and temperate areas (Hanlon, Manjengwa & Smart 2013). The consequences of such developments are reflected in the following: "Prior to the conquest, the Ndebele occupied 21 million hectares, but by 1894, they had been pushed to only 2 reserves

that measured 1 million hectares.” (Moyana 2002:4). From this period onwards, the disproportionate distribution of land between natives and whites in Rhodesia only worsened. Palmer (1977) states that “when World War I started, 752 000 Africans occupied 21 390 080 acres of land, and whites had annexed 19 032 320 acres of the land. Legal instruments supporting white people’s ownership of land effectively left the black population at the mercy of the colonizer”.

2.4 White Culture of Violence through Legal Instruments

Banana (1989:118) argues that throughout the colonial years white power oppression was felt on two critical areas of life. The first instance was on the occupation of land and the resultant subjugation of the indigenous population. The second was on administrative expedients which resulted in racial laws barring Zimbabweans to exercise their rights in certain places and institutions. It is argued that during the 1896-7 Uprising, white suppression of the uprising had been slow and piecemeal and very destructive. Many *Vakaranga* people had fled from their homes to take refuge in the high lands and some never returned to settle in their old areas.

The wholesome evictions and forced removals of the VaKaranga from their land left them with no option, but their economy which was agro-based went down to subsistence levels by the late 1930s. Vambe (1995) argues that the settlers carved up and parcelled the country of Zimbabwe among people of white descent. In reaction to the dispossession, Africans put up spirited resistance to the colonialist menace but were overwhelmed by the superior firepower of the British Maxim gun. Mutasa (2019) asserts that Africans were left with no option but to move to areas designated as native reserves or communal lands. These areas had very poor

soils and situated in places very difficult to sustain life as well as area with tsetse fly such as Gokwe and Muzarabani.

Banana (1996:152) argues that there was the advent of a rare economic development called capitalistic mode of economic production soon after colonization. Whites vowed to tenaciously hang on to the land, while the Africans laid a legitimate claim by appealing to centuries of succour from that very land. In pursuit of the goal of further entrenching themselves and indeed setting roots in the nation of Zimbabwe, the early settlers went ahead to employ legal means with which to secure the appropriated land from the Africans for themselves for all time.

This process was violent and destroyed the being of the Zimbabwean people in the struggle as they were reduced to mere objects which could be manipulated by the ruling class, the capitalists. Bakare (1993:48) asserts that the culture of the colonized people which hinders the new mode of production for the colonizers had to be destroyed or distorted first before it could be used against its own people. A wife tax was introduced to those who had a polygamous union. It is however, argued that the greatest form of colonization for the *VaKaranga* was brain washing, and this is the greatest form of injustice by the colonizers. To date, many *VaKarangas* attribute good and fine things to the whites. If you are prospering in your endeavours, you are likened to the *murungu* (whites).

The land had been taken over and now belonged to the British South Africa Company. The company made money out of selling land it did not legally own. Until 1914, Zimbabweans were allowed to remain on land purchased by the settlers but had to pay rent. The *VaKaranga* were reduced to tenants in their ancestral homes. "In 1915, according to the Native Reserves Commission, 405 376 Zimbabweans were living in the reserves, a further 327 777 were living on the 22 million acres expropriated by the settlers while 47 million acres of land

remained to be alienated” (Moyana, 2002:4). Despite the imposition of excessive taxes and other adverse conditions created to discourage them, Zimbabwean farmers showed a clear reluctance to work on the settler’s farms (Banana 1996).

Land for settlers, unlike Zimbabweans, became a commodity to be bought, owned, sold and used as one chose. This concept of land sharply contradicts that of Zimbabweans in every aspect. To consider land as an economic asset is to disregard its sacredness, hence by virtue of this, the settler’s worldview of land was absolutely opposed to that of the *VaKaranga*. Rhodes and his cronies did not perceive the land as sacred but as an economic commodity, a repository of minerals rather than ancestral spirits Mobuvula (2011:38). It is actually clear that the European perception of land trivialises its value. Land treated as a commodity land became marketable and classified as cheap and expensive. This is exactly what characterised the colonial era where the colonial governments put a price tag on land. The same situation is still obtaining in urban areas in independent Zimbabwe where land is sold and is actually classified in terms of being cheap or expensive.

To illustrate the different concepts of land between the Europeans and Zimbabweans, Bakare (1993:51) talks about the dynamic forces of a land exploiter (settler) and a land nurturer (Zimbabwean). In this respect, the exploiter’s goal is money; profit and the nurturer’s goal are health, his own health, family, community and country. It reflects a clash between capitalism and communalism, two different modes of production which also nurture opposed ideological positions.

Mobuvula (2011:38) states that the essence of Zimbabwean Cultural existentialism is Zimbabwean communalism. It is this communalistic aspect that stands in sharp contrast with capitalism which has more to do with individualism. No wonder Europeans perceived land as something that could be individually owned and exploited as opposed to Zimbabwean view

of the land as something that belonged to the entire community. For the colonizers to achieve their goals of exploitation, this was supposed to be supported and anchored by various legal instruments so these were enacted.

2.4.1 The Land Apportionment Act (LAA)

One particular repressive piece of legislation that caused decades of conflict and ill-feeling between Africans and Europeans in Zimbabwe was the Land Apportionment Act made into law in 1931. A commission led by Morris Cartwe was appointed to examine the land question and recommend policy guidelines. In 1925, various individuals and organizations offered their views to the commission. There were divergent views coming from the two constituencies of black and white. The recommendations of the Commission were used as the basis for the enactment of the law under which the country suffered for years until independence (Banana 1996:153).

The Act was the first watershed legal piece on enactment which gave the white colonialists access to land in 1930. The Act decreed that half of the country with the best water was European and could not be sold to non-whites (Mutasa 2019). Mlambo (2014) argues that in 1930 came the Magna Carta of racial segregation on land in Zimbabwe called the Land Apportionment Act. The Act divided land along racial lines designating white areas where blacks could never purchase land. What was most distressing about this situation is that most of the land that, by law, now belonged to white citizens of Rhodesia, was under-utilized, unoccupied or left fallow for speculative purposes.

As Floyd (1959) notes, land inequality was palpable to indigenous people since their barren land was often close to fallow land reserved for white citizens. Such ordinary reminders of the injustices of the ruling authorities revived a resistance against such practices especially in

the period between the 1930s leading to the 1960s. However, the organization of many black organizations at this time lacked the capacity to out-manoeuvre the colonial authorities and effect positive change for the majority black people. The Act was violent and racial that a greater proportion of the better land was allocated to white farmers and empowered them to evict local black farmers to infertile agro-ecological drier regions. There was no mercy in the white colonial land dispossession, and also, one continues to ponder on the silence of the church during this abusive period in the history of Zimbabwe.

Bakare (1993) asserts that, the LAA of 1930 divided Zimbabwe into six zones that are, European area, native reserves, unassigned areas, forests and undetermined areas. For Vengeyi (2013:205), “the Land Apportionment Act entitled the Europeans to possess more than half of the country’s land although they were a very small minority”. The Land Apportionment Act is demonstrated by the below demographic data extracted from Moyana (1994:45).

Land Apportionment in 1911

Category	Acres	% of country
European Area	19032320	20.7
Native Reserves	21390080	23.2
Unassigned	51628800	56.1
Total	92051200	100

The balance of power continued to shift as Europeans continued to amass land for themselves and creating more misery for the indigenous people. By 1930 the balance of power on land use and rights had escaped the indigenous people as they only had 29.8% of the total land for their use. This is demonstrated demographically below.

Land Apportionment Act 1930

Category	Acres	% of country
European Area	49149174	51
Native Reserves	21127040	22
Unassigned Area	17793300	18.5
Native Purchase Area	7464566	7.8
Forest Area	590500	0.6
Total	96213120	100

Total use by Africans 28591606 which constituted 29.8% (Moyana, 1984:8)

The Act also prohibited Africans from ownership of land in areas that were designated white areas but provided for overcrowding the VaKaranga people in reserves with infertile soils not suitable for good yields. Institutions of the epitome of racism emerged in form of racially segregated schools, hospitals, churches, residential and business area, and even separate cemeteries (Banana 1989:118). The church remained silent, a sign of its serious association with Empire.

Empire can be defined as that which claims lordship over God`s creation and commodifies all relationships between human beings and human beings, human beings and creation, human beings and faith, human beings and work and human beings and sexuality, thus commodification of the whole creation and the disablement of moral agency. The violent face of Empire is exposed in systems and practices that excludes and discriminate people based on class, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation. Empire is, hence a god that rejects God and the flourishing of the community of creation (Vellem et al., 2016:17).

In the *VaKaranga* context Empire is the convergence of many forces of manipulation and humiliation for their humanity. The Act also created African Purchase Areas very close to reserves and accorded an opportunity to blacks with the potential to purchase the land. Critically to observe and take seriously the Act gave Chiefs nominal power over land. This

soon as argued by Banana (1996:153), became a powder keg resting on a hot surface. Tension soon ruled supreme

Bakare (1993:51) also talks about the effects of the repressive colonial Land Tenure Acts in Zimbabwe. He argues that the Land Tenure Acts laid the foundation for separate development dividing the country along racial lines. Settlers divided the whole country not carefully taking their time to make sure the best conditions adaptable to the whites who were born in Rhodesia. The effects of the land tenure systems are still visible in independent Zimbabwe. The Land Tenure Acts laid the foundation for separate development between European and Zimbabwean designated areas, whose dual economy is still visible in present day Zimbabwe.

2.4.2 The Matenganyika Concept: A Racist Irony

The most positive aspect of the Land Apportionment Act was the creation of 7.5 million acres of Native Purchase Area wherein would emerge, it was hoped a wealthy, contented and conservative group of African middle-class farmers who could act as a buffer against revolution from below (Palmer 1977:197). This was carefully planned to make sure that those Africans who benefited will pacify their fellows who would want to revolt against the unjust distribution of land. The native purchase areas were as much as possible placed adjacent to the native reserves.

These were regarded as ‘cemeteries not homes’. Professor Bhebhe demonstrated that in the 1940s, there was much overcrowding in the reserves, hence this resulted in overgrazing, soil erosion and poor food production. The white colonial government introduced the Matenganyika concept. Matenganyika was the term used for land bought by African farmers during the colonial era. The Rhodesian colonial system also called these areas the African Purchase Lands. Matenganyika meant, you have bought the land.

Number and location of farms sold in the Native Purchase Area from 1931-36

District	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34	1934-35	1935-36	1936	Total
Bikita			5				5
Charter			5	2	6	3	16
Chibi		1				3	4
Chilimanzi							0
Darwin						1	1
Gutu		9	20	22	6	2	59
Hartely				6	16	2	24
Inyanga							0
Lomagundi	2		1			1	4
Makoni		1	3	4	5		13
Marondera							0
Melsetter	5	22	11	1	8	16	65
Mrewa		1					1
Mutoko					1		1
Salisbury	10	11	11	4	6	4	46
Umtali		1	11	11	3	45	71
Victoria	15	5	22	16	51	50	159
Total	32	51	85	65	100	135	468

This concept was against the *VaKaranga* understanding of land because for them land could not have a market value because it is sacred. And yet, when you examine the areas where Africans purchased land, it becomes apparent that some of the African farmers were being moved from fertile lands to areas that white Rhodesian farmers did not like. It took many years and the second Chimurenga to outdo the impact of the land thefts caused by the Rudd Concession. The historical legacy of Matenganyika remains, up to this day, as the generation

of 'master farmers' and their descendants continue to work on the farms allocated to them in the colonial days.

2.4.3 The Native Land Husbandry Act (NLHA)

The introduction of the Native Land Husbandry Act (1951) was meant to institute the private ownership of land, with the ultimate aim to destock and force desired practices on small black land holders. In some areas, there was forced destocking which resulted in many *Karanga* people losing their livestock. The late Vice President of Zimbabwe, Simon V. Muzenda's revulsion against colonial rule grew out of the way Rhodesian settlers plundered the people's possessions and land. To make matters worse, the stripping of the wealth was effected with physical violence and intimidation (Bhebe 2004:32).

The settlers got more land through the process called latifundialization, a process which was meant to prevent Zimbabweans from having access to land as they were forcibly settled in designated reserves (Bakare 1993:42- 45). The 1951 Native Husbandry Act stipulated that Zimbabweans could only own up to 5 heads of cattle and 8 acres of land. This number was below the *VaKaranga* tradition of paying lobola. A full payment of lobola (*roora*) for the *VaKaranga* was 12 heads of cattle.

Indeed, these developments had far reaching repercussions on the socio economic and political status of Zimbabweans. The reserves were meant to keep Zimbabweans poor with no chance to be economically productive, competitive and self-sufficient (Bakare 1993:42- 45). The Act faced a lot of mass resistance and resulted in the emergence of nationalistic politics and it was replaced by the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs) in 1965. Banana (1996) notes that the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs) were designed to change the name of the Native Reserves and come up with trustees for the land. The trustees of course were colonial government instead of the traditional chiefs. The volume of population Tribal Trust Lands made them degraded 'homelands'

2.4.4 Alvordism

Closely related to the concept of Matenganyika was Alvordism. Alvord was instrumental in the development of the Native Reserves in order for them to carry a larger population. This was also a policy of trying to avoid, by all ways possible, the cry for the need to acquire more land for native occupation (CNC Annual Report 1932). Alvord never clearly acknowledged this mission but instead, used other pretexts to justify his hegemonic endeavours. Alvordism is all about the politics of land in a settler colonial situation. To ignore this fact is a gross mistake in itself. When the Land Husbandry Act was implemented in the early 1950s, African people reacted negatively to this Act.

McGregor (1995) notes that the reaction of the Africans made the Government to implement the Act by all propaganda methods that were at the disposal of the Government. The Demonstrators took part in the campaign. Conservation staffs were also part of the process. In a bid to change the attitude of the Africans films were made and shown in the African Reserves so that they could support the new land tenure and land use system. But still, it was not accepted. The contour ridge became a symbol of discrimination and oppression.

McGregor (1995) concludes that conservationist arguments were only used as the cutting edge for the justifications for the use of violence against the policies of Alvord. The reserves allocated to the natives faced a challenge of overstocking and overgrazing, and in an attempt to curtail the disaster, forced destocking regulations were passed in 1943. The contour ridge programmes also faced resistance but force was used when the Rhodesian government gained legal powers for compulsory African labour in soil conservation works. The ecological problems in reserves were declared a state of emergency so that violence in forced labour could find some form of justification.

Alvordism was the means of implementing these political objectives. The agriculture which was introduced by Alvord was not a clean scientific approach; instead it was clogged with political motives, racial discrimination and rhetoric that denigrated African ways of thinking and practices. McGregor (1995) sums it up this way, “the history of implementation of land conservation in Zimbabwe is one of authoritarianism and discrimination”. For settlers, conservation meant financial support for more production and other incentives while for Africans, it entailed a different story that is coercion and punitive restrictions on resource use. This entails that the concept of Alvordism was violent and racist. Conservation of the degraded environment due to overcrowding and overgrazing provided justification to use force on Africans in the name of protecting the environment. The settler government failed to address the real issue of overcrowding and overgrazing in reserves.

Land which was not tilled or cultivated for Alvord was wasted land. He continued to refer to Africans as ignorant and lazy, an allusion to psychological violence and denigration. For Alvord, God gave land for use by the wise for their convenience and land which is not cultivated is wasted land. Land must be given to the wise and those who can exploit it for their personal benefit (McGregor 1995:83). It clearly and distinctly required men to enclose and cultivate the land for their benefit, and those who did so industriously and rationally were especially blessed in God’s eyes. This is another shift from how the *VaKaranga* considers uncultivated area because some forests were not cultivated because they were sacred and aboard of the spirits. In some of these forests they were ‘does’ and ‘don’ts’ and even those going for hunting were supposed to ask for permission from the spirits for a successful hunt.

Efforts to redress unbalanced racial discrimination on land inequality suffered a major blow in 1965. In 1965, Ian Smith declared Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Britain. This was a declaration of Rhodesian independence from Britain. According to Banana (1996:115) “the UDI represented a travesty of justice, bastardisation of civilisation and an

irreclaimable erosion of Christian values and traditions.” The only notable achievement of the UDI was that its opening of the way for the legitimization of black exploitation of Africans. The UDI for Banana was in fact putting the lid on any future aspirations towards African political assumption of power. The Africans were left with limited choices if any; than to resort to the armed struggle as an answer for liberation and justice.

Banana (1996:115) pointed out that the UDI ignored the moral conscience of the vast majority of the governed who clamoured for its reversal. Whereas civilisation too many whites meant comfort and material wellbeing at the expense of the African, the later felt it was the exact opposite for it signified a postponement of the realization of universal adult suffrage, repossession of land and a share in the material prosperity of the land of his heritage. The launching of the guerrilla war was not a surprise because UDI had made it practically impossible for the blacks to obtain liberation through negotiations and peaceful demonstration thus, the second Chimurenga.

2.5 Pre-Colonial Zimbabwe’s views on Land

Zimbabwe during the pre-colonial era like any other society also went through a communal and tributary mode of economic production. The pre-colonial view of land can be understood in different categories such as land as a communal asset, as a burial site, as a symbol of motherhood, as a symbol of identity and as a sacred entity.

Land as a communal asset

This communal stage is distinguished by the fact that everything was communally owned and the products of labour were communally appropriated (Mosala 1989:69). Although Mosala was not referring specifically to Zimbabwean society, his view is universally accepted in most African societies before the advent of Empire. Production was strictly for use value in this society thus, production was based on fundamental human needs. Egalitarian control over

the means of production ensured equal appropriation of the products of social labour. Prior to Rhodes' pursuit, pre-colonial Zimbabwe was a largely communal society in which the indigenous lived as a community anchored by their religion? Land was an inheritance (*ivhu inhaka yemadzitateguru*).

No individual owned the land: the source of shelter. Land was collectively owned in perpetuity from generation to generation. This was an egalitarian society where no one was landless. In many cultures there was a link between the gods, the people and the land. It is believed that the deity or deities gave land to the people to cultivate as a source of life and sustenance. The land became therefore, the possession of the whole community and any particular family inheritance must remain within it and within its extended family. In other cultures, the land was thought to have been given to the king representing the gods, and he was entitled to dispense of it to the people as he willed and had the right to claim it back (Fabella & Sugirtharajah 2000:121).

Kadyandango rightly observed that irrespective of other forms of property or employment, for the Africans, one could not be without land. There was no tradition of landless people (Kadyandango 1999:57). Land for the *VaKaranga*, is an asset of great importance and it belongs to the whole community including the living, the dead and the unborn.

For the *VaKaranga*, once a man was mature and had married, he would, together with his new family, be allocated a place to farm and build a home hence landlessness was not an issue (Young 1967:25). It may be argued that prior to 1891 there was no one who would be rendered landless in this pre-colonial era, because families, clans and tribes owned vast pieces of land where they would farm and graze their cattle, sheep and goats. The system was crystal clear; no one was rendered landless in the pre-colonial Zimbabwe.

Mosala (1989:121) admits that there is no information or evidence about the communal stages of Zimbabwean development but just like any other society, Zimbabwe went through this mode of economic development. He argues that in Zimbabwean all the major means of production were communally owned, and these included land and cattle. They were the fundamental means of production. Family members provided labour on their family fields. Production in this society was strictly of use-value, that production was based fundamentally on human needs (Mosala 1989:121). Basically, this means of production is based on morality; it is the need which necessitates production. Human beings are the basis of this economic system, because the economic investment in the communal mode of production took the well-being of people as its point of departure (Mosala 1989:72).

Of importance to note is the bond which was created by different age groups who belong to the same land through the initiation practice. This practice was a way of showing that within the larger community; those of the same age could belong together. The community could call upon the initiation group or age sets to defend them together, to plough, harvest or weed fields together. This formed strong bonds among the members of each group. In the *VaKaranga* tradition, those without cattle to plough in their fields could just brew beer and invite the community to come and help, and this is called *humwe* in the *Karanga* dialect. This shows how communal land was for the *VaKaranga* before the advent of colonialism.

The construction of social identities, the organization of religious life and the production and reproduction of culture for the *VaKaranga* is anchored on land. Amanze (2002:303) observes that in the African setup, people view themselves as simply trustees to the land that God has entrusted upon them for use by the whole community. Land is inextricably intertwined with the ontological beliefs of the Africans. This even went to the extent of even personifying land such that land can kill and can be angry (Taringa 2006:204).

Land provides a burial site

The *VaKaranga* tradition firmly believes that land provides a site where one would be buried. In view of this serious cultural and spiritual belief, it is therefore, highly expected that a person must be buried in his or her land regardless of where the death occurs. The economic hardships in Zimbabwe has made many of the *VaKaranga* to seek work in the diaspora but when they die their bodies must be repatriated to be buried at their homes (*Kumusha*), no matter the cost. This exercise will ascertain that the rest of the departed among the *VaKaranga* are buried in the land and village of their originality.

The importance of one's burial site is critical in the *VaKaranga* tradition and how the burial site is looked after. This is closely linked to an incident which the researcher's mother always narrates when they were moved from their original land to pave way for Ian Smith farm. She was a little girl by then, but she remembers how one lady, Mrs Mate went to sleep on the grave of her husband when vehicles which were moving them arrived. Mrs Mate, who was believed to be mentally ill refused to leave her husband's grave. It is said she only accepted to be moved after they promised her that they will arrange for the remains of her husband to be buried at the new home which was never the case. As postulated in this research, it may be argued that Mrs Mathe displayed the true understanding of how important land is to the *VaKaranga* and one may argue that she was very normal in her reaction.

Land as a symbol of motherhood

The pre-colonial Zimbabwean philosophy viewed land as a mother. According to Bakare (1993:46) "the land is therefore a place of human connectivity with the mother earth and where one's roots are, where one's umbilical code has been buried". The blacks consider the land as also where ancestors are deposited; forming a place of connection and orientation. This implies that land takes the form of a mother who has the capacity and capability to

produce for her children. One may also take note that Bakare's observation is indeed a true depiction of the *VaKaranga* understanding of land. In Zimbabwe, human beings are totally dependent on the land for survival hence land is a source of life just as a mother is to a child. Vengeyi (2014: 68) also concurred with Bakare when he states that for the peasants the land was like a mother and you cannot change your mother because of her behaviour she remains the mother. Moreover, a person can only have one mother. For him, a mother is central to every Zimbabwean, regardless she is dead or alive; she holds a special place in the lives of the people, and the same understanding can be thus, appropriated in understanding the centrality of land to the *VaKaranga*.

Gaidzanwa (2006:6) asserts that motherhood is hailed and held in high esteem as long as it conforms to socially approved wifeness. Mungoshi depicts a mother as a tough and fearsome character. In Marechera's *House of Hunger* the mother is portrayed as a fearsome woman who beats her son for speaking to her in English (Gaidzanwa 2006:6). This shows how motherhood is revered among the *VaKaranga* with the potential to punish the children. It is also so among the *VaKaranga* people that land can punish the occupants if they misbehave and such punishment include among others; drought, floods and diseases. The *VaKaranga* will always say *ivhu rakatsamwa* meaning the land is angry. In the *VaKaranga* tradition, you can wrong your father with little or no consequence, but not your mother; *unotanda botso*. *Kutanda botso* is a Shona ritual where a person who has wronged her mother is supposed to beg through the community for grain to brew beer for appeasing the mother's avenging spirit. This is done while you are putting on rags or sacks no matter how rich you maybe. This shows how motherhood is so important for the *VaKaranga* people. So, to equate land to motherhood is not an understatement.

Land as a symbol of identity

The *VaKaranga* conceives land as a symbol of identity. Bakare (1993:46) also specified that in Zimbabwe, land is perceived and understood by Zimbabweans as a symbol of identity. It consists of things that can be quantified and not quantified, it offers them identity, history and livelihood hence the saying *mwana wevhu* (child of the soil). This assertion makes sense and indeed neatly connects with the concept that land is mother. If land is understood and appreciated as mother, it is therefore a symbol of identity for the *VaKaranga* in the same manner a mother is a symbol of identity to her children. Land is connected to lives of *VaKaranga* in the same way a mother is connected to the lives of her children.

The pre-colonial Zimbabwe viewed land as an inheritance, and according to Bakare; land is designated to human beings not as a possession but as an inheritance. Thus, if land is considered to be an inheritance from the ancestors as such it is therefore central in the lives of the people and cannot be given away to foreigners. Land in Africa, has always been considered an inheritance from the ancestors by the peasants. Because of the centrality of land as inheritance, losing it is tantamount to losing everything. It is therefore, postulated that, and from an indigenous Zimbabwean perspective loss of land is loss of everything that defines a Zimbabwean. There is a strong tradition among the *VaKaranga* that if someone is given something as an inheritance (*nhaka*) he/she is not allowed trading it or exchanging it. It is something worth defending to death. The same notion is true of how the *VaKaranga* view land. This is indeed true as attested by the history of Zimbabwe where Zimbabweans lost everything, (political, economic, social and religious autonomy) through the land dispossession done by the settlers.

Vengeyi (2013) also pointed out that in many societies of Africa to include Zimbabwe land is perceived as an inheritance, thus brings into account three critical dimension of life as a

religious entity, an economic enterprise and a marker of one's social status. The loss of ancestral land is disgracing to the living, the departed and the future generations. Sacrificing one's life and gaining control of your father's land is a symbol of honour to the living, the departed and the future generations (Vengeyi 2013). The indigenous Zimbabwean philosophy treats land as an inalienable resource. For one to perceive land only as an economic asset is somehow to trivialize it, for there is more to land than just economics.

Land is a sacred entity

The pre-colonial Zimbabwe took land as something that is tied to the diviners, and as such, land is sacred. Vengeyi (2013) posited that, land is inseparably connected to the spirituality of a human being. For Bakare (1993:47), "land is a repository of the family ties between the living, the living timeless and those yet to be born". It is from this understanding that the land derives its sacredness and also from the fact that the umbilical cord is buried there. Bakare is right to say the land is considered sacred because if the land is a mother, a symbol of identity and inheritance it therefore follows that it is a sacred entity. A mother is sacred in Zimbabwean culture and she is revered to the extent that she cannot be sold. There is a Karanga idiom which says *nhamo inhamo zvayo, amai havaroodzwi*. This simply translates that even if you become very poor you cannot push your mother into marriage for you to benefit.

Land is perceived, both physically and spiritually, as an integral part of the web of life and has an intimate relationship with human beings. In a sense the land is sacred, which of necessity has ecological implications. Land is the beginning and end of all indigenous theologies (Fabella & Sugirtharajah 2000:121). Bakare (1993:47) asserts that the sacrality of the land derives from that it belongs to the whole community as a gift from the ancestors and cannot be owned solely by an individual because to do so is to reduce it, to take away from it

that which is sacred. The *VaKaranga* cosmology accepts the seniority of nature over humanity and the close correlation of nature with the spirit world. Nature, for the *VaKaranga* possesses powers no human being can fully understand and comprehend. Nature is too vast and complicated and cannot be perceived as dead and lifeless. In this view, land cannot be sold because a mother cannot be a commodity dead or alive. For him, one person's mother is not a commodity, which means land has no commercial value, it cannot be sold. This is indeed, true and scholars like Vengeyi (2014:59) subscribe to this line of thinking.

Shona people place more value in their land than as a simply usable property. The land is intimately related to the history of chiefdom. The association of the chief and the land is symbolized in the instalment of chiefs all over the Shona country. The description of the instalment of one *karanga* chief Ziki is concluded by the chief holding earth or soil in his hands when a pronouncement is made for him to be the chief. The chief is declared to be legitimate while holding the soil. The kingmakers will hand over the country the chief and the chief will pledge to rule his people justly while holding the mother earth (Bourdillon 1991:69).

The ownership of the land for the *VaKaranga* people is partially with the Chief and this ownership is usually restricted to very limited rights over the land and certain duties to be performed towards the land. When the chief grants someone some cultivation rights, these rights are inalienable. The grantee has irrevocable and undisputable rights to farm on his land and keep his herds and their offspring and he has the right to protect his land from trespassers. It is also important to note that the grantee cannot sell his land rights and should he decide to leave the territory the rights revert to the chief. Among the *VaKaranga*, if one is given land as a stranger or foreigner, he is supposed to brew beer and invite the village to accept him in the village fold. This called *doro remakweme*. Once this is done you are full accepted in the land. This entails that land is not just ordinary but it is highly revered.

To further confirm the sacredness of land a special day of rest is designated once every week. One of the most widely practised customs, with a very long history, is observance of the communion days known in Shona as *chisi* (Chigwedere 1998; Mukamuri 1995). *Chisi* is a period set aside for the spirits. A number of days were spared for communion with the spirits of the land. The various connections between the spirit world, nature and human society, necessitated many forms of conditioning of the human mind (Sadomba 1996). The essence of *chisi* was not *per se*, a physical rest. Rather, it is a refrain from physical activity considered to detract individual meditative powers during communion with nature. Through *chisi* and during *chisi*, societal duties and obligations towards the sustenance of nature and adoration of the spirit world were deliberately meditated upon, forming complex mental and mystic images.

Development of values and beliefs for the management of nature derives from such type of communion. In the *Manyika* customs, as in other ethnic groups, the *VaKaranga* included, this period is distinguished in that "It is a period set aside for the *mhondoro* ... for the two or three days in the lunar month when there is no moon ..." (Matowanyika 1991). *Mhondoro* is a lion that depicts the presence of the spirits of the land. Values and beliefs of nature conservation, find their nucleus from this type of relation with nature, fashioned from intricate intercourse of human society and the spiritual world. "Failure to observe *chisi* would result in the failure of rains or crop destruction by animals. In fact, some of the toughest penalties were meted out on people who violated the rest period..." (Matowanyika 1991:230).

Analysis

Among most leaders of opinion both in Africa and abroad, the colonial and neo-colonial experience in Africa does not seem to have been considered destructive. Yet, all indicators of

social engineering show that the colonial experience was destructive of African social and physical infrastructure, while it was a means of amassing surplus capital for Europe (Mugambi 1997:2). From the perspective of the *VaKaranga* in rural areas, the impact of this experience has been marginalization and pauperization. The culture and religious heritage of the *VaKaranga* has been undermined to the extent that they have lost confidence in themselves as a people. For the *VaKaranga* to reaffirm their cultural and religious identity and consciousness, land can provide a springboard for the revitalisation of their social life. As argued by Gutierrez that to dismantle a people's culture is to kill a people.

The perceptions of the pre-colonial Zimbabweans on land still holds on even after the settlers disposed them off their land inherited from their ancestors. The power which directed the people in this mode of production resided in a strong ideological domain which is the living dead, the ancestors. Thus, the struggle for liberation of the community's productive forces is structured by the communal values of the ideological of the 'ancestors', (Mosala 1989:76). Bakare (1993) sums up the Zimbabwean worldview on land as follows; land as a mother, land as a symbol of identity, land as sacred and land as an inheritance. The above views represent the *VaKaranga* worldview on land.

It is however quintessential to note that the above views provided a fertile ground for the *VaKaranga* to rise against the colonial white farmers in the spirit of defending their mother land and their inheritance. It is easy for the *VaKaranga* to die fighting in defence of their mother. The greatest insult for a *MuKaranga* is to say "*mai vako*" (your mother). During our days, whilst herding cattle, it was easy to start a fight. The big brothers will simply mould soil and say that's your mother's breast (*zamu ramai vako*) and if someone tampers with that mould then a fight ensues, a serious one for that matter. It is however, difficult to convince the *VaKaranga* that the Third Chimurenga was not a just cause no matter the methodology used and the short comings associated with the revolution.

2.6 The Second Chimurenga

The white culture of violence through legal instruments did not deter the *VaKaranga* from fighting for their land as is evidenced by the rise of the second Chimurenga. The second Chimurenga as argued by Maradith (1979) was anchored on the influence of the spirit mediums who were believed to be the custodian of the land. These were used to drum up the support of the locals since they were highly revered by the local communities. To overcome doubts, the guerrillas in the second Chimurenga grievances were around high taxation, poor soils and overcrowding and government conservation measures such as Alvodism. It is further argued that some spirit mediums (*masvikiro*) crossed the borders into Mozambique to join guerrillas in their camps, while others toured the villagers in the border area giving their approval to the Chimurenga. The intelligence sources which were used by the colonizers dried up during this period for everyone was ready for the revolution.

It has become evident that even after the second Chimurenga, Mugabe and his regime used intelligence to silence critics, and it is still happening even in the Mnangagwa's administration, the so-called new dispensation. It is a perpetuation of violence designed by the colonial master to mastermind violence through black elite.

The inequalities and deliberate dispossession of African land by the white settler regime caused a sense of injustice that became one of the main causes for the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe to ensue. The main reason was the grandeur deprivation of the black Africans from the land which formed the basis of their livelihood. "The process of dispossession was legitimated by a series of pieces of legislation which sought to entrench white privileges and to bring the Africans under colonial control" (Kaulemu 2008:7).

It is however a fact that the land question was the root cause of Zimbabwe's war of liberation as widely acknowledged. "Josiah Tungamirai, one of the top leaders of Zimbabwe African

National Liberation Army (ZANLA) makes this point clear when he said the unequal distribution of land was the main reason why African people fought the settler regime” (Tungamirai 1995:37). Black Africans had a strong feeling that land was theirs rightfully such that it was a matter of justice for them to rise up and fight to regain their lost heritage.

Different strategies were used to fight the colonizers. There were times which were known as the days of *Zhii*, a Shona word translated by Nehwati, a veteran trade unionist and nationalist as meaning a devastating action which completely destroys or reduce to rubble. During this period, municipal beer halls and government properties were destroyed (Ellert 1993:2). There was also the rural sabotage strategy in which rural masses were encouraged to form the *Zhanda* groups. *Zhanda* is a *Karanga* word which means destroying (Ellert 1993:2). The *zhanda* groups targeted white owned property so as to force the whites to leave the land but they resisted through the use of state machinery in sanctioned violence.

The freedom fighters continued to attack the whites on the farms but the white farmers’ determination on the land remained unshaken. In response, the white farmers developed new styles such as sandbags piled up around the bedrooms, bolted doors and windows, beds in the corridors, security fencing around their residents, alarm systems, guard dogs and more other security measures. On the other hand, the Rhodesian government provided compensation for damage and medical relief to its farmers and a Terrorist Victim Relief Fund was set up, well subscribed and funded (Ranger 1985:112). This entails that the freedom fighters were now viewed as terrorists. Who is the terrorist in this case? One who is fighting for his own inheritance taken by violence has become a terrorist!

The community support of guerrillas made Smith and his regime to remove thousands of tribesmen from their villages, screened and resettled in other districts. After that, their remaining properties were either confiscated or destroyed and their huts burnt. In transit

camps, each family regardless of size was allocated one hut and there was little medical help available and diseases were rampant and scores of young people died of cholera and measles (Ranger 1985:112). In Zimbabwe, monuments of what used to be called Keeps where the locals were put in order to cut their ties with freedom fighters are historical sites in existence. In these Keeps, women were raped by the masters and there was violence both spiritual and cultural.

Guerrilla action spread across two thirds of the country due to the fusion of the *VaKaranga* spirit of cultural nationalism and peasant radicalism in the 70s. The second Chimurenga intensified in the 1970s, but had no outright winner. A negotiated peace agreement was achieved and in 1979 a ceasefire agreement came through under the mediation of the British government. After cessation of fire followed a round table negotiation process to establish a new sovereign Zimbabwe which took place at the British Lancaster House from 10 September to 15 December 1979. Although the negotiations at the Lancaster House under the Chairmanship of Lord Peter Carrington, the then British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth, were protracted, an agreement was eventually arrived at based on the principle of universal suffrage (Banana 1996:256).

There was a clear framework to the agreement outlining key outcomes which included inevitable elections following a universal plebiscite, a Constitution; and clear roadmap to institute equitable land reform (Mutasa 2019). Land reform was to target the black majority who were landless and government would buy land from the white commercial farmers. This shows that the Agreement had a lot of foreign overtones in that the land taken from Africans without any payment had now fetched a market price (Mlambo 2014:191). The purchase clause caused serious challenges to the government which failed to purchase land from white minorities.

The negotiating parties agreed on the Zimbabwe Independence Constitution which provided for among other things, 20 seats in the parliament to be reserved for the Whites for a period of 10 years. This is extension of Empire to protect its interest. Most contentious during the negotiations was the issue of land reform. Only the offer by the British and US governments to provide funding to the new government to enable it to purchase land from white landowners on the basis of “willing seller, willing buyer” broke the impasse between the Nationalist and the Rhodesian government making it possible for the agreed political agreements to be effected (Murisa & Chikweche 2015:34).

The Lancaster House Constitution designed as part of the deal to end the liberation war in 1979 consisted of a series of compromises over majority rights. Raftopoulos (2009:173) weighs in and says “the constitution made a half-backed recommendation on the future of land ownership in the country and guaranteed white representation in parliament”. Existing authoritarian bureaucracy and private property rights were protected by the new constitution thereby limiting the scope of land redistribution. The willing buyer willing seller was the main obstacle on land redistribution in the Agreement for it protected the interests of white commercial farmers and hampered government efforts on buying adequate land to meet the increasing requirements of a growing population.

The constitution had certain entrenched provisions reserving 20 seats for the whites in the new Zimbabwean Parliament and the right for whites to maintain property and land, provisions which were to be reviewed after seven years. The Constitution also provided for the posts of Ceremonial President and Executive Prime Minister. The agreement was welcomed by the Zimbabwe Council of Churches (Banana 1996:256).

The Constitution however, hampered progress towards justice and political reconciliation. In 1987, 20 seats reserved for the whites were removed. However, the active political whites

continued to view themselves as operating outside the new nation State and supported the interests of their colleagues. They had a separate voter's roll. Their behaviour was influenced by a legacy of settler culture. Settler culture is the great power exerted by settlers to the oppressed, their virtual monopoly over political and legal institutions and their manipulative methods of advancing their economic interests. This can better be described as violence at its worst.

The context of the Lancaster House Constitution shows that Zimbabwe was never independent for many reasons. The constitution was negotiated in a foreign land using a foreign language, the main reason for going to the war, the land was not settled, the whites continued to enjoy civil liberties than the blacks and the economy of the country remained in the hands of the few (the whites). Above all, the constitution never addressed religious rights of the Zimbabweans in regard to land, but instead, it made everyone a Eurocentric Christian. This was like setting a stage for a serious crisis, which of course, was later followed by the Third Chimurenga.

2.7 Post-Colonial Strides in Land Resettlement

The colonial era ended by the attainment of independence of Zimbabwe in 1980 on the 18th of April. In Post-colonial Zimbabwe, the government tried to transform and democratize the structure of housing in urban and rural areas through decentralization of powers and giving responsibilities to local authorities to allocate resources. It should be noted that in post-colonial Zimbabwe politics and society, the policy of reconciliation adopted by the new government led by Prime Minister Robert Mugabe in 1980 was a grave mistake (Raftopoulos & Savage 2005:2). This was the most fatal error of the post-colonial government. While reconciliation was necessary, a framework was needed to be in place.

The policy measures generated increased differentiation amongst blacks which could not be reconciled with state socialist rhetoric. There was growing unemployment, continued economic domination by monopolies and a white minority, the growth of black bureaucratic bourgeoisie in charge of parastatals and vital state organs and the emergence of a visible black capitalist class (Moyo, 1995:6). The ownership or access to large tracts of land by a growing number of blacks became visible focus of public attention in the late 1980s. Black ownership of large farms was subsequently rationalised by the Government Land Policy of 1990 in terms of promoting commercial farming rather than subsistence as an improvement upon resettlement programme (Moyo, 1995:6).

Raftopoulos (2009:173) weighs in and says the Lancaster House Constitution designed as part of the deal to end the liberation war in 1979 consisted of a series of compromises over majority rights. The constitution made a half-backed recommendation on how land ownership would be designed in the country whilst guaranteeing white representation in parliament. Existing authoritarian bureaucracy and private property rights were protected by the new constitution thereby limiting the scope of land redistribution. The willing buyer willing seller was the main obstacle on land redistribution in the Agreement for it only protected the interests of white commercial farmers and hampered government efforts in providing adequate land to meet the increasing requirements of a growing population.

“Land redistribution in the 1980s was based on the resettlement of people who had been displaced by war, the landless, the poor, the unemployed and the destitute” (Moyo 1995:118). It has been estimated by the government in 1981 that no more than 18000 households needed resettlement on 1.5 million hectares of land over 5 years. This was scaled upwards in 1982 to 35000 and 165000 in 1993 on 5 million hectares of land (Moyo 1995). In the earliest period after independence, government land redistribution was targeted on the amount of land

available for purchase. The government had never formally computed the actual demand for land in terms of number of households requiring land for different uses.

The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) which Zimbabwe embarked was on the internationally recommended economic highway of trade liberalisation, there were some unfortunate hit and run casualties who could not avoid the financial traffic hurtling to and fro at astronomic speed (Banana 1996:264). Those were the retrenchees, the economically vulnerable and the unemployed. The retrenched people had no option save to relocate to their rural home pilling more pressure on rural land and natural resources (Harold-Barry 2004:123). The failure resulted in the country seriously divided along racial lines.

The Land Acquisition Act was introduced in 1992 after the expiry of the Lancaster House Constitution. This was done in order to facilitate a speedy process of land acquisition. The Act also intended to outlaw the willing-seller willing-buyer close and empower the government to compulsorily acquire land for resettlement. The government lacked resources to undertake the process and thus, the issue of land remained a hot potato (Mlambo 2009:190).

In 1993 the Director of Resettlement announced that there was a waiting list of over 300000 households while on the other hand there were over 500000 squatters throughout Zimbabwe`s rural areas (Moyo 1995:118). This was a time bomb which the government was underestimating which could explode any time without warning. Hanlon et al, (2013:54) notes that “Zimbabwe`s first land reform resettled 75000 families by 1996. This is 16 years into independence and the number is far much less than the estimated number of people who were on the waiting list of 300000 and 500000 squatters thus a crisis was looming”.

In 1997 there was more ant-white farmer rhetoric from ZANU PF hard-liners and the government responded by designating 1471 farms for possible compulsory acquisition using

the 1992 Land Acquisition Act for the first time. However, that was matched by another group whose members still hoped to gain donor support for resettlement and under their influence in June 1998 the government proposed the Land Reform and Resettlement Programme Phase 2 which was similar to the 1980 first resettlement (Hanlon et al., 2013:73). This shows that there was no progress, and that the government had no clear policy and strategy to avert the land hunger.

Mandivamba Rukuni (2010:13) notes that “the land reform program commenced on the back of restive peasantry which frequently contested the lack of social justice and the problem of inefficiency that underlay the unequal agrarian structure. Liberal land and agricultural land policy reforms in the late 90s failed to address the land shortages”. A tension was brewing within the people as the population increased land became a scarce resource. It was setting stage for another Chimurenga.

2.8 Third Chimurenga

Post-colonial strides to address land injustice failed and as a result there was the explosion in form of the Third Chimurenga. “The year 2000 saw the beginning of a radical repossession, when blacks took over land from white farmers, amending policies and laws to effect the repossession” (Matondi 2012:1). The former President, Robert Mugabe indicated he would not leave office until the land reform was completed. He declared in 2005 that “without doubt, our heroes are happy that a crucial part of this phase of our struggle has been completed. The land has been freed and today all heroes lie on the soil that is declaration. Their spirits are unbound, free to roam the land they left shackled, thanks again to the Third Chimurenga” (quoted in Derman 2006:2).

According to workers Hughes (2005:622), “the year 2000 witnessed the killing of some white farm owners and black farm workers, setting fire to more than 10 million acres of crops,

interrupting and preventing cultivation on some farms resulting in the displacement of hundreds of thousands of farms”. Widespread farm occupations began as political response to the electoral defeat of new draft constitution in Zimbabwe`s first national referendum. The initial goals of the Third Chimurenga were consistent with the long-term government goals for the acquisition of 5 million hectares of commercial land (Derman & Kaarhus 2013:9). However, this goal was abandoned in favour of forcing almost all white farmers from the land they occupied. This aggressive and often violent process of Chimurenga forcing farmers and farm workers off the land led to a series of significant debates about the process, the means that were used, who received the land and the degree to which it was successful (Derman & Kaarhus 2013:9).

The Third Chimurenga involved a return to war time rhetoric of enemies and sell outs and politicised land occupations led by War Veterans in which white farmers and farm workers were assaulted, evicted and killed (McGregor & Primorac 2010:7). The War Veterans were in command right from the onset of the Third Chimurenga. The War Veterans signed and put up notices at farm gates and along farm roads to indicate triumph. Some of these read “War Veteran ahead-detour, War Veterans in Action-keep off, Third Chimurenga or Land is the Economy and the Economy is Land”. “They also displayed political party or national flags and other paraphernalia that demonstrated the action of the land occupiers” (Matondi, 2012:26). The whole nation was engulfed with the spirit of war as the process was filled with terror and victimization. In February 2000 War Veterans in Masvingo the provincial capital of the VaKaranga people launched land occupations that received full media attention. “The War Veterans, then under Chenjerai Hunzvi already had substantial autonomy prior to 2000 as demonstrated by their success in extracting gratuity payments from the government. They had a clear position on land advocating large scale appropriation of land without compensation” (Matondi 2012:21). The land invasions provide an impetus to resolve the land

question as the political mood of the country changed through War Veterans mass mobilisation of landless peasants. “They sought methods of delivering land with or without the government through what has been termed *jambanja*” (Matondi 2012:22).

Chaumba et al (2003:540) defined *jambanja* as follows:

Literally meaning violence or angry argument, *jambanja* has been used in subtly different context to refer to different people and different places, including the excombatant farm invaders themselves, the farm invasions and more broadly politically instigated violence.

A popular war veteran catchphrase during the Third Chimurenga was “*jambanja ndizvo* (violence is the way). The term has been used in some cases by the opposition supporters to imply confrontation with a bully, whilst the workers’ movement used it in reference to mass protest action. In space and time, it is used to describe confusion and chaos.

The use of *jambanja* or mayhem can rightly be seen as response to political coaching to a certain extent, it is indisputable that a significant role was played by the beneficiaries. These beneficiaries were restive because of the pressures coming out of the communal areas, where unemployment and limited economic opportunities were the push factor. They were also riding on the back of promises made in the liberation struggle and at independence that land reform would be addressed. “Therefore, when they placed themselves on the land, they did not see anything wrong or illegal in their action because they viewed themselves as victors of the liberation struggle leading up to independence in 1980. Victors naturally take what they think belong to them” (Matondi, 2012:1).

“The Third Chimurenga used an array of operative tactics which included physical violence, political pressure on the law enforcement agencies (especially the Zimbabwe Republic Policy) to ignore taking action against occupiers, negotiations, endless demonstrations at the farm gates (singing, engaging in press-ups and all-night

vigils close to the home of white farm owners, using youth as shock troopers, killings and maiming of livestock and many more other antics” (Matondi 2012:24).

Some of the invaders targeted underutilised land and immediately instituted occupation without affecting land owners, some ceaselessly declared themselves as the new owners of the land immediately asking the current owners to vacate. There were others who forcefully grabbed the farm produce that was already on the land and took ownership. Others took over the farm houses and farming implements and declared ownership. “In most cases, a symbolic gesture of intention was seen through the pegging of the land by occupiers and subsequently squatting” (Matondi 2012:25). “On the other hand, some of the white farmers preferred co-existence because it stopped the incessant night-time farm-gate vigils (singing and drum beating), the barricading of their families and provocation of pets such as dogs. In addition, it gave them time to arrange escape lines in case of any impending danger” (Matondi, 2012:25).

There were accusations that Western media chose to focus on the affected white farmers deliberately without paying attention to the black farm workers. Even opposition black supporters who were in some cases violently beaten up or killed did not receive much international coverage (Mupunga et al., 2002:4). “In fact, the few white commercial farmers who were killed and beaten up (when compared to the colonial land dispossession and murder of indigenous people) became an international outcry as news worthy” (Hughes, 2005:622).

In the beginning of the land reforms, the violent 3rd Chimurenga drew international attention and imagination. This period and its activities changed the lives of the people in a radical way and livelihoods were altered in a big way. It also brought back the memories in the minds of the people of event in the past. The programme fundamentally changed the society, with the sitting land owners pushed aside, farm workers having their livelihoods withdrawn and new

beneficiaries walking into new commercial land without structured or sustained support. “The majority of the people saw Third Chimurenga as the final embodiment of empowerment following Zimbabwe`s independence in 1980” (Matondi, 2012:1).

To say the Third Chimurenga is the final embodiment of empowerment is an overstatement since there are groups of people who were not treated fairly in this revolution. Women only benefited around 16% of the total land reform in the revolution while on the other hand corruption was highly associated with the Third Chimurenga. Double allocation of farms and boundary disputes continue to manifest in the revolution. Above all, there are some people who are still on the waiting list 20 years after the revolution. All this makes it possible that another revolution might be looming probably to be called the Fourth Chimurenga.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has set the tone for the study by providing the important information regarding land alienation in colonial Zimbabwe and how the government failed after independence to settle the land issue. Centrally there was little reform of the colonial economy on the legacy of economic inequalities in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The willing seller willing buyer clause gave the oppressor a comparative advantage over the oppressed hence land remained in the hands of few whites.

The central argument here is that all the effort by government in post-colonial Zimbabwe did not address the main reason for the Chimurengas which is land. Access to land is the ultimate form of social security for many people in Zimbabwe. It lies at the heart of social, political and economic life of the VaKaranga people. Land is fundamental for livelihoods, food security, incomes and employment. The history and spirituality of the VaKaranga people find meaning in their land.

The pace for proper planned resettlement post-independence was very slow as compared to the rising demand for land. Moreover, the Lancaster House Constitution and the policy of unconditional reconciliation were major pitfalls in addressing the plight of the *VaKaranga* people on land. The government also turned a blind eye on population increase which also contributed immensely to land hunger. Land hunger in this context refers to the shortage of land while in other contexts it may mean the desire to grab more land particularly by political elites. The Third Chimurenga came, and what is left to be seen is its impact in addressing the social injustice of the colonial regime. Is the Third Chimurenga not a hijacked and failed project?

The Black elite had also become oppressors through corruption denying the Zimbabwean citizens' justice by fair distribution of land. The plight of women remains critical in the distribution of land in the Third Chimurenga for women were not treated fairly in the program as shall be investigated fully in the course of the research. More challenges continue to resurface in terms of double allocation controversies, boundary disputes, disputed farm sizes and offer letters confirming ownership. Is it not that Zimbabwe is herding for another Chimurenga? This Chimurenga is not fighting the colonial masters but the Black elites who have continued to subject the poor to forms of injustice.

Third Chimurenga has partially addressed the land imbalances and more needs to be done in this regard. The church was divided in offering guidance to the Third Chimurenga as the voice of reason due to reasons that shall be attended to in this research. I must also admit that the chapter did not relate all the history of the struggle in Zimbabwe but that I was interested in the land issue. The next chapter looks at a theological imagination of land.

CHAPTER 3

A THEOLOGICAL IMAGINATION OF LAND JUSTICE

3.1 Introduction

In God's redemptive plan, land occupies a central role in the salvation of humanity. The gift of land and environment are not autonomous gifts for they cannot be separated from the giver. With the land and environment, God also gives and avails himself to humanity. As argued by Dyrness and Karkkainen (2008:466) that the theme of land in scripture is a surprisingly rich one that spans, the Biblical story from creation to new creation and entails ethical and missional dimensions. What is not surprising is that the promises attached to the covenant actually launched the work of redemption in history also included land as part of its terms. In purely statistical terms land is clearly the dominant note in ancestral promise. From all the forty-six reference to the promises given to Abraham stretching between Genesis and Judges, the is mentioned in all, except only seven, and twenty-nine refer specifically to the land (Genesis 28:4). The blessing of Abraham is simply the possession of land. This entails that any liberation which does not place the justice of land as a central motif is not complete and total liberation.

Chapter two delved into the history of land dispossession, white culture of violence through legal instruments, the Chimurenga wars and post-colonial strides in land resettlement. This chapter is a reflection of the liberation theological imagination of land justice. This reflection will be done through the sub themes of land and the cry for justice, Naboth's vineyard, Tangwena the biblical Naboth, spirituality ethics of land from a womanist perspective through the daughters of Zelophehad in Numbers 27 who protested for the land rights, Palestinian land question and the role of the Church as handmaids in land occupation.

3.2 Land and the Cry for Justice

Third World Theologies consider justice as a central concept which should be understood intrinsically as an element of the gospel message making it one of the goals of Christian living. “Accounts of justice in Third World Theologies are not intent on establishing one general theory, but grounded in the specific reality of marginalised and oppressed peoples, they point to liberative theological or ethical praxis, and are aimed at undoing oppression in relationships, structures and societies” (Fabella & Sugirtharajah 2000:115)). The cries of the poor and the oppressed are the starting point for justice. Oppression refers to the constraints and deep injustices that are part of unquestioned norms, habits, symbols and assumptions present in the ordinary behaviour of people, in media and cultural stereotype. “Using oppression of the poor and marginalised as a source and locus, Third World Theologies accounts for justice attempt to be discourses specific enough to force options and concrete enough to play a central role in devising strategies to bring about radical change” (Fabella & Sugirtharajah 2000:115).

Justice is a central theme in the Scriptures with major importance for all human life. It runs like a golden cord throughout the Scriptures. This centrality and vast richness of the term makes it difficult to come up with a simple definition in the biblical context. Justice can be defined as legal codes and ordinances that govern communal life (Dyrness pp. 442). Justice describes the proper relationship which should obtain between humanity in their social life (Harvey 1970:115).

Land as a justice concern

Land in the bible is connected with justice because God is a God of justice. Since it was and is easy for the rich to dispossess the poor of the land, the jubilee year provided a way to restore justice (Leviticus 25). Although it is impossible to know whether the jubilee

provisions were implemented, they reflected God`s concern for justice in the community (Fabella & Sugirtharajah 2000:121). The liberation theological imagination of land justice must always conceive the poor as vulnerable to the rich and that land can be a source of oppression as well as redemption.

Land is intrinsically linked to the cry for justice. “Justice and only justice you shall follow, that you may live and inherit the land that the Lord your God is giving you” (Deuteronomy 16:20). A theology of the land according to the Hebrew Bible, asserts mediation of the land to God`s presence, and as such demand holiness. Land is covenanted, hence it is always a mandate and not a possession therefore it requires accountability. “The reign of God takes place on the land and it calls for God`s agenda to be applied through God`s vicegerents” (Oiktree Movement 2016:55).

Land was the test of loyalty to the covenant. The land functions like a moral barometer in the Old Testament. Old Testament prophetic anger can be seen being directed towards economic injustice and oppression where rampant abuse and misuse of land was dominant. “On the one hand, Israel fell into the kind of nature polytheism that characterised the Canaanites view of land and thus compromised their unique covenant relationship with Yahweh” (Dyrness & Karkkainen, 2008:468). Alternatively, economic practises were allowed in the use of land, especially land that was associated with the Monarchy. This eventually pushed the nation to descent into a wealthy land-owning elite whilst redefining clearly an oppressed peasant population. In other words, the land stood at the junction of the vertical and horizontal covenant relationships. Neglect of either one always indicated or involved neglect of the other (Dyrness & Karkkainen 2008:468).

The Bible is also against the injustice of amassing land by transforming the lives of free peasants into day labourers and slaves and also refusing them their wages. So, justice and

land are linked throughout the bible. The biblical view of land acknowledges that land is supposed to be shared equally by members of the society and not be treated as a possession. It is a gift for the good of the community and is shared equally between the members of that community. An ideal land is where people of all ethnicities and social backgrounds are treated equally (Oiktree Movement 2016:62). This emphasise the importance of land in the Bible and also the nation of Israel.

Olivier (1996:250) states that the moral fabric of the Old Testament is couched in spatial terms while Weinfeld (1993: xv) concede that the land is the focal point of biblical historiography. Rendtorff (1975:23) regards the aspect of land as so crucial that he finds it unusual that no land theology has been developed. Davies (1974:213) contends that the issue of land was Christified in the New Testament era. Others like Brueggemann (1978:185) regard this approach as spiritualisation of the land and stress the sociological importance of land in the Bible. This culminates in a theology of ecology thus the importance of land in biblical theology.

Waltke (2007:559) has helpfully observed that because the New Testament rarely uses the term land very closely related terms must be studied that refer to significant part of Israel's real estate in the land. Terms such as Jerusalem, Zion, Temple and throne of David is a reflection of land. Temple prophecies began to be fulfilled in Jesus and the Church. The same is true with the end time Jerusalem. Hebrews 12v22 says "believers have come to Mount Zion and to the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem". In some way Christians have reached their destination, even while still journeying as exiles on the earth. How can this be so? It is because Christ has already become true Israel and thus also the New Jerusalem and all who identify with him likewise become part of the New Jerusalem. This New Jerusalem is well known for the justice who will prevail in the city.

Beale (2011:766) also alludes to the same argument as Waltke that reference to part of the fulfilment of the land promise that never were fulfilled in the Old Testament epoch are not merely typological but rather are fulfilled in an ultimate straightforward manner in the literal land of the new cosmos which is the new Jerusalem, new Israel, new Temple and new Eden. This consummate fulfilment will occur after the destruction of the old heavens and earth (Revelation 21v1-5). What Israel failed to achieve is what the church is trying to attain in the resurrected Christ, and will consummately possess in the future.

Land: gift versus commodity

For traditional Africans, land was not just a commercial commodity, but it was a socio-cultural and spiritual asset that was shared and controlled within communities. Land was inextricably intertwined with the ontological beliefs of Africans. Good stewardship of land is highly expected as a way to honor this gift from God.

If land is used as a gift it contributes to flourishing communities. The mission statement of **Cord aid**, a Catholic Organization for Relief and Development highlights that flourishing communities create living spaces where the dignity of the people is upheld, in security. People must enjoy the freedom to express themselves, being accorded the opportunity to realize their capabilities. They must also be able to take part in social, economic, cultural and spiritual life. Flourishing communities brings about change in society ensuring a more just, inclusive and sustainable world through stewardship of resources. Communities are given every opportunity to flourish.

The centrality and spirituality of land is further affirmed by James Amanze (2002:304) when he observed that in the African setup, people perceive themselves as simply trustees for the land that God has entrusted them with, for the use of the whole community. The community

includes the ancestors, the living themselves and the future generation of that particular society. African land was not sold because it did not belong to an individual, it was a communal asset. Land was highly esteemed as a source of all life. This is simply to demonstrate that the way land is perceived biblically is the same way Africans view land.

Land could not be privately owned and speculatively acquired because it was perceived as a communal commodity which will benefit the whole community. Land was an inheritance from the family generations, hence could not to be sold, but held in trust for the generations to come. This implies that in this socio-economic system of the *VaKaranga*, before the advent of the colonizers, all people had land; as a result, there was no landlessness to people in this period of egalitarianism. The tribes of Israel were responsible for the security of the social and territorial rights of the society which guaranteed safe rights to land ownership and use in the pre-monarchy period. After retribalization in Israel communities were governed by a council of elders. This council of elders would convene deliberate on nearly every issue of concern to the wellbeing of the tribe (Vengeyi 2013). Thus, the administration of justice was not corruptible as it was left to the experienced and mature elders.

Vengeyi (2013:80) argues that the emergency of revolutionary institutions such as priesthood, prophecy and judiciary brought a different direction as these institutions became an extension of the ruling class instead of serving the interest of all the people. This created a lot of injustice within the society by the ruling class being supported by these revolutionary institutions. This could be the reason why the monarchy was such a detestable institution among the peasants and prophets like Isaiah and Amos as captured in some of the traditions of Israel. This was because the monarchy was viewed by these anti-monarchy supporters as a

foreign institution. The elite in particular had a capitalistic understanding of land where land was seen as a commodity hence land had an economic value. This understanding of land led to the dispossession of the land belonging to the peasants and this further disadvantaged the peasants economically through taxes and capitalistic economic laws. The land ownership patterns created two extremes in society that is the extremely rich and the exclusively poor.

With the monarchy system, Israel became an entirely counter-society; religiously, socially, economically, politically and militarily autonomous. The traditional view on land was changed since land became the major means of production. Very large pieces of Land now belonged to the ruling class and their kinsmen not to the family. The majority of the people called peasants were dispossessed of their land and it came in to the hands of the few. The poor people who would have lost their land to the ruling elite would become cheap labour for land owners and merchants for their survival. Subsistence farming was the main preoccupation of peasant farmers, if they lose land, they were most likely to become baggers because of not farming and especially due to the irregularity of the farming seasons (Vengeyi 2013).

Tarimo (2014:1) further asserts and confirms that the decline of the spirituality of land has weakened its meaning. The spirituality of land links human beings to the natural world. The meaning land has been weakened by market forces which have taken over the responsibility of land management in which land is viewed as a commodity to be exploited for economic interests.

3.3 Naboth`s vineyard

The injustice of land in the Bible can be demonstrated in the story of Naboth`s vineyard which was requested by Ahab in 1Kings 21:1-20. The arguments of two denote different constituencies in society whose personal attribute is completely different and opposed to each other. The ruling elite had developed a culture towards conceptualising unfamiliar worldviews, as is reflected in 1 Samuel 8:5, where they the ruling class in Israel wanted to be like other nations. This concept of being like other nations was rejected and despised by the peasants who wanted to stick to their indigenous worldview. The story of Naboth and Ahab presents two contrasting opinions regarding land ownership and use. For the peasants, land is sacred space and an inheritance from the ancestors which must be kept in trust for the generations to come. (Vengeyi 2014). This understanding of land by peasants above made it difficult to sell or exchange land no matter the circumstances and this standpoint is represented by Naboth and naturally the majority. Naboth and the majority unfortunately, represented the poor masses without voice.

The other perspective was the stand point of Ahab who represented the elite, the urbanites. They viewed land as an economic commodity and no more as an incontrovertible inheritance. This perspective made them to perceive land as a sellable commodity and also the view made it even possible to exchange the land. The idea of commodifying land was foreign with its practice in Tyre. They hold on to the land on the basis of making profit and not identity (Vengeyi 2014). The elite dismissed the peasant view of land as despicable aboriginal, backward, prehistoric and retrogressive worldviews only to promote their newly acquired unfamiliar philosophy as progressive.

Nowhere is Jezebel's flagrant contempt for Israel's ancient ideals seen more clearly than in her vile plot to seize Naboth's vineyard. As shown in the book of Ruth, real estate was not readily saleable among the Israelites. Land was passed through successive generations as part of the family inheritance. It could be sold only in dire emergencies and then preferably to a kinsman. Thus, Naboth was appalled at Ahab's presumption offer to buy or trade the vineyard (William et al., 1982:267). While Ahab pouted, Jezebel plotted with utter disdain of the customs and practices of the tribes. Schooled in a more dictatorial approach to kingship in Tyre, she could not understand Ahab's distress when Naboth balked at his request. Jezebel's understanding as a queen was that she could not be denied anything she wanted by a backward tradition of land ownership. Hiring thugs as false witness, she had Naboth condemned to death by the elders on trumped up charges. Elijah incensed at Jezebel's inhumanity confronted Ahab at Jezreel and pronounced doom upon him, his despised wife and his entire household (William et al., 1982:267).

Bright (1981:245) asserts that Jezebel, who was a strong-minded woman, filled with an almost missionary zeal for her god and no doubt contemptuous of the cultural backwardness and austere religion of her adopted land, planned the murder of Naboth in order to take his land. The conflict between Ahab and Naboth was a result of opposing worldviews in the interpretation of land use and land ownership. The murder of Naboth was gross injustice perpetuated by empire.

Ahab wanted to purchase a vineyard that adjoined his palace. His terms were generous enough but Naboth the owner refused to sell for the simple reason that it was a family estate. His refusal "YHWH forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors" expressed an attitude towards land that was unique with Israel. Properly speaking, it was not Naboth's

private property to dispose of as he pleased. It belonged to the whole family or clan who had passed it down from generation to generation as a sacred inheritance (Anderson 2007:255).

In this view the real owner of the land was God, who had fulfilled the promises made to their ancestors by bringing the Israelites into country where they could settle down. The various tribes and clans were stewards of God's property, administering it for the welfare of the whole community in a way that ruled out land grabbing and private speculation. Naboth was simply reaffirming the ancient basis of Israel's land tenure when he insisted that he was not free to sell the ancestral estate (Anderson 2007:255).

Ahab recognised the validity of Naboth's position, and he became sullen and refused to eat. But Jezebel nurtured in the commercial civilization of Phoenicia had the other conception of property. Her Baal religion placed no limitations on the exercise of royal power. She promised to get Naboth's vineyard for Ahab in her own way. At her direction Naboth, was accused by two good-for-nothing of cursing God and the King (blasphemy and treason). With no word of defence on his behalf, Naboth was stoned to death and eventually his sons were done away with too. "The murder had a pretence of legality enough to salve the conscience of those who had a hand in the treacherous deed" (Anderson 2007:255).

The varied conceptions of land were a result of different historical and religious systems between Phoenicia and Israel. Revolutionary Yahwism conceived that land was an inheritance whereas the concept of land, an economic asset such as estate or farm was a concept integral to manipulative Baalism (Brueggemann 2000:264). More so, the ownership of land was chief safeguard of the independence of the family unit and was therefore inalienable under Israelite law. The situation was intolerable to Jezebel (Empire) even though

she does not venture to challenge the laws of the Hebrew community directly she concocts a plot which makes it possible for the king indirectly to attain his end (violence). Naboth was executed and his sons (2 Kings 9:26) in default of heirs' property was reverted to the crown (Dentam 1980:67). The prophet appeared on the scene to challenge the wickedness of Empire. This concept fits well the situation of the *VaKaranga* and how they were treated by the Colonizers who viewed land as tradable economic asset.

The indigenous philosophy which Naboth relied on made land sacred. The land, for Naboth and the generality of peasants of his time, belonged to the family, tribe or clan as an inheritance (Vengeyi, 2014). For Naboth and his contemporaries, no amount of money therefore, could buy an inheritance (nhaka). It is near impossible to put a commercial price on an inheritance. The value and importance of land is in the fact that one cannot put a commercial price on it. The land for the peasants can be likened to a mother. One cannot despise or changes the mother no matter how she could be like. She will always remain the mother and the only mother In the *VaKaranga* tradition one cannot beat his or her mother (*amai havarohwi unotanda botso*). It is true the world over that every human being has one mother. In light of this religious worldview, it was uncalled for to hear that land could be sold or exchanged.

It was surprising that King Ahab as the custodian of Israelite tradition and customs could stoop that law to make such a stupid proposal. Naboth as a representative of the peasants in Israel conceived that the land had to do with identity, dignity and being. This is even confirmed in the opening verse of 1 Kings 21:1 where Naboth is identified with his vineyard as Naboth the Jezreelite who had a vineyard in Jezreel (Vengeyi, 2014). Reno (2006:14) asserts that Naboth's objection is theological that is, it would be profanation of Yahweh if he

were to sale his vineyard for mere convenience. Ahab's intention was to turn the vineyard of Israel into an Egyptian vegetable garden and this was consistent with his entire policy of re-Canaanization of Israel. He wanted to return to slavery and idolatry which was against Naboth's religious worldview on land.

In the light of the conflict on land between Naboth and Ahab highlighted above, there are many pointers to the Zimbabwean situations which are of paramount importance to the history of land dispossession. The perspective of Naboth represents how the *VaKaranga* people view their land. Colonialism is represented by the desire by Ahab to grab land from Naboth against his wish. The whole story and how Naboth was later killed shows the injustice of Empire towards the less powerful. The injustice perpetuated by Empire is violence. The conflict between Naboth and Ahab represents the extent to which Empire can go to unleash violence in the name of modernity. The change of policy and worldviews for Africans was not done peacefully but violently. Empire could not stop at anything in the bid to take control of African states.

The story of Ahab and Naboth shows how slowly but surely Yahwism was high jacked by the rich elite. Yahweh had become the God of the rulers who amassed a lot of wealth from the land taken from the peasants. The peasants were more like a people without a god. A big transformation of Yahwism from being an ideology preoccupied with liberation of the under classed into an oppression ideology by legitimating ill-gotten wealth. The consequence of this scenario is that the poor did not only lose their land but they lost also their God, their companion in arms (Vengeyi 2013). The loss of land and injustices associated with land resulted in the rise of 8th century prophets like Amos among a few who sided with oppressed hence Amos is known as the prophet of justice.

Bakare stresses that the 8th century prophets condemned the exploitation and oppression of the powerless, which exploitation stems from the imbalances in the control of land, (Micah 3:3-12, Isaiah: 3:13-15, they also protest against latifundialization which means a very expensive parcel of privately owned land (Isaiah 5:8), (Bakare 1993:5). These prophets protested against unjust land ownership patterns that in turn created unjust socio-economic systems. The land ownership patterns in Israel had shifted. In this regard Bakare (1993:6) also specified that, land ownership rapidly shifted its domain from patrimonial to the capitalistic mode of production and this new economic order caused extensive social injustice. It is indeed true that there were fluctuating perceptions of land during the time of 8th century prophets.

3.4 Tangwena the Biblical Naboth

In 1964 white Landowners were advised and assisted to evict African squatters so as to make all land classified as being within the European area as white as possible. In 1965 Hanmer, a white farmer who had occupied the land which belonged to the Tangwena people called an enumerator from the lands Inspectorate to check the boundaries of his estate and take account of African squatters. He was told that the Tangwena people were living in the estate, notices were served for them to leave and if they did not, they would be liable to pay a fine of 100 pounds but the Tangwena people did not move.

The Tangwena people were offered an alternative home in Gokwe district, a flat barren area and about 400 miles away by road from their original home. Rekayi Tangwena on behalf of his people as the chief declined the offer as they did not want to live in an area so different in climate from their own. More so, to leave their mother land and its sacredness was too

difficult to imagine. Being removed from their land meant being disoriented from reality.

Exactly a month later Rekayi Tangwena received the following letter from Hanmer:

I understand you are living in Tsatse Kraal area on Gaeresi Ranch. You have never worked for me to my knowledge, and I never gave you leave to settle on this property. When Mr Dunn the enumerator came around in August to take census of the population and to give notice to quit to certain people, you apparently were not there. It would appear that you have come into Tsatse Kraal area on my property since August 1965, and therefore it must be assumed that you have come in since illegally, hence this short notice to quit the property by the 12th of October 1966 (Nelson, 1972:6).

The Tangwena people were later on removed through violence in form of destroying their crops and burning and destroying their huts. The Tangwena story shows how white hegemony violently destroyed the African way of living and any resistance was met by violence.

To Chief Tangwena, land, human dignity and selfhood are inseparable. By Evicting one from his land symbolised the uprooting of the soul of that person and converting one into a status comparable to upgraded slavery. He saw his eviction as a challenge to African manhood and an insult to the African personality. Time and again in defence of his right to land of his birth Tangwena stressed the fact that he could not and would never agree to move from the land bequeathed to him by his ancestors. In many ways the conflict was a clash between Western notions and values in respect to land rights and African traditional values. It was a conflict between a cosmological world view which accepted the alienation of land rights and another to which such values were ridiculously out-landish (Moyana, 1984:155).

3.5 Spirituality of the Land from a Womanist Perspective

A mother is sacred in Zimbabwean culture and she is revered to the extent that it is a serious offense to wrong your mother. In the VaKaranga societies a mother is a sacred being and the death of a mother is very difficult to contain. There is always an idiomatic expression where the VaKaranga would say *nherera isina baba irinani pane nherera isina mai*. It simply entails that an orphan without a father is better than the one without a mother. The love and caring attitude of the mother is highly cherished among the VaKaranga people. This ability to take care of the family even when the father is not around makes the mother a hero. If land is a mother, the hero of the family, where is the space of the mother in land ownership and use? As alluded in the previous chapter, land is a symbol of motherhood. Gaidzanwa (2006:6) asserts that motherhood is hailed and held in high esteem as long as it conforms to socially approved wifedom. Mungoshi (1990) depicts a mother as a tough and fearsome character. In Marechera's *House of Hunger* the mother is portrayed as a fearsome woman who beats her son for speaking to her in English (Gaidzanwa, 2006:6). This shows how motherhood is revered among the VaKaranga with the potential to punish the children. It is also so among the VaKaranga people that land can punish the occupants if they misbehave and such punishment include among others drought, floods and diseases.

This assertion makes sense, and indeed neatly connects with the concept that land is mother. If land is understood and appreciated as a mother, it is therefore a symbol of identity for the VaKaranga in the same manner a mother is a symbol of identity to her children. Land is connected to the lives of VaKaranga in the same way a mother is connected to the lives of her children. It becomes clear that if you do not have land you are more like you do not have a mother the source of all love, care and protection. Dispossession of land by the whites meant that Africans were deprived of their connectivity to the motherland the source of care

and comfort. The cry for land is demonstrated by the daughters of Zelophehad even before the settlement when they discovered that their father's name was not on the list of beneficiaries in the land of Canaan.

3.6 Daughters of Zelophehad

The complaint of Zelophehad's daughters (Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah) presupposes that the name of a man, the continued existence which was important and was taken seriously, and could be preserved only in association with the inheritance of land by his descendants. If then there were no sons of Zelophehad to share in the territory of the clan in question, then at least the daughters of Zelophehad should be associated with their cousins. The divine judgement in verse 7 gives the daughters of Zelophehad such a right and the judgement is at once, transformed into a ruling to be generally valid for Israel (Noth, 1970:211).

“Give us our possession among our father's brothers, backed by this rationale: why should the name of father be taken away from his clan because he has no son”. This story of the bold action of these women naturally follows the account of the second census. One of the primary roles of the census was to apportion the land. The action of these daughters raises questions not only about inheritance laws of women but also about the character of this new generation (Stubbs, 2009:207). Their request to Moses raises the issue of what principle was more basic that of patrilineal inheritance or that of equitable distribution of resources according to economic needs.

Given that the law concerning daughters in their situation was perpetual, and thus, not simply a matter of initial division of the Promised Land, more is at stake namely the economic independence and livelihoods of the daughters and other women in similar positions (Stubbs, 2009:209).

God's resolution made clear that the most basic principle of the distribution and inheritance system is not that women cannot possess or inherit land. The ruling showed that the patrilineal system was in service to the more basic concerns that the tribal land structure should remain intact and that there should be an equitable distribution of land to the tribes and the tribes' members according to the need. This ruling has implications for women's rights within the people of God. One can reason that given the demise of the tribal land system in Israel's later history, there is no reason for women not to own and inherit land (Stubbs, 2009:209).

The ruling also informs the Christian understanding of the relationship between men and women. Here God seems to be guiding Moses and Israel in a way that suggest one aspect of patriarchal system of Israel, that is, the typical passing of land from fathers to sons, rather than from parents to sons and daughters. This should not be interpreted as a signpost towards some kind of natural set up by God concerning the relationship between men and women. Instead it is best interpreted as a contextual system set up in part to preserve the tribal structure of Israel, not as universal system based on the natural authority and rights of men. At the very least, the recorded divine guidance concerning male inheritance rights is secondary to divine concerns for the equality and economic viability of women, should the two come into conflict (Stubbs, 2009:209).

In places and part of the Christian Churches where the relationship between men and women is still being negotiated, Numbers 27 v1-11 provides one example how God is at work with the people of God, showing at the very least that concern for economic viability of women is more important than upholding systems of male privilege. The boldness of the daughters of Zelophehad is based on their trust in the goodness and justice of Moses and God in their right understanding of what that goodness and justice entails (Stubbs, 2009:210).

The daughters of Zelophehad challenged the earlier legislation which recognised inheritance only through sons (Deuteronomy 21:15-17). In this text women are given a measure of legal dignity through the praxis of the daughters of Zelophehad (Brown et al., 1990:91).

“This lands my sister.... So begin a song, a song so sad and yet so full of sound and fury. This is the sound of the women who sweat working on the land and strike the hard earth with hoes. The fury of working on borrowed land and the fear of being disposed loom high above them. They till the land in good times and bad times (Getecha & Chipika 1995:54). They feed the nation. These are the women who will only rest when mother earth claims them back to her and yet in life, they never owned the land they slave on. The land is her only source of livelihood. The song of the dispossessed is sung all over the country at different pitches. First it is a low murmuring in the wind and then it reaches fever pitch as the struggle for the land ensues.

The land belongs to the men. The wife and children do not exist where ownership is concerned. Only their labour counts and to add insult to injury women do not control the proceeds from the land (Getecha & Chipika, 1995:54). What chances does a woman therefore, have to stand up and fight for a piece of land which she was tilling in the absence of the husband? This is just a tip of the iceberg for women suffer in silence as far as land rights are concerned. There is therefore, need for praxis if women are to survive this injustice to liberate them.

Zagano and Tilley (1999:93) remarks that since women are created equally *imago Dei*, then it is incumbent on the community today to acknowledge in word, deed and structure the graced identity of its female members. The history of women`s holiness largely erased from public memory by patriarchal traditions but now being critically retrieved by feminist scholarship

serves as a source of empowerment in the struggle for justice. The overcoming of this amnesia connects the community of today not with figments of imagination but with a living cloud of witnesses in whose company resistance to all kinds of domination and action for a healed world receives a strong encouraging shot of hope.

Acceptance to Christianity demands not only a break with traditional religious system but also an abandonment of the African cultural background. The daughters of Zelophehad demonstrated the possibility of women to rise against traditional religious systems and come up victorious as shall be demonstrated in Chapter six by women who challenged injustice of the Third Chimurenga.

3.7 The Zimbabwean land question in global perspective: A case study of Palestine

The Biblical view on land is not independent from Western scholarship particularly with a slant that land belongs to nobody, but to those with power. Between 1920 and 1930s the British colonial government pledged full support to the Zionist movement in the process of taking land from the Palestinians and materialization of the settler project. Prior to the British rule the Palestinian land tenure system was structured in a characteristically pre-capitalist form and this was an impediment to land commodification and transfer (Abdo-Zubi, 1989:78). The Land Transfer Ordinances was passed in 1920 to facilitate the dispossession of land from the indigenous people replacing the Ottoman Land Code of 1857 which provided protection against dispossession of the peasants from their land (Abdo 1992:59).

Palestinians suffered from the unkind policies of land dispossession; illegal settlement combined with rampant discrimination from Israel since the occupation first began in June 1967. Palestinians were deprived of their basic rights by disrupting every aspect of daily life in the occupied Palestinian territories by Israel's military rule (<http://www.opendocs.ids.ac.uk>).

It is through this violence that Israel controls and determines the life of Palestinians. The violence and injustice have gone to the extent that Israelites determines when and how Palestinians can travel to work or school, go abroad, visit their relatives, earn a living or attend a protest (Abdo 1992:61). This deprivation of basic rights of Palestinians with the backing of Britain and America has caused untold suffering among the Palestinians. Anyone fighting for the rights of the oppressed Palestinians is labelled a traitor. As is the policy of an empire to introduce repressive laws, Palestinians are controlled through a web of complex laws designed to crush those who protest against Israel occupation of Palestine.

Legal and illegal coercive measures were used in a one-way transfer of land from Palestinians to Zionist settlers which include taxation, imprisonment and collective punishment. “Land confiscation sometimes took place for demographic reasons in order to try to keep a Jewish majority in all areas of the state especially in the Galilee with its high concentration of surviving Palestinian villages” (Stasiulis, 1995:298). As is noted by Raja Shehadeha Palestinian lawyer that: “the worst thing is the sense of being a stranger in your own land and feeling that not a single part of it is yours”.

Palestinians were forced off their land, their homes and livelihoods were destroyed and settlements that exclusively house Jewish Israel settlers were created. In some instances, the entire communities were displaced from their home and 100000 hectares of land was seized by the Israel settlement project including for construction and Agricultural use (Abdo-Zubi, 1989:78). “Most chocking is how governments from other countries around the world are letting goods produced in these settlements into their market and allowing companies in their countries to operate in such oppressive settlements” (Abdo-Zubi, 1989:78). This shows how a country regarded as the birth place of Jesus Christ may use biblical influence to commit

crimes against humanity on the principle of Biblical supremacy with the backing of America and her allies.

The Palestinian crisis of land shows the extent to which Eurocentric Christianity can influence violence under the guise of Promised Land. When the Palestinian economy was steadily going into recession under the strain of these restrictions, Israel was busy building multibillion-dollar business out of the suffering of Palestinian nationals. It was also exporting hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of settlement goods internationally each year. I can draw parallels from the Zimbabwe situation where there were mass evacuations of people from their homes and resource looted from Zimbabwe by the colonizers were used to develop their mother lands. It can therefore, be concluded that it seems the land grabbers use the methodology of violence and repressive laws.

3.8 The Role of the Church

During this time, the church failed to be relevant in addressing the unjust land tenure mainly, because the church was also involved in the process of dispossessing Zimbabweans from their land. Rev C Helm played a critical role in persuading Lobengula to sign the Rudd Concession in 1888, which shows that the church right from the beginning was never faithful to spreading the gospel without a bias towards colonialism. Bakare (1993:61) states that, Land was grabbed from its rightful owners and some of it was given to missionaries to establish mission farms and schools. This observation is indeed true as the history of Zimbabwe clearly shows that the church contributed to underdevelopment, exploitation and oppression of blacks. Vengeyi (2013:195) observes that there is overwhelming evidence which shows that they contributed immensely to the economic disadvantaging of the general public owing to the vast acreage of the land in their ownership.

It is further critical to note the argument by Desmond Tutu who says “when the white man came into our country he had the bible and we had the land, the white man said to us, let us pray, after the prayer the white man had land and we had the Bible”. This is also further confirmed in the words of Takatso Mofokeng when he says:

It is shocking to notice that the white colonial church failed to address this violent process of dispossession as a theological issue. It was never called a sin against God and against African people. This church also failed to develop a theology that could have stopped this process, in spite of the fact that violence was perpetrated right in front of their eyes. The missionaries saw our people turned into beggars and wanderers and instead of confronting those who sinned against them, they identified the victims as objects of mission who were taught not to steal and not to be violent. They were taught that their inheritance was safe in heaven from thieves (1997:44).

Bakare (1993:42) alludes to the fact that the *Pioneer Column* did not see anything morally wrong with the idea of fighting for land even if it was belonging to other people. The British South African Company’s desire was to invade Zimbabwe in order to occupy it and plunder resources. Technically and diplomatically, the British were calculative to use force and diplomacy in order to obtain the land. That became a historical event in which land was lost to the British. Rhodesia was established by right of conquest (violence).

The same sentiments raised by Desmond Tutu are echoed by Ngugi waThiongo from an African global perspective when he asserts that, the missionaries taught us to close our eyes to pray to God. When we opened our eyes the missionaries’ brother had stolen our land. When we started making noise demanding our land back, the missionaries taught us to forget all earthly wealth and turn our minds and hearts to God and our treasure will be great in heaven (waThiongo, 1972:33).

When the original pioneer column crossed the Limpopo in 1890, it was accompanied by a party of Jesuits who operated medical facilities and the first school in the company settlement. The growing Roman Catholic mission to the African population was soon joined by missionaries sent out by Anglican bodies, British and American Methodist, Congregationalist and the Dutch Reformed Church. In addition to the services that they provided to both settlers and the African communities; company officials also welcomed the missionaries as agents of social control. In Rhodes' own words "the missionaries are more effective and less costly than the police" (Nelson, 1983:18). This actually epitomise the role of the church in land theft and suggest that if it was not for missionaries, colonisation of Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular could have failed. The missionaries were used to pacify the *VaKaranga* people to forgive and forget.

When Christianity made its renewed appearance in the *Shona* country around the close of the 19th century, it did so at the time when European colonial powers were extending their own influence in Africa. It has sometimes been implied that the *Shona* saw the coming of missionaries as a direct consequence of the occupation of their land by the colonizers and that therefore, the link between missions and government later affected the progress of Christianity. Although the missionary enterprise itself seemed to be of a different paradigm from that of settlers but they would sometimes treat Africans the same way as the colonisers. When missionaries referred to Africans as savage, ignorant and superstitious, it was in fact expressing the same general feeling of European Afrikaanschaung (Dachs, 1973:25; Bediako, 1995). The church played a major role in promoting violence against the *VaKaranga* people.

Samkange (1973:258) toured the same line of thinking that the church played a major role in Land theft when he said the invaders from Fort Victoria held a church service before departure. Led by Army Chaplains they sang “Onward Marching Christian Soldiers” and mounted on a pulpit of ammunition cases, they were told by Revd Sylvester that the Sons of Ham must be destroyed. Zimbabweans were seen as sons of Ham who deserved nothing but brutal treatment, and all this was coming from the Church. The Church therefore, cannot escape from the blame of fuelling colonialism.

More so, Christian missionaries practised racial discrimination to the same extent as the white settlers. White missionaries baptised black babies but black ministers never baptised white babies. The white missionary had privilege over black counterpart. The black priest travelled up and down on a bicycle, while the missionary drove the car. The white missionary was paid a higher salary than the black priest. Missionaries also condemned African culture as evil and devilish and identified western civilisation with the Christian way of life. African songs, dances and even drums were banned as pagan. African traditional healers were derisively dubbed witch doctors and called forces of evil. African names were replaced by white names at baptism (Thomas, 1978:73). This shows that there was thin line between evangelisation and colonisation.

Ranger, Chimhundu and Ndhlovu (year of publication) have also disclosed how missionaries and the colonial intention to standardise native languages contributed immensely to the invention of ethnicity. Vernacular languages were to be codified and orthography established for the missionary educational and administrative purposes thus, language was also used as powerful tool of oppression. It was Clement Doke who was assigned by the Rhodesian government to research the language varieties spoken by natives for purpose of

standardisation into monolithic and homogeneous linguistic categories. As put by Doke himself, his purpose was a settlement of the language challenges involving the unification all the dialects in Zimbabwe into a literary form for educational purposes (Ndhlvu-Gatsheni, 2009:100). Language is a powerful tool of exploitation. Once the people speak the same language it becomes easy to manipulate them. It is surprising that even up to know English is the official language of Zimbabwe. Institutions and churches run their conferences in English and speaking fluent English is a mark of civilisation.

Manyoba (1993) argues that mission farms were created as a way of alienating Africans from their way of life. The mission stations were to serve as a settlement of Christian example to the rest of the pagan world. At the beginning, anyone could live on the mission station but as time went on only those prepared to observe the church`s teaching could stay on the mission Farm. The regulations embracing the teachings included total abstinence from beer, monogamous marriage, avoiding heathen dances and ancestral worship (Banana, 1991:66). The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is having challenges with its tenants who are occupying the Mission Farms particularly with regard to burial rites. The church has established communal burial sites which the tenants are denying on the basis of their religious faith. The tenants want to bury their relatives on their land near their home not at designated burial sites.

The church was supposed to opt for the disposed in order for justice to prevail but this was not the case. Bakare (1993:69) appropriates this understanding of Justice from the eighth century prophetic traditions where justice means protecting and siding with the poor, the disadvantaged. The prophets are the spokespersons of the exploited poor and so should be the church in Zimbabwe. He, thus, argues that if the church is to be on the side of the landless poor and speak on their behalf then it has to remove the speck of saw dusts in its eyes.

The main focus rests particularly on how Zimbabweans were denied their God given right to land by the settler regime. Zimbabweans were not only alienated but also lost their land rights. This is quite true because Zimbabweans lost their land to the settlers who had no concern for their wellbeing during the colonial period because of the oppressive system that had been created. According to Vengeyi (2013:204), the settlers' concern was to further the interest of their mother countries through economic and political enterprise, and it is therefore, a fallacy to think that they were concerned about affording Zimbabweans a better life. Bakare further explains how Zimbabweans lost their land through violence and repressive land acts that were instituted specifically to alienate Zimbabweans from their land.

The liberation struggles and their aims were the desire to regain freedom and land rights remained very much alive and undefeated in the hearts of Zimbabweans. Hence it is this desire for freedom that manifested itself through the liberation struggles in 1896/7 (First Chimurenga) and 1966-1979 (Second Chimurenga). On April 8, 1980, Zimbabweans finally realized their independence. And as Bakare insists, the land rights and the land reform were to be the main tasks to be solved by the majority government upon gaining this independence. It is, however, unfortunate that the majority in government did not treat the issue of land as a matter of urgency and that the church did not practice its prophetic role in challenging the injustice on land imbalances as such this resulted in the eruption of the poor.

The dividing line between evangelization and colonization has been and remains so fluid and difficult to discern. The church did not take its role faithfully during the colonization period and even post colonization. The church has preoccupied itself in state theology which gives divine authority to the state in the name of law and order and renounces all violence towards

or criticism of the State (Romans 13vs1-7), and church theology which does not involve any analysis of the society and applies traditional themes of reconciliation, justice and non-violence while supporting a blanket condemnation of what is called violence.

Gorongu and Dimingu (2017) argue that the church supported the spiritual needs of colonialism by providing chaplains to the white colonizers. Moreover, by possessing land that was taken away from natives, the missionaries demonstrated they were part and parcel of the colonization machinery.

Banana (1980:16) argues that “the prayer of anguish by the oppressed and impoverished Black people is a judgement upon our Churches which have become mere shrines and ancient relics that are interested in the preservation of their own institutions”. They pose as rescue squads preoccupied with mopping up the wreckage of the dispossessed through charity programs. True Liberation of man will only come when the root causes of human injustice are removed (Banana 1980:16). Above all those who are disenchanted with religion may awaken anew to the fact that the God we adore is not a dead or weak God but, alive and active in creating and recreating man and his environment.

He further posits that, we live in a world of potential holocaust, due to the refusal of the Western powers to acknowledge the emerging third world presence (Banana 1980:17). If these Western powers continue to maintain arrogant attitudes towards ‘Third world’, integrity and advancement all hope for meaningful dialogue will diminish. For Banana ‘Third World’ people must be free to control their own political and economic resources and social and cultural destiny. The western powers will ignore this new reality at their own peril. For him, solidarity shall take precedence over individualism and humanistic ideologies will emerge to combat those who oppress others.

He advocated for an advent of a political reality aimed at the future of revolutionary nationalism and the establishment of socialism as a change agent and a response to the challenge of powerlessness. The challenge to the Church will be to take the defending position in supporting and initiating struggle for liberation, rather than remaining aloof. While this publication by Banana was on the eve of independence, the projection for revolutionary violence is evident in his writings. This research utilises these insights and blend them with a social ethics of land and justices.

Churches are sacraments of hope, visible signs that hope is available for the world; a hope that can be understood and assimilated by the world. The church serves as a channel of hope, reaching out to others. It is the role of the church to represent the liberation of God, maintaining an awareness of the need for righteousness. The church stands with the needy and those who see liberation, ready to encourage or rebuke and ready to show the way. While not necessarily becoming the enemy of the powerful, it must maintain distance to avoid the danger of being swallowed by the powerful. The church is both the sacrament of righteousness and the conscience of society. “Liberation ensures that peace in our society stays, grows and overflows” (7th AACC Assembly Report 1997:117).

3.9 Conclusion

The chapter has unearthed the fact that land is very central in the Bible and pointed how Naboth was prepared to die for his land as an inheritance from his ancestors. The chapter also revealed the extent at which Empire can go in order to possess land. Tangwena is also sighted as an example of a Zimbabwean who was prepared to fight and defend his right to land. The chapter also revealed the spirituality of land from a womanist perspective where land is equated to motherhood.

The daughters of Zelophehad played a critical role in championing a revolution against male privileges in land allocation and proved that God is not on the side of the oppressor but the oppressed. These daughters were granted their father's inheritance amongst his relations because they challenged patriarchy without fear. This is a lesson to women that freedom is in their action and courage. More importantly the chapter pointed out how the church failed to come up with a theology to defend the VaKaranga people when their land was taken violently from them. The church instead, acted as handmaids and assisted the colonizers to have the land as is sighted in the chapter. This failure by the Church to take the side of those suffering the injustice further complicated the situation which resulted in the Third Chimurenga. In the next chapter I will explore a liberation theological framework.

CHAPTER 4

A LIBERATION THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1 Introduction

Chapter three engaged a theological imagination of land justice in the Bible and how the VaKaranga perceive of the land. The praxis of resistance to land seizure and land rights is demonstrated through the role of Naboth, Tangwena and the daughters of Zelophehad who protested against oppression in land rights. The crisis of the church and its theology which fails to stand and affirm the side of the poor has been criticised in chapter 3. Land in the bible is a justice issue more than it can appeal politically although it is a fluid relationship. This chapter therefore, lays a foundation for a liberation framework by describing briefly some of the key axioms that make up the content of liberation theology. These are currents and under currents of Liberation Theology.

It should be highlighted that Christianity is the faith of the Apostles, and not necessarily a new faith. The faith of the church should link to the sufferings and hopes of the people in order to liberative hope to the oppressed among its adherents in this world. There is need to question the liberating potential subsumed in the Christian faith. Christianity should be a faith that does not only promise eternal life, but also a just and worthy life here on earth. It should be questioned on the image of God that emerges from the struggles of the oppressed people in the quest for liberation. Aspects of the mystery of Christ should be seen in the relevance of liberation. What accents do the poor give to their Marian devotion? This is an ethics of life, a critical ethics from the victims. Now I shall discuss the creative and strategic liberating development of such life. Victims, when they irrupt in history, create new things. The axioms which lay the foundation for a liberation theological framework to be discussed in this

chapter include among others Christology, ecclesiology, stereology, justice, resurrection, preferential option for the impoverished, grace, praxis, context, liberation theology and revolution and reading the bible from below.

The key axioms which make up the content of liberation theology are very pivotal in the methodological discourse of liberation theology. The identity of liberation theology cannot be clearly exhumed without pointing to the above themes. Any discourse on liberation theology which underrates the highlighted themes makes the discourse irrelevant. The raised themes also speak to the context of the *VaKaranga* and how they related to their liberation and their conditions of life as a dominated race. The themes give impetus for the *VaKaranga* to fight for their liberation as victims who erupt in history and create a new society.

Profound transformation of the private property system is only assured by liberation. The same liberation can represent true access to power for the exploited, and a true social revolution that would replace dependence, allowing for a fuller change of the society, creating a socialist society (Gutierrez, 1990). It is a radical social and political transformation that is necessary, but it would be a mistake to think that liberation is only a matter of social and political transformation but a liberation that is integral and holistic recognizing life in more dimensions and seeks to transform each level.

4.2 Levels of Liberation

Gutiérrez (1990:23-24) discerns three interrelated distinctive liberation level. The levels incorporate; the social, the personal, and the theological level. These levels of liberation correlate with what the *VaKaranga* view as total liberation. At the social level, concerns are directed towards concrete liberation in historical contexts that show oppression, the marginalisation and exploitation. This level pays attention to critical issues of poverty and

how wretched humanity has been set wherein so many people struggle to stay afloat. The poverty and dehumanization of the *VaKaranga* has a history of white supremacy, as such the *VaKaranga* people cannot be viewed as lazy, but as victims of circumstances. Poverty for the *VaKaranga*, in other words, is a social construction.

It cannot be ignored that black poverty in Zimbabwe is a result of concrete historical acts of deliberate dispossession, as such a continual act of violence against the local blacks will be an act of injustice. Mawondo (2008) point out that “while the mere fact of poverty is not necessarily indicative of the existence of injustice, the existence of poverty due to deliberate acts of dispossession and marginalisation is evidence of injustice”. Accepting that pre-independence disparities due to dispossession remain an injustice is the only way we can we assume reconciliation and forgiveness is possible without addressing the said injustice.

Kaulemu (2008:10) reveals that “the Lancaster House Constitution shows clearly that Zimbabwe’s land question is not just heirs to solve on her own”. External interests have continued to determine how this problem is addressed. This speaks to the fact that poverty in Zimbabwe can be traced historically to the dispossession of land by the indigenous people through white violence and legislation.

Level two is the personal which objectifies a freedom that is profoundly inner. “It is an expression of the inner longing of persons to be the artisans of their own destiny. It marks humankind’s assumption of conscious responsibility for its own future” (Gutierrez 1990:24). These levels of liberation are also articulated by the Boff brothers (Boff & Boff, 1989:11). For the *VaKaranga* this is quest for belonging in a society where they have been pushed to the periphery of the society. This can also be interpreted as Kairos consciousness when the

VaKaranga realised that they were exploited even psychologically by affirming the whites as the superior race. This is a personal, private or perhaps, even the psychological realm.

Level number 3 constitutes the theological view which looks into our communion with Christ and liberation from sin. “It manifests itself in the value or principle of love in a turning away from a selfish gaze on oneself and turning towards God and neighbour and is commonly identified as the religious or spiritual dimension of life” (Bell 2004: 56). The third level, which is the religious level, has a serious bearing on the Third Chimurenga (*Jambanja*) for this revolution was started by spirit mediums within the *VaKaranga* clan expressing the dismay of ancestors over the abuse of land by the whites. This was a religious war started by religious practitioners. One cannot talk of land in Zimbabwe while isolating the role played by spirit mediums. The first, second and third Chimurengas in Zimbabwe were projects of spirit mediums. Land for the *VaKaranga* is a sign of unity (*mwana wevhu*) son or daughter of the soil: that expression is enough to garner solidarity among the *VaKaranga* people.

4.3 Revolution and liberation

“Liberation theologians believe that social reform, such as religious and political progressives advocate, is too slow and timid” (Gutierrez 1990:7). The theology of liberation does not represent an old social gospel, rather, it is revolutionary. It is true that the moment revolution is mentioned a kind of nervousness grips people for fear of violence since most revolutions associates with violence. Liberation theologians have often pointed to the irony of Americans who celebrate their own annual violent revolution on July 4, while condemning revolutions of other people. It is important to note that liberation theologians, feminist theologians included, are not necessarily calling for gradual reform to the social orders; it is a call to radical change in social structures and customs.

Dussel (2013:303) asserts that “Liberation theology represents a paradigm shift in theology obvious because of its objectivity. Objectivity is not valued; involvement is the door to good theology”. The goal is not that of a correct doctrine nor is right understanding the goal, but right praxis and social revolution. Oppressed consciousness and the struggle for liberation are tied inextricably with knowledge. Social change is attained not only on the level of progress and development, there is need for revolution too. The way in which liberation theology respond to modernity also represents a paradigm shift.

The challenge to liberation theology in the era of modernity is not so much unbelief as oppression, but the Enlightenment which has always been viewed as the preserve of the privileged classes. Modernity has been viewed as a mixed blessing to the elite. “It cracked open the door to equality for all (as in the French Revolution), but it did not push it open or even allow the oppressed to move through it” (Dussel 2013:304). They would prefer a theology that stops preoccupying itself with modern scepticism and lack of belief since it appears that such answers are already available interlectually and the new focus should be on the poor, the oppressed, who are left behind by the modern system in its project of progress.

It is a revolution in that the nonperson who are not being acknowledged by the prevailing social order should start to appear in the picture of recognition. Such groups encompass the poor, the exploited, those systematically and lawfully disadvantaged of their human status. “Non-persons represent a challenge not primarily to our religious world but to our economic, socio, political and cultural world as their existence is a call to a revolutionary transformation of the very foundations of our dehumanizing society” (Gutierrez 1990:7).

I should emphasize one point, one thought running through Olson's summary, which is the focus of theology of liberation where society is revolutionized in terms of how justice is assured for the poor in any new socio-economic order. Jesus Christ is viewed as a freedom fighter, a man of his time, a patriotic Jew upon whom the vicious political issues of his day impinged agonisingly (Grounds 1985:112). He was involved in the seditious activity against Rome. "Believing this, it was therefore God's will that Jesus in the first century Palestine would help release Israel from the heathen yoke of the Romans" (Grounds 1985:112). In agreement to the assertion that liberation theology is a revolution, the Third Chimurenga can be classified as Third Revolution, a Shona word meaning people involved in a struggle for justice and liberation from all forms of oppression and human subjugation.

Considering the dovetailing pieces of evidence and this supposition is not as incredible as it first sounds. For one thing, Jesus was raised a subject people who hated the Roman overlords and plotted rebellion against them (Grounds 1985:112). He must have been educated as much on the legends of the Galilean freedom fighters as in Jewish law. For another thing in the bible, He is recorded as scathingly denouncing the Pharisees and Herodians, but is never recorded as saying a single word in criticism of the Zealots, those fanatical militant, violent Jews who were prepared to fight and die for freedom (Grounds 1985:112). The description and image of Jesus presented here is of a freedom fighter who stood for justice and freedom of the oppressed. This is the Jesus which the church in Zimbabwe and all over must preach and follow.

Jesus also chose a Zealot to be a member of his inner circle named Simon the Canaanite, according to Mark, but identified openly as Simon the Zealot by Luke. Jesus' reply to the most explosive issues of his day like the payment of tribute to Caesar was clearly seditious as

well as the cleansing of the Temple and triumphal entry into Jerusalem was consciously revolutionary. His Messianic program included the downfall of both the Roman dominance and the establishment of a new social order and authority (Ground 1985:122). Jesus occupied a super revolutionary position calling for transformation which lay a whole dimension beyond politics and economics, little as our Saviour disparaged the herd realities of human existence. “Jesus is the greatest friend of humanity, the most dangerous adversary of the established order in the world of violence, falsehood and base compromise” (Ground 1985:122). He is regarded as a true and magnificent Evangelist, and the most radical revolutionary of all time. “He is the inaccessible source from whence revolutions break through the herd ground, the eternal principle of non-submission of the Spirit to Caesar no matter who he maybe and the unjust force. So, as the greatest Evangelist, Jesus was the greatest revolutionary. His revolution was in the power of suffering love” (Ground 1985:122). This revolution would change the social character of the society. Revolution therefore, is a critical framework for liberation.

4.4 Dependency

The theory of dependence is another major current premise in liberation theology that has a direct bearing on its methodology. This theory is the point of departure for many liberationists’ works and often the term liberation is defined in its context. In a word the theory of dependence sees the society in a dependent and oppressive relationship to the centres of the Capitalist world (Haight 1985:4). Moreover, this structure is internalized within the dependent countries where the Wealthy few who are the agents of the industrialized centres maintain a system that keeps the masses in a dependent and oppressive poverty (Haight 1985:4). The majority of those who do not want change are those in position of authority. In farms owned by the whites the managers, foreman and supervisors are used to

oppress their fellow brothers and sisters and they are enjoying several benefits for being agents of the oppressive system.

Dependency involves an acute and sustained study of the causes of poverty and places it in an international context and look for ways to break the dependency on the main centres of power and their influence. It is a qualitative step forward in trying to understand the situation of the oppressed. “Its presence in the framework of liberation theology derives precisely from its contribution to social analysis. In this way dependency theory fulfils the role of a tool of understanding those aspects of socio-economic reality of the poor and the oppressed in their context” (Rowland 1999:22). Patrella (2006:72) contends that dependency theory provided the framework within which reality was analysed, the picture of the enemy to be fought in pursuit of liberation and the choice of the weapons by which to fight best.

The theory of dependence has gone to the extent that some of the *VaKaranga* people are still lamenting the absence of the white colonial farmers whom they view as the best by all standards, and find it difficult to continue to envision life without murungu (white). They are victims of a colonial system capable of colonizing the mind.

Dependency can become a theological praxis as was reflected in Latin America when the foreign debt reached fever pitch in the 1980s, involving national political leaders and international agencies. Liberation theologians considered that the debt was contracted under conditions of complicity between the rich and the government and was not used to help the poor (Rowland 1999:22). This became the basis for praxis and the poor and oppressed protested against the dependence syndrome. Enrique Dussel’s work on liberation theologian and liberation philosophy of which he was a proponent, is crucial to any student interested in knowledge and power decolonization. Dussel’s article put more thrust on the fundamentality

of the modern/colonial structures of knowledge shaping the foundational epistemology of universities in the West and the implications it has in decolonizing knowledge.

The article addresses pertinent issues on the structure of knowledge. It questions the possibility of the canon of thought in Westernised Universities bases their disciplines of the Social Sciences and Humanities on the knowledge produced by a few men from five countries in Western Europe (Italy, France, England, Germany and the USA)? This is clear monopoly of knowledge. It further questions the queer possibility of men from the five countries in achieving such an epistemic privilege such that only their knowledge is considered superior today over the rest of the world. Such monopoly of knowledge in the whole world would be astounding. The same critical review can be placed on why it is that what all we know today as social, historical, philosophical, or Critical Theory can be referred to the socio-historical experience and world views of these five countries. This actually has created another problem of dependency on the knowledge of the great Nation. Africa and Africans must become of age and come up with their theology which speaks to their spirituality. The church also depended on grants from overseas and this has rendered the church ineffective when it comes to challenging dependency syndrome.

Dussel (2013) also talks about epistemic privilege and inferiority and asserts that, epistemic inferiority is the other side of this epistemic privilege. “Epistemic privilege and epistemic inferiority are two sides of the same coin”. Epistemic racism/ sexism represents the coming in this scenario. Epistemic inferiority is perpetuated and fuelled more but a dependence syndrome where Africans think of themselves as inferior to the Western world and for the *VaKaranga* murungu (white) must do exceptionally well while their sons and daughters

perform dismally. If the VaKaranga were to remain rooted on the help from the whites and forget that they were slaves in their country of birth, Third Chimurenga could have been a dream and not a reality. Dependence is therefore, a fundamental framework for liberation.

Kaunda (2015) talk about perpetual self-negation by Africans which requires decolonization of the African mind. Decoloniality argues that coloniality of the mind is a key constraint and a sight for the struggle for authentic African humanity, political progress, social transformation and economic development. Emancipating the mind is the first step towards true liberation.

4.5 Salvation as integral liberation

The levels of liberation as alluded above pave way for a discussion of salvation as a theme of land in the *VaKaranga* discourse. The doctrine of salvation lies at the heart of Christian faith and must therefore be central to any preconception of theology. As such, it stands central to liberation theology which places its concern for the liberation of the oppressed at the centre of its doctrine ((De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio, 1994:190). Salvation is also seen as operating at the level of empowering people to take responsibility for themselves in history in the pursuit of the creation of a new humanity and a new kind of society.

The concept of integral liberation emerges from the recognition by the Christina Church that salvation is not purely otherworldly and spiritual. “Salvation is the communion of human beings with God and among themselves and is something which embraces all human reality, transforms it, and leads it to its fullness in Christ” (Bell 2005:86). The salvation that Christ brought is a radical emancipation from all forms of misery, all despoliation, and recovery from alienation. Christ’s salvation embraces all of human reality, the personal and social dimensions as well as the religious dimension. Hence, liberating historical events are part of

the growth of the Kingdom; they are salvific events, even if they are neither the culmination of the Kingdom nor all of salvation (Bell 2005:86).

Quantitatively, the issues that emerge from the idea of salvation traditionally has been dealt with under the classical question which was limited to the “salvation of the pagans.” This is considered quantitatively and extensively as the aspect of salvation; it is about the number of people who will be saved, the chance of being saved and the function of the Church plays in enhancing salvation (Gutierrez, 1974:36). The universality of salvation defines the problem whilst also using the visibility of the Church as the conveyor of salvation. “The evolution of the question has not been straightforward and it can be therefore, be said that this evolution has ended” (Gutierrez, 1974:36). As articulated by Paul in his letter to Timothy, the ideal of God’s universality has been established. It has overcome the difficulties posed by various ways of understanding the mission of the Church and has attained definite acceptance. “All that is left to do is to consider the ramifications, which are many” (Gutierrez 1974:36). Brief consideration must be given to one important point leaving the repercussions for the idea on ecclesiological matters for later treatment.

Salvation as implied in this view point carries a dual very well-defined characteristic. Salvation is viewed as a life cure for sins; the same cure is in presented as virtue of a salvation to be attained in the afterlife. It is, therefore, important to understand how a person can attain salvation outside the normal place of grace, which resides in the institution of the Church, (Bell, 2005:86). There are so many explanations given to demonstrate many ways by which Christians can be assured of salvation, understandably, as the life beyond the current one. One is tested in the present life through the actions as a form of judgement and assessment in relation to the transcendental end. “The perspective here is moralistic, and the spirituality is one of flight from this world. Normally, only contact with the channels of grace instituted by God can eliminate sin, the obstacle which stands in the way of reaching that life

beyond” (Gutierrez, 1974:36). We can easily understand this approach by remembering the question of “the salvation of the pagans” when raised towards the challenged posed by those who belonged to other religions and resident in areas far from where the Church had been, traditionally.

Salvation for the *VaKaranga* is not an abstract idea, but a reality which must happen here and now and it is very much linked to the land. This is the reason why the *VaKaranga* people would want to bury their relatives in their own land especially where they have buried their umbilical code (*rukuvhute*). This implies that if one is buried outside his or her land, he or she cannot attain salvation. This understanding is so powerful in the *VaKaranga* tradition that outside their land of birth, there is no salvation. So, for the *VaKaranga*, a spirituality that does not attach itself to their cosmic experience will be abstract, inconsistent and ineffective.

The issue of salvation can also be viewed from a qualitative perspective. “As the idea of the universality of salvation and the possibility of reaching it gained ground in Christian consciousness and as the quantitative question was resolved and decreased in interest, the whole problem of salvation made a qualitative leap and began to be perceived differently” (Gutierrez, 1974:37). The idea of the universality of salvation had more issues to be attended to apart from the simple assertion of the possibility of accessing from outside the visible Church frontiers. The question was raised with the main reason being a search to widen the scope of extending salvation to all. People are saved by opening out to God and to others regardless of their knowledge to doing so. “This is valid for Christians and non-Christians alike for all people” (Gutierrez, 1974:37). People speak about the presence of grace, whether accepted or rejected to show value from a Christian standpoint as the very root of their human activity. Once it becomes impossible to speak properly of a profane world. The profane world is the language of the oppressor yet, the *VaKaranga* viewed their land as sacred and a place for soteriology. Africans are exceedingly a religious lot and each of its people possess its

own system of religion bearing a unique set of beliefs practices. According to Mbiti (1970:1), “religion permeates into all the departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it”.

There is a replacement of the quantitative and extensive approach by a qualitative and intensive one. “Human existence, in the last instance, is nothing but a yes or a no to the Lord: Persons already partly accept communion with God, although they do not explicitly confess Christ as their Lord, insofar as they are moved by grace (*Lumen entium*), sometimes secretly (*Gaudium etspes*), renounce their selfishness, and seek to create an authentic fellowship among human beings” (Boff & Boff, 1989:32). “They reject union with God insofar as they turn away from the building up of this world, do not open themselves to others, and culpably withdraw into themselves” (Mt. 25:31-46). The notion of salvation changes from this viewing stand and takes a different light. The universality of salvation is only guaranteed in your land of birth and outside this land, there is no salvation.

Jesus is the salvific centre of God, a fit achieved through his death and resurrection allowing for the transformation of the universe. His resurrection made it possible for all persons to attain fulfilment as human beings. This level of fulfilment ensured the embrace of every human aspect, incorporating the body and spirit, individual and society, person and cosmos, time and eternity. “Christ, the image of the Father and the perfect God-Man, takes on all the dimensions of human existence” (Arokiasamy & Gispert, 1987:196). Sin is now viewed as now the only an impediment to salvation and the afterlife. “Insofar as it constitutes a break with God, sin is a historical reality, it is a breach of the communion of persons with each other, and it is a turning in of individuals on themselves which manifests itself in a multifaceted withdrawal from others” (Arokiasamy & Gispert, 1987:196). Salvation for the *VaKaranga* is holistic which include the body, spirit cosmos and society as such the fight for land was the struggle for a comprehensive liberation which guarantees salvation.

It is through salvation that we understand the human and cosmic situations as totally divorced from any life-threatening occurrence and a full realization of God's plan for creation. Thus, liberation theology seeks to articulate a reading of the reality from the perspective of the poor in the concern for their liberation. For the faith and its tradition, the mission of delivering the victims of injustice and marginalised is ascribed to the Messiah. One wonders also whether the *VaKaranga* men think of the women when they interpret salvation a social concern for justice and land. I may argue to say if *VaKaranga* women are denied land ownership is it not as good as denying salvation?

Awkiasamy & Gispert-Sauch (1987:196) points out that the concept of sin is an individual and social intra-historical reality, and can happen at any day of human existence. Moreover, sin is an obstacle to life's reaching the fullness that is called salvation. Universal salvation gained through great difficulty on the basis of the desire to enlarge the parameters of accessing salvation, led to the questioning around the serious presence of the Lord and of the significance of religion to human action in time. A closer look at this world therefore, does not reveal the "true life," but rather, the transformation and fulfilment of the present life.

More so, Gutierrez (1974: 84-86) asserts that the "absolute value of salvation far from devaluing this world and gives it its authentic meaning and its own autonomy, because salvation is already latently there". The reviewed developments have allowed us to definitively recover a critical element in the salvation previously overshadowed by the possibility of reaching it. The idea that salvation is an intra-historical reality has been fully recovered. In addition to that, salvation is the communion of human beings with God and among themselves which orients, transforms and guides not just history, but its fulfilment (Gutierrez, 1974: 84-86).

The social realities of salvation, especially its concern for the poor with regard to salvation of the total person, makes it a strong foundation for consideration in constructing a framework for a theology of liberation. For the VaKaranga salvation is linked to their land.

4.6 Justice, Resurrection and the Cross as framework for liberation

Justice is a serious concern for Liberation theology. In defence of justice, some liberationists invoke the resurrection. Does not the resurrection of Jesus amount to the victory of justice over injustice? The resurrection of Jesus, asserts Sobrino (1995:189) “shows in direct the triumph of justice over injustice. It is the triumph not only of God’s omnipotence, but also of God’s justice”. The resurrection of Jesus transformed into the good news, based on the central concept that justice has triumphed over injustice once and for all, the victim over the executioner. The resurrection, no less than the crucifixion, is a profoundly ambiguous event. For example, just as the cross need not be interpreted as an act of injustice on the contrary, some popular accounts of the atonement make it an act of justice so, too, the resurrection is not self-evidently a sign of justice.

Indeed, given the presence of so much injustice and the striking absence of justice in today’s world, what is to keep us from seeing the resurrection as nothing more than an indication of the victim’s stamina and endurance? The land issue, especially the Third Chimurenga, was a revolution for justice in an environment of serious violation of the land for the *VaKaranga*. The fight and reclamation of land by the *VaKaranga* speaks to the victory of justice over injustice thus, the victims have become the victors. Chapter two highlighted all the miscarriage of justice done on the *VaKaranga* when their land was taken from them and how their dignity was compromised. Jambanja or Third Chimurenga is a fight for justice.

Whatever the resurrection signifies, it does not annul the cross. The one who is raised remains the crucified one, and injustice is as irreversible as the cross on which the crucified hung. Whatever the future brings whatever restoration God may effect, the cross is not undone. The healing of the nail's mark is not its undoing (McGovern 1989:70). Therefore, if the resurrection is to be understood, in line with Sobrino and the liberationists, it is the overcoming of the wound of injustice. If desire is to be liberated from capitalist discipline and the wound of injustice healed, it must be through the operation of a strange therapy, one that resists capitalist incorporation, breaks the cycle of violence, and wards off the temptation to acquire (McGovern 1989:70).

McGovern (1989:70) notes that the question of the proper interpretation of the resurrection introduces the issue of the theological adequacy of the liberationists' conception of justice. If there are grounds to suspect that the resurrection is not about justice in the classic sense of "rendering what is due," is it possible that the whole effort to place such a conception of justice at the centre of the Christian witness against capitalism is misguided. Is the primacy liberationist's accord such justice a faithful reflection of the Christian vision of God?

Liberation theologians insist that God's concern goes far beyond compassion and charity but it involves justice. The prophets make this point clear as they say to know God is to do justice. In the Hebrew text assisting the poor was considered a work of justice (*sadaqa*) but it became translated as almsgiving which connotes an act of charitable supererogation by western translators (McGovern 1989:70). Justice as rendering something which is due resonates well with what happened in the Third Chimurenga land was due for the *VaKaranga*

but since liberation cannot be negotiated with the oppressor the *VaKaranga* demanded it revolutionary.

Liberationists defend the primacy of justice by appealing to the Bible. As we have seen, they emphasize that the God of the Bible is fundamentally a God who establishes justice. Nothing is gained by disputing this claim. Justice is certainly a prominent theme in the Bible and God is clearly portrayed as working to establish justice (Bell 2005:130). What is arguable, however, is the meaning and significance that liberationists bestow upon this particular divine attribute in the struggle against injustice generally and capitalism in particular. When God acts to counter injustice, God does not simply enact justice in the sense of settling accounts with a strict rendering to each what is due. The paradigmatic example of this is the atonement (Bell, 2005:130). The *VaKaranga* believe that when there is no justice in the society certain misfortunes are bound to occur and these include among others poor rainfall distribution pattern and outbreak of diseases for both human beings and animals. The loss of land to the whites through unjust processes brought suffering to the *VaKaranga*, hence third Chimurenga (*Jambanja*) corrected the historical wrongs of the colonizers.

Boff argues that “Jesus produced a social and cultural revolution without violence that became the basis of Western civilization” (1985:64). His interpretation of the theological significance of the death of Christ and resurrection resulting from a radical crisis arising among the Apostles which in the end produced the faith that later created the church (this interpretation managed to bridge the gap between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith). Christ is now viewed as representing a liberation praxis that transcends class differences above the law. “The cross had been the symbol of the human will to power, but Christ

transformed it into a sign of liberation by his resurrection: Good Friday must be seen as a historical event and also as the death of a suffering God who expresses his love for the miserable and oppressed by sharing it with them” (Boff 1985:65).

Denominations and Churches in Zimbabwe have rightly grasped the authentic element of Christianity arising from the faith of Good Friday, although in very passive terms. The situation of the *VaKaranga* has somewhat brought a different focus, particularly from the groups that are deeply involved in a social change agenda. The new focus of Christianity on the cross and Jesus Christ has an activist kind of character. It requires praxis of liberation.

Resurrection remains the paradigm of liberation, even though the cross no longer exhibits that simple picture of suffering which for long was negative. The symbol now presents a dialectical moment that has directly given rise to the positive moment of liberation. People now appreciate a whole new process of analysis to establish the latter positive phase which is now viable. The possibility of verifying the truth associated with the resurrection now obtains through a transforming praxis based on the resurrection. The predisposition of misery and protest once associated with the biblical texts is now understandable through an active process of change which allows the present to be transformed. It is a calling for the church to engage in the praxis cycle.

Political hermeneutics must consider the theology of the cross, for the reality of transforming extends beyond the presence of the power provided by evil and injustice. In Christianity, the power of transforming praxis derives from the acceptance of suffering juxtaposed to contradiction. “This action is structurally akin to that of Jesus, and here we have an unvarying constant in Christian praxis” (Bell 2005:131). It is directed toward the public sector, toward

the concrete manifestations of politics, body life, and the cosmos. The following of Christ is a praxis in which one experiences the same sort of structural conflicts that Jesus did.

The resurrection, according to Sobrino (1986:84), “is a first hope for those who have been crucified and they constitute the majority of human kind, those millions on who structural justice is imposed like a slow crucifixion”. The significance of the exodus takes shape into the new central image of the salvific history. The mystery of paschal becomes a revolutionary symbol transforming the Eucharist to become a liberation feast in the political Messianic sense of hope and of its practice.

The replacement of the word redemption with liberation inspires a new understanding against the historical background of class struggle among the processes of liberation going forward. Praxis is fundamental in liberation theologies. “The truth cannot be understood in a metaphysical way for this becomes idealism” (Sobrino, 1986:86). The truth must be realised in history and in practice. Action is truth. South Africa cannot continue to talk about land expropriation without compensation for years without action for it becomes idealism. The only decisive thing is praxis and, in this case, orthopraxis becomes the only true orthodoxy.

In a new model of scholarship, Vellem (2016:154) brings in the relationship between resurrection and insurrection. There is an undeniable relationship between insurrection and resurrection. A theological approach that raises the consciousness of the oppressed does not escape the charge of insurrection and the resultant punishment by killing, yet rebellion against death itself is ostensibly and inspiration of the same theological paradigm and perhaps a number of struggles for life in the world that could be cited as examples of insurrectionist by the powers that be. It is in these insurrectionist struggles that we should locate the rebellion of resurrection. Inside the system of Empire, the lived experiences of the

marginalised and the impoverished are quintessential examples of insurrectionist forms of life and resurrected ones in the presence of but outside the logic of Empire.

The VaKaranga believe that there is no resurrection unless someone is buried in his own land and with full burial rites. These include burial tools such as a plate, a cup, a dish and some of your important possessions such as clothes. All these are pointing to the resurrection and sometimes even the direction where the head faces in death at the grave is conditioned by their perception of resurrection.

4.7 Preferential Option for the Impoverished

Liberation theology is a response to the problem of the non-person in history. It is a response to the problem of history that manifest in the social injustice and oppressive poverty in the society. All these problems have their underlying theme in the relationship of Christianity and Christian faith to human history and society. “The major conference for Asian Liberation Theologians was held in Sri Lanka in 1979 in Winnipeg and was sponsored by Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) as part of its five-year program of intercontinental conference promoting Third World Theologies as well as dialogue among Third World Christians” (Fabella 1980:21). Repeated appeals have been made to the universal Church by the EATWOT to turn its attention on the plight of the poor, those constituting the reference in its theology. The focus is to make the poor both the point of departure and the point of arrival of its spiritual life thereby fulfilling God’s concern for the poor is the focal theme of the Bible. More so, EATWOT had remarked that a Christian is a poor person who has made an irrevocably option to follow Jesus. This option necessarily coincides with the option to be poor. Christian discipleship or spirituality therefore is a coincidence of the three, God, Jesus and the poor who have made an alliance (Fabella 1980:21). As a matter of fact, spirituality in this case is not merely a struggle to be poor, but equally a struggle for the poor.

This theme has a twofold approach that is, God has a ‘preferential option’ for the poor and oppressed, and the poor and oppressed have a ‘privileged insight into God.’ This double-sided principle has been called the “epistemological break” that sets liberation theology apart from every other form of theology. In analysing their social context and rethinking their faith traditions, liberation theologians typically make an option for the poor which means that they view both social realities and the claims of faith from the vantage point of the marginalised (Nickoloffetal 2007:769). The epistemological break is further alluded to by Witvliet (1985:34) which he says it is a break with academic theology. Academic theology is Eurocentric and far removed from the realities of social life. The *VaKaranga* who occupies the greater region of Masvingo are living in abject poverty because of their conditions. It is only through fighting for their land or control of their resources which may better their living conditions.

In the same vein De Gruchy and Villa-Vicencio (1994:187) confirms that liberation theology is a new way of doing theology involves two choices that is, the first is to show a preferential option for the poor and the second is to turn theology into critical reflection on praxis. In a society characterised by injustice, oppression and conflict, neutrality is impossible. The basis of liberation theology is a self-conscious choice to side with the victims. This is a choice grounded theologically in the affirmation that the God of the Bible is a God of justice who while loving all people sides with the oppressed against the oppressor.

They further argue that if theology is to reflect the interests of the majority of the world’s population who are the poor, it must be consciously done from the perspective of the poor and the marginalised (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio 1994:187). This places an extra burden on the theologian who is supposed to employ what is called double location by Miguez

Bonino. The argument is that theologians, despite their social location are required to see things from the perspective of the poor and do theology from this perspective. This is not to suggest that the spiritual or moral insight of the poor is superior to that of others, but it is rather that they see reality from a different perspective. They provide the perspective from the underside of society which theologians cannot afford to ignore (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio 1994:187).

Laurentin (1985:85) and Petrella (2006:22) points out that the bible describes the plight of the poor in terms that have not grown old. They are as follows: loss of freedom which goes even to the point of being reduced to slavery (2 Kings 4:1; Amos 2:6-8), unjust treatment of all sorts (Isaiah 32:7; Micah 3:3; Ezekiel 22:29). The poor man has no rights in this world. He is despised and rejected. The poor man's wisdom is despised and his words are not heeded (Ecclesiastes 9:16). If God loves the poor, he does not love the evil poverty, just as loving a sick man does not mean loving his illness but rather combatting it. An ideal expression is Deuteronomy 15:4 where it is said "there will be no poor among you". This precept aimed at continuing, in the Promised Land, the nomadic relationship in which no gulf existed between the poor and the rich since brotherly solidarity in this wandering hazardous life favoured the positive realization of a common destination and relative equality.

Moreover, the law of Israel protected the poor. It gave them the right to encounter the power of those accumulating riches in the inequality that different possessions generate. The rights were; every seven years the law of Israel commanded the remission of all debts and every fiftieth or jubilee year the freeing of all slaves as well as the freedom of a poor man every seventh year in the case where a poor man had sold himself to a rich man (Laurentin 1985:86). Empire does not protect the poor, but it inflicts pain on the poor. The aim of empire

is not to improve the living conditions of the poor but to continue to hold grip on the poor. It is evident that the God of history has been on the side of the poor since the creation of humanity.

In the *VaKaranga* tradition before the advent of the colonizers there used to be a serious concern for the poor through what was called *Zunde raMambo*. This was an arrangement where a special land was worked by the community and the harvest goes to the Mambo (Chief) who in turn will distribute the proceeds to the vulnerable of the society. The *Zunde raMambo* showed how the society cared for the less privileged members of the community in the spirit of sharing and love.

In the Israelite society, a loan functioned as a relief measure and not as an investment. The law prohibits lending at interest. “If you lend money to any of my people who is poor you shall not be to him as a creditor, and you shall not exact interest from him” (Exodus 22:25). The law also protected the poor man from lifetime servitude and the poor from losing his family land and against the accumulation of possessions by the rich (Laurentin 1985:87).

The word poor can also be interpreted in different ways. By "poor" is not practically referring to the poor individual that goes knocking on the door seeking for alms. Poor is meant a collective term that refer to the "popular classes," a much wider category as opposed to the "proletariat" who were singled out by Karl Marx. It is not appropriate to identify the poor in the discussion of liberation theology and equate them with the proletariat, though many of its critics do. In the sense of Karl Marx, the poor will be the workers that are exploited in a capitalist system; “the underemployed, those pushed aside by the production process, a reserve army, those underpaid and those stripped of their identity and dignity” (Boff & Boff, 1987:34). “Sobrino's conception of Jesus as an historical figure who takes the side of the poor

and oppressed, emphasizing the central position of the community as the method of "re-appropriating" the historical Jesus is sustained" (Sigmund, 1990:80).

What does the exodus event tell us about God? An increasing number of biblical scholars insist that the Exodus reveals Yahweh as a God who is allied not with the rulers of society but with the poor and oppressed. Yahweh is a God whose ears and heart are open to the cries of the oppressed and who intervenes on their behalf. "Yahweh put the mighty down from their thrones and exalts the lowly, sends the rich away empty and fills the hungry with good things" (Haring 1995:70). Yahweh does not legitimize existing property or power relationships or sanctify the social status quo but overthrows unjust social orders and liberate the oppressed. Brueggemann (2003:71) express the difference between Yahweh and the gods of Egypt in this manner: Yahweh steps into the backyard and says let my people go whereas the gods of Egypt say make more bricks. The divine revelation of Yahweh starts with the liberation of the oppressed and tortured masses to allow their movement prophetically from oppression to liberation (Haring 1995:70). Third Chimurenga can be viewed as a religious revolution in the sense that it springs from a religious understanding of land. The spirit mediums in several occasions were on the forefront evoking the spirits of the departed heroes and heroines of the struggle and above all appealing to *Musikavanhu* (the creator) for victory.

The theology of liberation springs from the deepest heart of a commitment and practice whose finality is the liberation of the oppressed. It is a matter of thinking the totality of the content of faith and the gospel from a point of departure in a practice of liberation and an option of the poor against their poverty. This is also the authentic nature of Liberation Theology. If theology means to be able to identify the presence of sin and grace in society, it will be obliged to undertake the most rigorous possible analysis of the mechanism and functions of that society (Boff 1984:74).

Liberation theology makes more sense when it is being viewed from the perspective of those who traditionally have been made powerless and voiceless in the Church and in society in general. Those who have suffered as a result of domination and oppression qualify to be discussed under liberation theology together with those whose opinion is taken to matter no more nor is it asked for. These are the people from whom no wisdom is expected. You cannot talk of liberation theology without going to its root in the struggles and intuitive responses of the people theologically. The rights of the poor are the rights of God and the option for the poor entails the option against poverty because it is unjust and inhumane (Boff, 1993:97). The alternative to poverty is not wealth but human dignity and freedom. The VaKaranga people are emotionally attached to their birth place as a way of laying down a strong foundation of their identity. Land forms a part of a conceptual framework that embodies the process of constructing identity as well as forming a platform underlying the claim for belonging.

Grace is closely linked to the preferential option for the impoverished in that the word which is translated grace in *VaKaranga* is *vurombo*. If the *vu* is replaced by *mu* it becomes *murombo* meaning the poor. Hence when we say in Eurocentric terms, the God of grace, we are saying for the *VaKaranga Mwari WeVurombo* who can easily be the *Mwari WeVarombo*, the God of the poor. Grace signifies the presence of God in the world and in human beings.

The presence of God makes the sick well, with the dead coming back to life, and restore freedom to the oppressed. Those in despair must feel being consoled with warm intimacy. We want to reflect on the experience of grace as we encounter it in circumstances and limitations of our own day. Grace does not begin to exist when we talk about it. We talk about it because it first exists in our lives (Boff, 1979:5). Liberation theologian Leonardo Boff agrees with the main premises of liberation theology in liberating Grace. The theologian unanimously agree that one is only liberated spiritually if the person has also attained economic, social and

political liberation too. However, Boff extends his discussion to include grace. Boff (1979:5) “defines grace as the most basic and original Christian experience”. Grace becomes an experience in God’s sympathy and love for humanity which run deep such that HE has given himself. The experience come fully to human beings when they attain that capability of letting themselves to be loved by God. “Grace is relationship, exodus, communion, encounter, openness, and dialogue”.

Furthermore, according to Boff (1979:103) “grace is conceptualised as proffering a liberating and impacting aspect of life, in friendship, love and creativity”. The suggestion according to this statement is that grace takes into itself an openness that accommodates tolerance. Grace “is ever present in the world even in thoroughly ambiguous situations”. Although he does not explicitly state the existence of grace in corporeality, he mentions the existence of it in every aspect of life and even in ambiguous situations, the implication is that grace can be manifested in corporeality. If grace, as argued by Boff, can be attained through economic, social and political liberation, one may argue to say the *VaKaranga* people for a long time were not living in grace until they decided to be liberated through reclaiming their land.

From the African perspective, Orobator (2008:56) contents that grace means a favour that God freely gives to us and meant to help us in the journey of faith. Another way of saying this is that grace comes from God as unmerited gift and it empowers us to respond to God’s invitation of his offer of love. Ultimately grace helps us to live our lives as we originally meant to live them as women and men created in the image and likeness of God in who lay our origin, purpose and dignity. Thus, it implies grace enable us to live in harmony according to the purpose of God which the *VaKaranga* people were denied by colonisation for a very long time. Third Chimurenga becomes a divine respond to God’s grace.

The church in Zimbabwe has a lot of work that lay ahead of it especially coming up with a theology which gives preferential option to the poor and oppressed. A theology which speaks to issues of corruption, marginalisation of women, political violence and judicial fairness among others.

4.8 Liberation is the Work of the Oppressed

Liberation theologies cumulatively agree to the fact that liberation of the oppressed should be the responsibility of the oppressed themselves. “The oppressed do not have to look upon those who are privileged in society to extend equality to them; they should take it. The “force” of the community of victims striving for liberation, who always appears to be weaker than their adversary, must instrumentally and strategically “calculate” their possibilities of movement amid the fissures of the dominant power that they confront” (Dussel, 2013:303). For its part, the liberation principle enunciates the ought- to- be that ethically obliges such transformation. This is a demand that must be fulfilled by the community of victims itself, under its own collective responsibility, which has its origin, practically and materially, in normative terms, in the existence of a certain power or capacity (of being) possessed by those victims (Dussel 2013:303).

Because there are victims of a certain capacity, it is possible and necessary to struggle in order to negate the inhuman negation of the pain of the victims, which is intolerable for an ethical- critical consciousness to bear. The praxis of liberation is that which involves the possibility of action undertaken to transform subjective and social reality, with its ultimate point of reference always centered upon a particular victim or community of victims (Dussel 2013:303). The community of victims must first of all be aware that they are victims of a historical wrong for them to fight for justice. This is some kind of Kairos consciousness to

the effect that they have the capacity to liberate themselves. The effective possibility of liberating victims is the criterion upon which the most complex principle of this Ethics is based. It is also the one principle that embraces all of the others at a more concrete, complex, real, and critical level.

Petrella (2006:1) asserts that Liberation theology shares some of these powerful presuppositions, a sharp dichotomy between revolution and reformist political action where the first is seen as necessary, while the second is deemed ineffectual or as a smokescreen that supports the status quo. Moreover, the poor are seen as the primary and at times exclusive agents of social change. The *VaKaranga* people rose and fought in the Third Chimurenga as the community of victims as well as agents of social change, and if they had not raised to their cause no one could have done it for them. This is a clear indication that freedom and liberation is the work of the oppressed.

As argued by Boesak (2017:37), “it is the poor and the oppressed, the wronged and the destitute who know that there is a crisis”. They do not have the luxury to deny it, since their whole lives are a clear testimony to perpetual crisis. The rich and the powerful have no crisis because their greed, rapaciousness and violence are the reason for the crisis from which they always. The feeling of the rich is that there is no crisis for as long as the oppressed can be controlled and their demands suppressed, managed or ignored. They will never acknowledge the crisis because they have created it and forced it upon others to sustain their own profit. It falls to the oppressed themselves to cry out against injustice and take the crisis to the doorstep of the powerful so that it can no longer be denied. This confirms that liberation is the work of the oppressed not the oppressor.

4.9 Women and the struggle for liberation

Women have never been left behind in the struggle for land in Zimbabwe. The influence and determination of women is seen from as early as the First Chimurenga. Lyons (2004:72) asserts that Nehanda, or Charwe, played a significant in the First Chimurenga and her significant role brought a very big difference to the war. Her heroic acts demonstrated that the role of the women in the struggle for Zimbabwe was not subservient to that of men, but was equal (Lyons, 2004:23). Beach (1995:38) adds that she was an ordinary woman, who was unjustly accused and tried but she did not give up easily. She resisted even unto death. “She went to the gallows of death with courage” (Lyons, 2004:76).

Apart from the early resistance of Charwe, there is also the participation of the women in the nationalism drive of the 1940s and 1950s. Hallencreutz (1998:460) laments the fact that that the narrative given only recognizes what men did in the urban centers, yet there were women who did a lot. The same period also saw the involvement of women like Mrs. Parirenyatwa, Mrs. Chinamano, Mrs. Muzenda, Mrs. Mugabe (Sally) and Mrs. Chitepo. Some of these were the wives of the nationalists. These taught the young women in the Salisbury to combine their domestic duties with political activities. Their big numbers at the rallies were also crucial in having the voice of the black people heard. Lyons (2004:84) argues that the participation of women was felt during the 1956 bus fare strike. They became so active to an extent that they participated in the 1961 demonstration of women, which preceded the ban of the National Democratic Party that same year. Some of these women were also incarcerated by the colonial regime.

There is also another category of women who participated in the war. These were the female combatants who were at the battle front such as Joyce Mujuru, Margaret Dongo and many more women. It should be noted that they received that same training as men. This means that their role was the same as that of men. There are also some women who were professionals at

the time of the war. These utilized their positions and employment in various ways (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 2000:31). For example, Maudy Muzenda, the wife of the late Vice President Simon Muzenda, a nurse who mobilized women to rally behind the freedom fighters as well as providing the fighters with medicines. She would also provide secret treatment to the injured fighters. She said that she also gave the fighters some money so that they could buy some of the things that they required.

Although the intelligence work was done by the old women, it should be noted that the girls also participated as the informants or agents. They were called *zimbwido* or *chimbwidos* (Staunton, 1900:48). Their duty was to relay information. They also directed the combatants and led them in their escapades, since they were the ones who knew the areas in which the fighters operated. The *chimbwidos* also brought food to the bases, as well as carried the weapons for the fighters. The other role that they played was that of mobilizing the community to attend the *pungwes* (all night vigils) which were held at the bases set up by the fighters. They would also lead in singing at the bases, so as to boost the morale of the fighters and the community. There is another role, though not very plausible, which was played by the *chimbwidos*. They were used to satisfy the sexual desires of some of the fighters (Jena, 2015). However, despite this part, the great work done by the women and these girls cannot be negated. Looking at the role which women play one wonders why they were excluded from land rights in favor of men. Women's participation in the liberation struggle must therefore provide a framework for liberation theology.

4.10 Liberating Christology

Liberation theology is allergic to any trace of Docetism (the doctrine that God only assumed a phantom body in Christ), it wants to take seriously that Jesus was truly man. In his Christology Sobrino says "If the end of Christology is to profess that Jesus is the Christ, its starting point is the affirmation that this Christ is the Jesus of history". At any rate in its first

phase, Christology is Jesuology. Without the historical praxis of Jesus, actual discipleship is impossible and this in turn is condition of true Christological knowledge (Witvliet, 1985:134). This Jesuology must prevent Christology from being what it often has been in history that is, an instrument in the hands of the powerful for whom the death and resurrection of Christ forms a religious and metaphysical event without political and social implications.

For liberation theologians, Jesus` crucifixion is the consequence, not of supernatural destiny, but of a life in the service of justice. The death of Jesus is the logical consequence of his option for the poor in the midst of a people suffering under extreme exploitation and dependence (Witvliet, 1985:134). Traditionally, Christology starts from the fact that Christ died for all men to redeem them from their sins, but in this way, it loses sight of the fact that his death was a direct consequence of a sinful situation and that his proclamation of the kingdom of God can be understood only against this background. The centre of Jesus` life lay outside himself (Witvliet, 1985:134). Justice is the climax of the death and resurrection of Christ hence the injustice of the colonial regime ignored by the church was counterproductive for the liberation of the VaKaranga.

Christology needs to be reconceived “from below”. While liberation theologians are as concerned to give expression to the divinity of Christ as the other theologians, their point of Christological departure is the human Jesus. They view Jesus from within the socio-political context of first century Palestine as the one who identified with the poor and marginalised members of the society. Jesus is also seen as the proclaimer of the kingdom or reign of God. The proclamation of the reign of God on earth is a demand for the radical reordering of life and society (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio, 1994:191). Christology from below resonates well with the Third Chimurenga in that it was a great opportunity for the *VaKaranga* people to

radically reorder their society which was ravaged by racial discrimination and social injustice. Christology, which is Jesuology, encourages humanity to struggle for justice and human dignity. Land is a case of justice and human dignity.

Christology from below or theology from below is a view from the underside of history, the view of the oppressed people challenging traditional theological norms on violence and nonviolence. Church historians remind contemporary Christians that in pre-Constantinian days the church was identified with the poor and outcasts of the society (Stivers et al., 2000:117). Christians were known as dangerous subversives. In the century following Constantine, the church became identified with the ruling class and with Western civilisation. “In a conflict of values, the church came to identify with the dominant values of the ruling regimes and frequently legitimised the use of violence by those regimes while at the same time, opposing revolutionary violence to overthrow those” (Stivers et al., 2000:117).

There is another theological tradition that distinguishes between oppressive state violence and the use of violence in self defence against aggression and tyrannical rule. This perspective known as the just war theory or tradition allows for a theological legitimization of force. This understanding supports not only the theological right to resist tyranny but the theological obligation to do so in obedience to God. Although nonviolence is still normative for the church, the alternative just war tradition has been rediscovered by numerous liberation theologians including the framers of the South African Kairos document (Stivers et al., 2000:117). Is the Third Chimurenga justified or reflect a theology from below? In all its intended purposes, the Third Chimurenga for the *VaKaranga* people is justified and the violence that was used was qualitative and aimed at restoring their own dignity and humanity.

Jesus` message is seen as a direct challenge to the ruling class that is the Herodians, the Sadducees, the Pharisees and the High Priest. Liberation Christology is the recognition that

Jesus' message of liberation transcended the boundaries of Jewish nationalism. It was a message for all the poor people. Christologies with the framework of liberation theology see Jesus' death as an inevitable consequence of his message and of his identification with suffering humanity (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio, 1994:191). They further argue that it is not only the human Jesus who suffered on the cross. In Christ, God identifies with suffering humanity, entering into the pain and death. The resurrection is consequently God's vindication of Jesus and his message of God's reign. It represents also the inauguration of the hope of a future liberation (De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio, 1994:191).

Moreover, Boff (1985:76) presented one of the first efforts by a liberation theologian to establish a Christology with characteristics which are distinctive to the poor. He articulated a Christology that focuses on the human person rather than the church, one that stresses utopian hopes for the future, one critical of ecclesial institutions, one that emphasise social dimensions and one that gives primacy to orthopraxis over orthodox. This is called a descending Christology. Kee (1990:35) also contends that it would be blasphemous if the Christian religion should allow itself to be used or abused to support the claim that God is reconciled to an evil and oppressive social order. A Christology of liberation therefore, places Christ at the centre for the struggle of human emancipation and challenges the church to be revolutionary in its thinking and practices. This follows that Christology especially from below is powerful tool for human emancipation and therefore provide a strong foundation for liberation theological framework.

4.11 Liberating ecclesiology

Liberation theology's ecclesiology follows directly from its Christological focus. Liberation theology calls for a church which identifies itself with the poor in order to make itself available to God for the realisation of God's laboratory purpose in history. Gutierrez (1984) asserts that the spirituality of liberation is opposed to individualistic and privatised tendencies

often associated with traditional forms of Christianity. Gutierrez's book *We drink from our own wells* (1984:203) describes a spirituality born in the midst of the struggles of the poor. It is a spirituality which arises out of an encounter with God within the community of the poor. It is also communal rather than individualistic in character, emerging within the communal struggle for justice. The spirituality of liberation gives hope in the midst of suffering and can only be experienced in solidarity with the poor. It is a spirituality which empowers people to deal with the challenges of all aspects of life. In brief, this is the spirituality which undergirds the mission of the church in a bid to transform the society.

Most local churches within the mainline paradigm have mission statements which speak to the transformation of social life. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, where I belong, has a mission statement which says "we exist to transform lives through biblical teaching, nurturing believers into true worshipers of God in a dynamic environment". When the time to transform lives arose, like the Third Chimurenga, most of these denominations shied away for the reasons that they still subscribe to Empire through receiving grants and also because they are beneficiaries of colonial legacy through mission farms. Even after the Third Chimurenga there is still injustice in the distribution of land yet churches that exist to transform lives continue to live in comfort zones.

Any authentic spirituality is, by its very nature, liberating. According to Galilea (1973:8-10), five fundamental intuitions form the basic structure for such spirituality. For him, conversion to God and commitment to Christ can take place only through a conversion to our neighbour and by a commitment to the ones who are suffering from oppression. Moreover, there exists a profound relationship between salvation history and the genuine liberation of the poor so that commitment to the latter is taken as working with the Redeemer who is Christ entering into his work of salvation. The liberating task must be seen as an anticipation and advancement of

the kingdom of God which is marked by justice, equality, fraternity and solidarity. Lastly, Galilea emphasised the value of poverty which is not only in sharing in the plight of the poor, but also sharing in the struggle for justice and which implies accepting persecution through forms of poverty as true identification with Christ.

Churches in Zimbabwe need to revisit their ecclesiological focus and refocus it to speak to the spirituality of the people. Crusades are happening all over Zimbabwe with a focus on increasing the membership, yet conversion must be linked to our concern for our neighbour and commitment to the plight of the poor. During the Third Chimurenga, the *VaKaranga* lacked support from the mainline churches. Only the African Initiated Churches supported the land reform because of their quest for belonging, but most of the leaders of the African Initiated Churches ended up in corrupt land episodes. Some were used by the politicians and dumped later after the politicians had achieved their selfish ambitions.

The church is not doing much more than talking. Peace and reconciliation are cheap words. Will the church be as supportive of fighting for the rights of the people when the cost is much more than words? Land has to do with identity and dignity. Land is an issue which evoke deepest emotions. If the church continues to support State theology which gives divine authority to the state (Romans, 13:1-7) in the name of law and order and renounces all violence towards or criticism of the state, she risks losing her saltiness.

The Kairos Document 1985 delineated three types of theology namely, State Theology, Church Theology and Prophetic Theology. The state theology model is a religious justification of oppression, racism, totalitarianism, injustice and capitalism. Furthermore, it is a theology which misuses theological ideologies to support the status quo (The Kairos Document 1985:6).

Turning to church theology, is a limited theology and inaccurately applying Christian Traditions. Therefore, church theology as an instrument, is a one-sided presentation of minority in society. Church theology does not involve any analysis of society and applies traditional themes of reconciliation, justice and nonviolence while supporting a blanket condemnation of that is called violence (Stivers et al., 2000:117). Revolution is an inevitable response to tyranny. Liberation is a human desire; history suggest that people will eventually resort to violence if necessary, to gain freedom. The church must be as concerned with the morality of indifference as with the morality of violence. The Church must engage a Prophetic Theology. Prophetic theologies of liberation are departing from the perspective of the non-person; the poor, oppressed and excluded ones.

Moreover, Dube (2006) charges that the Church in Zimbabwe has not been prophetic enough in challenging the elite and standing with the excluded in times of crisis. For Dube, the Church in Zimbabwe has been found wanting when faced with extreme violence by the state. Dube calls for a theology that promotes the health and well-being of all instead of the prevailing situation where only the ruling elite are assured of a decent quality of life. He contends that only a preferential option for the excluded will ensure the Church`s relevance.

More so, the Church must start to consider seriously reading the Bible from below. Liberation theology rejects the conventional hermeneutical perspective and argues that the interpretation of the Bible cannot be done from the position of privilege; in which it is used for the purposes of furthering subjugation and oppression. Liberation theology insists on a proper hermeneutical perspective, rather liberational and not oppressive (Boesak, 2015:84). The hermeneutical perspective of liberation theology becomes important when the evils such as alienation of land, genocides, colonialism and slavery are taken into perspective. “The church accepted the justification of war and all forms of violence and how the Bible has been used

until no, to keep women in subjugation and for the discrimination of those children of God who do not conform to conventional heteronormativity” (Boesak, 2015).

It should be noted that the Bible has also been abused in order to effect oppression and subjugation of people through obedience; and teaching them that any kind of resistance and any demand for the equality and respect would be tantamount to rebellion and thus, unchristian. It has been established through Liberation Theology that the interpretation of the Bible has been done through the lenses of a privileged and powerful white male. It is therefore, the concern of Liberation Theology to establish whether the hermeneutical perspective of the powerful white male has been accurate in interpreting Biblical events contextually. This ideological and hermeneutical “suspicion” phenomenon, has become an important perspective in the interpretation of biblical and theological issues. The reading of the Bible, therefore “from below,” as a theology of liberation as wisely learned from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, as well as the reading of our socioeconomic and socio-political situations “from below” is fundamental to the praxis of liberation theology. Thus, ecclesiology forms a strong framework for theology of liberation.

4.12 Praxis as a framework for Liberation

Another feature that is common to the starting point in liberation theology is praxis. “In the case of all liberation theologies, the praxis from which theology begins and on which it reflects is solidarity with the oppressed in their struggle for liberation” (Lamb, 1990:1). Prophecy is constituted by an agapic life or praxis whereby the cries of the victims are articulated into a voice protesting the victimisation of humans by other humans. Liberation theology seeks to translate such an agapic, prophetic voice into terms and categories of the mind through a noetic praxis (Lamb 1990:1).

Prophetic voice calls for action

Agapic praxis is one way of summarizing what Bonhoeffer analysed as the Cost of Discipleship when he wrote “there remains an experience of incomparable value. We have for once learnt to see the great events of world history from below, from the perspective of the outcast, the suspect, the maltreated, the powerless, the oppressed, and the reviled. The Christo-path of death and resurrection calls us to co-suffering with the victims in their struggle to transcend victimhood and reveals a transformation of values which brings grace out of sin, life out of death, wisdom out of folly. Far from being passive resignation in the face of injustice, such a self-transcending love (agape) intensifies participation in the humanizing and personalizing efforts for justice” (Lamb, 1990:9).

It is quite evident that agapic prophetic voice calls for action, and is not a passive word but an action word. Not all the *VaKaranga* rose to claim their land during the Third Chimurenga, for some waited for a very formal engagement while others, especially those who belonged to the Main Line Churches, did not participate in the revolution. Some were supporting their churches that had benefited from the land invasion and own farms while others were brain washed by a Eurocentric theology which calls for a passive resistance to the masters. This current undertow is the continuous struggle for those adopting the Christian religious option in our anguished world. They incarnate the transforming values of faith, hope and love by which human history will be judged and redeemed.

Praxis involves active participation and the participation can be divided into two steps. The first step involves socio-analytical mediation (seeing) analysis of the effect of the land situation to the nation as a whole or the specific area wherein one is working. This step also encourages rural workers to rise up for themselves and to see how individuals experience their problems as well as how they resist oppression. The second step is the hermeneutical

mediation (judging) which is the evaluation of how the populace confronts the land question from the basis of religion and faith; while also evaluating Biblical views on land. Participation refers to being involved in the specific problem of the people.

Love and option for the poor

Love, as an option for the poor, coincides with class struggle option. Liberation theologians underline in very strong terms the opposition to false universalism as well as the partiality and partial character of the Christian option to take side is accordance to the fundamental requisite for a correct hermeneutical approach to Biblical witness. “The fundamental concept of the preaching of Jesus Christ is the Kingdom of God” (Alfred & Hennelly, 1990:373). This concept is found again at the centre of all the theologies of liberation, read however, against the background of Marxist hermeneutics. The Kingdom cannot be understood spiritually or universally in the sense of an abstract eschatological reverse. It must be understood in a part form and tuned towards practice. Only if we start with the praxis of Jesus and not theoretically shall it become possible to know what the kingdom means (Alfred & Hennelly, 1990:373). This shows the importance of praxis in the bid to liberate the oppressed thus; praxis becomes an important framework of liberation.

The theology of liberation is a critical reflection on Christian praxis based on the Word of God. Praxis is a transforming marked and illuminated by Christian love. Praxis does not mean simply activism, but it connotes transforming activity guided by theory and goals. Liberation theology is involved in practice. It is a theology of praxis. It is directed for praxis and it operates from praxis such that the poor influence theology itself (Cone, 1975:90). Liberation theology proceeds in three main stages which correspond to the stages used in pastoral work that is seeing, judging and acting. The centrality of charity in Christian life expresses a commitment to praxis by emphasising living out one`s faith through actions that

is relating faith and action. Praxis does not mean simply activism but it connotes transforming activity guided by theory and goals (McGovern, 1989:32).

Praxis and envisioning

It is essential to note that one cannot talk of praxis without talking of dreaming or envisioning of a good future. Bones (2007) very clearly refers to history as maps indicating events of the past. “While forensic science helps us to understand what happened to an individual, hermeneutics help us to understand bones as historical texts, and liberation theology provides a reflection on social processes in which the God of life was ignored” (Wilfred, 2007:159). The liberating God, has always been present in all those events witnessing the horrors of the negation of life and the negation of God in society. “One of the greatest possibilities of liberation theology has always been the possibility of utopia, the possibility of dreaming that a better world can eventually come because “utopias are not illusions” but “they are imaginative and creative, but realistic possibilities for the future” (Wilfred, 2007:159).

It is not a dream imagining an outside reality. “Instead, through a liberating praxis, through actions that speak of liberation here and now, the dreamer prepares a community for the realities to come, enjoying the immediacy of the Eros, of the desire for God and other human beings, rather than the desire for commodities or for material things” (Wilfred, 2007:159). In this, theology of liberation there is connection of the utopian dream, resulting in the dreamer, with a historical project. Every true theology spring from a spirituality coming out of a true meeting with God in history. Liberation theology was born through a confrontation of faith confronted the injustice done to the poor.

Assmann (1988) asserts that the rejection of any logos which is not logos of praxis just as Gutierrez speaks of an epistemological split, the two are in fact not merely stating how the truth must be applied or that the truth is related to its application. They are in fact stating that

there is no truth outside or beyond the concrete historical events in which men are involved as agents. There is therefore, no knowledge except in action itself, in the process of transforming the world through participation in history. If not the *VaKaranga*, who then can stand for them in the fight for their birth right and also if women remain silent of the oppression of men who then can fight for their cause?

Praxis and context

Praxis is contextual, devoid of its context becomes irrelevant. Context is a critical family resemblance of liberation theology. Theology should not be universal in the sense of the same everywhere, according liberation theologians. Is it possible for theology to be the same in an affluent, all-white, North American suburb in much the same way as in a South American barrio or favela where we see hungry children and people living in subhuman conditions? All liberation theologians agree to a local kind of theology.

Theology of liberation is a contextual theology in the sense that a theology can only arise within and in response to a concrete socio-economic and political and cultural context. Liberation theologians have been more aware of this than some others and have consciously attempted to keep their theological reflections rooted in particular social context. This means that these theologies, for the most part, share a common methodology, that is, they attempt to correlate human reality and faith, allowing each other to challenge and enrich the other. Some have described this method as doing theology with the Bible in one hand the newspaper in another hand (Nickolof et al., 2007:769). This stresses the importance of context in doing theology.

As expressed by the Apostle Paul's reflections on the church as the body of Christ, context is that which hurts pointing to a common pain. "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it" (1 Corinthians 12:6). Paul noted that "the body cannot survive without attention to its common pain or without attention to what is often considered the "inferior members": "The

eye cannot say to the hands, ‘I have no need of you,’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you’ (1 Corinthians 12:21). As the labour unions say: “An injury to one is an injury to all.” “This insight leads to a fundamental reversal where the common interest is not located at the top or in universals that do not exist” (Nickolof et al., 2007:769). The common interest is located in situations of pain and struggle that tie us together. Revolutions become successful because their context is the same. Pain and suffering unite people together. The *VaKaranga* were united by their contextual situations to rise against a painful situation and fight for their birth right.

Challenges of revolution

The greatest challenge of any revolution is vanguardism. Vanguardism consists of this kind of overvaluation of the conscience and privileged level of the community of expert militants responsible for the central organs of the party or the state, from the top down namely, the bureaucracy. Spontaneity, by contrast, would be a quasi-irrational trust in the self-regulative or creative power of the masses of victims or in the organized and critical community of victims, without the benefit of sufficient scientific and ethical-critical “enlightenment (Dussel, 2013:370). Vanguardism can also be felt in the church and the church has vanguards to protect the interest of the state.

The person in power is always inclined to defend the status quo. Even servants of the Church are at times rewarded with fat morsels by the rich and powerful provided that their religious teachings and care of the faithful serve the cause of such vested interests. A good example is, if the church in defending the right of private property, upholds current practices regarding the distribution of wealthy and profits, the mighty rich are all too happy to support the church’s charitable works. For too long the church’s concern in defending their own status

quo as a kind of sacred power-realm have entered into much too intimate an alliance between throne and altar (Haring, 1995:3).

It is, therefore, true that whenever the church aligned her in times of revolution with disintegrating system and attempted to suppress the emerging society by threats of anathema, she rendered a great disservice to herself. Not only did she gravely injure herself as an institution but she weakened the credibility of her message. Rightly understood, Christianity is a force promoting peace and revolution (Haring, 1995:3). Power for the sake of power is a great evil.

Analysis

Liberation theologians note that in communities where people face extreme poverty conditions and inequality, survival becomes the primary focus of their lives at the expense of their spiritual development. “Therefore, the amelioration of the conditions which strip individuals of their dignity and humanity is indispensable to people’s full and free participation in Christianity. Only through this liberation from material ills can they begin building the Kingdom of God on earth, which is liberation theology’s stated goal” (Berryman, 1987:94–95).

Christ’s work is the inauguration of a different economy for dealing with the sin of injustice, of a peculiar technology for healing desire of the wounds inflicted by capitalist discipline, namely, the refusal to cease suffering that is forgiveness. This is to say, the Christian community, in its sacraments and orders, its discipleship and prayer, must be retrieved as (no less than capitalism and its state-form) an ensemble of technologies of desire that can properly be characterized as a therapy of desire. In recent decades, context has been defined in terms of particular settings, which are, however, often still taken at face value. Tom Driver (1977:89) once talked about “doing theology in a warm bathtub,” which some might consider

to be the context of white middle-class theologians. When the contexts of women and minorities are taken at face value in this manner, the result is that liberation is romanticised. The approach that I am suggesting here has deep theological roots. Doing theology in warm bathtub is siding with the oppressor in perpetuating violence “against the poor even, through post-colonial strategies”

4.13 Conclusion

There is no escape from the conclusion that on a global scale one must say that when we try to understand the fundamental option of liberation theology, one cannot deny that the theology contains an almost irrefutable logic. On the other hand, with the promises of biblical hermeneutics founded upon experience and analysis of history one succeeds in creating a global vision for Christianity which seems to respond fully to the demands of science and moral challenges of the day. The current generation has an obligation to make Christianity an instrument for the transformation of the world which seems prepared to face all the progressive forces of this era. This kind of Christianity will give direction to Nations especially those struggling to remove the shackles of imperialism and neo-imperialism.

The fundamentals raised in this chapter also show that liberation of any form and kind can only be achieved through the overhauling of the systems which oppress the people. The fight for such radical change must be placed in the very heart of any effective paradigm. Oppressive institutions such as, the Church, Family with regards to patriarchy and community institutions of influence must take sides with the poor and allow justice to flow. The church in its preaching must read the bible from below in order to allow the liberating grace of God to appeal to the oppressed in a revolutionary way. The framework of liberation

shows that the church must move away from its comfort zone created by Eurocentric theology into praxis because Liberation theology is Praxeological. The next chapter focuses on the ethics of liberation praxis.

CHAPTER 5

THE ETHICS OF A LIBERATIONIST PRAXIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to articulate and analyse the Ethics of liberationist praxis in the context of the struggle for land in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The chapter will also highlight briefly, Western ethical theory, and the hypocrisy associated with these theories. The struggle for land in post-colonial Zimbabwe can be viewed in the perspective of revolutionary justice. The key result area in this chapter is to see whether the revolutionary use of violence is justified as a way promoting human liberation and creating a just society?

The ethics of revolution testifies the clash and conflict of two historical rights. On the one hand is the right which is the established common wealth on which the life and happiness of the individuals depend. On the other hand, is the right of that which may reduce toil, misery and injustice? The end justifies the means if it promotes human freedom and happiness (Kee, 1974:135). The chapter will look at key thematic areas which correlate with the ethics of a liberationist praxis. These key phrases are theology of revolution, revolution and violence, modernity and violence, cultural violence, theology from the underside, Christology and revolution and Kairos consciousness. These themes are not all necessarily the same, and even their exponents hold different views, but I have designed them so that they can exist alongside each other as building blocks to the establishment of the ethics of liberationist praxis and its impact on the struggle for land in Zimbabwe particularly the Third Chimurenga.

5.2 Western Ethical Theories

Ethics can be defined as the study of voluntary human actions in a philosophical way in order to ascertain the types of actions that are good and right which can be done or bad and wrong, and not to be done that man may live well. Fabella and Sugirtharajah (2000:148) deepen the definition of ethics by tracing its Greek derivation. The term ethics and morality are often used interchangeably to designate the judgements made about wrong and right behaviour. The ethics has roots in the Greek word *ethos*, meaning virtue or custom of a people. The Latin word *mos*, from which the term morality is taken from, refer to the customs or regular practices of a social group. Hence, both terms have to do with the expected practice of a community and by extension its individual member and what is believed to be right or wrong in a social context.

Ethics is more concerned with voluntary human conduct in relation to some end that person has in view. The goal of ethics is to reach conclusions after reflecting, well-thinking and reasoning about any kind of voluntary action that you take so as to be able to evaluate the good or suitability of it, evil and unsuitability for other beings in the context of man's life. This includes his relations to other beings whom his/her action influences in some significant way. "It is philosophical thinking about moral behaviour, moral challenges and moral evaluations" (Frankena, 1991:4).

Generally, all ethical systems attempt to identify the characteristics of a life worth living. Christians understand this task with reference to Jesus of Nazareth. It is a disciplined attempt to explain the importance of morality for Christians and to identify norms that should inform and guide Christians in the way they conduct themselves in life. Each and every religion has its own ethical code of conduct. There are four branches of ethics which corresponds to the

various tasks to be undertaken as follows; semantics which focuses on logical analysis of moral terms or systems, moral epistemology which possess questions about the foundations or origin of knowledge, descriptive ethics which is concerned about the factual investigation of moral behaviour and believes and normative ethics which offers prescriptive directions about moral selfhood and moral actions.

Virtue ethics

Virtue ethics may be understood as a form of moral reflection which gives a central place to such traits of character such as excellence or manliness. It is an acceptable or desirable trait of character. Forms of virtue predominated in western Philosophy before the Renaissance, most notably in Aristotle, Plato and Aquinas (Audi, 1995:840). Several ancient and medieval philosophers endorsed stronger versions of virtue ethics. These views focused on character and rather than discrete behaviour, identifying illicit behaviour with vicious behaviour that is conduct that would be seriously out of character for virtuous persons. A virtuous person was defined as one with disposition relevantly linked to human flourishing (Audi, 1995:840; Quinn & Taliaferro, 1999:466). This could imply that when the Whites were taking away the *VaKaranga* land, for them it was a virtuous act since they were exploiting *VaKaranga* resources and flourishing on the expense of the *VaKaranga*.

Deontological ethics

The word deontology comes from the Greek word *deon* which means what is proper, what ought to or duty. The central principle of deontology is duty (Bunnin & Yu, 2009:171). It is an ethical principle based on acting according to duty or obligation. It further asserts that there are some actions which are right or wrong intrinsically but we ought to do them whether right or wrong for the sake of duty and nothing else regardless of the consequence of doing

them. Deontology is contrasted to teleology or consequentialist ethics represented by utilitarianism. The most celebrated deontologist is I Kant and other deontologists include S Clarke, W D Ross, and Pritchard, and in contemporary philosophy are, A Donagan, C Fried and T Nagel (Bunnin & Yu, 2009:171). This moral argument shows that even when the whites knew that it was wrong to take away the *VaKaranga* land, their ethical perspective allowed them for the sake of greediness. They were not worried about the consequences.

Utilitarian theory

Utilitarian theory suggests that the rightness of an action is judged by mainly the consequences which the action produces. This theory is championed by J Bentham, J S Mill, Sidgwick and many others who subscribe to this greatest happiness principle. The argument is that one must choose an action which will produce the greatest pleasure and least pain to the greatest number out of the entire alternatives available as the morally right action (Wolff 1980:297). The greatest happiness principle assumes that actions are right in proportion to the happiness they promote for the greatest number. Actions are considered to be wrong as they tend to produce pain and privation of pleasure to the greatest number. Act utilitarianism applies to actions which are right when they maximize happiness (Wolff, 1980:297; Urmson Ree, 1989:319; Blackburn, 1996:388).

The greatest happiness principle sounds quite reasonable if it was observed but unfortunately, the colonizers used the same theories the opposite way to rob Africans of their land. Happiness for the greatest number yet in their small number they controlled vast lands while the greatest number suffered. As argued by Batizat and Mwalo (1989:2) that the land alienation for white settlement was legalised by the LAA of 1930 which was superseded by the Land Tenure Act of 1969. The Land Tenure Act divided the land equally between the

indigenous population and the white settlers so that the settlers who comprised of a mere 5% of the population had the same amount of land as Africans who comprised of 95% of the population. This is the hypocrisy of Western ethics. The ethical theories of the whites represented an extension of the Empire and are different from the *VaKaranga*'s ethical values which promote *Ubuntu* or *Unhu*.

5.3 Unhu or Ubuntu as a Central Ethical Theory for the VaKaranga

Ubuntu is a derivative of the word *mntu*, meaning a person, a human being. According to Chinkanda (1994) *ubuntu* connotes a positive quality possessed by a person. *Ubuntu* is not only about human acts but also about human beings. Ubuntu is all about the disposition and values that contribute to the wellbeing of the people and the society. For Africans ubuntu is the way of life that affirms that we are human because we affirm the humanity of others and the conviction that I am because we all are (Boesak, 2017:118). The concept of *unhu* enables the *VaKaranga* to view land as something to keep in trust for the benefit of the community and future generations. *Unhu* enables human beings to become *vanhu* or humanized being. In *VaKaranga* speaking it is enough to describe a person as *uyu munhu chaiye* or *ane hunhu* meaning is well cultured. It is more accurate to say *ubuntu* or *unhu* is a person's self-realization and manifestation as a human being.

The concept of *unhu* exists in many variations within different African cultures and languages, each conceptualization retaining the same core meaning of humanness or being human. In such places as Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, the concept has other shades of interpretation such as human generosity (Matupire, 2017:10). Tutu (1999:31) the philosophy of ubuntu speaks of a person being generous, hospitable, friendly, caring and compassionate.

The communal character of African culture means that a person pursues his own good as he/she pursues the common good. This means that a person is not expected to sacrifice his or her good in order to promote the good of others but instead to recognise that he or she can attain their own good only by promoting the good of others (Matupire, 2017:10). It is common practise in the village in VaKaranga to have neighbours, without any formal invitation just turning up at a wedding or any other family function to assist another family with preparations for the event as well as cleaning up afterwards (Matupire, 2017:11).

Ubuntu means one is human because he or she belongs and ubuntu serves the common good of social integrity which Tutu would want to call the greatest good. Ubuntu is life giving and enables people to survive and continue to live with dignity despite all efforts to dehumanize them. The *VaKaranga* were united through *ubuntu/ unhu* to fight all forms of dehumanization. The well-being of the society is an ethical concern for the *VaKaranga* people and this is reflected in their greetings. Their greetings show the concern for the well-being of the other person for example when they say *mamuka sei* the other person will say *tamuka kana mamukawo*. This means I am well as long as you are well. If you are not well then it means I am not well as well.

Unhu or *ubuntu* is a foundation of spirituality, an inner condition and orientation realised or made evident in the harmonious relations within the society. A person with ubuntu is open with others, who he or she values and respects. He or she recognises that we all belong to a greater whole, and therefore, he or she is not threatened by others` capabilities and strengths (Matupire, 2017:10). It is a way of life that seeks to promote the well-being of the society. *Unhu* is the corner stone of the *VaKaranga* community. All the societal values are couched toward promoting *unhu*. If you kill for the *VaKaranga* you will have to suffer the

consequences of the avenging spirit (*Ngozi*). This, promote peace and harmony within the society (Murove, 2013:65). *Ubuntu* as a way of life find meaning in different idiomatic expressions in various African languages in Southern Africa. *Umuntu, ngumuntu ngabany' abantu* (Xhosa). *Munhu, munhu pane vamwe vanhu* (Karanga). This emphasis on relationships cannot be overemphasised for it forms the basis of *VaKaranga* world view.

Zahan (1979:110) argue that African moral and ethics belong to a domain which Western researchers have scarcely explored. Western researchers have failed to conceptualise various concepts of the moral conduct of the Africans such as fidelity, hospitality, sense of justice, love and respect of relatives and traditions. They also misinterpreted modesty surrounding relations between sexes, unselfishness and self-sacrifice as passiveness. Nevertheless, these observations have most often been buried by the investigators in the mass conventional acts or else they have been arranged according to the perspective of Western culture, thus losing their African specificity.

In a nutshell, *Ubuntu* or *unhu* occupies the central nervous system of the *VaKaranga* people and is linked to justice. The golden thread for *VaKaranga* society is *Ubuntu* or *unhu*. It is a test of life. The laws which govern the land especially the prohibitions most of them point to *Ubuntu* or *unhu*. In the *VaKaranga* societies one is not allowed to dig holes in certain places and to sit on certain places such as crossroads and more other prohibitions. A daughter in law can only be accepted in the family on the basis of *Ubuntu* or *unhu*.

5.4 Ethic of Liberation

Liberation ethics is primarily social ethics because it holds the elimination or the conversion of the oppressor as individuals do not deal with the structure of oppression embodied in long acceptable and interrelated social systems. Thus, the struggle for liberation is not a

clandestine operation designed to destroy a few oppressors (Swomley, 1972:2). Liberation ethics is a response to both human need and to the biblical emphasis on redemption. In fact, liberation is simply a currently more acceptable or modern term for redemption. Both words mean setting people free from enslavement of all kinds. Swomley (1972:2) has correctly pointed out that liberation ethics begins with the fact of desperate human need to be freed from whatever it is that threatens or enslaves it. It holds that the goal of history is the liberation of human kind. To set people free from enslavement is not the work of some other powers that be but, the work of the oppressed through praxis of liberation.

A liberation ethic is an ethic which assesses the implication of the Gospel message of liberation preached to the oppressed, guide the oppressed in their response ensuring that this response is ethically positive and responsible as well as in accordance with the demands of the message. It helps expose evil for what it is, and work on inculcating the good that is implied by the good news of liberation and ultimate freedom and injustice for the oppressed. Sources of liberation ethics are the Bible, actual life situations and experience of the oppressed and customs, tradition and value of the oppressed (Motlhabi, 1998:21).

Motlhabi (1998:21) argues that the preoccupation of liberation ethics is the issue of violence and nonviolence. How can the oppressed people act meaningfully to relieve themselves of their suffering? It is koinonia ethics. It is ethics of service. Liberation ethics is not only concerned with the goal of freedom but with the process of setting people free. The function of liberation ethics is to provide guidelines for action that will humanize rather than brutalize persons, which will help solve the problem than to proliferate the problem and provide useful guidelines in evaluating the methods and consequence of social change. It is not always the case that every revolution is violent but, in most cases, and in the context of Third

Chimurenga it turned out to be violent because of the failed negotiations and the failed management of the activity since politics had superseded the cry of the poor.

Dussel (1988:58) notes and affirms that the theology or ethics of liberation sees reality from the point of view of the poor. The impoverished becomes the subject of the reign of God and the active participants of the revolution of liberation. The Third Chimurenga land distribution in Zimbabwe can be interpreted from the point of view of the poor. The revolution was started by the poor people especially those who had gone to war during the Second Chimurenga. After decades of promises that they will get land as one of the reasons for going to war, the post-colonial government failed to fulfil the promises.

It is widely acknowledged that the land question was the root cause of Zimbabwe's war of liberation. One of the top leaders of Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), Josiah Tungamirai made a point to clear the tension by saying "the unequal distribution of land was the main reason why African people fought the settler regime" (Tungamirai, 1995:37). It was a matter of justice to go and fight to reclaim land since Africans felt that the land was rightly theirs that needed regaining as their lost heritage.

5.5 Theology of revolution

While there are methodological problems dealing with revolution especially whether we have a theology of revolution or a theology in revolution, it is certain that we have a theology for the revolution. Theology in revolution is how we can talk about God in a revolution. Theology for revolution is how theology can guide a revolution. Within these three possibilities and for the sake of this research I will stick to the option of the theology of revolution. Fierro (1977:195) notes that the theology of revolution tries to ascertain the

relationship between the revolutionary activity of human beings and that of God and it does so by establishing a liberative correlation between the revolutionary aspect of the gospel and the revolutionary aspect of the world situations. In this theology, the Kingdom of God is viewed as a revolution. To be specific, it is understood as the eschatological revolution, the revolution to end all revolutions or to put worlds in order. It is viewed as the revolution in the revolution, the salvation of the revolution from its alienated form (1977:195). This revolution is brought into being through the praxis of the poor and since the Kingdom of God is viewed as a revolution, the church must take an active role in promoting this Kingdom.

The resolution of the World Council of Churches (WCC) Geneva Conference 1966 recommended that the churches must promote a worldwide revolutionary opposition to the neo-colonial agenda being imposed on new nations by Western industrialised countries. The new system is leading to new forms of colonization and oppression (McGovern, 1989:5). The conference also affirmed in its resolutions that a radical position had a strong foundation in Christian tradition thus, paving way for a theology of revolution (McGovern, 1989:5). This could have been a follow up of the Second Vatican Council (1963-65) which unquestionably provided a tremendous impetus for change. Christ's mission was interpreted as breaking the power of evil so that this world might be fashioned anew according to God's design. It affirmed the importance of human activity in carrying out Christ's mission and its new eschatology stressed no longer heaven alone but a new earth where justice will abide (McGovern, 1989:5). This laid the foundation for a theology of revolution and social activism in the churches throughout the world.

The theology of revolution is met with mixed reactions and standpoints. The notion that Christian responsibility is only indirect has defenders among Protestants as well as Roman

Catholics. Waldo Beach, quoted in McFadden (1998:401), argues for an indirect relationship as follows; the church does not exist in order to produce racial justice, or to achieve inclusiveness in its own life. The Church exists to honour its Lord and Head through corporate life of worship and service. Therefore, there is no ethical justification for bearing the sword because the only valid ethic is the gospel ethic. In contrast Jacques Ellul writes as follows:

The church exists in order to insist on constant change in society civilisation, in order to bring the society more in conformity with the order of God.

This is a mission of permanent revolution. Permanent revolution involves such concepts as judgement, crisis, mission, conversion, fundamental change and transformation. There is in this an eschatological element of hope. Hope involves the prospect of release from captivity (McFadden, 1998:401). Mission is hope in action.

A permanent revolution in Christ is an on-going eschatological event in which God guarantees the instability of every order of injustice, since it mocks the creation. “Since mission is hope in action, the church has a permanent vocation to take steps to release all people from whatever bondage which holds them” (McFadden 1998:401). It stands to reason that Liberation theology as a reflection on the praxis of liberation within the black situation must have an ethic of liberation. Boesak (2005:146) talks of an ethic of transformation. The change of society can be interpreted as a revolution and this change sometimes cannot be violent. This revolution is a profound social change from the status quo to the desired ordered society.

Today we need an ethics of the liberating process of permanent change, an ethics designed not to restore or preserve some threatened order, but to create new forms of societal life. The theology of nonviolence has been criticized from different stand points. In the eyes of some Christians who profess nonviolence, violence itself is seen as anti-evangelical. Those who subscribe to this thinking try to present a nonviolent Jesus who is direct opposite of the Zealot Jesus presented by other exegetes (McFadden, 1998:401). For those Christians nonviolent is the distinctive trait of the gospel message. Moltmann (1964) asserts that the problem of violent action versus nonviolent is a false problem but real issue is between justified violence and unjustified violence. Zimbabwe is under sanctions by the European Union for taking back its land in pursuit of justice. Are these sanctions really necessary or there was supposed to be a better way of resolving this sour relationship?

Moltmann (1964) asserts that, there will be no theology of revolution until there is revolution in theology. We live in a revolutionary situation and we shall continue to experience history more and more as revolution in future (Kee, 1974: 25). The responsibility of a future generation lies within a revolution. The church is the exodus community that hears and follows the message of the messianic Christ of liberation and joy to the poor. It is opposed to the powers of exploitation, oppression, exclusion and violence in economic, political and cultural life. The exodus community is not an authoritative hierarchical church, nor is it divided along racial or class lines. It is a church of the priesthood of all believers, a priesthood that must also become the sovereignty of all believers, a fellowship (Kee, 1974: 55). The challenge posed by Moltmann is real in the Zimbabwean society where the church has decided to take the side of the oppressor or rather to be reactive to issues which are paramount to the life of the people.

5.6 Violence and Nonviolence in liberationist praxis

Fierro (1977) argues that neither, liberation, revolution, rejection nor protest can take place without some sort of violence in the broadest sense of the term. All movements of liberation, revolution or protest have some common trait of violence. This aspect of violence in liberation movements gives them concrete form, fleshing them out in the real world. “Without violence, they lose themselves in abstraction, unreality and ineffectiveness” (Fierro, 1977:200). The only way to subvert the dominant powers of oppression is to oppose them with antagonistic power. Conflict and clash between powers in the world (violence) is inherent in any serious social change. The most realistic theologians recognize that there is a close correlation between the theology of revolution and the theology of violence. The distinction between these two theologies is untenable from a realistic point of view (Fierro, 1977:200).

The issue of revolution and violence is interpreted differently with some school of thought advocating for nonviolent approach while others prefer the violence philosophy. Martin Luther King Junior`s philosophy of nonviolence was strongly influenced by Jesus and Gandhi (Cone, 1991:77). Jesus, for Luther, provided the religious motive that was persuasive in the African-American religious communities while Gandhi provided the practical method that was effective in dealing with violence. He would often say “Christ furnished the spirit and motivation while Gandhi furnished the method” (Cone, 1991:77). His philosophy was non-violent direct-action contrary to Malcom X who believed that nonviolence disarmed the oppressed. Martin believed that nonviolent can be a powerful tool to disarmed the oppressor.

Malcom X believed the oppressed should claim their liberation by any means necessary refusing absolutely to let the oppressors to determine their ethics of resistance to exploitation

(Cone, 1991:302). According to Malcom X, a black man has the right to do whatever is necessary to get his liberation like what other human beings have done to get their freedom. What right do other people have to tell black people on the methods that they should use to fight against white racism? The white people were not nonviolent when they perceived that their humanity was being violated. Why then should they expect blacks to be nonviolent (Cone, 1991:302)? This is also true of how whites violently took land from the *VaKaranga* people and then they expected to determine how the land will be redistributed. Malcom spoke of visceral feelings and violence while Luther spoke of political realities implicit in the minority status. In Africa the majority are those who are oppressed.

In his analysis of violence, Camara`s description of the chain of violence or spiral of violence becomes tenable. Camara enumerates three forms of violence. The first violence is institutionalized violence which is imbedded in the oppressive power structures. This original violence provokes and unleashes violence number two. Violence number two is the violence of the oppressed or the young or revolution in general. When the authorities try to restore public order by resorting to repressive measures, they create violence number three (Camara, 1997:19-23). Violence breeds violence and provokes violence in return.

The history of humanity is a history of violence and all present societies are sustained through the threat and use of perfectionated and terrifying means of violence. In view of the impossibility of the abolition of war the church has exercised itself in the attempt of mitigating the horrors of war. But the church of the ruling classes has neither contributed much to the abolition of violence nor has it resisted the military development. In the liberation struggle today, just as in the Exodus and the Magnificent, God is not an impartial observer, but is identified and present among the poor and the humiliated. A messianism of

the oppressed, therefore the church cannot abstain from the struggle but like her master take sides with the oppressed. There is always room for tactical violence as the lesser evil. This is also true of the situation in which R Mugabe was removed from power through a soft coup code named Operation Restore Legacy.

Cone (1978:217) sums it all by saying “the task of black ethicist is to untangle the confused and much discussed problem of violence and nonviolence and Jesus in relationship to both. Violence is not what Black people do to white people as victims who seek to transform the structure of their existence but it is also what white people have done when they created a society for white people only”. The violence by white people continues as they seek to maintain the created order. White violence cannot be solved by romanticizing white history. The greatest challenge remains on how to define violence for equality? Is it not violence to regain *unhu/ubuntu* or visceral violence which springs out of deeper emotions of seeking identity?

5.7 Modernity and Violence

Mugambi (1997:7) asserts that Africa is torn between sustaining its own cultural heritage and embracing European values as promoted in the market place. For Africa to face the future realistically the word development must be revisited so that whatever is linked to development as neo-colonialism is faced with courage. Development can be a new form of controlling the so-called developing countries by the forces of empire. Modernity, as the process whereby people acquire and make use of material elements of other countries, is one of the most important social realities in Africa. If not properly handled, it can threaten the work of the church. The church of the future must be equipped to liberate its members from

the many religious, technological and powerful economic forces invading Africa (Mugambi, 1997:7).

With hindsight, we observe now that during the colonial period much of the Christian missionary enterprise functioned in this way, leading colonized people to acquiesce to the aim of the colonized powers. In Angola and Mozambique, during the Portuguese colonial domination, the Concordat and the Missionary Act signed between Portugal and the Vatican had the double aim of Christianizing and civilizing the people of the colonies (Mugambi, 1997:38). This is also memorably expressed in a letter written by none other than Cecil J Rhodes the embodiment of British colonialism to the parents of a Dutch Reformed missionary in Rhodesia “your son among the natives is worth as much to me as 100 of my policemen”. Rhodes well understood that as a method of control religion was 100 times more effective than brute force (Mugambi, 1997:38). Modernity and development work hand in hand and if African countries continue to talk of development and modernity, they are making themselves prey of the West instead they must talk of justice. Modernity is the language of the oppressor.

The oppression of people from third World countries is linked to modernity. Africans described as backwards were supposed to be modernised so that they can be better humans. This demonstrates the violence which was used by the Whites to take land from the *VaKaranga* without shame and guilt. Land was taken in the name of modernity and *VaKaranga* culture was destroyed in the name of civilization. It is in this context where the *VaKaranga* rose to take back their land in a revolutionary way. The wide condemnation of the Third Chimurenga (Jambanja) did not come from Africa but from Europe especially those European countries which consider them to be the centre of civilization and modernity.

“Liberation Philosophy criticizes ‘the sacrificial myth’ of modernity as irrational, albeit presupposing its ‘rational emancipatory nucleus’, thereby also transcending modernity itself. Our project of liberation can be neither anti- nor pre- nor post-modern, but instead Trans-modern” (Dussel, 1996:52). Dussel argue for trans-modernity which goes beyond the misguided notion of modernity by Europe.

Trans-modernity places a strong emphasis on xenophile and globalism, promoting the importance of different cultures and cultural appreciation. It seeks a worldview on cultural affairs and is anti-Eurocentric and anti-imperialist. Trans-modernism in addition takes very strong stances on issues of feminism, family life and relationships, health care, promoting the emancipation of women and female rights and also promoting and advancing several traditional moral and ethical family values (Andrea, 2012:68). In Trans-modernism, the importance of family and family values are stressed.

European colonial rule is inherently violent from the perspective of Fanon and it is from this idea which he justified and rationalise the use of revolutionary force. Fanon declares that “decolonization is always a violent event which wrecks red-hot cannon balls and bloody knives” (1961:3). The central theme of his work is on how violence has become an integral part of the colonial system. Whenever and wherever the colonizers wanted to achieve something, violence was used as a method of execution. Later on, Fanon notes that, “colonialism is not a machine capable of thinking, a body endowed with reason. It is naked violence and only gives in when confronted with greater violence” (Fanon, 1961:3). Violence can only be justified when used to overthrow an inherently violent system such as colonialism.

The ideas of Fanon go parallel to those of Gandhi. Gandhi argues that the best way of overthrowing the colonial rule is non-violence and that independence could only be gained through ‘internal self-control’. Fanon dismissed non-violence and viewed it as “an attempt to settle the colonial problem around the negotiating table.” This will only guarantee that a corrupted and co-opted colonial bourgeoisie replaces the old European overlords. Non-violence was a way of facilitating bourgeois siege oppression. The masses can only free themselves from both forms of despotism through violent struggle (Presbey, 1996:283).

Third Chimurenga (Jambanja) for the *VaKaranga* is a response to the notion of violence which is central theme of the colonial system. The insights from Fanon add value and credibility to this research. The second Chimurenga which brought independence in Zimbabwe in 1980 ended up with the Lancaster Agreement, a negotiated document which in fact derailed the process of land redistribution in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Some of the clauses included the willing seller and willing buyer, and that the colonial master will compensate some farmers. This was not done in the expected time and resulted in the rapture of the Third Chimurenga

5.8 Liberation is the work of the oppressed

The interlocutor of the theology of liberation is the nonperson. Nonperson refers to those who, in a context of oppression, are not considered to be human beings. These include exploited classes, despised cultures and marginalised ethnic groups of the present social order (Gutierrez, 1983:195). The greatest challenge is for the church to tell the nonperson, nonhuman that God is love and that love makes (the oppressor and the oppressed) brothers and sisters. Here the oppressors and the oppressed share superficially at any rate the same faith and what differentiates them is precisely their economic, social and political levels

(Gutierrez, 1983:195). In the struggle for land in Zimbabwe, especially the Third Chimurenga the poor *VaKaranga* became the interlocutors of their own liberation since they were regarded by the colonial system as nonpersons.

There are two basic principles in liberation theology. In the first, it recognizes the importance of being liberated from any kind of oppression, be it political, economic, social, sexual, racial, or religious. The second basic principle is its assertion that the theology must grow out of the basic Christian communities and should not be imposed from above, that is, from the infallible source book or from the magisterium of an infallible Church. This principle explores the meaning of human activities theologically. It interprets Christian faith out of the suffering, struggle, and hope of the poor. “It critiques society and ideologies sustaining it, it pretends not to lay down specific rules for how to struggle for justice, but stresses that a responsible commitment with class conflict is an expression of love for one's neighbour” (Gutierrez, 1988: 31). The Fast Track Land Redistribution posed a challenge to theological thinkers to come up with a theology which is Afro centric against a Eurocentric theology, which this research seeks to establish.

The oppressed must develop the pedagogy of their liberation. In this pedagogy of liberation, the oppressed are key agents in advocating for their freedom. The oppressed are more prepared to fight oppression because they are the ones who suffer oppression. Liberation is not by coincidence, but it is through praxis of the oppressed. The fight for liberation by the oppressed constitutes an act of love different from the lovelessness which is displayed by the oppressor pampered usually in false generosity (Freire, 1970:29).

In the same spirit of the poor as agents of the revolution Dussel (1983) asserts that the poor constitute the hermeneutic point of departure. Revolution is not part of people`s normal

experiences for it may take a very long time before it is fully realised. In the event that a revolution takes place certain Christian ethical principles can be used to guide and regulate the praxis of the revolution. The poor remain the active partakers and make the hermeneutical point of departure as well as the centre of theological praxis. The ethics of liberationist praxis places the oppressed in the centre of action and in the Third Chimurenga the women also played a critical role although the patriarchal society ended up oppressing the women.

The dominated must not be denied their right to defend their lives and those of the innocent victims. This defence cannot be called sin, and the struggle against the stigmatization of class struggle as hatred and nihilism is the aim of liberation theology. “It is unfair to regard the revolution of the poor as sin and to make the violence of the oppressor seem like peace and order in society is to establish a diabolical morality and call that morality gospel” (Dussel, 1983:180). Dussel is more like challenging the church to consider its stand when faced with situations of oppression and revolution. The church must be the voice of the voiceless through its pastoral praxis.

The white commercial farmers who held the vast fertile land were not prepared to give it to its rightful owners through a silver platter until the *VaKaranga* were prepared to stage a revolution. While the Zimbabwean economy showed a downward turn around the 90s to 2000 mainly due to the effects of corruption, failed policies and bad governance, the *VaKaranga* took it upon themselves to stage a revolution to reclaim their lost heritage. It was better off for the *VaKaranga* to have land than to have a good economy in the hands of a few.

When the poor grow in the realization, they begin to hear the voice of the other poor among the people and they are changed into agents of the reign that is its primary builder and its

principal protagonists. “Under the oppressive moral order of the whites, the poor always accept the structure of domination in the spirit of passivity. In this condition of silence, they are just part of the crowd and they belong to the many whom Jesus of Nazareth felt pity for” (Mtt, 14:14). The oppressed must take an active role in the process of the emancipation (Dussel, 1983:54). Interestingly the male in the Third Chimurenga on the contrary failed to hear the voice of another poor, who in this case is the women. This shall be demonstrated in this research through well elaborated statistics of how women benefited.

Freire (1970:28) deepen the agent role of the oppressed by highlighting that the great humanistic and historical task of the oppressed in humanization process is to liberate themselves and that oppressor as well. This is very critical insight offered by Freire that the oppressor needs to be liberated. Unless and until the oppressor is liberated oppression will continue to haunt the society. Moreover, the eyes of the oppressor need to be opened and the oppressor apologise to the oppressed so that society may affirm its wellbeing. Any attempt to soften the power of the oppressor; in defence of the weakness of the oppressed always manifest itself in the form of false generosity by the oppressor (Freire, 1970:28).

The oppressor must continue to perpetuate injustice for him to express generosity. Several conflicts and calamities in Africa are sponsored by the oppressor. It is good that the *VaKaranga* were able to show the oppressor that they also needed to be liberated from a dominant mentality and racist thinking through the Third *Chimurenga*. The challenge is for the *VaKaranga* men and the Black elite to realise that they are also oppressors of women and other weak social classes in the society.

From the underside of history: A liberationist strategy

There are two important principles of liberation theology and the first is that liberation theology recognizes the need for emancipation from any form of oppression ranging from political, social, economic, sexual, racial and religious (Gutierrez, 1988:31). On the second note, it affirms that theology must emerge from the grassroots which are the basic Christian communities. Theology must not be created and imposed from the infallible source book or from the magisterium of an infallible Church (Gutierrez, 1988:31). It must not be crafted in quiet libraries, but it must reflect its context. Liberation theology interprets Christian faith out of the struggles, suffering and hope for the poor by exploring the meaning of human activities in their context in light of the word of God. The theology critiques the community and systems maintaining oppression and lays down specific rules to fight for justice and self-dignity (Gutierrez, 1988: 31).

The Third Chimurenga or Fast Track Land Redistribution posed a challenge to theological thinkers to come up with a theology which is reflective of the context of those who are from the underside of history over and against the theology of those on the position of privilege and power. Whilst it is the tendency of Empire to use the divide and rule system, the VaKaranga people continue to suffer under the hands of their fellow man who have become neo-colonial oppressors. Complete liberation can only come after all these forms of oppression are destroyed including the black elite.

The question to critically ponder around is whether Third Chimurenga can be classified as a just revolution. Just Revolution is modelled after the medieval Christian concept of Just War. A just violent revolution is waged only when there is gross injustice on the part of the ruling class and when all nonviolent means to do away with injustice have failed. There must be

moral certainty that justice will prevail and there is absolute intention to usher in a just order rather than just shifting power from the hands of a few elite (Swomley, 1972:11). Third Chimurenga (Jambanja) was not led by the elites of the society but by the poor people who had discovered their identity those who can be described as coming from the underside of history, the oppressed and marginalised of the society. It can best be described as awareness by the poor of the need to fight oppression. It was a moment of self-introspection for the *VaKaranga* people, especially to reflect on why they were living so miserable in their mother land. An awareness of the lack of vision from the church to champion the cause of the poor by coming up with a theology from the underside of history.

Kaufman (1973:37) asserts that “justice is widely held to be objective if not absolute, precise and not subject to emotions, timeless and above mere preferences”. The demands of justice require that no mere human beings can try to decide what to do, rather, the individual has to submit and do the bidding of justice. During the Third Chimurenga, in Zimbabwe, it was no longer the *VaKaranga* speaking or fighting but it was justice fighting for what was due to it hence, it becomes true to say when justice demands something no force can stop it. Justice was demanding its land back. This justice must be scrutinised internally for it also failed to look after its own weak members of the society particularly the women.

5.9 Kubata Makuku: A Black liberation theology of restoration

The policy of reconciliation in Zimbabwe made a name for Robert Mugabe yet it did not address the issues of racial inequality. Reconciliation is that process which helps establish love and understanding between the parties that previously were estranged. Wiredu (1996:181-182) asserts that “what is central to the process of reconciliation is the re-appraisal of the importance and significance of the initial bones of contention”. It therefore, means

instead of trying to avoid the causes of the conflict, through reconciliation, there is need for all the parties to the conflict to present their demands and that a proposed settlement should take into account the existence of these various demands.

One of the serious critics of unconditional reconciliation is Canaan Sodindo Banana. Banana in one of his publication *The Theology of Promise* heralds the need for both the black and white populace of the new Zimbabwe to reconcile in order to build a country that had been shattered by war. He called on both blacks and whites to put at the back of their minds the animosity of yesterday and concentrate on the rebuilding exercise (1983:11). That process was only possible if true reconciliation could be cultivated.

Reconciliation is a concept that has been appealed to by many countries that have tried to move from a situation of civil war to peace. There is no exception with Zimbabwe under Robert Mugabe, the man who led the country into independence appealing to the concept of reconciliation when he tried to set up a new nation and to rebuild the newly independent Zimbabwe. “However, this reconciliation was called for even before the basic injustices that had caused civil war in the first place were fully addressed” (Kaulemu, 2008:7).

Banana sees reconciliation as the prerequisite for unity and the promise of salvation. He challenged the Churches’ attitudes to reconciliation. He devoted a whole chapter to the question of reconciliation in order to clarify a doubt that rankles in minds of many people. The Christian Churches are reminded by Banana that “Christian reconciliation means more than a handshake that tries to eliminate past wrongs, nor is it a way of ignoring contradictions, but of removing them” (Banana, 1983:11). It required transformation, a new creation in Christ, in order for all things to be reconciled through Him. He used Colossians

1:20 to illustrate the need for reconciliation. His analysis of reality is not based on abstract philosophical principles and ideas about reality but on existential issues.

Banana is interested, not only in interpreting the world, but in transforming it; he used Marxist dialectic analysis when dealing with situation created by capitalistic oppression (Banana, 1983:13). His theology starts from the position of the under privileged. This bias towards the poor is completely in accordance with Christian eschatology (Matthew, 25:31-46); it is the focal point of the “Last judgement”, the foundation for the creation of a new heaven and a new earth, it should therefore be at the heart of the theology of promise. “Freedom from oppression, hunger, external and internal dependence from fear, greedy and the manipulation of man by man is the promise of a new creation” (Banana, 1983:14).

For the *VaKaranga*, true forgiveness and reconciliation comes after *Kubata makuku*. *Kubata makuku* when translated literally means catching hens. This is a concept which is used in most *VaKaranga* villages to settle differences. If a person has wronged another person a council (dare) is called to look into the issue and anyone found guilty must *bata makuku*. So, for the *VaKaranga* forgiveness is not an abstract philosophy but a comprehensive process. The concept of *Kubata makuku* is universal in dealing with issues of forgiveness and reconciliation in most *VaKaranga* communities. The concept may sometimes be used even when the offence is so huge that the person is requested to pay a goat or a cow, but the goal is to bring reconciliation. Once someone has done the process, the honour is on the community to make sure that there is true reconciliation. To talk of reconciliation without getting back the land for *VaKaranga* it was a non-starter. In fact, the whites were supposed *Kubata makuku* for the damage to the integrity of the *VaKaranga*.

The building of a different society and of a new human person will only be authentic if it is undertaken by the oppressed themselves. Hence, the point of departure for this undertaking must be the values of these persons. For it is from within the people that the prevailing social order is being so radically questioned. It is from within the people that the culture of oppression is on its way to being abolished. Indeed, this is the only way in which a genuine social and cultural revolution can be carried out (Gutierrez, 1983:193). One of the values of the *VaKaranga* is land. This is the reason why the *VaKaranga* would rise against the White minorities reclaiming the cultural heritage of land.

The stress for liberation presupposes far more than simply differences in our analysis of the situation. At a deeper level, it means one sees the on-going development of humanity in liberation as a process of emancipating humanity and creating a society where man and woman are truly free from servitude and where they can actively shape their destiny. Such a process does not lead us simply to a radical transformation of structures or to a revolution but goes much further implying the perjurying creation of a wholly new way for man and woman to be human (Gutierrez, 1983:193). There is an urgent need for Christians to involve themselves in the work of liberating the oppressed by establishing real solidarity with the oppressed persons who are the chief victims. In summation, Cone (1978:219) confirms that it would be the height of stupidity for victims of oppression to expect the oppressor to devise means of liberation for the oppressed. It is important to point out that no one can be nonviolent in an unjust society. To be non-violent is to express and accept the oppressor's values.

Kubata makuku was the only way for true reconciliation in which all the aggrieved parties were supposed to agree on the way forward after independence rather than one person being

popular internationally at the expense of the majority of the people. A theology of *Kubata makuku* can be a panacea to several conflicts in Zimbabwe and around the world.

Zimbabwe is currently embroiled in quite a number of unresolved conflicts. For instance, the pre-independence tribal tensions between the Shona and Ndebele, aggravated by the Gukurahundi killings in 1983, have not been resolved. Gukurahundi saw the deployment of the Fifth Brigade to Matebeleland and parts of Midlands which resulted in between 10000 to 30000 Matebele slain by Mugabe`s private Army. Gukurahundi ordinarily refers to the wind which blows away the chaff before the rains (Hill 2003:77). It is precisely this meaning ascribed to the operation Gukurahundi that is seen by some to mean the wiping out of ZAPU and the Ndebele population`s contribution to the liberation history.

There was also violence during operation Murambatsvina where authorities bulldozed, razed and destroyed what was labelled **illegal structures** that included but not limited to houses with approved plans in residential areas and well established markets (Nyere 2014).

The 2008 election re-run saw more than 200 MDC activists murdered in State led election violence. While on another note 5000 MDC supporters were tortured and displaced from their homes. These are just some of the conflicts which Zimbabwe is experiencing and the theology of *kubata makuku* can be utilised to bring restoration.

In its originality, *kubata makuku* does not discriminate against women. If a husband has wronged his wife, he must *bata makuku*. There is no male dominance in the concept of *Kubata makuku*.

5.10 Christology in relation to liberationist praxis

Eurocentric Christianity is a master in advocating for a round table to negotiate under critical challenges. Throughout Africa Christian Organizations spear head the calling of waring or conflicting parties to a negotiating table. When it comes to a revolution, Eurocentric Christianity condemns any revolution indiscriminately without looking at the goal of the revolution. This is so because up until now some Christian Denominations continues to receive aid from their colonial master prompting them to support the interest of their masters.

The project of creating a new and different society works hand in glove with the creation of new human persons. This new person must be progressively liberated from whatever enslaves them and from whatever prohibits them from acting as agents of their own lot in history. This is the reason for the challenge to the dominant ideologies of the Whites in Zimbabwe, with their model of a human being which they attempt to impose onto the society. It is only within the framework of a challenge to the established order in toto that it is possible to critique even the role of religion on the part of the oppressed. Religion has come to be criticized precisely as a factor purporting to justify the domination under which the exploited and marginalized suffer (Gutierrez, 1983:192).

Liberation praxis denounces society built to benefit the few and proclaim a social order established in favour of the poor and oppressed. It should be seen as a project embellished in the struggles of the people to live on a daily basis in spite of the oppression while demonstrating a resistance to oppression in the struggle for liberation. Their questioning seeks to go to the very root of the misery and injustice they live in. This is why they take the road of social revolution and not of reformist palliatives. This is why they go in search of liberation not developmentalism; they call for socialism not some updating of the system in

effect (Gutierrez, 1983:191). The Third Chimurenga in Zimbabwe was not and is not a reformist idea, but a revolution aiming at dismantling all the power structures used to exploit the poor in as far a land was and is concerned.

Liberation theology undertakes to fight all forms of social injustices everywhere such as homelessness, unemployment, racism, sexism, homophobia, lack of access to health care and education. “Liberation theology also considers the marginalization of indigenous peoples, declining mortality rates, economic inequality, social impediments to ownership of property, human rights violation, discrimination of religious minorities as well as environmental degradation and its impact on the poor” (Hopkins & Antonio, 2012:33). This is done in relationship to the person of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the embodiment of justice.

Liberation theology brings along its discourse to be part of other challenges and objections affecting citizens as it deals with the negative radical critique of religion as the opium of the people in the context of the oppressed. The churches are still using religious superstructure inherited from the west which justifies domination. These superstructures have made religion an ideology of oppression (Hopkins & Antonio, 2012:33). Scholars also believe religion produces a false political conscience. It is of its very nature ant-revolutionary. Liberation theology in Africa in general, and in Zimbabwe in particular is confronted with a theology of oppression which is predominantly in most Mainline and Pentecostal churches. Liberation theology must demonstrate and defend the possibility of a religion of liberation which gives solutions to the issues of becoming a true Christian within a revolutionary process of essential structural change through the praxis exhibited in the person of Jesus Christ.

5.11 Poverty and Postcolonial influence: An Ethical Concern

“In Africa, imperialism has discarded the outmode formula of direct occupation and colonization but imperialist countries have resorted to the neo-colonial formula whereby countries have flag independence as outward manifestations of independence but the economic and political systems of these countries with flag independence are tied to and dominated by the imperialist countries” (<http://www.link.springer.com>). Foreign capital is very dominant in most African countries. In most African countries Zimbabwe included of course the mining sector is generally foreign owned and controlled.

The multinational companies have invested in mining and are reaping great benefits from their operations. In the agricultural sector, the large plantations are foreign owned. Before the land revolution in Zimbabwe 90% of commercial farms and plantations were in the hands of the few Whites. Studies show that multinational corporations sometimes welcome the state participation in joint partnership with them as this guarantees them monopoly control of the market as well as control of labour force (Torres & Fabella, 1978:10).

There is heated debate in the Zimbabwean parliament on the issue of a USD15 billion which is said to have disappeared in the Chiyadzwa diamond mines (Banya, 2018). Foreign companies, in liaison with political elites mined diamond which never benefited the local people, and some locals were moved from their mother land to pave way for mining companies without compensation (Banya, 2018). After the demise of Robert Mugabe regime through a military operation code named Operation Restore Legacy, the parliamentary portfolio committee on mines was calling on the former president to come and answer to the allegations of the missing 15 billion. It has also emerged that even China is also operating in Zimbabwe in bad faith.

Colonialism is part of our history, and there are still unhealed wounds of imperial plunder in most African nations Zimbabwe included. Today we think we live in a post-colonial world but we continue to live under the sway of neo-colonial forces. The neo-colonial forces are most often not far away from us but Africans often wilfully participate and become partners in neo-colonial exploits as co-contractors and implementers of Empire. Faith is to meet God at the bleeding points of history and to participate in the salvific praxis of God. Christian mission is not a rescue operation to airlift believers from a sinful world, but is to believe in the promise of God to transform the world to participate in the divine project to realize that promise (Torres & Fabella, 1978:10).

Dussel (1983:141) argues that dependence has become an international sin which people from the periphery continue to suffer at the hands of capitalism. It should be noted that tribal and ethnic groups, including other marginal groups, have their lives sacrificed on the altar of a fetish that wear a global face. The sacrificial alter is the exporting of the product of a poor country and sell it below its production price, thus sacrificing the labour of the poor people. On the other hand, poor countries commit murder by importing a product and selling it for more than its value. It is the denial of the life to the poor whose money will now purchase less life than the life they have objectified in their wages.

The case in point is the diamonds from the Marange area as highlighted earlier in this chapter where those who were supposed to benefit were side lined and continue to wallow in poverty. One of the great local musicians in Zimbabwe, Hossiah Chipanga, in one of his songs *Dambudziko Ndiye Pharaoh* had this to say “mbuya *Nehanda zamu renyu romwaya ngoda asi dambudziko ndiye Pharaoh*”. This song is saying Nehanda the great war heroine of the First

Chimurenga 1896 to 1897 your breast is giving us diamonds but the problem is neo-colonialism imbedded within the structure of governance as such the rightful people are not benefiting from the blessings of the departed.

Within the same framework of modernity Dussel (1990:12) highlight the perpetuation of colonial influence through colonial oligarchs. Colonial elites are trained and brainwashed in colonial centres of influence such as Oxford, Cambridge and Paris. The new imperialist is the fruit of the third industrial revolution. The transnationals do not invade countries and territories with armies or create bureaucracies. The new imperialists are owners directly or indirectly of the key enterprises in Third World countries such as the production of raw materials and process industries and services of the periphery. One of the major setbacks by these colonial elites to selfhood and dignity for the poor is corruption. Most of these black elites are very corrupt and corruption has become a cancer for Africa.

The importance of this cultural and religious domination is well grasped by North Atlantic powers. There exists a remarkable 1964 USA government document ingeniously entitled “Winning the Cold War: The US Ideological Offensive”. The document consists of testimony by officials of the US Agency for International Development of Defense. A deputy director of USAID testified that the goal of aid is a political one. The aim of the aid is to open up more political space for the US and ensure that it is well received in different nations. We give serious consideration to how we can effectively influence countries in the direction of policies and programs which accord with US objectives (Mugambi, 1997:39). This is the extension of empire through specialized aid.

While African theologians such as Mugambi, Ka Mana and Villa-Vicencio (Mugambi, 1997:19 & 48-49) argue that “the theme of reconstruction theology must take precedence

over the theme of liberation, it is critical to note that reconstruction is only possible after true liberation”. They argue that with the metaphor of liberation, Africans have wasted much time complaining as if they were expecting to receive compensation from the colonialists. The theology of reconstruction brings Africa face to face with God and together with him it is possible to create better conditions in many areas. These theologians seem to have forgotten that those who colonized Africa are still using post-colonial methods of continuing the neo-colonization strategy. It is only when African has taken full control of their resources such as land, minerals, culture and human resource that it can talk of reconstruction. The other way could be that Africans can talk of both liberation and reconstruction simultaneously and come up with liberation-reconstruction theology.

Cultural Violence

As one ponders about the agent role of the poor in liberating themselves from the forces of domination, it is critical to reflect also on cultural violence. Kee argues that there is cultural violence which closes the mind to aspirations towards human fulfilment. Far from being overtly violent, this form may take an enlightened approach bringing many gifts but deny man his future (Kee, 1974:138). This research tries to bridge this gap where some *VaKaranga* people are brain washed to only think that the whites are the right people to own commercial farms. This was also necessitated by the fact that those who are educated in Zimbabwe, their education is according to colonial dictates. For the *VaKaranga* and most of the VaShona in general someone who is rich is likened to murungu (Whiteman) this entails the epitome of brain washing.

Using all the communication and education media, the forces of imperialism and their ruling class in the nations impose a dependence form of culture on the people. This culture disguises

and justifies the situation of domination. It forms human beings who are resigned to their alienation. It also stipulates the oppressed to patronize and exploit others in turn. The right of each individual is assured only if cultural freedom is respected. The function of government is to promote and protect the cultural life of everyone including that of the minority groups (Hennelly, 1990:490). As highlighted above, the dependence form of culture has been imposed on the VaKaranga to the extent that there were many VaKaranga who, from the First, Second and Third Chimurenga never joined the struggle for they thought the white man or woman was a super human. They instead fought the struggle in the white man`s corner.

Privileges and power are associated with whiteness in most African societies. More often than not, the normative power of whiteness has been used to oppress and side-line people of colour. The notion of whiteness as an explicit and implicit cultural ideal of beauty and desirability has come to many VaKarangas. Virtue and purity linger in post-colonial world in relationship to whiteness in surprising ways and presents a formidable obstacle for both subjects of colour who find themselves marginalised by nationality, ethnicity, gender and sexuality. For the *VaKaranga*, all beauty and virtue is associated with whiteness in popular *VaKaranga* idioms like: *wakanaka semurungu* meaning you are beautiful like a white, *wagarika semurungu* meaning you now live a life of riches and *watove murungu chaiye* meaning you are now just a Whiteman.

For a long time, the *VaKaranga* people of Zimbabwe lacked this realization after the independence, but later realized that freedom without land is not freedom. They begin to ask questions relating to why they were living in mountainous places, overcrowded, and leaving in abject poverty while the whites owned vast tracts of land. In other words, some began to appeal to history and realised that they were subjects of an unjust historical biography. This

self-realization resulted in the revolution. The realization can be viewed as a moment of truth but such truth calls for action. The action must be taken by those who suffer oppression and humiliation.

In the philosophy of violence and culture Cabral (1974) argue that culture is the means by which some people are guaranteed domination over others especially the oppressed groups. “Culture is one of the important tools of the struggle for emancipation and it is intimately linked to the fight for freedom” (1974:101-209). There is no national liberation of a people if they fail to regain their historical personality as a people and a return to history through the destruction of the imperialist oppression to which they were subject. Fanon (1961:25) concludes that fighting for national culture entails the struggle for the liberation of the nation. One cannot remove the combat of culture from people`s struggle for liberation and emancipation to affirm selfhood. Land is of cultural and religious value for the *VaKaranga* hence fighting for land was also a cultural revolution and national liberation agenda.

5.12 Jambanja: a liberationist praxis of hope

Chaumba et al., (2003:540) “defined jambanja as follows: Literally meaning violence or angry argument, jambanja has been used in subtly different context to refer to different people and different places, including the excombatant farm invaders themselves, the farm invasions and more broadly politically instigated violence”. One of the war veterans’ catchphrase during the Third Chimurenga was “*jambanja ndizvo*” (violence is the way). The same phrase has also been used in opposition politics to refer to fighting against a bully, whilst the workers movement to refer to mass protest and direct action. In space and time, it is used to describe confusion and chaos. The confusion and chaos which was witnessed

during the Third Chimurenga made it very difficult for many researchers to evaluate the method used in the farm invasion.

The jambanja or mayhem concept can be viewed as a natural response to political initiation to a certain extent however, it is not disputable that beneficiaries played a significant role. The beneficiaries were restive because of squatting conditions in communal areas, together with unemployment and limited economic opportunities. They however, were also being pushed by the promises made during the liberation struggle and at independence that land would be re- allocated to the masses. Therefore, when the masses went to settle on the farming land, to them it was in order and they did not see anything wrong or illegal in their action. They viewed it as the culmination of the Chimurenga cause and as victors of the liberation struggle leading up to independence in 1980. “Victors naturally take what they think belong to them” (Matondi, 2012:1). This jambanja was an expression of hope for equality and fair distribution of land. Alves (2004:83) analyses violence in the context of hope and argued that violence may take an enlightenment approach, bringing many benefits and gifts except man`s own future.

It is however, a fact that those who possess the present, to them, violence is whatever disturbs the status quo. While it is also a fact that during the Third Chimurenga there was violence, but the extent to which it was magnified by those who possess the present is beyond measure. They zoomed it so that the international world will condemn the action in their strongest terms. Yet in any struggle there is bound to be causalities and for every hospital there is a mortuary although the purpose of the hospital is to treat the people in anticipation of full recovery. The violence was in the context of bringing a new society for the VaKaranga where land was taken back and given to its rightful owners.

The world is in need of a structural revolution. With regard to underdeveloped and developing countries, this fact is evident. From whatever standpoint one approaches the issue, be it economically, culturally, socially, scientifically, politically and religiously. It is obvious that a summary, superficial reform is absolutely insufficient. “What is needed is a reform in depth, a profound and rapid change” (Kee, 1974:139). People must not be afraid of the west to institute this structural revolution. The Third Chimurenga in Zimbabwe was such a revolution. While it remains a fact that the exercise was not properly done to the satisfaction of all, the Third Chimurenga was a necessary evil. The Republic of South Africa is not safe as far as this revolution is concerned. The land issue in South Africa has become a highly contested issue on the political space and the general economic imbalances. South Africa must face the land issue with courage otherwise the issue remains a melting pot.

Liberation theology must not only be critical and take a bold stance on colonial powers and ignore post-colonial evils perpetuated by the new forms of Empire. The land issue as alluded in this research is not conclusive until post-colonial oppressive structures are dealt with decisively. Liberation theology in Zimbabwe must concern itself with fighting the neo colonial evils such as corruption, double allocation of farms, multiple farm ownership and gender issues which continue to lay their ugly face in the gains of the Third Chimurenga. If that is not dealt with, it means a Fourth Chimurenga is looming.

The relationship between Church and government must be a dynamic, critical and creative solidarity with each other. The relationship becomes a process propelled by the motive to serve and to bring man and woman to become more fully human. This dynamic view of the state frees the church from thinking of the power of government as God-given all the time (Okullu, 2003:67). The new view sees the government as a task force with the power and

mandate to fulfil a specific historical task. This view of government of any state introduces the issue of a theology of a just rebellion and revolution. If the government is given a specific task by the community to fulfil and fails, if the government introduces a state of conflict and oppression, the process towards a just order can be justly set in motion by revolutionary measures (Okullu, 2003:67). This is an ideal which is very difficult to achieve but if the church continues to play its prophetic role and as watchdog role the above relationship of dynamic, critical and creative solidarity can be achieved.

In this case our Christian conscience allows us to accept a revolution as the logical method of changing the system of governance. The state must demonstrate its authority by effectively carrying out its work through a particular government or else it becomes impossible to exclude the possibility and the legitimate use of arms to overthrow the one which has failed to carry out its mandate (Mohanty, 1977:20; Sigmund, 1992:42). It is also wise to note that revolution is so destructive and, in many cases, hardly succeeds in correcting the ills it sets out to correct it must be the primary duty of the church in its service to society to prevent revolution from happening. The church must in its witness to society strive to establish and maintain justice that revolutionary uprisings need not to occur. But in the event that a revolution has occurred the church must not fold its arms or condemn the revolution in its pulpit without calling to order the structures which oppress the poor (Mohanty, 1977:20; Sigmund, 1992:42).

One of the requirements of the church in order to bear such witness and to render such service to society is to adopt a position of critical detachment in order to be free and able to act as a watchdog in society (Mohanty, 1977:20; Sigmund, 1992:42). If church leaders allow themselves to be drafted into sycophantic political thinking and accept patronage from state

officials, they will lose their prophetic freedom to correct whatever is wrong in society. Instead of the Church taking sides with the poor masses during the *Jambanja* many Christian denominations especially those of Missionary origin were busy protecting their own farms and mission from landless people. This entails that there was no critical detachment of the church in order to exercise its role as the watchdog, voice of the voiceless and as the voice of reason or conscience of the society. During the period under review, the Main line churches failed to exercise its prophetic role due to the fact that they were accomplices to the land theft and to date many Denominations are engaged in serious land wrangle with local people.

The new vision above attends to structural factors in order to help Christians to devoid themselves from the fallacy of proposing a personal transformation isolated from concrete condition, as a pre-requisite to any social transformation. If people remain wedded in this fallacy, in the name of some hazy humanism or disembodied spiritualism, they shall only prove to be accomplices in the continuing postponement of the radical changes that are necessary. Such changes call for simultaneous work on both persons and structures, for they condition each other mutually (Mohanty, 1977:20; Sigmund, 1992:42).

Several steps can be taken by the church in establishing solidarity with the oppressed. The major step is for the church in its entirety to break away from its many ties with the oppressive order. The church has maintained those ties overtly or covertly, wittingly or unwittingly up to the present day. This is critical from the backdrop of the fact that most Mainline Churches in Zimbabwe continue to receive grants from their head office in Europe. The case in point is the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, United Methodist Church, the Anglican Church and the Salvation Army. This will not be an easy task, for it will mean abandoning outworn traditions, suspicious viewpoints, advantages and privileges as well as

the forces of inertia. It will also mean accepting the fact that the future cast of the church will be radically different from the one we know today. It will mean incurring the wrath of those in power who control the means of production. Above all it will mean believing in the revolutionary and liberating power of the gospel.

Liberation theology is so dangerous because it disrupts a religious and political worldview that supports social structures that privilege a few at the expense of many. Ignorance of the causes of the oppression is crucial to maintain this worldview. But as the consciousness of the oppressed begins to be raised, as they begin to see with their eyes that their repressive conditions are contrary to the will of God, the power privilege of the few who benefit from the status quo is threatened (Vellem et al., 2016:154). A theological approach that raises the consciousness of the oppressed does not escape the charge of insurrection and the resultant punishment by killing, yet rebellion against death itself is ostensibly and inspiration of the same theological paradigm and perhaps a number of struggles for life in the world could be cited as examples of insurrection (Vellem et al., 2016:154) When the church feels safe in the discharge of its duties it means the church is operating in its comfort zone, hence the church must move away from the comfort zone and face reality. This reality is confronted as the church confronts the situation of the poor and oppressed.

Liberation theology must find meaning in the on-going fight against Empire in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Empire can manifest itself in different faces which include among other things corruption, government and civil bureaucracy and gender imbalances thus black theology of liberation must take the centre stage in post-colonial Zimbabwe. Empire is that which claims absolute lordship over God's creation and commodifies all relationships between human beings and human beings, human beings and creation, human beings and faith, human beings

and work and human beings and sexuality (Dussel, 2013:357). The violent face of Empire is exposed in systems and practices that exclude and discriminate people based on class, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientations. Empire is, hence a god that rejects God and the flourishing of the community of creation.

In 2014 there was disaster in Masvingo area a place predominantly of the *VaKaranga* people. There was a construction of a big dam (Tokwe-Mukosi) the largest inland dam in Zimbabwe. Before people were moved to pave way for the dam, there were floods due to incessant rains which forced a backflush and many people found themselves in the middle of floods. Evacuation processes were carried out and the people were moved to a transit camp in an area called Chingwizi. This incident created a lot of trauma for the *VaKaranga* in that they left their father`s land unceremoniously which included all their sacred space. This story shows that modernity in the name of building a dam lacks wisdom if it ignores the people`s worldview. This shows the tension between modernity and traditionalism, as it reflects the cultural, religious and political undercurrents behind modernity in the form of dispersing people for the construction of a dam or other modern forms of development.

The Tokwe Mukosi dam dispersed thousands of the *VaKaranga* from their original homes which they had cherished for generations and generations. However, the government view the dam highly as a source of wealthy for the country. It is argued by the government that the dam will change the fortunes of Masvingo area which is the capital city of the *VaKaranga*. This is said without looking at the trauma associated with the displacement caused by this development to those *VaKarangas* who were moved to Chingwizi areas where they are likely not to benefit from the waters of the dam. Chingwizi area where they were moved to is so far

that those who were not disturbed by the construction are the ones to benefit from the dam. Land is connected to the life of the people.

It falls to the oppressed themselves to cry out against injustice and take the crisis to the doorstep of the powerful so that it can no longer be denied (Boesak 2017:38). For the colonizers, the post-colonial land imbalances did not constitute a crisis to them but for the *VaKaranga* it was more than a crisis.

5.13 Consciousness and liberationist praxis

One of the greatest concerns for Kairos theologians is that the church had not been the bearer of hope for the society. The church must preach a bold message of hope. ‘A revolution can be viewed through the lenses of a Kairos consciousness which is a realisation awake and open to the discovering of and reacting to the certainty and exceptionality of that moment’ (Boesak, 2015:39). The historical process of a class-based society and imperialist domination inevitably leads to confrontation between classes despite the fact that this confrontation becomes clearer every day, it is denied by the oppressor. Meanwhile the exploited classes are progressively discovering and adopting a new revolutionary consciousness (Hennelly, 1990:151).

This Kairos moment lays bare the truth about ourselves and removes us of all pseudo-innocence. It is a time of repentance, self-reflection, commitment, and conversion.

To be aware, then all it takes is to be a human being (Boesak, 2015:39). ‘All it takes is to be human, to seize the reality in the dialectical relations that flow between human kind and the world. Consciousness implies therefore, that when I realize that I am oppressed, I also know I

can liberate myself if I transform the concrete situations where I find myself oppressed’ (Hennelly, 1990:6). The fact that the VaKaranga people realized that they were oppressed can be described as Kairos moment which opened avenues for a new society and a new realization of the importance of land in Zimbabwe and beyond.

Obviously, one cannot transform it in his or her head that will be falling into a philosophical error of thinking equating awareness to reality; it will be decreeing freedom in the mind. Yet the structures would continue to be the same as ever denying the people freedom. Consciousness implies a critical first step into a process; a historical commitment to change. This is why consciousness bids the oppressed to adopt a utopian attitude towards the world, an attitude that turns one into a utopian agent (Hennelly, 1990:6). The awareness demands love and justice. We also discover who we are and other people and more importantly about the God-given potential for real and critical change in the balance of power.

This awareness is the truth which sets the victims of oppression free, and at the same time, it is a shocking and a liberating moment (Boesak, 2015:39). One of the positive realities in the Third Chimurenga was a farewell to pseudo-innocence by the *VaKaranga* who discovered themselves and engaged in a revolution whether justified by Empire or not. ‘This consciousness is aware of the fact that the discovery of the moment of truth is not a period of victorious gloating, affirming and rejoicing in the spiritual superiority of the victims, but rather of deep and humble happiness for the gift of discernment and love’ (Boesak, 2015).

It seems like in this consciousness, the oppressed hear a compelling voice which demands for a response. The voice that is heard and responded to is the voice of the voiceless that are the poor and oppressed. These are the people who are at the bottom of the well whose voices

were described by John Calvin as the very voice of God (Boesak, 2015). The victims know that this confusion of order and justice is not to be sustained and that injustice is not from God. When the victims cry and groan it is if God hears himself in their cry for justice (Boesak, 2015:11). As alluded to earlier in this chapter, western ethics is hypocritical in the sense that while, the majority of humanity suffered and still suffers humiliation the west still subscribe to the happiness of greatest number.

Among the many issues at the heart of ethical analysis in Third World countries are the pervasive sense of alienation experienced by their citizens and the multiple levels of tyranny that dominate their existence. Both evil diminish and undermine the quality of life and impose harsh or impossible conditions upon their victims (Fabella & Sugirtharajah 2000:150). Christian ethicists from these countries argue that they should judge the validity and credibility of ethical norms by their sensitivity to these mutually reinforcing evils and by their efficacy in shaping moral visions by which to overcome them. In places where the evils of alienation and tyranny are produced and maintained by social, economic and political systems, liberation ethics has been prescribed as the appropriate goal of the moral life (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:150).

This goal calls for radical realignment of the interests that constitute the collective life with priority given to the economic and political empowerment of the poor and oppressed. Thus, the ethics of liberation challenges those who benefit from unjust structures of domination to commit themselves to and participate in the struggle to affirm the human dignity of the marginalised. It also asks the victims of such structures to view themselves as subjects rather than objects of history, refusing to accept their situation as inevitable (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:150). This understanding of ethics has defined the activities of various

liberation movements in the Third World countries. It is also the impetus for several other issue-oriented movements like the Third Chimurenga (*Jambanja*). It is a Kairos consciousness, a violence informed by an awareness of the need to be liberated.

Boesak asserts that a Kairos consciousness is being able to read the signs of the times and making judgments of a political nature by calling on the church to be involved in the fight for justice.

The understanding of a revolution is highly significant. This is not about turning the tables on the oppressors and in the process exacting retribution for centuries of feudal or colonial oppression. Neither is it a revolution to gain power for the sake of having power. It is wresting power not as instrument of political self-gratification, manipulation and destruction but as bearer of dignity of the people as they seek significant and responsible participation in society and history. It is not the power over others, but the power shared with others to serve others in the pursuit of justice, dignity and wholeness as a common good in a qualitative different society. It continues to leave a lot to be desired especially when equating Third Chimurenga in the consciousness for justice in society when the justice of women was not considered in the struggle of Third Chimurenga.

Significant in the new revolutions is the acute awareness that this is resistance against imperial power and might in all their global manifestations. Dussel (2013:386) points out that a social revolution must be place within the overall horizon because it implies a human protest against the dehumanization of life. The revolution considers the victims of injustice as its point of departure, because the common essence whose division the individual is rising up against is the true common essence of humanity. He further asserts that power is a “relationship of forces.” “Forces” are actions in tension with other actions, which are self-

sustained in “the management of life.” Dussel would want to look at a revolution as nothing but intense times of complexity that begins the lowest level with the changing of the maxims of everyday life (Dussel, 2013:385).

5.14 Conclusion

The ethics of liberationist praxis brings into the fold a different paradigm to the struggle for justice where the poor must engage in liberation by bidding farewell to pseudo innocence. It has been always the tradition that when the oppressor uses violence to suppress the oppressed it has been interpreted in the spirit of bringing order. In the recent ended harmonized election in Zimbabwe soldiers opened live ammunition to protesters and the explanation is that it was maintaining law and order yet people lost their lives. The ethics of liberationist praxis calls the church to order by challenging the church to come up with a prophetic theology which justifies the church to struggle together with victims of oppression. Churches and denominations must revisit their mission statements, vision and core values so that they align them to the plight of the poor and marginalised in a revolution.

The plight of the poor and the marginalised does not only include male poor, but it encompasses woman who suffer on the edged sword of exclusion from the church and the society. It is the role of the reawakened church to think through gender issues which have become thorn in the flesh of women in so far as land redistribution and ownership is concerned.

Ethics of liberationist praxis exposes the hypocrisy imbedded in western ethics by challenging the west to measure up to its ethical principles and embrace a liberating ethical

code which justifies the struggle for human dignity. The ethics of liberationist praxis promotes ubuntu/*unhu* which seeks to promote a society of human dignity.

It opens a new way of thinking and interpreting reality. Neo-colonialism has taken a new shape and Empire is manifesting itself in new ways such as creating artificial shortages and desires for people of colour so that their mass media advertising and production. The new horrible menace is a perpetuation of white privileges. There is therefore need for the oppressed to stand for their identity in defence of this new form of oppression through engaging an ethics of liberation praxis. The next chapter deals with gender imbalances on land redistribution during the Third Chimurenga. This has been necessitated by the fact that right through the research the women have been oppressed and side lined in the land redistribution.

CHAPTER 6

“LAND IS MOTHER: GENDER INEQUALITY IN LAND REDISTRIBUTION”

6.1 Introduction

Chapter five discusses the ethics of a liberationist praxis and concluded that it is the work of the oppressed to engage in liberation and calls the church to order by challenging her to come up with a prophetic theology. This chapter looks at the discourse of women empowerment that has grown swiftly in the past two decades as women move up in various ways within different domains of life. Gender equality has been at the centre of debate nationally and globally for many years, women attacking gender prejudice. Nasrallah and Fiorenza (2009:7) point out that gender prejudice has made a negative impact on women as they are left out of development and other critical social economic enhancement because they are women. This kind of stereotype has made women inferior to men including their own sons thus, impacting negatively on land tenure system in Zimbabwe. The male dominated society has facilitated a serious gender imbalance on land.

Matondi (2012:185) describes Third Chimurenga as “a revolution without women`s land rights”. The Zimbabwe radical land reform did not yield meaningfully benefits to women`s cause particularly towards in accessing state land. The assumption is that land reform should have provided the previously disadvantaged groups with new opportunities for employment, redress inequality, correct resource use inefficiencies and poverty, much of which affects women.

Gender imbalance continues to cast its dark shadow on how land was redistributed during the Third Chimurenga or Fast Track Land Reformation. This chapter gives insight into how women are challenging the redistribution of land in Zimbabwe during the Third Chimurenga

or Fast Track Land Redistribution (*Jambanja*) by scaling the highest mountain in Zimbabwe. If really land is a mother or womb why is that women side-lined yet land is a symbol of motherhood? The chapter begins by defining gender and evaluating some theories of gender and then give detailed analysis gender land redistribution in the Third Chimurenga. If land is like a mother for the *VaKaranga*, the issues of women must be taken seriously and evaluated in the Third Chimurenga.

6.2 Gender constructs and challenges in Zimbabwe

Definition of gender

Gender is defined by Sifuniso et al., (2000:2) “as the social meanings ascribed to being either a man or a woman in a given society and the expectations held as to the character, attitude and likely the manner in which they behave”. As opposed to sex derives from biological, gender is a socially constructed unit of culture. It has the power to influence the observable different roles, behaviours, responsibilities, identities and the varied treatment accorded to males and females in any society. Gender is heavily influenced by the history and culture history of any specific society whilst differing from one culture to another.

Gender disparities found between men and women, especially in the economy, points to the systematic exclusion and oppression of women. Gender studies have indicated that this cannot be attributed to the natural or innate inferiority of women but to social and economic mechanisms. Thus, the existence of gender division in society and issues of sexism and oppression of women especially via the control of their sexuality and reproduction and perpetration of sexual violence need to be recognised as fundamental instruments of oppression of women by men (Lips, 1988:27). Huisinga (et al., 2001) argues that the socially constructed role of men and women have a profound effect on the use and management of

resources. The churches have been slow in lending support to such complains around the gendered society.

Gender constructs

Scholars and philosophers of different disciplines have invested much time and thought on efforts to understand and explain the differences between men and women world-wide. Various theories have been constructed and among them most central ones are the Gender Constructionist Theory and the Biological Determinism/essentialism theory. In this research the constructionist theory will take the greater toll of discussion since it is a product of human endeavour and has a profound role in the way resources are managed.

Biological determinism/essentialism

This is an explanation of gender differences based on a set of other sub-theories founded on the assumption that the difference between men and women is biological. It is a conception in the wider society that the essential difference between men and women in behaviour is biologically fixed. This theoretical approach, referred to as the “anatomy is destiny” perspective asserts that certain behaviours are justified and unchangeable based on anatomy (Giddens 2001). Biology presented the first and mostly acceptable explanation for inequalities between male and female beings in society from a long time. Scientific results pointing to observable natural differences accounting for hormonal, chromosomes, brain size and genetics have been used to explain the innate differences ascribed to behaviour of women and men (Giddens, 2001). Some of the behaviours that stereotypical such as physical strengths of men, advanced intelligence, aggressive nature and women’s softness, care, docility and love have equally been all deterministic attributes of biology.

Social Construction of Gender

The theory argues that gender behaviour is not innate but is socially constructed. It is based on the concept of gender socialization, which “refers to the means whereby social expectations regarding gender appropriate characteristics are conveyed”. Stereotypical beliefs often create and engender these expectations. “It has a dual significance for children, that is, it provides them with models for present behaviour and it prepares them for adult life” (Dekker & Lemmer, 1993:9).

The theory stresses that boys and girls are not born men and women, but learn to be masculine and feminine in conformity with social values and practices. Young boys and girls learn the appropriate behaviour for their sex during primary socialization in the family and secondary socialization at school, at church and among their peers (Dekker & Lemmer, 1993:9).

Musa Dube (2003) shares the same sentiments by affirming that gender is socially and culturally constructed. It refers to how individuals are brought up to act as men and women. In other words, while one’s sexual identity as a male or female is a biological fact how one expresses the masculinity and or femininity is shaped by societal values and norms. Elaborating that gender is socially constructed Musa Dube draws the following conclusion: Gender is not natural, is not divine, has to do with social relationships and men and women can be reconstructed and reformed by the Society for since it is culturally constructed it can be socially deconstructed (Dube, 2003:86). Human agents are at the forefront in terms of gender construction. Androcentric is a particular apparent in historiography, methodology and conceptual tool of discipline which express the marginality and invisibility of women as both subjects and objects in the study of religion.

Butler (1990: ix) introduces the concept of the elasticity of gender perceptions arguing that, all identity categories including gender are in fact the products of institutions, practices and discourses. To these scholars, individuals are not locked up in anatomy, with no room for manoeuvre but have the capacity to challenge biological deterministic or essentialist stereotypes used to give them identities. Some have even given the examples of heterosexuality versus homosexuality. If biology says a man must be attracted to a woman, and yet some men are attracted by men, then the essentialism of biology as a central identity determinant becomes questionable. Homosexuality defies the explanatory logic of Biological determinism and so does trans-sexuality (Butler, 1990: ix).

Gender, as a social construction, is therefore the result of social making through the socialisation process of gender. The socializing forces are the institutions that are responsible for gender construction, and the family, the school, the media, language, music religion among others (Haralambos & Holborn, 2004). Socialization agents like the parents, the teachers, pastors, peers and many others are the people who carry out the socialization. Institutions like the family become forms of primary socialization institutions due to the fact that they are the first set of community that most children come into contact with.

Murdock in Haralambos and Holborn (2004) says:

“The family is the child’s first window to the world and no other gender socialization institution rivals it in gender socialization. Such prime gender socialization institutions are called primary socialization forces, while those institutions that the child comes in contact with after primary socialization are called secondary socialization forces like the school, the peer group, and others. Both the primary and secondary forces create, reinforce, maintain and perpetuate gender differences but the primary forces are the chief creators, while the secondary forces are the chief maintainers, reinforces and perpetrators.”

A woman is understood as a creature that has been made, fabricated, moulded to social purpose. For example, in marriage the social structuring of marriage necessitates appropriate training for those who are to fill its requirements. It must follow as the night, the day that the acquirement of certain characteristics had been rendered inevitable for women in general (Lips, 1988:27). What is significant in this development is that such social construction is purported to be based on the real nature of women, a nature which is claimed to be remarkably consistent even in the presence of very difficult of particular women but which women are compelled to conform. Prevailing social standards presents morally accepted behaviour of woman which is not actually according to the women themselves but a code of manners formulated in the interest of her master (Lips, 1988:27). Even the behaviour of woman in the VaKaranga tradition follows certain path ways agreed by men in their council (dare).

The theory of gender socialization is criticized for denying individual choice or free will by portraying individuals as over-socialized and passively conforming to predetermined social roles. Individuals can not dare to actively amend, recreate or redefine social roles in a reflective and purposeful way. It is therefore, as a deficit model, where difference is seen as deviance or abnormality. It emphasizes role modelling to provide messages about gender behaviours, which are allegedly passively soaked up by boys and girls.

Some scholars like Connell (2000) have argued that the gender socialization theory is so confusing for, on the other side, it relies on the dichotomous biological distinction which leaves it with a non-social conception on the basis of difference between men and women. Walby (1999) also states that the theory is not conclusive as the specific and differentiated

content of gender roles emanate from and the beneficiary whose interests are being represented. Stanley et.al (1999) contends that there is deficiency in the theory in explaining the existence of feminists, lesbians and other people who are not like the stereotype for their sex is inadequately explained by this theory as failed products of socialization. It justifies patriarchal oppression of women through the socialization process.

The category man and woman have no universal explanatory force that goes much beyond strictly physiological. Gender roles are culturally produced. Whatever the biological differences between male and female, it is the culture of society that exerts most influence on the creation of masculinity and femininity behaviour. Gender is socially constructed in the sense that the behaviour of male and female are learned rather than being inevitable result of biology (Haralambos et al., 2013:101). The *VaKaranga* society`s socialization of boys and girls is different. Boys from a very tender age are taught to be tough and endure pain in silence. If a boy cries, he is likened to a woman. The common idiom among the *VaKaranga* men is *kufa kwemurume hubuda ura* which literally mean until or unless your intestines are ripped out you are still alive to continue fighting as a man. Moreover, when a man wants to try something new you can hear most of the *VaKaranga* men saying *chemurume chivindi, chemukadzi ibapu*. This implies that man must have courage while women are regarded as cowards.

The challenge of Queer bodies

In Africa, societal attitudes towards queer bodies and non-conforming identities remains very hostile. “Opposition towards lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) bodies and non-binary individuals is visceral” (Futshane, 2018). Homophobia is rife in the African continent with four countries punishing homosexuals with death while

over thirty countries criminalise homosexuality. Queer bodies and non-binary identities are subjected to stigma and exclusion from both social and economic activities.

It is also reflected in the language used to describe people of this orientation. In Zimbabwe, former President Robert Mugabe described them as “**worse than dogs and pigs**” (Shoko 2010). It becomes clear that the level of exclusion towards LGBTQI is very high in the Zimbabwean communities.

Futshane (2018) asserts that the manner in which men and women are presented as default categories is disrespectful to those whose existence is routinely erased through this default categorisation. Heteropatriarchy is inadvertently given a pass to oppress the LGBTGI community because it is a hidden population.

Patriarchy and women oppression

Fabella and Sugirtharajah (2000:162) define patriarchy as rule by father. The meaning of this term is traced to the ancient societies in which authority was concentrated in the male head of the family and power was defined by the ability to control property and people in the household and state, and it was believed that this was ordained by divine command. As an analytical category today, patriarchy refers to a global societal system maintained by powerful elites largely composed of monies, educated, Western Euro-American elites who in alliance with Third world powerful elites control all aspects of life and rule women, children, nature and other males (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:162).

Patriarchy articulates a system of privileges that benefit the ruling elites against the subordinated peoples and nature and that maintain woman at systematic disadvantage. It has been identified as a system of organized subjugation that evolves and molds the roots of entire civilization. Currently patriarchy combines and multiplies neocapitalist exploitation,

neoliberal colonization, alienating systems of meaning, controlling religious traditions, cultural oppression, dehumanizing racism, social exclusion, depredation of nature and sexual subjugation of women and homosexuals (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:163).

The real malice of patriarchy is clearly seen in the impact it has on the lives of the poor and oppressed woman in the Third World who suffer from physical violence as an accepted social cultural practice and are forced into a system of structural alienation, dependence and self-denigration (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:163).

It is also argued that patriarchy has a post-colonial influence on gender in Africa. The trends and perspective on gender in Southern Africa have been heavily influenced by the British model with which most of the nationalist and middle-class men and women are familiar. Britain was the colonial power that oppressed most countries in Southern Africa thus, as colonised people, the nationals of these countries tended to look to the British government on the basis of values of universal adult suffrage, taxation with representation, equality, freedom, liberty and justice (Meena, 1998:108). The same sentiments are echoed by Musa Dube who argued that culturally, African communities were not androcentric but egalitarian communities (2003:86). The African communities had a dual and flexible gender construction that empowered all sexes. Pasura (2010) contends that although African texts indicate a gradual encroachment of patriarchy, studies indicate that the coming of Christianity and colonisation shifted gender roles towards patriarchy.

In the fight for patriarchy and male supremacy, women must take serious cognizance of what Fiorenza (2013) “has called “*kyriarchy*” or “*kyriocentrism*,” an ideology of “lordship” and

domination'. She defines kyriarchy as "a complex pyramidal system of intersecting multiplicative social structures of supremacy and subordination, of ruling and oppression".

Gender challenges in Zimbabwe

In Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Women's Affairs failed to incorporate former women combatants and guerrilla as most of them lacked advanced formal educational qualifications. As a result, their militancy and devotion to the revolution was not harnessed. Many of these women combatants faced serious challenges in being re-absorbed into society. Their experience as guerrillas were not readily welcome by the society and some parents vetoed the idea of their sons marrying these former guerrillas who were seen as wild and stubborn largely due to their self-assertion. The Government, in 1983, authorised the arrest of women on the pretext that these women who were walking at night were prostitutes (Maloba, 2007:156).

Mapuranga (2013) further alludes that the exclusion of women explains why only a negligible number of women lie buried at the National Heroes Acre in Harare. In instances where women were not married, they were mentioned as supporters (*zvimbwido*) who would do the washing, cooking and messengers for the warriors at the battle front. Some became sexual objects for the warriors; they would provide sexual satisfaction to the fighters of the armed struggle, either through rape or consent (Mapuranga in Chitando, 2013:178-179).

As women continue to fall victims of moral construction by others especially male dominance, she is rendered incapable of true morality. Women live, therefore, by second-hand virtues, a situation made even more demeaning by the reduction of all of these to one virtue of honour (Parson, 1996:72). That women's attempts to conform freely and rationally to standards set by others should be further distilled into a statement about the physical state

of her body, is the final insult and contradiction. The woman is rendered powerless in her personal and social life by this reduction. The life of a woman thus determined by the requirements of social institutions which she had no part in formulating and the virtue of life is judged accordingly (Parson, 1996:72).

Eurocentric feminist analyses of Shona gender relations talk about the social invisibility of women and argue that Shona women influenced public affairs only indirectly. The fact that Shona society is patriarchal does not necessarily imply that its gender system serves only to entrench the interest of men while oppressing women but, both men and women complement each other to serve the corporate interest of the clan (Mguniea et al., 2006:154). British colonialism upset and tilted gender systems through legislation which lowered the status of women through the imposition of a colonialist culture inimical to indigenous cultures. European structures of patriarchal control based on Victorian ideals transformed Shona gender relations culminated in the marginalization of women (Mguniea et al., 2006:154). Marginalisation of women is a historical sin by Empire

The British reproduced and valorised European culture within the colonised Zimbabwean geopolitical and mental space thus, systematically transforming the way Zimbabweans men and women experienced their relations together within time and space to replicate western gender notions and practices. Through their institutionalised textual authority, physical and political restructuring of Zimbabwe, the British inscribed the de-womanization and abuse of women (Mguniea et al., 2006:154). By reorganising Zimbabwean geopolitical space into several categories such as Native Purchase areas and reserves, the British government created oppressive systems controlled and policed through western discourses of gender relationships and practices. This offered limited possibilities for women to own land. The fight for gender

balance is a double-edged sword for women that are colonial repressive law and male supremacy in traditional patriarchal societies.

The challenge of childlessness

The story of Sarah and Hagar gives poignant insight into the plight of women in patriarchal society with regards to loss of status due to childlessness. The two women are victims of a patriarchal society which gives relevance to a son as more important than a daughter in a relationship of marriage (Russel, 1985:77). The challenge is that, surprisingly, the two women in such context make victims of each other. The narrative shows how Sarah exploits her maid by donating her to her husband Abraham as a wife. Once Hagar got pregnant, she coveted the place of Sarah thus, a reflection of the oppressed seeking to turn the tables to their advantage. In order to assert her authority Sarah must oppress Hagar. Patriarchy seems to enjoy this vicious circle. Men enjoy when women fight against each other and this gives men the advantage as they use divide and rule tactics to assert their power. Patriarchy is nourished by women's failure to unite and fight one common enemy. From radical feminist perspective the narrative reflect how patriarchy is sustained and nurtured in society by women who fail to support one of their own kind and it is a patriarchal system which pits women against women (Russel, 1985:77).

The *VaKarangas* are highly patriarchal and for a woman to be childless in marriage is not something to be entertained. There are two ways to this situation; either the wife is divorced or allow the husband to marry another wife by consensus. The issue of polygamy is quite prevalent among the *VaKaranga* arguing that one wife is like having one eye, if something bad happens to that one eye you become blind (*mukadzi mumwe chete akafanana neziso rimwe rikatosvorwa unoita bofu*). On the same token, a woman can be divorced for bearing

only female children or that the man can marry another woman by consensus because the wife cannot bore a male child. This shows the epitome of male dominance.

It is however important to note that women are further exploited by fellow women depending on the basis of age, power and social relationships (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003). Generally, culture allows the elderly women to subordinate younger women. The elderly women are allowed by culture to dictate and subject the young to initiation ceremonies. The elderly retains the role of interpreting cultural norms and values that submits younger women to their subordination. Other women are empowered by culture to assume patriarchal roles that enable them to oppress other women. The examples of mothers in law and sisters in law come to mind in such situations. Senior wives in polygamous and family structures enjoy a higher status as family mothers or grandmothers, big sister and sisters in law (*gogo, sisi, maiguru* and *tete*). They make authoritative commands that should be carried out by the junior women. Societal culture imparts to them traditions and norms in support of male dominance at the expense of female subordination. ‘In pre-colonial Zimbabwe, it is reported that the wife of Lobengula, the Ndebele King, Lozikheyi Dlodlo kept younger women under her Nabuiza. The first wife of the Mutapa, in the seventeenth century, lived in the palace and served by personal servants while other wives could not enjoy these benefits’ (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2003). This shows the extent to which patriarch can pit woman against woman.

The subordination of other women is further shown in the example of the Shona and Ndebele cultures of Zimbabwe concerning a *muroora/ Umalukazana*/wife who is expected to take without questioning all instructions from the mother of her husband (*vamwene/umamazala*) and from the sisters of her husband (*vatete/ubabakazi*). These privileged women have the power to decide on the fate of the *muroora/umalukazana* in marriage and the custody of children.

A woman is expected to endure under the marriage union if she is to avoid the collapse of her marriage (*kuputsa imba yake/ ukudiliza umuzi*). Most rural women in Zimbabwe, for example, are meant to work and express themselves in agriculture. The produce is destined for both personal family subsistence as well for commercial purpose. However, in the case of commercial farming, few women can access credit facilities, agricultural implements as well as technological know-how to make their farming thrive and access marketing facilities. The introduction of the legal system and policies on access to resources and opportunities has done very little to redress the condition of women in this cultural society that is patriarchal and continue to maintain the status quo.

6.3 Gender analysis of Third Chimurenga

There is credible evidence which shows the exclusion of women in the Third Chimurenga through gender consideration. Any strategy to achieve greater power must be accompanied by voicing, for if women do not deliberately attempt to break their silence about their situation, others will continue to maintain it. The best way to deal with African women concerns in a justly way must take seriously the women`s pronouncements about their worrying status. Ignoring these concerns will only serve to perpetuate more harm than good. The voices of the women deserve to be given an ear when they speak and to uphold the God-ordained dignity of every human being attending to the consequent need of each person for purposes of respect. To expect women to uphold all that is humanizing in African culture and yet deny their participation in the politics of family and nation is like asking them to make bricks without straw (Oduyoye, 1995:171).

There has always been a patriarchal construction of land in Zimbabwe. Possession and land ownership of land is traditionally a mark of a man and his wealth. Women in the rural areas

have no access to land because it is believed that they do not belong to the family they are married to, they remain outsiders. Even when one is not yet married as a daughter, sister or an aunt they do not own land, but rather, the land belonged to their brothers, uncles and fathers. Even under the third Chimurenga, it is argued that women were not prioritized in terms of land allocation which was distributed to male households.

Women emerged as a minority in the formal land access process with only 18% of the women acquiring land during the process as individuals. The government failed to meet its target of 50% of women accessing and owning land as individuals (Murisa & Chikweche, 2015:126). The number of women who acquired land as individuals in all provinces of Zimbabwe is illustrated in the Utete Report (2003:25) below.

Demographics of land acquisition by gender during the Third Chimurenga

Province	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model	Model
	A1	A1	A1	A1	A2	A2	A2	A2
	Males	%	Females	%	Males	%	Females	%
Midlands	14800	82	3198	18	338	95	17	5
Masvingo	19026	84	3664	16	709	92	64	8
Mash Central	12986	88	1770	12	1469	87	215	13
Mash East	12967	76	3992	24				
Mat South	7754	87	1169	13	215	79	56	21
Mat North	7919	84	1490	16	574	83	121	17
Manicaland	9572	82	2190	18	961	91	97	9

Figures for Mash East A2 were not available but the demographic data given shows that the figures from Mash East A2 will not change much of the picture of land distribution according to gender in the Third Chimurenga. The figures reflect that in the A1 scheme, which the small-scale farm is, women constituted 16% of the beneficiaries while the A2 which are the

large-scale commercial farms, women beneficiaries constituted only 12%. This gender demographic imbalance constituted a crisis which erupted in the demonstration of women.

Chung (2015:152) made a very clear observation when he argued that “two groups which have not fared well under the Third Chimurenga reform programme are women and the farm workers. A small number of farm workers have taken the challenge and obtained land when they joined in the land invasions crusades. A minority of women, on the other hand have also made inroads in obtaining improved land rights. About 40% of the A1 farms allocated to households are actually worked on and controlled by women. Women only farm and control the land without the rights to that land. This right is a preserve of the male in the society.

Allison Goebel (2005:37) argue that in Zimbabwean context women`s lack of primary land rights was historically underpinned by the definition of their legal status as minors and the dual legal system practiced by most African women under the dictates of customary law in the colonial period. After independence in 1982 the legal age of majority recognized women by granting them majority status at the age of eighteen. While women were recognized under this provision, customary norms continued to cast its dark shadow on women`s access to land in communal areas. Women continued to have access to land through accepted customary law systems such as marriage and bearing male children. Even under the unfortunate circumstances of death widows could not inherit the land. Those widows with male children will only keep the land in trust for the male heir usually the eldest son. Many a times this led to the eviction and dispossession of widows from the land they shared with their husbands.

Women were thus, left absolutely landless, and yet were the ones who mostly needed land to provide for the family. The allocation of land to males left women with little access or no space for them to provide for the family without access to land. Many civic and human rights

organizations in Zimbabwe are fighting for the rights of women in all spheres of life of which land is one of them. But there are still a lot of obstacles at the community level hindering women from having full access and ownership of land. Moreover, the legal framework is also shifting towards accommodating women but it is just on paper while on the ground a different story is presented and portrayed. Even under the government resettlement policies women have been left vulnerable. One can rightly argue that gender analysis of the land in Zimbabwe show inability of the general law to ensure women`s rights to land when such laws are not socially legitimate and enforceable. Lack of land pushed women to urban areas where they hoped they could make a much better living than in the communal life. This resulted in many women finding the situation in town and cities difficult and unsustainable. Some were forced into commercial sex work while others embarked on cross boarder trading.

Lack of access to land resulted in women scaling the highest mountain in Zimbabwe, Mount Nyangani which is located in the Manicaland province about 275km north-west Mutare (Zvayi 2016). They scaled the mountain for them to be heard in as far as land ownership was concerned. Their motive for going up Mount Nyangani was to raise their concerns to both the traditional and government leadership on the inequalities over land redistribution which sidelined women as compared to their male counterparts (Hughes & Richardson, 2019). It was a group of 90 women from different socio economic and religious backgrounds.

The scaling of Mount Nyangani can be equated to what King (1994:25) referred to as the irruption within the irruption. The irruption of women in church and society is an integral part of the voice of the earth`s voiceless majority that is beginning to penetrate the atmosphere and disturb the peace of the principalities and powers that hold the structure of our so called one world in their hands. Moreover, Tamez (1989:43) asserts that the irruption of history into

the lives of women is the irruption of historic realization into the lives of millions of women who have been silent for a long time. This led them to the liberation struggle by way of an active involvement in different fronts from which they had previously been absent. Their presence is like a strong wind blowing, opening eyes and loosening tongues. There is also shifting stances and enabling arms to reach out to new embraces and hands to take up other tools, impelling feet to take other steps and raising the voice so its song and its lament might be heard. Woman begins to take her place as agent of history (Tamez, 1989:43).

Women's agency is of course exerted within particular structures of power. Certain institutions and opportunities enable women to challenge and transform repressive gender norms while others constrain what women can do. National courts in both colonial and contemporary Zimbabwe provided an important venue for demanding change in betrothal, marriage, divorce, child custody, inheritance and property rights (Hodgson & McCurdy, 2001:14).

Chief Samhembere confirmed that it was possible for the traditional leadership to give equal opportunities to both men and women. The traditional leadership through Chief Samhembere pledged their support to the women's complaints and alluded to the fact that it was high time that Zimbabweans appreciate the important role played by women in the community and that they deserve better treatment in as far as land was concerned. There was no problem with women owning land in the community (Hughes & Richardson, 2019). This shows the extent at which the scaling of the mountain had in the society. Chiefs as custodians of the land were the major obstacle in as far as land allocation to women was concerned.

In groups, women have challenged the injustices perpetuated by the colonial and postcolonial states, created new economic and social space for themselves. They are circumvented sexist barriers to employment, established formal political association and pursued financial autonomy in the face of mounting hostility. Women have slightly succeeded in reconfiguring the gendered order in which they live (Hodgson & McCurdy, 2001:2). The *VaKaranga* women have turned the tables upside down by demanding their voices to be heard through different channels. Some have written on the walls of their huts, scorch cats and wheel barrows the inscription *musha mukadzi* literary meaning the home is a wife. This shows how serious women are moving towards gendered change. They write the *musha mukadzi* even those who are married showing that the centre no longer holds.

An analysis of the above incident of woman scaling the highest mountain pick in Zimbabwe shows how these women were prepared to transform land imbalances which were created by the *Jambanja* project. Women chose the highest mountain not any other mountain and this mountain is a sacred mountain where stories of human disappearance are always narrated and manifestations of hierophanies, but women braved all these and reached the pick for their voices to be heard. It was a clear demonstration that women were not weak as society portray them and that what men can do women can also do and even much better.

The *VaKaranga* men believe that women cannot even climb a tree let alone a mountain. Scaling of mountains is a male activity. Anything which is associated with scaling (*kukwira*) is male arena. In the *VaKaranga* society if you marry a wife who can climb a tree, they say you have married a man (*wakaroora murume chaiye*) let alone the mountain. On the *VaKaranga dare/indaba*, that is council, the word *kukwira* is not ordinary for it mean quite a lot. *Kukwira* may mean dominating or may mean to mount a woman during sex. On the

dare/indaba they would ask *wakamukwira here* meaning did you have sex with her. The fear of the *VaKaranga* men is to see women dominating a male reserved area so, when women scaled mount Nyangani some man felt threatened because it is always men who must be on top even when doing sex.

Following the theory which states that liberation of all should entail that the most oppressed subject is to be liberated, Aquino (1993) “asserts that the most oppressed individual is the impoverished woman”. Aquino is convinced that the woman who is a destitute will be easily exploited, or be oppressed and treated as an inferior both in the society, and in her own community due to her sexuality and gender, aside from being exploited because of her class (and possibly her race).

Mexican/Chicano culture presents such case scenarios where women are constantly assessed on the basis of an oppressive culture originating from the Spanish conquest. “In this template, the Indian woman was not only blamed for her victimization at the hands of the Spaniards, but she was also accused of betrayal because of her victimization” (Aquino, 1993:86). Therefore, according to Aquino, the threat against corporeality is lived by women in the destruction of their sexuality. “Restitution of corporeality then, needs to first occur with poor women, especially poor women of colour because they are additionally oppressed due to their race’.

Women also argued that land was the reason some of them had to be involved in the liberation struggle alongside their male counterparts. They argued that during the liberation struggle there was no gender classification hence the same policy should be observed in land re-distribution (Zvayi, 2016). The civic society also joined the cries from women for land

imbalances. The civic society challenged the authorities to consider gender justice in land ownership.

Statistics reveal that, of the 70 percent of the women population in rural areas, only 18 percent of women benefited on the small-scale farms called A1 and 12 percent under the large scale commercial farms known as A2. The statistics above are in agreement with the Utete report of 2003 which shows as discussed above that 16% benefited in the small scale and 12% large scale commercial farms. This shows the extent to which women trail in land ownership. The protests by women were validated by the constitution which supports equality on all frontiers (Zvayi, 2016). According to Section 17 (1) (c) of the Constitution; “the State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must take practical measures to ensure that women have access to resources including land, on the basis of equality with men.” This section of the constitution has proved to be just an inscription which does not have great impact on the country as is reflected by the land imbalances in the distribution of land in the third Chimurenga.

The scaling of mount Nyangani by women shows the importance of land for sustainability and how women are challenging patriarchal ownership of land. This radical view by women has left men, who are the custodian of patriarchal systems, challenged while at the same time it has challenged other women who have for a very long time remained willing participants in patriarchal systems of land ownership. It was a Kairos moment for both women and men. The exclusion of women is based on gender and patriarchal nature of the society.

6.4 Feminist reflection of gender

In this section I reflect on different feminist approaches to gender such as the liberal, radical, ecofeminist and a womanist approach. Feminists reflect on gender issues in different perspectives as will be discussed in this section. Sinclair (2014) asserts that feminism brings with it an insistence on facing several realities squarely. There is need for a critical review of the culture that has been sustained, and the normalised systematic ways which are designed against women emancipation and freedoms because of their gender. Feminism unpacks the reason why certain categories of women remains marginalised and vulnerable to oppression and provides theories and ways of challenging and finding solutions to the status quo.

Sinclair (2014) asserts that ‘feminism brings with it an insistence on facing several realities squarely’. It demands a critical review of the sustained yet normalised and systematic ways in which women are discriminated, demeaned and subordinated because of their gender. Feminism unpacks the reason why certain categories of women remains marginalised and vulnerable to oppression and provides theories and ways of challenging and finding solutions to the status quo.

Women emancipation would need a radical distinguishing between gender as a tool of neo-liberal status quo and gender as a feminist thinking tool.

McFadden (2016:3) asserts that:

Women movements must rely more on feminism which uses gender as part of critical intellectual and activist wedge prying open patriarchal language and taboos that still inhibit women from being the creative, dynamic, conscious beings who bring their agency to the contested sites of power, at the interface between themselves and the institutions of the state and its largely feudal infrastructure, policies and practices.

Liberal feminist

“Liberal feminists believe in individual rights for women and that women’s discrimination is based on prejudice, sexism and socialization” (Magezis, 1996). On the basis that women have equal mental capacities as compared to their male counterparts, they should be given the same opportunities politically, economically and socially. Their inability is only because the social legal and cultural institutions constrain them. That attitudes, stereotypes and biases against females constrain women. It is also argued women are disadvantaged by the perpetual confinement of women to the private sphere and dependency on men.

Feminist theologians and ethicists have long been arguing that categories of service rationalize and validates women’s subordinate role and that sin and virtue in Christian tradition have been defined as if maleness constituted authentic and normative humanity to the exclusion of women experience. Theological anthropology must develop an understanding of how the three categories of gender that is biological sex, sexuality or sexual orientation and gender influence personhood (Sunday, 1986:210). They may be linked but they do not necessarily follow inexorably from each other. Theological discourses need to be mindful of such fundamental philosophical and anthropological questions as to whether there is a fixed human nature and the degree to which we are simply the object and products of cultural discourse shaped by powers beyond our control or whether we can choose strategies and identities freely and creatively.

What is the relationship between body and mind and self to culture? How does the theological discourse about women and men and religious practice inter-mingle nature and culture in the generation of gendered identity and meaning? The lesson from the human and social sciences would appear to be that culture and human practice must be seen as crucial to

the development and formation of human personality, especially in so far as our experience of being human is always already one of being gendered (Sunday, 1986:210). Gender is a real and constant product of social and sexual relations, rather than an abstract dichotomy that cannot be beyond scrutiny and critique.

The special opportunities for women to impose their purposes on the world lie ahead of them as they realize the full implication of the belief that “One is not born, but rather becomes a woman” (Parsons, 1996:28). The full affirmation of woman as full human beings must become the touchstone of cultural criticism, of biblical interpretation and of theological truth. Those things which affirm their humanness are true signs of the divine will and those things which deny, diminish or distort the full dignity of women are therefore not redemptive (Parsons, 1996:28).

Liberal feminists are more revolutionary in their pursuit for freedom. They display a more militant involvement class struggle and family life. They call for a paradigm shift on the existing relationships between women and men that is economically, socially and politically (Magezis, 1996). Rather than involving themselves solely in the struggle for equal rights, measures which would include women in society on the same terms with men, they also deeply looked into existing society, analysing more critically its limitations and possibilities of women. They recommend more drastic changes as the necessary steps towards true and full liberation for women.

Radical feminism

Radical feminism is a breakaway of Marxist feminists who grew tired and frustrated by their inability to apply social class in analysing gender oppression. It denounces the contribution of patriarchal religion to the pervasive reality of violence against women, children and nature

(Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:164). This theology affirms that religion cannot be used to legitimize a societal system that dehumanizes women and men, deprives women of self-worth and autonomy and degrades nature. It also asserts that the theological enterprise cannot be used to validate patriarchal churches, androcentric theologies and sexist relationships.

Men and women are called to the wholeness of life in God, to relate to one another on the basis of justice, solidarity and mutuality to establish egalitarian societal models that truly reflect God's salvation, grace and maintain a way of living free from injustice and violence. This stand is slowly eroding the foundations of the current patriarchal church and society. Feminist theologians have identified two main concepts that lead to distortion of classical theology. These are androcentric which is the perspective that considers the male as normative and patriarchy, an ideology and social system which are the root cause of all oppression (Fabella & Sugirtharajah, 2000:164).

This radical demand for women's recognition and empowerment explains why radical feminism has been met with hostility in several societies where patriarchy is highly dominant. This also explains, of late, why radical feminism has failed to have a significant impact on the development strategies on gender issues in most African societies.

Radical feminism chooses to describe what is happening in society with regard to rigid gender division of labour as male supremacy rather than patriarchy. Accordingly, gender studies should not just research on politics of patriarchy, but go beyond that to investigate the politics of male supremacy. For instance, kingship systems prevailing in all societies graphically demonstrate that it is a system of classification and statuses which regularly contradict actual genetic relations (Meena, 1998:76). Kingship as an organizational structure

gives power to men to organize women. Kingship is rooted in the exchange of women between men. Marriage is the basic form of exchange. Women as gifts, are made powerless. Women are for men to dispose of; they are in no position to give them away. “Women are given in marriage, sent as tribute, traded, taken in battle, bought or sold” (Meena, 1998:76).

During the campaign to the harmonised election in Zimbabwe of 2018 the leader of the MDC Alliance, Advocate Nelson Chamisa came under fire from women and gender activists for saying if President Mnangagwa’s win the election he will give him his sister. This shows how the issues of exploitation of women as gone and radical feminists are prepared to challenge this patriarchal hegemony for the sake of liberation. Radical feminism sees male dominance evolving as resources diminish and as group survival depends increasingly on the aggressive acts. Male oppression of women is however sometimes a reaction to scarcity (Sunday, 1986:210). The Third Chimurenga (*Jambanja*) was a reaction to scarcity and as such male supremacy was felt. Women participated but men got the lion`s share in the form of farm houses and double plots.

Ecofeminism

Another critical dimension of gender analysis is the aspect of ecofeminism. Ecofeminism sees women and nature as properties and men as curators of culture. It asserts that both women and nature must be respected. “Women are viewed as curators of nature. Ecofeminism analysis explores the connection between women and nature in culture, religion, literature and iconography and addresses the parallels between the oppression of nature and the oppression of women” (Adams, 2007:6)

In ecofeminism, the relationship between women and the earth, is fundamental to its analysis and practice. The concept of gender is drawn to evaluate the relationship between humans and the natural world the land. It does not seek to place woman on dominant position of power and authority but it calls for collaborative society which is egalitarian and in which there is no oppression of particular group through the cultural or religious influence of another group (Merchant, 1992).

Women are oppressed as nature and the marginalisation is evident in the language to describe nature as Mother Earth or Mother Nature and the animalised language used to describe women. Women are linked to the environment because of their social role of care giving and nurturing the family (Shiva, 1988:60). This notion resonates well with some metaphors described in the research as the VaKaranga refer to land as mother. This is a symbol of respect but ironically, they do not respect the mothers.

Womanist approach

There is progression from feminism to *womanism* which is important to explore. Maparyan (2012) asserts that *womanism* seeks to restore the balance between people and the environment and to reconcile the spiritual dimension. The core of womanist theory acknowledges the equal necessity of femininity and culture to the existence and experiences of women. Womanist do not conceive of womanism as extending to the concept of feminism but rather view it as a theoretical framework which exists independently of feminist theory. It is a broader perspective which includes feminism as a subtype. *Womanism* is a movement designed to push for the survival of black women race taking into consideration the experiences of black women, black culture, black myths, spiritual life and orality (Walker

2005). It is the experience of exclusion from both the church and society which unites the women to be a powerful force to challenge the hegemony of power.

6.6 Woman`s Sexuality as a Source of Liberation

Restoration of corporeality for women entails the restitution of their sexuality (ies). It is in this vein that Aquino (1993) asserts that sexuality can be a source of liberation for women'. "Liberation through sexuality, according to Aquino, would entail a full expression of sexuality beyond the traditionally church sanctioned sexuality of procreation and would include pleasure as well as desire". Aquino puts more emphasis on sexuality, "as an actual source of liberation which as a goal for the individual's full participation in spirituality, demonstrates that sexuality and spirituality coexist and are inextricably linked". Aquino calls her feminist theology, *mujerista* theology, or *womanist* theology.

Woman can be agents of social change because they are at the centre of world food production, producing more than 80% of the food in most African countries. This follows that any evaluation of land resources must have an appreciation of the pivotal role women play. It is this role which can make them agents of social change not passive resistance. Gender blind development has its consequence on both the men and women. There are some aspects of customary law which requires change to protect woman from injustice as eviction from their homes and loss of property after the death of their husbands (Weiss, 1986:23). As long as women are oppressed, whether Black, White or Indian, and as long as men are taught that they are superior, there can be no healing of our psyches.

Aquino (1993) looks to "the oppressed woman's sexuality as a source of liberation. She discusses the need to extend sexuality beyond procreative purposes and categorizations of

shame and evil, and instead, rightfully incorporate these new sexualities into spirituality” (Mukhopadhyay, et al.).

“Likewise, Anzaldúa also attempts to show that sexuality is an aspect of personhood that should not be contained. She does this by looking at her mestiza body and sexuality and calling for the unlearning of the puta/whore dichotomy which desexualized the Mexican/Chicana body. Liberation theology is recognition of materiality and spirituality, and therefore a recuperation of full subjectivity. The inclusion of sexuality and women’s experiences into liberation theology is *mujerista* theology. *Mujerista* theology recognizes women’s sexualities as central to their existence, and as such, integral parts of spirituality” (Aquino 1993:173).

This, in turn, validates women’s expressions of sexuality/ies as spiritual and wholesome, as opposed to the traditional views of women’s sexuality/ies as sinful.

The preoccupation of liberation theology with the poor remains unchanged, but greater consciousness of the special oppression suffered by women has begun to emerge more clearly and the role of women in liberation theology itself have developed as well. The liberation philosopher E Dussel has for years spoken about a triple oppression that is rich over poor, men over women, parents over children but his focus ended up raising the economic domination negating the cultural domination (Dussel, 1996). Kobo (2018) argues that Black theology of liberation must conceive that there cannot be a theology of liberation without the broken bodies and lived experiences of faith of black women.

If we are to accept the biblical revelation as a point of departure for a picture of Christ, then we must ask whether it is possible to talk about Jesus Christ in any sense without making his identity with the oppressed the starting point. The biblical Christ is primarily the Liberator of the oppressed from human bondage. He is God`s revelation who has come to set the captives free therefore, whenever is said about love, hope, obedience, faith and humanity in Christ it must be interpreted in the light of his identity with the poor for the purpose of liberation (Cone, 1975:90).

Ideology in the particular sense is telling the biblical story in the light of the economic and social interest of a few. It is the interpretation of scripture as if the poor and their liberation is incidental to the gospel message. Ideology on the particular level is a serious danger to oppressed people who are afraid of political consequences. The risk of fighting oppression can lead to passive resignation (Cone, 1975:93).

White people`s discrimination of black people is an example of an attempt to deprive people of their stories, in order to establish the white story as the only truth in history. Black people`s stories are regarded as lies and superstitions that have no place in civilised history and country. Freedom is eschatological. It is the anticipation of freedom, a vision of a new heaven and new earth. The *VaKaranga* recognised that freedom is transcendent that is a constituent of the future.

6.7 Land and women emancipation

Mugugu and Chimonyo (2004) asserts that much attention on land “in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa has focused on how the colonialists forcibly moved the indigenous people from their fertile land and their subsequent impoverishment”. Very little is said about

the impacts of these evictions on women, thus creating a gender dimension to the land issue. There is need for a clear understanding of the implications of the forced eviction on marginalised groups of which women constitute the majority.

Land has always been the source of life in Africa. African history shows the African life is based on land. It is the land which produces what is needed for human consumption. The value and importance of land in Africa is demonstrated by the fact that from ancient to modern history, land always caused wars, and political and social disturbances whenever it was not equally distributed amongst people.

James Amanze (2002:304) observes that in the African setup, people perceive themselves as simply trustees for the land that God has entrusted upon them, for the use of the whole community. The community includes the ancestors, the living themselves and the future generation of that particular society. African land was not sold because it did not belong to an individual, it was a communal asset. Land was highly esteemed as a source of all life. The globalising ownership of land came with modernity. Globalization came with many advantages, but some serious disadvantage to those at the lowest level of the economy. This is particularly true in the area of land ownership. A poor person, who could not have much in his name, would have land as the only asset they would pass to their children as inheritance.

There are serious gender imbalances on land. As argued by Chitando, women remain marginalised in terms of land ownership and that even increases their vulnerability to HIV as they sometimes resort to survival strategies that can compromise their health. Land is a critical resource that women are denied access to and in many instances, women`s control of land is tied to their relationship to a man (Chitando, 2013:6).

For the VaKaranga people, the access to land was mostly guaranteed to women upon bearing male children. Male children were perceived as an extension of the lineage (*zita harifaniri kurova*) meaning there must be a perpetuation of the clan's name. Divorce for the VaKaranga is an easy task if there are no male children, and this can also justify polygamy. The VaKaranga cultural fabric prohibits women from 'inheriting' land except in circumstances where they do so through the dispensation of their fathers or male relatives. This could be in situations of a divorced daughter or where the daughter is unable to marry.

Many people suffered and died during Zimbabwe's war of liberation and many accounts of that struggle have been written but the story of women, the wives and mothers who remained behind has not yet been told. The stories reveal courage, endurance, humour and wisdom. These women, the mothers are both victims and actors. Throughout the war, they fed and protected the freedom fighters and they risked their lives in doing so. The men were around, but used to command these mothers to hurry with food before they were beaten up by the freedom fighters. Without the women the war could not have been won (Staunton 1991: xi).

One of the most obvious structural features of the Biblical patriarchal family is its location of women within the role of motherhood. A woman is a child bearer. This role is marked out as primary, if not the only legitimate place of women. It is the place where man can risk woman having some freedom, and power, but within the formal constraints of male authority. Not surprisingly, despite many dimensions of women's lives that could frame their stories, the narrow focus on women as mothers far and away predominates. But, despite attempts to monopolise power systematically, the ability to effect change does not wholly lie within the grasp of men (Fewell & Gunn 1999:68). From the view point of men who want big families for the sake of productivity (more hands to work in the farm), protection (safety in numbers)

and prestige (as a sign of virility and prosperity thus power) motherhood is an easily exploited role. *Lobola* or *roora in karanga* not only legitimize the marriage but also give the husband legal custody and dominion over the wife and the children resulting from that union.

If land is a womb or mother, its cultural symbol is very important for the *Vakaranga* which also means its ownership and use must be a perquisite for all people regardless of gender. As argued in this chapter that land is a source of life and that women are the ones who are at the centre of taking care of the family, it entails without land their task is an uphill one.

6.8 Security of Tenure for Women

The legal framework on access and utilization of land by women does not guarantee them security of tenure. Women in most cases have to access land through male heads of household such as husbands, brothers or fathers. This dependence on the male's family member makes possible the abuse of women since their use of land is dependent on the continuation of their relationship with these men. For married women, this permits their husbands to exploit their labour. Thus, during the tobacco and cotton selling season we have men who work in towns taking control of the produce produced by their wives and children in rural areas. In some cases, a lot of abuse is reported emanating from the sale of these produce to the detriment of the women and some women have committed suicide sighting abuse of their labour.

Pallas (2011) asserts that women's land rights are crucial as secure access to and other natural resources constitutes the basis for sustainable livelihoods and a key factor in assuring food security. Land ownership has a number of important socioeconomic benefits for women and their families. Increased land security allows women to access loans for agricultural inputs

for them to increase food production. Access to land also lifts the women`s status and enhance her bargaining power in families and in the community.

The traditional view of the *VaKaranga* on land is that, land belongs to man. It is a patriarchal domain to the extent that even women in marriage are allocated a piece of land by their husbands known as a *tsevu*. *Tsevu* for the *VaKaranga* is a piece of land allocated to a wife by the husband for purposes of cultivating crops associated with women such as groundnuts, (*nzungu*) round nuts, (*nyimo*) and other small crops associated with women. This *tsevu* is not permanent because it can be changed at will by the husband and allocated another *tsevu*. Husbands usually do not work on the *tsevu* for it is a woman`s domain and because of pride and dominance they shun the *tsevu* and work on the main steam farm. In some cases, the woman has to endure more extra time by working first on the main farm and then go to the *tsevu*. As *Mukaranga* man I only remember my mother having a small *tsevu* where she used to work extra time. This *tsevu* was her only possession as far as land is concerned. After the death of my father my elder brother was given the title of the land and my mother again would be allocated the *tsevu* by my brother who had taken ownership including allocating another *tsevu* to his own wife. This shows the extent to which women are always deprived of land ownership in a patriarchally dominated *VaKaranga* tradition. This implies that land is for the male members of the community.

For single women who never married, the failure to allocate them land in their own right in communal areas means puts them at the mercy of their fathers, brothers and other male figures with power and influence. Moreover, divorced women are also another class of women who find it difficult to access land on the premise that land is accessed through marriage. It is a *VaKaranga* tradition that a divorced woman must be sent back to her maternal home and be supported by his father and brothers who may as well be hostile to her.

According to Land Links (2016), better land rights for women boost their employability especially with effective incentives and support schemes. Women's empowerment increases when they have secure land rights. Land rights become a source of empowerment and this result in high economic gains. The church and the government must support and advocate for women empowerment on agriculture through secure land rights (Nouwah 2016).

6.9 Theological reflection on women and land

The majority of religions in the world are guilty of subordinating women. "In an Islamic religion, it is argued that a devout Muslim would cease to pray when a strange woman or a donkey appears" (Acker, 1997). "A prayer by devout Jewish reads; I thank God that I am a Jew and not a gentile, am a man and not a woman". In Christianity, the creation story shows that the woman was not formed from the dust of the earth but was taken from the rib of Adam. Adam was given dominion in Genesis to preside over all creation showing man as the head of the family as Christ was also made the head of the church. In African traditional religions women are not allowed to speak to the ancestral spirits (*midzimu*) but can be allowed to access stray spirits (*mashavi*). Women are stopped from making important religious decisions in the families. They cannot appease angry ancestral spirits for they do not belong but it is the responsibility of the fathers, brothers or brother's children.

"The *Imago Dei* (image of God) does not refer to God's creation of two gendered beings, but to the creation of complex human beings who can relate to one another in a great variety of ways once they are freed from adherence to dualistic categories that have been elevated to a supernatural apriority" (Parson, 1996:230). In this way also the notion of the complementarity of man and woman, which relies upon equality that attempts to deny the

image of God can be exposed and superseded? The above assertion opens the way to thin beyond heteronormative captivities and create a society that is inclusive.

Chitando (2002) argues that, apart from academic contributions more work remains to be done if the church in Zimbabwe is to transform Christianity into truly African religion. A useful starting point is the refashioning of ecclesiology to reflect the post-colonial dispensation. Gender recognition of the roles of women as well as facilitating their occupation of leadership roles is also crucial. The middle old age male monopoly of African church power requires critical analysis. The Methodist Church in Zimbabwe is a practical example where more than 60% of its membership are women but from the 9 Bishops which they have only one is a woman.

Maluleke and Nadar (2002) assert that the unholy trinity of religion, culture and gender socialisation has formed a covenant of death against woman in Africa. Violence against women in Africa is both physical and verbal. In its physical form, it includes rape and sexual assault. Some men pass crude remarks portraying women as carriers of dangerous diseases such as HIV. Chitando (2008:215) remarked that when women are verbally abused, members of the police take scant regard to it. In 2004 police in Harare Zimbabwe launched a clean-up exercise code named “Operation Mahure Bodo” (No to Prostitution). Many single women were arrested for not being accompanied at night. This illustrates the dominance of patriarchy in the society.

Both Christianity and African culture have long been used to manipulate and reinforce the sorry treatment of women. African male clergy and male laity are viewed as ideal spiritual leaders. Women are viewed by the Church as weaker sex even when they have demonstrated that they can be good leaders and work in challenging professions. Christian women are seen

everywhere except at church pulpits (Parsitau, 2017). Churches are increasingly becoming violent spaces for women by developing theologies of woman`s bodies and spaces where women have been physically and sexually abused. The churches have not just become violent masculine spaces but also patriarchal and dangerous spaces. “This is so because the Bible is also a patriarchal document interpreted through patriarchal lenses” (Parsitau, 2017).

Issues of class and gender discrimination are very controversial and it seems the church has aligned itself with the forces of gender oppression. The church sometimes finds ways of justifying the oppression of women and other minorities. The church in Africa must come of age and stop discharging finished products of Eurocentric theology packaged well in European ecclesiology (Oduyoye, 1995:18).

This dependence on Eurocentric models and hopes is no substitute for the church to work out its own models of salvation in a particular historical and cultural context. “Religion in its various roles tends to promote unequal power relations between men and women. Myths of creation and stories of sin came into the world are used in religion to perpetuate the subordination of women in society. Proverbs and other oral forms tend to reinforce women`s inferior social status”. This claim is also supported by Oduyoye (1995:18).

Oduyoye (1995:18) postulates that our contemporary language has created a mind set in which male and female are rigidly opposed to each other and our religious myths show a bias towards rigid limits for women and mobility for men. The portraits of women in African mythology serve as models for women`s being that is what any woman or all women ought to be. A woman is simply a human being and she does not have to prove that her way of being is as human as that of man, her destiny as a mother is not derived from a man`s destiny.

Acceptance to Christianity demands not only a break with traditional religious system but also an abandonment of the African cultural background. The harvest amongst older people was discouraging. R Sykes the Jesuit missionary said in this regard “the man who had plurality of wives is practically hopeless as a prospective Christian convert. The hope lies with the children (Chitando, 2002:6).

Isabel Mukonyora (1995) argued that while both the traditional religious and Christianity marginalized women, it is possible to recover a feminine dimension of the Mwari religion. She maintains that Zimbabwe women can read the Bible, with their own eyes and this affects their liberation from patriarchal oppression. Women also play a central role as prophets in tackling problems that emanate from the Shona world view. For Musa Dube (2003) the issue of gender is visible in its absence. Women in the colonized space do not only suffer the yoke of Colonial oppression but endure the burden patriarchy.

Parsitau (2017) remarked that the Bible and the life of Jesus allow us to foreground such a theology. Jesus suggests that women are much more than a weaker sex for they were the first to declare that Jesus had risen. The church begins to reimagine a woman-centered theology of human flourishing which lifts off the burden placed on women by both the church and the society. Jesus Christ modelled for us a theology which is woman-centric, a theology of solidarity and affirmation of women.

6.10 Conclusion

Scaling the highest mountain by woman in order for their voices to be heard shows the importance of land as a source of socio, economic and political power in Zimbabwe. It also entails that the centre can be challenged and this centre is patriarchy which gives more latitude to men in land ownership. The chapter also unearthed the close and fluid relationship

between patriarchy and Empire in that the two seems to be borrowed concepts for *VaKaranga* people. While there is male dominance in the *VaKaranga* communities it was and is not legislative as was done by Empire hence, women are fighting a double-edged sword that is Empire and the elite class which were transferred power by Empire. It also speaks to the shortcomings of the Third Chimurenga in the sense that women did not benefit as their male counterparts in this process. While woman constitute 52% of the total population of Zimbabwe only 12% benefited from the A2 commercial farms and 18% the small-scale farm a percentage far below the expectations of women.

This percentage which is below the expectations of women made them realize that without protesting the system of patriarchy they will remain disempowered. Women have demonstrated that they are agents of social change since the scaling of Mount Nyangani sent shock waves to patriarchy not only in the social ordering of the society but also to the church which is also an embodiment of patriarchy through inherited Standing Orders and Books of Discipline.

Black liberation theology must reflect critically on itself, assisting itself to rethink, reimagine and reconstruct itself in ways that address not only issues of race and class but also issues of gender oppression. The stance taken by women in scaling the highest mountain in Zimbabwe is a challenge to black liberation theology from possible complacency and supporting the status quo which oppress women. Black liberation theology is not only limited to issues of oppression of men but it must embrace a holistic approach to issues of oppression. The next chapter shall proffer the findings, recommendations and way forward and the general conclusion.

CHAPTER 7

A PROPOSED BLACK LIBERATION PRAXIS FOR LAND JUSTICE IN ZIMBABWE

7.1 The different faces of oppression: where we come from as a people

This thesis was based on the Third Chimurenga and revolutionary justice through the lenses of liberation praxis in post-colonial Zimbabwe in the realm of the *VaKaranga* people including women. The research engaged the liberation theological paradigm and the praxis cycle to analyse the documentary data presented to review how the land redistribution has brought a sense of dignity and belonging to the *VaKaranga* people. The exclusion of women in the land distribution is also highlighted in the research.

The thesis has laid bare the history of land dispossession, some demonstrated demographically and the meaning and significance of land for the *VaKaranga*. Furthermore, a theological imagination of land and ethics of liberation praxis were explored in detail. A liberation theological framework of land justice in Zimbabwe is explored resulting in analysing the gender disparities in land redistribution which led to women challenging the patriarchal understanding and use of land.

The thesis has, among other things, revealed the pertinent dichotomies in the understanding of land between the *VaKaranga* and the colonisers. The colonisers viewed land as a commodity which can be given a price tag (commodification of land). The *VaKaranga* viewed land as a mother, hence sacred and cannot be sold as confirmed by their *karanga* proverb *nhamo inhamo zvayo amai havaroodzwi* meaning (you cannot marry away your mother and take the lobola as a son). This divergence in understanding of land resulted in the colonisers using all forms of violence at their disposal to take land from the *VaKaranga* for their selfish motives.

It is also revealed in this research that postcolonial strides to quench land hunger did not yield the expected results for the majority of the *VaKaranga*. This was so because the Independence in Zimbabwe was negotiated under the Lancaster House Agreement which gave the whites some privileges over the Black population. What disappointed most was that the Lancaster House Constitution had clauses which made it very difficult for the government to navigate its way towards total control of land.

Subsequently, the promised finance by the colonial government to speed up the process did not come as expected. The issue of land was addressed under the willing seller willing buyer clause which gave the whites supremacy over the blacks, thus, extension of Empire. The policy of reconciliation announced by Robert Mugabe also perpetuated the land imbalances. As indicated in this thesis, the *VaKaranga* believed that reconciliation and forgiveness are not abstract philosophical engagements, but practical reality and the whites were supposed to *bata makuku* meaning paying compensation for the inhumane treatment they subjected the people and return the land.

The primary goal for all the Chimurengas was to recover the land taken by settlers. The colonial government had forced people out of arable lands through legal instruments and resettled in crowded reserves. When the government failed to address the issue of land right at independence, it was clear that the Chimurengas were not over until the land issue was resolved (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012). This resulted in people who were in dire need of land losing patience and began to occupy some of the farms illegally putting pressure on government.

The role of the church as handmaids in the whole process of land dispossession in colonial Zimbabwe is exposed. It has been revealed in this thesis that Rhodes himself preferred more missionaries than the police because they would pacify the people through the gospel of

unconditional forgiveness. Land was taken in full view of the church and the international community. The international community did not raise any voices to defend the *VaKaranga* people so, why should the West continue to impose sanctions on Zimbabwe. The noise from Empire represents the ideas of Neo-colonialism.

In the research it came up clear that the Third Chimurenga fell short in its intended objective. The process was done in a haphazard manner, wanton destruction of environment, corruption by the black elite, and above all, the Third Chimurenga failed to address issues of gender and security of tenure for women. Corruption as highlighted in this thesis was or is cancer in our societies. Corruption is a challenge everywhere but more so, in Africa where the majority of the people are steeped in poverty and the wealthy and powerful elite is very small. In Zimbabwe, little has been done to control corruption despite the regular rhetorical condemnation of corruption whether this is large scale corruption by the political elite or small-scale corruption by the police at road blocks. The system in Zimbabwe is such that corruption is condoned if it is carried out by a fellow party member and exposed when it is done by an opposition party member (Chung, 2015:152). Corruption in Zimbabwe is associated with political power.

The struggle for independence, it is argued, if it were not for women it could not have been successful. In a community which highly give reverence to land as mother or womb and where you are identified as son or daughter of the soil, why are these mothers pushed to the periphery. There must be security of tenure to all women regardless of status so as to enable people to live in harmony. Third Chimurenga has been described by Mutondi (2012) as a revolution without women`s rights. This is very true in that women who benefited in the Third Chimurenga constitute only 16% of the total number of beneficiaries.

In his inauguration speech the president of Zimbabwe Emerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa who assumed office in November 2017 after a soft coup acknowledged that land was priceless resource. He acknowledged that whilst Zimbabwe needs to do a lot in terms of outcomes, the issue of land cannot be challenged or reversed (Mnangagwa, 2017). The liberation struggle was waged to regain the ancestral land which had been taken by the colonialists. For him, remaining silent would be a betrayal of the gains of the liberation struggle. The second Republic promised to avail support to the new farms through programmes such as the command Agriculture to ensure food security. The Land Commission will be capacitated to ensure all outstanding land related issues are solved.

The President further alluded that the government was committed to compensate those white farmers from whom land was taken in terms of the law of the land. The land tenure systems were also highlighted as some of the impediments to full ownership of land especially among women who constitute more than 50 percent of the population (Mnangagwa, 2017). Land is a key resource for national development and as a nation we do not prevaricate on this key issue. It is from this backdrop that some pertinent findings are unravelled, and from them a proposed black liberating praxis of land justice in Zimbabwe may be articulated.

7.2 Critical reflection on current land practices

There are contests over the nature of the land allocation during the Third Chimurenga. There is a strong view from various sections of the population that the Third Chimurenga largely benefited members of ZANU PF party (Matondi, 2011). This is so because they played a significant role in the allocation of land and in mobilising the support base for the party to win the election. This entails a pending problem in the future. Women beneficiaries are much lower as indicated in Chapter six of this research that only 16% of the resettled farmers are women and this constitutes another serious form of injustice and oppression.

Important to note is that many people who grabbed land during the Third Chimurenga do not have security of tenure for the land. The 99-year lease released by the government were not given to all the beneficiaries of the Third Chimurenga. There are always constant threats from the government to remove some occupiers from state land. More than 20000 families occupying the Nuanetsi Ranch in the Lowveld face eviction from the government (Chitindi, 2017). There are people who are still at the government waiting list 20 years after the Third Chimurenga. This inefficiency in terms of allocating land to the people on waiting list is attributed to corruption.

In essence, there is land related corruption in Zimbabwe both rural and urban. Local government officials, politicians and chiefs are on the forefront of land related corruption. The government has created two new models of land allocation known as the A1 and A2 (Mutondi & Decker, 2011:5). The current scenario shows that those who benefited from the A2 model which is the large-scale commercial farms have political stamina while A1 the small holder farmers are rural peasants. The current situation of land redistribution leaves a lot to be desired and shows that the Third Chimurenga was high jacked. It is not therefore surprising that the Fourth Chimurenga might be on its way.

Moreover, the stewardship of land has been grossly affected by the Third Chimurenga particularly the destruction of the ecosystem. Because of lack of government support and technical skills, some land occupiers ended up destroying the environment by engaging in firewood sale, illegal gold panning and wanton killing of wildlife (Taringa, 2013). Much support is needed from government to make the project a success.

Land is a matter of dignity and justice which goes beyond party and petty politics. Land justice, from my personal view, is when land is held in trust as an essential resource for the benefit of all people regardless of gender, culture, race or creed. A critical reflection of

current land distribution in Zimbabwe falls short of justice because of the exclusion of marginalised members of the society.

7.3 Land Audit

The corruption which was associated with Third Chimurenga calls for a forensic audit of the whole process. If not, otherwise “Daka (2013:36) argues that the land reform in Zimbabwe is an on-going crisis with new developments emerging all the time”. The government has been resisting court orders. When the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe ruled that the Third Chimurenga approach the government used was unconstitutional the government ignored the ruling. During the past two decades disputes have been brought to court without final resolve. The land audit will also ascertain the issues of double allocation of land, cell phone farmers, absentee land lords and boundary disputes but above all evaluate and assess gender representation in the Third Chimurenga.

The purpose of land audit is to analyse land allocation data and the way land was distributed with respect to gender equity classification, environmental management system, extent of multiple land ownership and double allocations (Razemba, 2019). Issues of farm sizes, security of tenure and the right beneficiaries to be considered in the land audit in order to clean up the land occupations in the Third Chimurenga. The land audit will help the government to draft policies to address challenges and constraints of a successful Agrarian Reform Agenda (Razemba, 2019). Audit must also establish absentee farmers.

It is my conviction that without a proper land audit, the land question will remain an on-going struggle and Zimbabwe must be prepared to face the Fourth Chimurenga. The Fourth Chimurenga can be more violent and vicious than the Third Chimurenga if recommendations from land audit are ignored by the ruling elite.

7.4 A theology of land justice

Third Chimurenga was intended to bring justice and dignity to the VaKaranga people regardless of gender. Daka (2013) raised four pillars of land which are very critical to note which are the political, religious, economic and social. For Daka, any understanding of land reform in Zimbabwe must take serious cognisance of the four pillars of land. In his argument, “land reform in Zimbabwe has primarily been turned into a political issue for land is a sign of political power, dominance and control” (2013:15). This political overtone has overshadowed the issue of land justice.

Justice is a comprehensive approach and the ideal goal for each society. From a religious perspective, all-natural endowments such as land, mountains, rivers, trees and animals are sacred. Land is the most precious gift from the ancestors and it must be shared equally among the descendants (Daka, 2013:17). The religious aspect of land speaks of justice in land redistribution which includes even the Jubilee clauses in the Old Testament. Justice is a central theme in the Scriptures with major importance for all human life. It runs like a golden cord throughout the Scriptures. Justice describes the proper relationship which should obtain between humanity in their social life (Harvey, 1970:115).

Land was the test of loyalty to the covenant. The land functions like a moral barometer in the Old Testament. Evidently much of the anger expressed by the prophets was directed towards economic injustice and the oppression of the poor whilst the abuse and misuse of land is central. “On the one hand, Israel fell into the kind of nature polytheism that characterised the Canaanites view of land and thus compromised their unique covenant relationship with Yahweh” (Dyrness & Karkkainen, 2008:468). It is important to note that most of the times because of the power of politicians and their influence issues of land redistribution have become more political than justice.

The seizure of land reduced Africans to become completely dependent on the settlers. Land deprivation can lead to adverse poverty while availability of land can lead to prosperity. Land has a social value. It is a social utility. Land is life and the most valuable gifts one can ever receive. To be deprived of land is like being deprived of life. Land has so many social meaning and value. It is the cause of unity, for security, for avoiding conflict and community livelihoods (Daka, 2013:20).

The church must revise its theology and come up with a theology which reflects land justice. This is a theology which speaks and addresses the African religious world view. The church failed to be relevant in addressing the unjust land tenure mainly because the church was also involved in the process of dispossessing Zimbabweans from their land. Rev C Helm played a critical role in persuading Lobengula to sign the Rudd Concession in 1888, which shows that the church right from the beginning was never faithful to spreading the gospel without a bias towards colonialism.

The church in Zimbabwe is a beneficiary of the land seized by the colonial masters. Because of this, she has both interests in the stakes as well as an obligation to defend the rights people have to land (Daka, 2013:28). Churches were supposed to play a leading role in policy formulation towards land reform in Zimbabwe. The church needs to take a prophetic stance towards land resettlement in Zimbabwe and have the courage to hand over idle land to the poor and needy.

Analysis of the Third Chimurenga shows that those who benefited particularly in the A2 model which is the large-scale commercial farms were those with political power and the weak, the women and disabled received the least.

When it comes to a revolution, Eurocentric Christianity condemns any revolution indiscriminately without looking at the goal of the revolution. This is so because up until now some Christian Denominations continue to receive aid from their colonial master prompting them to support the interest of their masters. Liberation theology must demonstrate and defend the possibility of a religion of liberation.

The church in Zimbabwe needs to refashion its ecclesiology. Chitando (2002) argues that apart from academic contributions more work remains to be done if the church in Zimbabwe is to transform Christianity into truly African religion. A useful starting point is the refashioning of ecclesiology to reflect the post-colonial dispensation. Gender recognition of the roles of women as well as facilitating their occupation of leadership roles is also crucial. The middle to old age male monopoly of African church power requires critical analysis. African women have no significant voices in the church because of patriarchal hegemony. The church is challenged to work in the hope of redeeming the Christian religion from this image of a force that suppresses women and pushes them to accept roles that hamper free and full expression of women dignity.

The church in Africa must desist from a consumer mentality where its leaders are busy safeguarding a Eurocentric tradition and theology. It is high time that the church revisits its vision and mission statement to realign with the African religious spectrum. For example, the Church I am serving as a minister, the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, has a beautiful mission statement which reads “we exist to transform lives through Biblical teaching nurturing believers into true worshippers of God in a dynamic environment”. This can only be possible if the Methodist Church read the Bible from the point of view of the oppressed. It is high time that the church must be a prophetic church with a prophetic theology which

speaks to the African soul. We want a theology brewed from African pots. We want to drink from our own wells.

The Church in Zimbabwe has been, to a very larger extent, a silent observer of the mounting problems on land reform. On a few occasions the Church has cautiously issued statements of warning but each time the church issues such statements, political leaders have reminded the Church to consider her role at the pulpit as one of inculcating morals and not one of interfering with politics disguised by the cloth (Daka, 2013:28).

Although the Church has spoken in many ways trying to play a mediating role, she has neglected the vulnerable poor. I think that the Church should openly side with the poor and oppressed arguing for their emancipation. Land is an enabling tool of prosperity and happiness of the majority of people of low income and modest means. Today the Church's voice has been partially silenced because of harsh victimisation methods the governments uses to silence her critics (Daka, 2013:31). This is the cost of discipleship and the church must continue to fight for the rights of the oppressed and marginalised.

The Zimbabwean Church faces a theological crisis because of its near silence on the plight of the poor and oppressed in land reform. There is in the Church a misconception that participating in a political discourse is politicising the Church and threatens the separation between Church and State. The government of Zimbabwe has often silenced the Church saying that the land issue is a political issue, and therefore, the Church must keep clear of politics. The suffering of people seems not to mean anything for a theology upheld by this church (Daka, 2013:31).

The Church in Zimbabwe, and indeed elsewhere, should emulate the example of the Good Samaritan (Luke, 10:30-37) by not remaining a spectator to suffering in the world. As new developments take place in the debate, the Church has found herself more and more relegated

to the periphery of the debate. In this way her voice has lost relevance and credibility (Daka, 2013:33). It is therefore, within this context that the church must refashion its ecclesiology and come up with a theology of liberating praxis for land justice in Zimbabwe. For the church to stand and side with the poor, it must relook at how it is reading the Bible.

I am proposing a liberating praxis of land in Zimbabwe which stresses more on justice than politics. Justice on land must overshadow all political and selfish ambitions. I do appreciate the complexity associated with separating justice issues and political issues for the two are mutually inclusive but the issue of land must not be used to buy votes for it is a birth right for the *VaKaranga*. Third Chimurenga and land distribution has been hijacked politically, turning it into a process that did not always mediate justice but injustice. In other words, what emerged was a politics of injustice and favouritism instead of a politics of radical change.

7.4.1 Biblical hermeneutics

It is essential for the church to consider seriously biblical hermeneutics in its quest for liberation. Patrella (2006:28) asserts that reading the Bible through the hermeneutic of liberation prioritise application over explanation. This reading takes place together with the poor. They are the privileged agents of Biblical reflection. The reading of the Bible through the hermeneutic of liberation seeks to unleash the Bible's transformative energy to enable conversion of individuals and history as a whole. This approach to the reading of the Bible can also be interpreted in the context of reading the Bible from below.

For the church to be able to come up with its own theology necessary steps should be taken. The church must make a deliberate move to read the Bible from below. The traditional interpretation of the Bible has made the Holy Book a source of oppression. It is through liberation theology that the traditional interpretation of the biblical messages is rejected. The Bible is no longer a preserve of the privileged few who have the tendency of distorting the message to suit the agenda which continues to perpetuate oppression (Boesak, 2015). The

Bible can no longer continue to be used to justify oppression, land theft, genocide and slavery. The church in Africa in general and in Zimbabwe in particular is also guilty in that for too long it has accepted the justification of oppression through the Bible. The same Bible has been used to isolate and exploit women and all those who do not conform to rules of heteronormativity. The interpretation of the Bible from below brings in the ideological hermeneutic of suspicion which has become a powerful tool in the praxis of liberation theology (Boesak, 2015).

The Bible, for Dube (2003) is a post-colonial tool. She argues that to say African land was wrestled away from African control by the whites is insufficient. Africans were forced from their land by geo-political expansionism. By introducing imperialism as significant analytical factors in her analysis of land in Africa, she is able to make a similar move with regard to the Bible in Africa. In the context of imperialism, it is not sufficient for Africans to claim that their having of the Bible implies that this text is no longer a western book. They must go further recognizing that the Bible is also a post-colonial laden with post-colonial burdens and challenges. The task before theology of liberation is not only to develop creative black hermeneutics method but also to observe and analyze the manner in which African Christians read and view the Bible.

Many times, the Bible has been interpreted from above which means from the position of those of power and influence and this has made the Bible to be an oppressive book. Rather, than the Bible being holy it was profaned by how it was read. This paradigm shift from reading the Bible from above and reading it from below has created a solace for the oppressed of which the *VaKaranga* fall victims. Reading the Bible from below enables the church to come up with a theology that will be contextual to the *VaKaranga* people. If the church begins to read the Bible from below there will be great transformation of the society and tables will change in favour of the oppressed. The God of the Bible is a liberating God

and must be viewed as such. This liberation also includes the women who for long have remained under the bondage of oppression by such institutions such as the Church, society, work places and more other institutions of oppression.

Reading the bible from below enables the church to come up with a theology which is relevant to social context of its adherence. The church, by reading the Bible from below, becomes a relevant and prophetic church. Reading the Bible from below is reading the Bible in the context of justice in an unjust society where both men and women suffer from the strongholds of Empire. It is critical therefore that in propose a liberating praxis of land justice in Zimbabwe which read the Bible through a hermeneutic of liberation.

7.5 Advocating for gender inclusive

There is need for a deliberate effort to change the present structures which militate against the potentialities already exhibited by most women. The research has established that during the Chimurenga wars a lot of women displayed great courage and potential but due to the patriarchal nature of the society they ended up playing second fiddle to men. There is therefore need for gender policies and advocacy to liberate women. Black theology of liberation has long argued that the interlocutor of the liberation paradigm is the non-person, that is the black man and woman (Vellem 2015). Chitando (2016:6) confirms that there are serious gender imbalances on land. Women remain marginalised in terms of land ownership and that even increases their vulnerability to HIV as they sometimes resort to survival strategies that can compromise their health. Land is a critical resource that women are denied access to and in many instances women`s control of land is tied to their relationship to a man. Women also argued that land was the reason some of them had to be involved in the liberation struggle alongside their male counterparts. They argued that during the liberation struggle there was no gender classification hence the same policy should be observed in land re-distribution (Zvayi, 2016).

During the liberation struggles right from the first Chimurenga and the second Chimurenga the role of women could not be underestimated. They fought courageously with their male counter parts. Many people suffered and died during Zimbabwe`s war of liberation and many accounts of that struggle have been written but the story of women, the wives and mothers who remained behind has not yet been told. The stories reveal courage, endurance, humour and wisdom. These women, the mothers are both victims and actors. Throughout the war, and over again they fed and protected the freedom fighters and they risked their lives to do so. The men were around but used to command these mothers to hurry with food before they were beaten up by the freedom fighters. Without the women the war could not have been won (Staunton, 1991: xi).

The claim by Staunton (1991) that without the women the war could not have been won puts the women on the globe in as far as land ownership and use is concerned. To deprive these mothers of the land is to undermine the gains of the liberation struggle. During the second Chimurenga some women were used as sex slaves by the freedom fighters and some were left with children whom they cannot trace the whereabouts of their fathers. These women took it upon themselves to single handedly raise these children. In most of the VaKaranga community soon after independence a number of children were given names such as *Muhondo* meaning “during the war,” *Hazvinei* meaning “there is nothing I can do” and most of these children are living with single mothers.

Land ownership in Zimbabwe has created a certain stereotype for women portraying them as weak and people who need protection. The stereotype created by gender prejudice has a serious impact on land ownership and use. If women are portrayed as weak it means they cannot be considered as land owners since land ownership requires someone with courage.

Women therefore, suffer due to this stereotype and thus why they had to scale the highest mountain in protest of these shrewd land ownership principles.

Land allocation must also consider the single and divorced women. For single women who never married, the failure to allocate them land in their own right in communal areas means putting them at the mercy of their fathers, brothers and other male figures with power and influence. Moreover, divorced women are also another class of women who find it difficult to access land on the premise that land is accessed through marriage. It is a *VaKaranga* tradition that a divorced woman must be sent back to her maternal home and be supported by his father and brothers who may as well be hostile to her.

The concept of allocating women *tsevu* must be challenged so that women can have full access to land ownership with full security of tenure. The role of women in the upbringing of the family is pivotal in the society hence land as an important resource must be shared equally among men and women.

Zimbabwe statistics shows that 52% of the total population of the country are women. With the patriarchal land ownership system, it implies the majority of the population are landless. This needs serious review from the government and churches as social institutions which support patriarchy and suppress women. The issue of land as a justice issue must cut across gender divide and allows all people to have access to this precious resource. The rate of single mothers and widows is on the increase in Africa, and in Zimbabwe in particular thus, any land redistribution exercise which does not take cognisance of this fact is a failed project. The church must also partner government and civil society in gender advocacy and leading by example by promoting equal space for women and men.

7.6 Anti-corruption work

Corruption is often described as an individualistic act that involves the use of authority for personal gain. The research has established that corruption was rife in the Third Chimurenga especially politically related corruption. If land is viewed as a political tool to win votes there is high likelihood of profaning its meaning and value among the people. The result of this misconception of land is its abuse by those with political muscle through corruption. In a study done by Manase Chiweshe in 2017 on Land related corruption in Zimbabwe, it came out clear that corruption has become part and parcel of everyday life in Zimbabwe and it is a witness to the manifestation of political power. According to the findings land corruption is a function of political power in its many guises as such to deal with land corruption requires combating political power. Combating political power is one of the most difficult enterprises. In Zimbabwe political power is dangerous to tackle since there is no political tolerance and the country is a militarised entity.

Chiweshe (2017) further asserts that political power is at the heart of land related corruption. The major actors in subverting procedures across tenurial systems are the politicians mostly with ZANU-PF. Land corruption has eroded livelihoods and impacts negatively on the poor who were supposed to benefit from the land reform. It is the poor who suffer the brunt of corruption. Moreover, combating corruption in Zimbabwe is very difficult since institutions to combat corruption remain ruthless since they are appointed by the very same corrupt system. The Zimbabwe Anti- Corruption Commission (ZACC) has failed to deliver on land related corruption for the same reason that the commission is part of the corruption syndicate.

Chiweshe (2017) suggest that land corruption is an operational concept that refers to illicit acts and the abuse of power committed by those in positions of authority when discharging their land governance-related mandate.

Mukonza (2013) asserts that common types of corruption in Zimbabwe are administrative corruption and political corruption. Administrative corruption tends to alter the implementation of public policies with regards to who should benefit from public goods and services. Corrupt public officials may allow certain individuals to benefit from goods and services in exchange for some bribes and deny others access to the same for failing to provide them with bribes or certain favours. Political corruption entails that certain laws, policies and institutions are crafted or influenced to generate certain outcomes which do not reflect public interest but politically biased outcomes.

Mpofu (2018) argues that land administration has historically laced transparency and accountability. In 2018 ZANU PF at its National People`s Conference presented a report from the Land Reform Department which highlighted the prevalence of double allocation of farms across the country. The part, as indicated in the report, had received more than 200 complaints from aggrieved people and it apportioned the blame to corrupt officials in the Ministry of Lands. The evidence also provided highlights the dispossession of smallholder farming communities in Mazowe area by the former First Lady Grace Mugabe which left several poor peasant farmers homeless (Mpofu, 2018).

By and large, corruption has become the method of wealthy redistribution to all those who showed patronage to Mugabe. “I am rich because I belong to ZANU PF and if you want to be rich you must join ZANU PF,” boasted one of Mugabe`s nephew Phillip Chiyangwa a multi-millionaire businessman” (Meredith, 2002:17).Corruption became the order of the day as evidenced by several corruption cases raised by the ZAAC Commission. The Prisca Mupfumira case of externalisation of millions of United states Dollars and the Vice President Chiwenga`s wife who was put in prison for several corruption cases. “There were other several corruption scandals reported in the parastatal companies, notably the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) where Kumbirai Kangai, former minister of Lands and Agriculture and his

secretary were charged of corruption to the tune of Z\$360 million. Enos Chikoore resigned in shame after being charged for misappropriating Z\$9 billion from the National Oil Company of Zimbabwe (NOCZIM)” (Meredith, 2002:29).

This research proposes a liberating praxis of land justice in Zimbabwe where all forms of corruption are rooted out to allow the poor and marginalised to have access to land. Furthermore, to brought to book all those political elites who benefited from the land reform through corrupt activities. The exchange of land from white colonial owners to black elites excluded the poor masses who some continued to suffer death and indignity due to corruption. There is overwhelming evidence that 90% of commercial farms were grabbed by black elites in power such as Cabinet Minister, top Army Generals, influential War Veterans, top Civil Servants, high ranked Police Officers, members of the Central Intelligence and Business tycoons. Surprisingly, various patterns of corruption also point to the traditional leaders who are supposed to be the custodians of the land. It is therefore, due to corruption and abuse of power by black elite that the Third Chimurenga was hijacked to the detriment of the poor masses.

In a recent development it was revealed that Robert Mugabe the late former President of Zimbabwe owned 21 farms in the country. Mugabe grabbed the farms when he was still serving as President of the country (Shiri, 2018). The sources also revealed the hypocrisy of the former states man as he was the one preaching about one person one farm. More so, some of the farms were leased to white farmers. During his tenure he preached one person one farm (Shiri, 2018). This shows the extent at which Black elites can amass wealth for themselves at the expense of the poor. The revelation came as the veteran politician was linked to a part that was set to wrestle power from his predecessor, Emerson Mnangagwa.

Mugabe was not the only one with more than one farm, but quite a number of political heavy weights manipulated the exercise and enriched themselves at the expense of the poor. As a result, the exercise to a certain extent did not achieve its intended goal to equitably distribute land equal to the people who had been victims of oppression for a very long time.

The challenge of corruption becomes a theological and ethical issue which Liberation theology must engage in order to stop the spread of suffering of the poor. Civil society organizations and the church have a crucial role to play in fighting land corruption. They must work to strengthen grass root voices against corruption and the church in its pulpit must denounce corruption. There must be separation of institutions designated to fight corruption such as ZAAC from political manipulation. Judiciary must impose stiffer penalty to those who are found guilty of corrupt activities.

7.7 Anti-sanctions work

The Third Chimurenga generated a lot of despondence internationally which resulted in Zimbabwe being placed on targeted sanctions by Britain, the United States and the European Union. Sanctions are a hindrance to economic growth and poverty alleviation. SADC maintains that sanctions exacerbate the already difficult conditions and do not contribute to constructive solutions to the Zimbabwean crisis. It has given ZANU PF propaganda narratives that reinforce its ant-imperialist rhetoric (Razemba, 2016).

Maposa cited in Chitando (2013:58) asserts that the issue of sanctions has been used as a scapegoat to account for all the failures in all the sectors of Zimbabwe, especially the poor performance of the economy. There was paradigm shift in the story of sanctions in Zimbabwe. As the talk of new elections continued to gather momentum in political

discourses, ZANU PF intensified its anti-sanctions campaign against its real and imagined foes by drumming support from all angles of society, the church included.

The church was divided over the issue of sanctions with the African Initiated Churches and Pentecostal Churches supporting the anti-sanction campaign. Notably, the VaPositori VeAfrica (Africa Apostolic Church) led by Bishop Paul Mwazha were highly involved in the Anti-Sanctions campaign programme. Other high-ranking religious functionaries signed the petition against sanctions and more were expected to sign at provincial and district levels. Those who signed included, Bishop Trevor Manhanga of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Zimbabwe, Nolbert Kunonga of the breakaway Anglican Church, Obadiah Musindo of the Destiny for Africa Network and last but not least, the youthful Prophet Emmanuel Makandiwa of United Family International Church who was granted the 'honour' of giving an opening prayer at the proceedings on the launch (Maposa in Chitando, 2013:58).

The above scenario gives room for the manipulation of the church by government. The situation above shows that only African Initiated Churches supported the removal of sanctions. The churches of Eurocentric origin were quiet on the removal of sanctions. This therefore calls for concerted effort from the churches, government and human rights organisations to unite in the fight against corruption. Works should be produced to castigate sanctions by the church and human rights organisation.

The sanctions which were imposed after the Third Chimurenga have caused untold suffering to the innocent people of Zimbabwe. It is a fact that when elephants fight it is the grass that suffers. These sanctions can be interpreted in the spirit of neo-colonialism and the extension of Empire. The sanctions are a reflection of the colonial agenda and perpetuation of colonial injustice. Zimbabwe might be independent, but with the economic sanctions where the colonial masters decides on which countries to trade, do sport and even which banks can

Zimbabwe find help, makes it very difficult for Zimbabwe to recover economically. It is a tall order for Zimbabwe to recover because of neo-colonialism.

Countries within the SADC region and African Union (AU) have also raised their voices in support of the removal of sanctions which they described as causing heartrending suffering to the Zimbabweans. What sin have Zimbabweans committed by claiming back their land in a revolutionary way? The sanctions in political terms are targeted on certain political heavy weights but socially the impact is being felt by the poor people.

The call for the removal of sanctions can bring relief to the generality of Zimbabweans and also allows Zimbabweans to judge the failure of their leaders without blaming sanctions. Any failure of policy in Zimbabwe is attributed to the economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by Britain and the European Union. The sanctions have also made it difficult to assess the progress made in socio economic status of the people by their leadership. If sanctions are removed, land corruption is uprooted and other social evils associated with third Chimurenga such as the oppression of women are dealt with the land reform project can be a status maker for the Zimbabweans.

7.8 Land reform mechanism

The fact that the land reform was a noble programme is undeniable. Taringa cited in Chitando (2013:56) argues that the colonial imbalances that hitherto had been obtaining surely needed to be redressed. However, the redressing of the thorny issue should have been gradually undertaken with utmost cautions to avoid destroying the traditional socio-religious ways of relating to the land that have ensured a proud communal as opposed to individual ownership that breeds a capitalist mentality. Under the traditional way, the socio-religious rules and boundaries made by society were treasured and respected by all members of the society. These rules also applied to their attitude towards nature, which is imbued with sacrality and

therefor forming part of the cosmic totality. Nature could not be exploited willy-nilly as would obtain in a materialist society, but set rules had to be adhered to.

The third Chimurenga brought in something fresh as opposed to the usual scenario altogether. This was a period in which the nation witnessed one of the most chaotic of events on a national and environmental scene. Some revered and sacred land and forests in some communities fell victim to the land hungry peasants. “Land occupations and resource poaching strategies tended to target various forms of state lands, particularly forests and natural parks, and communal areas as well as privately owned lands” (Moyo, 2005:17). Many conservancies were intruded and animals slaughtered at will.

“The ZANU-PF government manipulated the traditional beliefs surrounding the land for political expedience; exploiting what is politically advantageous and playing a quiet diplomacy on what may constitute a political suicide if pursued with vigour” (Chitando, 2013:57). There was open evidence that any social group that could have a potential to influence political election outcome, (such as a church), exerted pressure and request for a piece of land, the request was granted easily at the expense of any formal modality that are environmentally protective. Paradoxically the government was willing to contravene the theme of the liberation on ecology which any government would intend to pursue. A landless community can be used as voting fodder (Vellem 2016).

The Zimbabwe Land Commission Annual Report (2016) highlighted the disputes related to the Third Chimurenga. The disputes involved the following main areas: land ownership, double allocations, sharing of farm infrastructure such as water sources and farm equipment left by former white farmers, illegal settlers, boundary disputes, and conflicts over shrines and cultural areas, settlement of people in grazing areas and dispute between former farm

owners and newly resettled farmers. Corruption by land officials within the Ministry of Lands remained a contentious issue.

With the above background in mind, it is critical to note the need for land reform mechanism which addresses the short comings of the Third Chimurenga. Land mechanism will look at and shed light on ownership patterns, tenure, productivity and optimum farm size (Razemba, 2019). Multiple farm ownership has extremely constrained effective utilisation of land and efficient farm management (Moyo, 2005).

A radical land policy should be developed which must not protect and satisfy the interest of a few elite in the minority groups at the expense of national land utilisation which would ensure productivity, increase employment growth, and assure income distribution and environmentally sustainability. Technological factors such as irrigation and greenhouses are highly concentrated among the few elite farmers. This is an area which needs to be strengthened so that the land reform will be a viable project.

7.9 Transforming Church Land

The church in Zimbabwe is a major landowner. The church bought some few farms but the majority of the farms were gifts from Cecil John Rhodes. This ownership of land compromised the church's position in defending the vulnerable (Chitando, 2002). Mission stations were built on land donated to the church by the BSAC. In demographic analysis the Anglican Church were promised and given 3000 acres of land on any mission established. The Wesleyan Methodist pioneer missionaries Owen Watkins and Isaac Shimmin were given land by Rhodes comprising of five farms of 3000 acres each. Salvation Army was given a farm in Mazowe measuring 3000 acres. The Roman Catholics found Chishawasha on a 12000acre piece of land (Zvobgo, 1996:3-5).

Furthermore, Banana (1996:239) asserts that “it is a known fact a number of churches that own farms have not been able to come up with a viable land policy for their tenants. The church continues to own land amidst landless peasants”. Chitando (2002) further argues that some families that hold historical claims to church land have occasionally invaded such farms. The case in point is the Mugabe clan of Morgenster Mission who have continued to challenge the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe over land rights of the mission. They remained convinced that the missionaries cheated them of their land.

The MCZ is one of the denominations of Eurocentric origin that enjoyed the privilege of the colonisers and missionary land grabbing. The church benefited eight farms, of which seven have mission schools (Mujinga, 2019). The church, to date holds around 15000 hectares of land. The United Methodist Church also holds around 5018 hectares of land which is highly underutilised as is reflected by the church audit. The audit revealed that only 982 hectares of land is being utilised while the rest is laying idle (Kamuterera, 2019).

As the struggle for land continues in Zimbabwe, churches must consider distributing some of its underutilised land to people who are landless. This will serve the church from the shame it may encounter if the struggle for land continues in probably the Fourth Chimurenga. The other option will be to come up with viable projects on farms so as to enable the church to be involved in charity work. If the church remains adamant on looking for options to alleviate land hunger, it will be siding with the oppressor in the struggle for land justice in Zimbabwe.

7.10 Fostering a spirituality of land justice: liturgies, rituals and prayers

Parry (2013:14) asserts that the church is there for the long haul. It does not come and go with elections or when the going gets tough. Long after all the secular agencies have left, in the midst of conflict and other crisis, the church is still there. It is our mandate. As such, we do not speak of “*an exit strategy*” from the people. The church is there to support, empower,

accompany, advocate for social justice, and be in solidarity with all those in need. It asks for no reward save that of doing the will of God and serving God's people.

Emphatically, the church is there as a beacon of hope and a conduit for God's unconditional love for God's people. This must be reflected in its worship. Henderson (1999:8) argues that there is an intrinsic connection between liturgy and social justice and this is better expressed in liturgical celebrations. It is within this spirit that the church in Zimbabwe must revisit order of services and include the spirituality of land. Areas to be reviewed include among others music, Eucharist, intercessory prayers and sequence of the service.

The common problems associated with traditional music for worship from a social justice perspective includes non-inclusive language, inappropriate images of God, military image and excessive individualism. "Music oriented for social justice should not be manipulative but must be prophetic and eschatological envisioning a new world reality" (Henderson et al., 1999:68). This entails that the church must renew its music to reflect the struggle of land in its worship.

The Eucharist is a meal bearing presence of a remembered liberating action of God to sustain God's people in the future. Eating the meal with girded loins, sandaled feet and staff in hand show the readiness of Christians for the journey of faith that proceeds from this feast (Henderson et al., 1999:86). It is important for the church to develop an order of service for the Eucharist which shows its liberating essence and relate it to the liberation from colonial bondage. I envision a renewed church which is not foreign to its adherents.

Churches complement governments and other agencies in their service provision but churches tend to reach out to the poorest of the poor and provide services where no one else goes. They have, in fact, the largest constituency, stretching from the most remote village to the international community (Parry, 2013:14). Because of their continued presence in the

communities and their engagement with people during the most significant times of life (birth, marriage, illness, death), they have an earned credibility and trust and, what is more, they have a “higher mandate,” not simply a “calling.” This higher mandate must be reflected in the new way of worship which is liberative in nature

Intercessory prayers within the Church must be relevant and directed towards issues of equality. Women and other vulnerable groups must be given space to express their full humanity. This will also entail equality in critical resources such as land.

Summary of Proposed Liberation Praxis for Land Justice in Zimbabwe

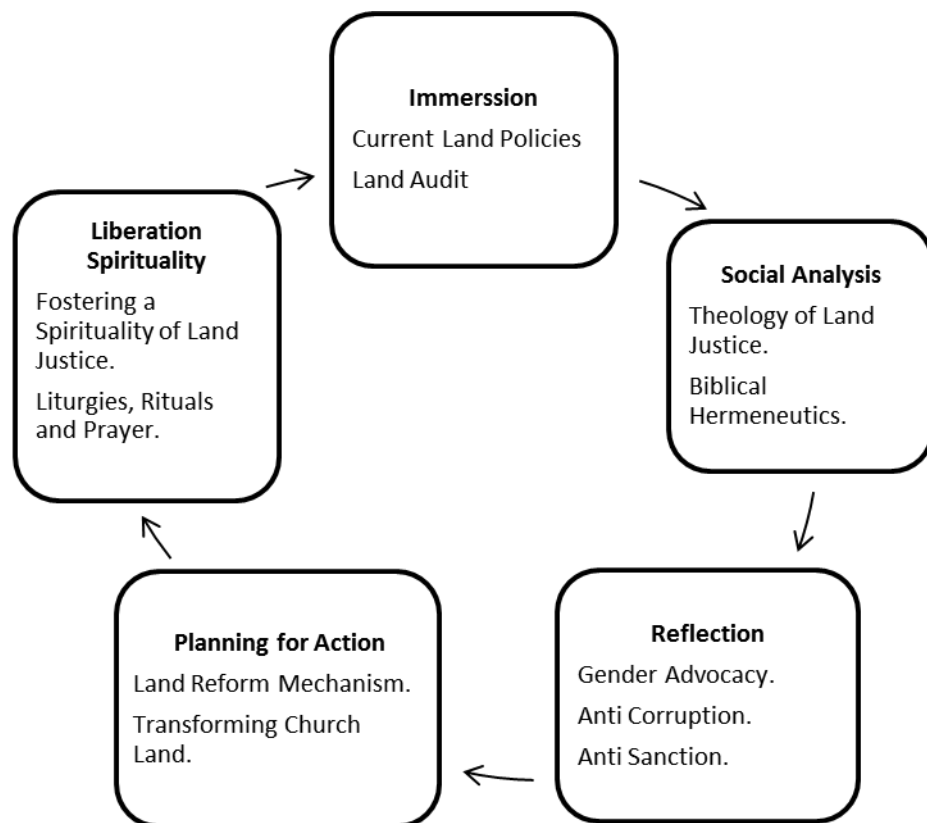


Figure 7.1 above shows a cycle of liberation praxis for land justice in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER 8

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The research articulated in this thesis re-affirmed a number of important issues about land in Zimbabwe. It also surfaced new insights and potentially contributes new knowledge to the already existing body of knowledge. Furthermore, the thesis has identified new areas which may require further research.

This research re-affirmed that land is of paramount importance to the *VaKaranga* people and that it is something worth dying for. Loss of land is tantamount to loss of history, identity and dignity. The research also, once again emphasised the religious significance of land for the VaKaranga. The VaKaranga are tied to the land by depositing the umbilical cord into the soil of one`s origin, stressing the central place land occupies in the VaKaranga cosmology. Land, moreover, is the space for their salvation.

The Third Chimurenga (*Jambanja*) was a revolution for justice. It was a noble cause, seeking to restore land to its rightful owners, thereby affirming their dignity and restoring confidence in their worldview. This was partially achieved. Moreover, to the *VaKaranga* who have managed to get back their land, it has become a sigh of relief and they are assured of salvation in their own land. There is joy to those who have received their land since land is the space for salvation. It was dream come true for many of the VaKaranga who managed to get back their land regardless of how the land was taken back. This research, however, also surfaced some of the shortcomings of this Chimurenga.

Critical to note is the level of corruption which was and is still associated with the Third Chimurenga. Corruption is evidenced by the double allocation of farms contrary to the government policy of **one man one farm**. Moreover, the revolution was **hijacked** by

powerful political elite since it coincided with a very volatile period of political decline for ZANU PF under Mugabe who in turn used the land as a political incentive to win the election.

Over and above that the church played a pivotal role in facilitating land theft and pacifying the VaKaranga not to rebel against their colonial masters through the gospel of unconditional forgiveness as expressed in this research.

The voices of women were also heard in this research in the quest for a society which takes the issue of women seriously. Motherhood as highlighted in this research is highly revered among most of the VaShona people and the VaKaranga in particular.” If motherhood is revered so much, why do we allow a system which discriminate women in their quest for land ownership. “Symbols which are used by the VaKaranga testify to land as mother and as a womb therefore, it must fall logically that women must be key stake holders in any exercise of land redistribution. More so, demographically women constitute a greater number percentage than men, hence the need to consider them in the allocation of this precious resource.

Patriarchal traditions which give male privileges are being challenged in favour of a just society where man and woman gain access to land at an equal footing. This is the reason why the research has proposed a liberating praxis of land which is gender sensitive. Women are now challenging the centre and the event of climbing the highest pick in Zimbabwe shows that the land tenure system in the country and among the *VaKaranga* has a gender bias. This gender bias has to be addressed in the spirit of a just society of which women are also strong beneficiaries of a just society.

Gender exclusion has been discussed by many scholars in Zimbabwe (Chitando 2016, Mapuranga 2013, Gaidzanwa 2006, Mugugu and Chimonyo 2004) but the concept of *tsevu*

has not been explored. The allocation of *tsevu* to women by their husbands shows how men continue to exploit women through a well-defined patriarchal system.

Patriarchy has been challenged and attacked to allow security of tenure for women as equal to men in the society. This can be described as a revolution within a revolution. It is quite evident that the “Third Chimurenga” was not enough without addressing issues of maleness. Patriarchy created a social system through socialisation structuring the relationship of men and women as a prison in which tyranny rather than the virtuous companion prevailed among them. The irruption of women into sacred space by challenging patriarchy shows to what extent women were ready to go in fighting this evil and redeem their integrity.

The research also established a “Liberation Theological Framework” which places the poor and the marginalised as the interlocutors in the fight for their liberation. In this research the VaKaranga people and the women were the interlocutors. The poor and the marginalised were agents of their liberation. clearly proving that, liberation is the work of the oppressed. The oppressed must, through the praxis of liberation, rise to the occasion and demand their liberation.

The preferential option for the poor stands out clearly in the research as a critical reflection for the church and those in authority. Dussel (1996) coined for theologians and pastoral agents the expression “the discipleship of the poor”. Leonardo Boff (1989) spoke about the new EcclesioGenesis a church born from the poor. The church has a challenge of siding with the poor in the crisis. It is the challenge which the church must overcome through its pastoral ministry.

The research brings a crisis in theology in Zimbabwe in the sense that theology in Zimbabwe has always been State theology. Very few voices of theologians from the Black Liberation theology are heard challenging State theology. It is important therefore, for liberation theology not to remain in the comfort zone but to go out there and challenge Empire in all its forms of manifestation. The church through its liturgy, prayers and sacraments must reflect a spirituality of liberation. There is also need for Black Liberation theologians to contribute to the church by producing more literature which challenges Eurocentric theology.

Crucially, the framework has managed to bring an ethics of liberating praxis which is capable of justifying the struggle for justice in an unjust society. There is a perpetuation of serious grip of Empire through an established culture and how modernity in the name of development has continued to haunt the *VaKaranga* decades after the Second Chimurenga. African countries must take the issue of land seriously otherwise most African countries are only enjoying flag independence. Neo-colonialism is coming in form of modernity and the ugly face of modernity is injustice and violence.

One of the contributions of this research is methodological. The researcher utilised the **pastoral or praxis cycle** in developing a black theology of liberation with reference to land. This has rarely been utilised in Zimbabwean writings. Theoretically the research contributes to a black liberation theological ethics for land justice for contemporary churches in Zimbabwe. This is breaking new ground.

The research has also utilised the concept of *kubata makuku*, one of the *Vakaranga* cosmological principles of life as panacea for conflict resolution in post-colonial Zimbabwe. As Zimbabwe is embroiled in several conflicts – such as the Gukurahundi, pre- and post-election violence, human rights abuses and corruption, all which are threatening the peace and

stability of the country. A theology of *kubata makuku* can be a unique restorative contribution of a local black theology of liberation, if used as a criterion by the Peace and Reconciliation Commission in restoring relations.

There are also areas which may need further investigation in the struggle for land justice in Zimbabwe. The results of this research could lead to further research in the area of the plight of farm workers who were employed by white commercial farmers. In Masvingo province, former farm workers only constituted 6.7% of the total number of those who got the land. This is unattainable considering their numbers and the plight of their families. Government must come up with a strategic plan to include the farm workers in its grant plan to resettle the people.

Another area which needs further research is on how people with disability were treated in the exercise. The exercise from its description as fast track entails a major challenge to people living with disability. The method used, from researcher's perspective, could not allow people with disability to benefit. From the documentary evidence researched through, there is nothing which actually show how people with disability benefited.

The third group which is very critical for further research are the white commercial farmers. It seems they have been relegated to the periphery and their feelings and perceptions do not matter in the land issue. It is important to consider a number of factors around the white commercial farmers for example some call Zimbabwe their home and were born and bred in Zimbabwe. What about the development on the farms, in terms of infrastructure such as irrigation pipes, dams, farm houses and more other movable and non-movable assets? This area needs further investigation and policies should be developed to cater for all forms of exclusion.

Finally, as a minister of religion, a black African liberation theologian and a Mukaranga man who is still on the waiting list to get land since 2000, I envision the struggle of land as an on-going exercise. The shortcomings of the Third Chimurenga, especially the exclusion of women, and the failure by the church to come up with an activist type of theology, may continue to haunt Zimbabwe and might degenerate into the Fourth Chimurenga.

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