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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the second issue of Zimbabwe Political Science Review. This issue explores political issues that characterise political systems in developing countries, in Africa to be particular.

The Editor in Chief would like to thank editors and manuscript reviewers for taking their time to work towards the publication of this issue.

For your comments do not hesitate to contact us.

Enjoy your reading

Percyslage Chigora

Editor in Chief ZPSR

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Democracy in Africa: Redefining Citizenship for Participation in the Post Cold War Political Space

by

John Gasu

Abstract

The political space in democratic Africa was expected to expand to embrace the hitherto disenfranchised in the decision making process. But this has not really manifested as Africa's democratic processes are increasingly taking *delegative* character. Political participation for the bulk of the citizens is minimal as it does not go beyond election periods. The political culture that was associated with authoritarian exclusionism continues to linger on, as citizens do not appreciate their own roles in the governance process. The libertarian entitlements of citizens are often copious in the national constitutions but completely inaccessible to the non-literate segment. Due to the predatory nature of the hegemonic class, the excluded segment is also the one that is most afflicted by poverty. The political space, as a result is appropriated by the elite leaving the rest of the citizenry stranded in a state of uncertainty. The paper addresses the question of how to bring the teeming majority of the people on board to contribute to the processes of decision making at various levels of governance. The nub issue of what could be done to expand the knowledge and the understanding of citizenship in democratic systems is also dealt with. It is concluded that the quality of democratic governance in Africa can only be enhanced if democratic citizenship is grasped and exercised by all for effective inclusion and participation.

Key Words: Citizenship; Democracy; Africa; Participation

Introduction

The political closure that characterized the military and civilian variants of authoritarian rule in Africa, largely established the motivations for the prodemocracy struggles that featured prominently

on the continent, in the early 1990s. This was mainly due to the absolute debasement of citizenship, which the authoritarian dispensations had visited on the people. The arbitrariness of authoritarianism makes the notion of citizenship, even in its minimal terms, as the 'right to have rights' rather problematic (Marshall 1964; Jelin 1996). In his discussion on what constitutes democratic citizenship, Robert Dahl indicated that 'every adult subject to a government and its laws must be presumed to be qualified as, and has an unqualified right to be, a member of the demos' (Dahl 1989: 127). The African authoritarian polities subjected the people to governmental control, and laws without any grant of participation in deciding on matters that affect them. Hence there existed a situation where state managers were largely unaccountable as they carried themselves as patrimonial patrons.

In the absence of any significant constraining factor on the whims of the authoritarian state-managers, African peoples in the period prior to the unraveling of the global democratic third wave on the continent were reduced to mere 'subjects of law' without libertarian or liberal guarantees. This rendered the African situation a prototypical Hobbesian 'state of nature.' The parody of the authoritarian era was that it was precisely against such legal and political deprivations that the anti-colonial struggle was waged

The continuity of the colonial-type subjugation and marginalization of the population by the postcolonial indigenous leaders (Mamdani 1996), inevitably evoked the fundamental question as to what was the essence of independence? And as the general population found no convincing answers emanating from the actions of the state managers, the situation ineluctably led to the corrosion of the legitimacy of the political hegemonic class. The conjunction of internal discontents with the imperative of the global democratic third wave produced a whirlwind effect on the continent, the momentum of which weakened the monopolistic grips of the autocrats. The

mass movements against authoritarian misrule has generically been referred to as prodemocracy movements and it was the driving force of these movements that significantly redesigned the African political landscape towards the reestablishment of democratic citizenship and the reintroduction of competitive electoral systems.

The triumph of the anti-authoritarian struggles, which were most visible in the holding of competitive multiparty elections, was understandably acclaimed by Peter Anyang' Nyong'o (1992) as the 'second independence.' This was to draw a metaphoric parallel with the anti-colonial antecedence, a few decades prior (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1997). Both the colonial and the postcolonial species of autocratic rule share a commonality in the form of a constrictive political space. This was carried out through disenfranchisements that deny the people inclusion and participation in the governance process; thereby effectively reducing them to the status of spectatorship; in a game they cannot participate (Mamdani 1996).

Without quizzing the timeliness of any triumphalistic declarations, it is, however, reasonable to perceive them as expressions of reprieve from the deadweight of the repressive systems that the African had undergone since political independence. In this wise, the pessimism that had earlier characterized the African political landscape began to recede, as optimism about the institutionalization of democratic governance began to gain grounds (Joseph 1997). The expectation was that with the smashing of the monopoly of the *ancien regimes*, the grant of libertarian guarantees and the re-enfranchisement of the people, the emerging political dispensation would translate into a new understanding of citizenship. With this expectation, it was obvious that what people sought was not only to have the power to elect their leaders but also to demystify political leadership by making their rulers responsible and accountable to them.

The political transitions that had been triggered by the prodemocracy movements in the 1990s had been described by Richard Sandbrook (1997) as being transitions without democratic consolidation. African political dispensations, therefore, continue to attract epithets that portray a situation of multiparty formalism. It is in this vein that Thomas Carothers (2002) classified the emerging democracies that gyrate in the realm of multipartyism as being in the *gray zone*. Such gray zone democracies are in fact 'façade democracies' as their weak institutions can relapse at any point in time (Finer 1974).

The initial processes that followed the fall of the classical authoritarian regimes were either christened 'transitions from authoritarianism to electoral democracy' or as 'first phase transitions to democracy' as these descriptions were affirmed by the conduct of multiparty-contested elections (Joseph 1997). The clamor for change in governance, which actualized in the holding of these elections were not meant to be an end in itself (Nwabueze 1993). But these were deemed to be the critical first steps for a people-centered governance system through the crystallization of leadership-citizenship engagements (Gasu 2008). It is in this direction that the democratic credentials of Africa can be measured; otherwise it becomes so tempting to anchor the continent's democratic progression on the most hackneyed minimalist criteria that electoral democracies offer.

In truth the democratization process has chalked some successes, as many significant thresholds, unthinkable in the past, have been crossed especially in the alternation of power through the ballot system.[1] And it is, therefore, increasingly becoming clear to African political leaders that they cannot avoid renewing their mandates through periodic electoral processes; which they are bound to contest with their opponents. Whereas, such progression is definitely a major break

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[1] Examples of power alternations have occurred in Benin, Ghana and Senegal

with the past, African electoralism conceals the shallowness of democratic culture in governance (Sandbrook 1996). What is becoming evident is that the attitudes and the conduct of leaders, as well as their constituents during elections, and in governance, continue to project political cultural traits that are reminiscent of patrimonial culture (Gasu 2007). Patrimonial culture, by definition is anathematic to democratic ideals (O'Donnell 1986).

It is important to recognize that democracy is a dynamic concept that keeps challenging itself for the enhancement of the processes and institutions that would improve the freedoms, and quality of life of the citizenry (Dahl 1971). In this regard, it needs to be noted that the election of leaders should not culminate into the abdication of citizenry rights but rather one that would generate interactive processes for effective governance (O'Donnell 1986). In a word, democratic governance should depart from mere plebiscitary forms and manifest in processes that promote vertical as well as horizontal accountability (Diamond 1997).

In the postcolonial era, in particular, the conscription of the political space has been accentuated by the rehash of the traditional attributes of patrimonial culture (Gasu 2007). This is maximally exploited by the power-wielding elite with the connivance of the people. This is where the danger of citizenship conceptualization in Africa lies. The immersion of African polities in this cultural domain has resulted in the stripping of people of basic rights of citizenship, as the political pedestrian exits the political patio for their social superiors. The political history of Africa is littered with gruesome human rights deprivations and violations, and hence libertarian concerns became the primary concerns of the elite-led drawn constitutions for the new democratic projects (Gyimah-Boadi 1997). The transition format adopted by Francophone Africa under the 'sovereign' national conferences was part of the effort through which civil society engagement with incumbents was meant to restore democratic citizenship by curtailing the powers of incumbent authoritarian regimes

(Nwabueze 1993).

The democratic processes have been underway for nearly two decades, and it is time we began asking questions about the depth and scope of the African democratic system. This is particularly important as it relates to the extent to which it allows the *demos* to continually engage the political leadership and to be part of the processes of making decisions that affect them. In other words, it is an issue of probing whether the democratic transition in Africa has transcended electoralism into one that has anchored the people onto the governance process. The nub concern of this paper is, therefore, an examination of the African democratic progression as to whether democratic citizenship has been established. This is to address the risk of democratic minimalism and stasis, as plebiscitary systems take hold in praxis.

Electoral Democracy and Stasis

Emerging from the yoke of authoritarianism, it would be understood why the fatigued peoples of Africa should exhibit a sense of contentment with the liberal openings that the new constitutional order and electoral processes of the democratic transition offered (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1997). Obviously, it was an era meant to secure new political entitlements in the form of liberties, rights and freedoms not only for the choice of leaders; but also one that would hook in the citizens as part of the public policy making. This was to open a new definition of citizenship and to begin a different kind of engagement with political leaders. Since the foundational elections, electioneering, and in fact elections have become ritualistic exercises carried out periodically for purposes of attracting external legitimacy (Carothers 2002). For the average person, elections are veritably conceived as competitions among political elites who either stand on a party platform or are audacious enough to go independent. Its essence is lost by the very mode of political mobilization that has been foisted on the people. The unrestrained eagerness of the political elite to capture

power, and to retain it at all cost, continues to be an emblematic feature of African politics. This has not seen diminution, even with the return of democracy. Electioneering campaigns among political contestants, only end up exacerbating primordial attachments and passions. Societal *lumpen* elements are recruited by patrons as agents for political mobilization and to battle the political enemies. In Ghana, for instance, election periods are expressed, in the local parlance, as 'cocoa seasons' for the lumpen, so as to emphasize the lavish reward system for their clientelistc services.[2]

A political rally for a typically well-endowed party is usually massed up by paid-up zealots that assemble in a mammoth fashion to provide psychic gratification for their sponsors. The spuriousness of what should have been a serious engagement with the electorate is the usual low tone that is accorded key programmatic issues of the parties. This is the case, such that the voting public is scarcely certain on what party manifestoes really stand for; and what ideological differences (if any) exist between the parties that present candidates for elections. The difficulty of accessing and grabbing the policy options the African electorate is made to choose, only affirms the charade character of elections. The electoral process is perceived as personality struggles, in a zero-sum game. The criteria for holding power-wielders accountable in the post-election periods are normally blunted by institutional arrangements that are steeped in patrimonial culture.

The marginality of the general voting public coupled with the persistence of the patrimonialism often occasions the taking of the political mass for granted by an overweening ruling class. Subsequently, the public ends up having a low esteem of themselves as they do not really understand their role in the political arena, leading to their withdrawal from the political space. For

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[2]

The unemployed youth are usually the enthusiastic supporters of party leaders for they consider election times as pay back times for them. Their patrons who had been able to amass wealth during their occupancy of office would be in position to distribute it for the purposes of a new tenure

this reason, political leaders are considered not as public servants but as largesse dispensing patrons (Jelin 1996). They exhibit benevolence by the distributionist grid which they establish during their tenure in office (Clapham 1985). The patrimonial context is, therefore, exploited well by the political elite, in both authoritarian and 'democratic' systems, as the average voter abdicates power as soon as the last ballot paper is counted.

In fact, the conception of the state power and how it should be used in a patrimonial system is derived from the norms associated with collectivistic and hierarchical societies, which is based on *particularism* (Mungiu-Pippidi 2006). Talcott Parsons (1951) in his well-known 'pattern variables' contrasts *particularism* with *universalism*. He associates universalism with individualistic societies where the norms and practices demand that equal treatment applies to everyone regardless of the group to which one belongs. This means, in effect, that in universalistic societies individuals expect equal treatment from the state and would thus measure the state's performances on that score. Particularistic societies, however, flourish on differential treatment of individuals based on the individual's status in society (Mungiu-Pippidi 2006). And given this reality, people do not even expect to be treated equally by the state; what they expect is similar treatment to everybody with the same status. It is for this reason that the social distributional system, in terms of wealth and privilege, often skews in favor of the privilege-bearing segment of society that also manages the state.

The epistemic view on which the African patrimonial order is established hardly allows for the interrogation of the differential treatment that individuals in that system are subjected to. Questioning it would be tantamount to demolishing its very substructure, since it will deal with the core issue of legitimacy. Thus, status-based systems are best understood in terms of one's position on the power grid; the farther one is distanced from the resource-center the less likely it is for the

individual to be part of public policy making. The accepted role of the ordinary individual is that of being a client that would praise-sing the virtues of their social superiors. Nowhere is this evidenced, in the contemporary 'democratic' situation, more than at political rallies where hordes of economically unengaged youth waste their energies away by chanting slogans and sing their voices hoarse, the virtues of their political heroes. That is the face of democracy and the character of citizenship in Africa; where such efforts end up benefiting the president, who wears the accolade: father-of-the- nation;

The concentration of power, and its elastic use, in a monocephalous presidential system makes it the most preferred political system in many third world emerging democracies (Valenzuela 2006). This system of government has been as attractive to the autocrats as the new breeds of 'democratic' leaders. Ordinarily, the other organs of government should act as checks on the powers assigned the president. But in Africa the legislature and in fact the judiciary also, have accepted their inferior status and rather acts to undercut their own power base. This is accomplished through extreme party loyalty and the use of the whip system to keep party members in parliament tow the line that the executive charts. The Montesquieuan construct against power abuse through the theory of tripartite separation of powers with its accompanied checks and balances among the organs of government are ineffectual in Africa (Sandbrook and Oelbaum 1999). The implications of these on the quality of governance are huge, as crude majoritarianism diminishes any assurance of horizontal accountability (Diamond 1997). The minority, for the same intransigent partisan calculations, have also lost credibility as they are perceived as just a maneuvering group for power grab. Thus, the constituents feel their concerns are always sacrificed on the altar of partisanship (Sandbrook 1996). In all these, the beneficiary is the *delegative* president whose image and status is even enhanced beyond what the constitution had provided through the adoption of political conventions that

depreciate the value and stature of the other state institutions.[3]

Democracy in Patrimonial Context: Implications for Citizenship.

The dominance of patrimonial particularism in African polities has substantial implications for the conceptualization of citizenship. Robert Dahl (1989) in *Democracy and its Critics* reminded us that at the heart of citizenship are the issues of inclusion and participation in public policy making. His view is that in the contemporary democratic environment citizenship is best defined in terms of rights, liberties and freedoms that allow individuals not only to elect their leaders but also to engage the leaders on matters of public interest. This engagement can be done either individually or collectively for the purposes of bearing results that serve the public interest. Democratic citizenship is, therefore, meant to demythologize leadership and governance, as it is considered on universalistic principles. Implicit in Dahl's (1989) conceptualization of citizenship is the cultural context described by Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba (1963) as 'civic,' which is founded on universalistic principles.

In prior African monistic political systems, inclusion and participation were restricted, and hence by definition, citizenship in terms of participation in governance was only available to the autocrat and his supporting coterie. The transition from authoritarianism to various democratic species on the continent has not actually happened with significant changes in the cultural idiosyncrasies associated with governance. Patrimonial particularism continues to hold sway as evinced in the abdication of power to the highly ranked hegemonic class in society.

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See Guillermo O'Donnell (1986) 'Transitions, Continuities and Paradoxes' in Scott Mainwaring et.al (1986) *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative* Perspective Notre Dame University of Notre Dame Press

In Africa, there are close correlations between political and economic power, such that contests for political recruitment are simultaneously also ones for material prize award for the winner (Clapham 1985). Be thus as it may, the hegemonic class exercises the assigned power not only in the political realm but more importantly in the economic. This class in Africa according to Claude Ake (2000) lacks the ability for wealth creation but act as an uncontrollable prey on the social surplus. The constraints of illiteracy and patrimonialism provide the required environment for social acquiescence for elite aggrandizement in the political and economic realm. In the scheme of things, what actually matters is the formation of socioeconomic grid of which the chief executive occupies the apex. Those at the bottom of the ladder are the powerless masses that only watch the players in the governance and economic arena (Ndegwa 1998). It is within this context that African's electoral democracies are delegative in nature; as rights, freedoms and liberties have very little meaning for the average person that is tormented by poverty and the cultural net of particularism.

It is for this reason that the second transition from electoralism to liberal democracy (Polyarchy) has become problematic in Africa (Diamond 1997; Joseph 1997). The Freedom House publication for 2009 indicates that few countries in Africa have moved beyond the phase of electoral democracy. In fact, the truer picture about Africa according to Freedom House indicators is that the continent continues to be dominated by countries classified as being 'Partly Free' and 'Not Free.'[4] Such countries are also illiberal democracies in nature, in which the police are at the behest of the government to suppress those perceived as opponents to the regime. What this means in real terms is that there is divergence between constitutional entitlements for libertarian provisions and what the people are really able to access and exercise in practice. This is where the lacunae in citizenship definition exist in the African context. The stasis in electoralism has direct bearing on citizenship

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Map of Freedom 2009 (http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/fiw09/MOF09.pdf

conception and how that translates into participation in the public realm.

Redefining Citizenship for Effective Governance

The carryover of the authoritarian culture of marginalization and exclusion of the people from the sphere of governance is a matter of concern for the survival of Africa's democratic dispensation. The prodemocracy struggles were based on the ideal of expanding the political space for the purposes of fulfilling the natural aspirations of people to be part of the processes for deciding on matters that affect them. Those aspirations could only be fulfilled within a political system that allows for the inclusion and the contribution of the people, without hindrance. The constitutions in democracies, it is expected, should entrench the rights and freedoms that provide the conditions that guarantee the involvement of the people in governance. The transitions to democracy in Africa generally provided for the libertarian concerns that were previously out of reach. Notwithstanding constitutional guarantees illiberalism and power abdication by the people, continue conspicuously to exist in Africa.

These developments have naturally raised concerns about the depth to which the state has guaranteed citizenship and how the people themselves take advantage of the governance processes for improving their quality of life. Governance, in contemporary democratic system, is supposed to be underpinned by the following cardinal principles: 'rule of law' 'political inclusion and participation'; 'political accountability' and 'transparency', among other things (Waema 2008). These principles are based on the universal notion that governance must be people-centered. It is also an expression that political leaders are at the service of their constituents and as such responsible to them. In contemporary political parlance, such governance system is expressed as 'good governance' (UNDP 1992). This is an effort to delineate it from non-democratic modes of governance that are characterized by opacity and closure (Bratton and Hyden 1992). What is not

immediately stated is that in liberal democracies, citizenship is recognized beyond the nominalism of legalistic recognition that a person as a legitimate member of a given state (Halisi et al. 1998). But what is more important is the inclusion and active participation of the individual in the governance process.

The notion of citizenship in liberal democratic system is, therefore, established on the principle of equality of all adults to be involved in the political space. As registered earlier, the import of citizenship goes beyond electoral choice making, for it also entails the view that the citizen can individually or collectively take on their leaders on matters of public interest; without the fear of reprisal. Whereas such notions of citizenship are generally accepted as the underpinnings of democratic governance, the extent to which they are realizable depend on the specificities within a given political space.

In Africa, the complex combination of patrimonial order, illiteracy-induced parochial culture, and pervasive poverty have worked together to facilitate elite appropriation of the political space; and the simultaneous mass withdrawal that fosters *delegative* democracy (Diamond 1997; Ndegwa 1998). It is the existence of this obvious conundrum that the definition of democratic citizenship becomes problematic on the continent. It should be reiterated that democracy is a universal concept such that its underlying ideals cannot be regional specific (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1997). It is for this reason that the notion of democratic citizenship cannot be African specific. Yet one cannot gloss over the enumerated peculiarities of underdevelopment, poverty, illiteracy and patrimonial particularism as they hit hard at the core issue of the conceptualization, and the practice of citizenship in the African context.

The danger, however, is that overplaying these peculiarities runs the risk of falling into the trap of

autocrats that had used these same pretexts to deny Africans any role in governance. The challenge of transforming democratic governance beyond electoralism is a task that can only be accomplished by bringing people to understand their libertarian guarantees as ssprovided in the constitution and what sort of remedies exist in case of infringement. This can best be done when the political class appreciates the fact that working towards such goals would help improve the quality of public policies; and also enhance the legitimacy of the incumbent government. In fact, the overall security of the state improves when the ordinary people feel involved in governmental processes beyond clientelism That this is the case, need not be retold in Africa where the evidences of discontented youth and the marginalized in destructive civil wars and communal violence are most abundant.

In dealing with problems of marginalization, rhetoric has always been ahead of practical institutional efforts. Populist approaches to the task of national development had always been the preferred choice of African 'revolutionaries' in the past. But when populist effervescence dissipates and the dust settles the grassroots come to realize that their circumstances remain the same. This has particularly been the case with decentralization programs where divergence between intentions for grassroots participation in local governance and what obtains in reality are most conspicuous.

What needs to be done is the establishment of independent state institutions well resourced to educate the people on the civic entitlements and responsibilities that would help broaden the horizon of the masses and hook them into discussing matters that affect them in their immediate communities. Such educational efforts should place emphasis on the equality of all in the political domain and an understanding that funds for the provisioning of social infrastructure are not out of the personal benevolence of any individual leader. In fact, the undue patrimonial supplication of the ordinary people to their social superiors would be minimized if this is done.

The efforts to bring the ordinary people into the governance network would not produce much

result if their economic status remains afflicted by deprivation and poverty. Poverty creates its own subculture of withdrawal, subservience and low self esteem such that the democratic ideals of civic vibrancy expected of the citizen is unattainable in such circumstances. The problem with poverty in developing countries is often a distributional phenomenon, where gross income inequalities consign large sections of the population to lives of misery and want (Gasu 2010). A Rousseauist egalitarian approach should guide the myriad poverty reduction strategies that are currently being implemented for long-term solutions. This is essential for the survival of the democratic dispensation (Lipset 1960) through citizenship redefinition by economic empowerment. It is also important to indicate it to the masses that the quality of life can only improve through higher productivity of all, as the size of the national wealth is a correlate of productivity.

Conclusion

The ideals that led to the rupture to the authoritarian *ancien regimes* do not seem to be realized in the current electoral democracies that are in place in Africa. Democratic governance has been characterized by similar exclusionist cultures that were associated with classical authoritarian system and patrimonial culture. This has resulted in the appropriation of the political space by the political hegemonic class; and the withdrawal of the masses from the governance process. Since citizenship is tied up with rights, liberties and freedoms that would enable them to actively participate in the public policy making process, the exit of the people from political space is tantamount to the forfeiture of citizenship.

The import of democratic governance is to translate participation into improved quality of life and hence mass withdrawal only negates the realization of that goal. It is for this reason that the content of democratic citizenship should be made a common knowledge to all. And so should this be accompanied with the knowledge of civic entitlements of the citizenry. This is important because an

expanded citizenry participation in public policy making process is necessary not only for ensuring the legitimacy and security of the state but ultimately in improving the quality of life for all through improved decisions.

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Tracing the Origins of Regime Change Agenda In Zimbabwe

by

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Abstract

The Regime change agenda has dominated political discourse on Zimbabwe -drawing interest from various players across the globe. The paper traces the origins of the regime change agenda in Zimbabwe. It is argued in this paper that the origins of the regime change agenda are located in internal and external politics of the country. The discourse demonstrates that ZANU PF's involvement in the DRC conflict, payment of gratuities to the war veterans and unstable economic policies have contributed to the push against President Mugabe's administration. It is further argued that neo-colonialism has had a hand in the drive to unseat President Mugabe from power.

Introduction

Regime change is not a new phenomenon in the world; it has been witnessed in Iraq, Afghanistan, South Africa, Liberia and in so many other countries. In fact, the notion of regime change has been in existence since time immemorial. In Zimbabwe, regime change started in 1980 when President Mugabe and ZANU PF dislodged the colonial rule under Ian Smith- who on 11 November 1965 had declared Rhodesia's (now Zimbabwe) unilateral declaration of independence from Britain. It may be of interest to the reader to point out that Britain took over the area as southern Rhodesia in 1923 from the British South Africa Company (which under Cecil John Rhodes, had conquered by 1897) and granted internal settlement (Allan et al 2009). Notably, the most threatening regime change agenda in Zimbabwe is one that started at the turn of the new millennium, when the newly formed labour party (Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)) organized civil unrests to protest against President Mugabe's political administration. According to Maphosa, Kujinga and Chingarande (2007), the goal of the regime change agenda in Zimbabwe is to remove President Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF from power.

As a matter of fact, President Mugabe, the first secretary of ZANU PF and commander –in- chief of

the Zimbabwe National Army has been in power since 1980. Robert Mugabe was born in 1923 in Zvimba district in Mashonaland province and was educated at Kutama Mission before moving to South Africa to study for a BA degree at University of Fort Hare. It was during his stay at University of Fort Hare that he sharpened his political career. In 1980, he became the first prime minister of Zimbabwe and later became the first executive president of the republic in 1987-apposition he has held to this very day. The paper contends that the drive against the octogenarian leader's political hegemony is an outcome of a combination of internal and external factors. The factors need to be isolated and analyzed, and that is precisely the intention of this discourse. This presentation begins with a conceptual and theoretical framework of the discourse. Thereafter, the discourse discusses the internal and external origins of the regime change agenda in Zimbabwe.

Conceptual and Theoretical issues

A policy is a statement or the course of action that a government has decided to do or intends to pursue in response to an expressed or felt public problem or issue (http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ILRI/x5499E/x5499e03.htm). Policies are tools used to guide development; they reveal the political preferences of the ruling elite. In a way, policies influence how national resources are to be used. National policies can also be understood as road maps to solving developmental issues. According to Gatawa (1998), failure to attain developmental goals is an indication of government's failure to conceive and implement western imperialist forces led by Britain and the United states together with local opposition political and civil organizations are the main drivers of the regime change agenda in the country. This paper is of the view that some of the policy decisions that President Mugabe's government has pursued have contributed to the call for his removal from power. According to Brett (2006), most policies in Zimbabwe have been crafted for political expediency; and so have not reflected the collective will of the people, resulting in widespread discontent and a growth in opposition.

Many scholars have attempted to define the term regime. For instance, Calvert (1987) defines a regime as a political authority in a specific country. The definition above fails to capture the characteristics of a regime. Fishman (2001) offers a more elaborate and concise definition of regime. He defines a regime as a political organisation that influences political decisions in a country. This definition aptly captures the idea of a core of political authority, which can be in the form of a set of political structures, or set of rulers or even a specific ruler within a political system. In this context, regime change can be described as a change in or abandonment of the principles and

norms governing the nature of the regime. Notably, regime change is different from governance change. Contrary to regime change, governance change is an alteration in the manner of ruling without changing the centre of political authority in a state (Fisherman, 2001). In a regime, the dominant power sets up a hegemonic system that determines the basic principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures of the system. The strength and prestige of the hegemony or dominant power plays a crucial role in the persistence or change of a regime.

Perhaps it is important to make a distinction between regime, state and government. According to Lawson (1993), state is an inclusive concept that covers all aspects of policy-making and enforcement of legal sanctions, while government is simply the agency through which the state acts in the political community. In essence, a regime is more permanent than a government but less permanent than a state. Governments succeed one another and regimes come and go but the state endures.

 Gasiorowski (1995) developed a framework that emphasizes that regime changes are more likely during inflationary and recessionary periods. The above view can be true considering that costs of political turmoil both to the rich and to the poor are lower during such episodes, which motivates them to engage in regime change activities. According to Gasiorowski's analysis, economic crises foster regime change by increasing the level of political discontent during or directly following economic crisis, as is the situation in Zimbabwe. The Gasiorowskian framework emphasises that economic crises exacerbate other structural conditions that also adversely affect regime stability. The above framework presents probably the most promising place to begin the exploration of the role of economic crisis in regime change in Zimbabwe. In a sense, President Mugabe's economic policy failures could explain the genesis of the regime change agenda, however, the paper explores other factors that motivated the regime change agenda in the country.

Internal origins of regime change agenda

Soon after attaining political independence, ZANU PF experienced a civil war between Shonas and Ndebeles. This was essentially a result of the political conflict between Joshua Nkomo (revolutionary leader of Zimbabwe African People's Union) and Robert Mugabe (the leader of ZANU PF). During the conflict, in which Mugabe wanted to stop the dissident activity in the country, over 20 000 people were massacred in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces alone (Chigora, Guzura and Mugodzwa, 2009). The conflict ended after the two leaders had signed a

unity accord (which was brokered by Canaan Banana) on 22 December in 1987. According to the above authors, the manner in which president Mugabe's North Korea-trained gukurawhindi (rain that washes away chaff) army unit handled the civil war left many people in Matabeleland unhappy with Mugabe's reign. Apparently, the dissident activity in Matebeleland and Midlands provinces was being sponsored by the apartheid regime in South Africa.

On the economic front, Brett (2006) notes that ZANU-PF emerged from the civil war as a centralised party that operated on Leninist organisational principles, and gave

precedence to decisions taken by its Politburo and Central Committee over those taken in cabinet. However, this corporatist strategy was becoming increasingly economically unsustainable. This was because the import substitution policy of the government had suppressed exports and led to a shortage of foreign exchange in the country. This happened at a time when state spending was creating a fiscal deficit. Again controls over foreign and new domestic investment repressed formal sector jobs and produced a rapid increase in unemployment (Chimhowu, 2006). These problems forced President Mugabe's government in 1990 to shift from corporatism to a market based regime in the form of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP), which had been recommended by the IMF and World Bank.

The key targets to achieved under ESAP were: an annual GDP growth rate of 5% during the period 1991-1995; raise savings and investments to 25% of GDP; reduce the budget deficit from 10% of GDP to 5% by 1995; and reduce inflation from over 17% to 10% by 1995 (CPIA,2005:128). Regrettably, by 1996 none of the above had been achieved partly due to the devastating drought of 1992. In addition, CPIA (2005), claims that the failure by Mugabe's regime had more to do with the lack of commitment, corruption and the absence of fiscal discipline on the part of his government. The above situation resulted in excessive borrowings, which according to Hamann, Woolman and Sprague (2008) fuels inflation and poverty in a country. Indeed, ESAP had tremendous economic and political implications in Zimbabwe; and was directly responsible for President Mugabe and ZANU PF'S dwindling political support both in Zimbabwe and outside of Zimbabwe.

On realising the failures of the economic structural policy, President Mugabe's government made attempts to rectify the damages by launching the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic Social Transformation (ZIMPREST) in 1998. However, ZIMPREST also failed to turn around the

economic challenges of the country (CPIA, 2005). The situation is summarised by Bond and Manyanya (2003) who claim that President Mugage's government was unsuccessful in coming up with sound financial and economic policies to create a conducive environment for both private and public sectors and build investor confidence; the failure kept away investors and contributed to the economic ills that made the government unpopular. The paper concludes that ZIMPREST failed on two fronts; it was underfunded and was too ambitious in that it attempted to address a myriad of social and economic problems instead of focusing on a few. The resultant effect was that by the turn of the new millennium, Zimbabwe was in the throes of a deep economic and political crisis, which intensified opposition to President Mugabe's administration.

Writing about the effects of economy on regime stability, Acemoglu and Robinson's (2001) thesis argues that regimes enjoy wider support, less protest, and fewer internal divisions when economic performance is strong. But when economic performance declines as was the case with Zimbabwe in the 1990s, the regime's support is compromised and challenges to regime persistence mount.

Through the use of his powerful ideological stance, President Mugabe diverted attention and criticism of his government's policy failures to the land question. He has consistently argued that the regime change agenda was motivated by the land redistribution exercise which sought to redress colonial land imbalances. The above situation is succinctly presented by Bond and Manyanya (2003:40) who noted that Mugabe reacted to the threat of the MDC and the British by reviving its dormant leftist rhetoric which he used to displace the Zimbabwean crisis to an international level which enabled him to project himself as the champion of African and Third world rights. Indeed, President Mugabe's ideological stance touched on emotive issues that appealed to the developing world, such as projecting land as an historic injustice, neo-colonialism as an ongoing legacy which needs to be dealt with, economic exploitation as a major problem on the African continent and race as a problem which remains unaddressed in Zimbabwe.

The decline of the Zimbabwe economy in the mid 1990s, civil war in the 1980s and the land issue are not the only internal origins of regime change in the country. According to Bond and Manyanya (2003:XI) the catalyst to Zimbabwe's plunge was Mugabe's decision in 1997 to give each of the registered war veterans a Z$50 000 pension payout plus Z$2000 from funds that were not budgeted for. On this note, the discourse holds that President Mugabe had no option but to win the hearts and minds of the war veterans who had assisted him fight colonialism. However, the

action by the president led to the crash of the Zimbabwean dollar by 72% against the US dollar. The economic crisis was further exacerbated by the army's entry into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) war in 1998, which gobbled US$1m a day (News 24, 2000). The figure was unsustainable in view of the domestic problems that faced the nation at that point. It has been argued by many scholars that Zimbabwe lost its opportunity to develop in the first ten years of attaining political independence from Britain. If Mugabe had focussed more on domestic problems, perhaps he could have wadded off those experiences that heightened people's dislike of his regime.

One of the key origins of the regime change agenda in Zimbabwe is the land question. A land redistribution campaign triggered violence in April 2000 against some white farmers. According to Allan et al (2009), Whites made up less than 1% of the population (14 million people) but held 70% of the land in the country. While land reform is imperative in Zimbabwe, ZANU PF's handling of the land issue was a monumental policy blunder which set in motion regime change plots. According to Matunhu (2008), the socio-politico-economic effects of the land reform was colossal in that it resulted in a food security crisis. Socially, the reform led to unemployment and poverty while politically it polarised Zimbabwe's relations with the international community, which resulted in the imposition of economic sanctions against President Mugabe's government.

Prior to 1989, the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) had reacted to the economic turmoil in the country by establishing alliances with other civil groups such as student organisations. The ZCTU had made linkages between the economic problems in the country with issues of governance and democracy (Chigora, Guzura and Mugodzwa, 2009). The ZCTU leadership had become more ambitious and pushed for regime change culminating in its leaders leaving labour politics to venture into national politics. The ZCTU leader Morgan Tsvangirayi, became the first president of the MDC.

According to Maroleng (2004), the MDC was created by a coalition of civic groups that were united more by distaste for Mugabe and ZANU-PF policies than by any unity of political programmes. The paper chooses to call the alliance a marriage of convenience. Maroleng views the origins of the coalition for regime change as located primarily in ZANU-PF's adoption of ESAP, which had a disastrous effect on living conditions of the majority. According to Bond and Manyanya (2003), the efforts of trade unions and new political parties to engage with ZANU-PF over these issues were ignored by a regime that was becoming increasingly authoritarian. President Mugabe's arrogance

could have contributed to the regime change agenda in the county.

The MDC and other civil organisations in the country lambasted futile President Mugabe and ZANU PF policies and enunciated the need for both political and economic reforms to serve the country. The vision of the opposition movements managed to capture the support of the disgruntled Zimbabwean people. According to Chigora et al (2009), the MDC managed to attract a broader support base particularly among the working class. This was mainly because of the declining employment benefits, unemployment, underemployment and overall economic malaise. The regime change agenda also attracted the support of rural populace who had been frustrated by President Mugabe and ZANU PF's lack of progress towards development and the resolution of the land question. According to Chigora et al (2009), the regime change agenda also attracted much political and economic support from the white community, especially the large scale commercial farming sector, who felt that President Mugabe had violated the rule of law as well as the property rights.

The regime change agenda is also attributed to ZANU PF government's poor political governance as shown by the absence of accountability and transparency in their leadership style (Meredith, 2002). The above school of thought claims that although there was some form of decentralisation and devolution of political power and authority, this was generally ineffective as grassroots decisions were never taken seriously by the regime whose hegemony was under a severe political threat from both within the country and from outside of the country. The regime was portrayed by the opposition movements as being run by authoritarian political elites. Poor governance therefore contributed to the call for regime change in the country, and by supporting the MDC, people hoped to bring about true democracy to Zimbabwe. According to Raftopoulos (2006), much of the discontent of Mugabe was manifested through the support given to MDC - a party which since 1989 became the biggest threat to ZANU PF's grip on power. The party quickly gained popularity by promising to improve the quality of life of the vast majority of Zimbabweans whose economic and political future was bleak under the Mugabe regime (Raftopoulos 2006).

Apart from the lack of political democracy, President Mugabe's political administration was and continues to be blamed for failing to democratise economic governance. In this context, economic governance includes the processes of decision, making which directly or indirectly affects a country's economic activities. According to CPIA, (2005) in concurrence with Matlosa, Elkity and Chiroro (2007), Zimbabwe's economic governance has been found wanting owing to inept policies

which lack the voice of the general public. For instance, the decision to award generous payouts to war veterans was reached with no consultations with the public –which in the eyes of the proponents of regime change was undemocratic. More than that, President Mugabe's unilateral decision to commit the country's meagre financial resources and machinery to the Mozambique conflict in the late 1980s and to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) conflict in the late 1990s attracted much criticism from the public.

The above scenario is summarised by Bond and Manyanya (2003) who claim that there has been little citizen participation in decision making and planning in Zimbabwe's politico-economic landscape; when ESAP was adopted there was little consultation and debate, the ZANU PF-dominated parliament simply rubber stamped the resolutions of the executive. The paper holds the opinion that the people of Zimbabwe want to be consulted in economic governance decisions. In the same vein, Maphosa, Kujinga and Chingarande (2007), argue that the regime change agenda is rooted in that President Mugabe's government thinks itself omnipotent to the extent that economic development decisions and projects have been top-down and not bottom –up in approach. Yet, public involvement and participation in decision making is crucial for regime stability (Matunhu and Nengwenkhulu, 2010).

External sources of regime change

The paper holds that regime change in Zimbabwe also has external origins, the main ones being neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism. The paper argues that the genesis of the regime change agenda is couched in a western-driven democratization process of the early 1990s. At the instigation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) President Mugabe and ZANU PF renounced the Marxist-Leninist ideology and adopted neo-liberalism, which entailed economic liberalization. By imposing SAPs to President Mugabe's regime, the Bretton Woods Institutions were serving a neo-colonial agenda of weakening the political-economy of Zimbabwe. According to Bond and Manyanya (2003), the institutions were aware of the structural weaknesses in Zimbabwe which include; lack of expertise, lack of managerial knowhow, and corruption. A combination of these factors were to affect the success of the programme in Zimbabwe. Nevertheless, President Mugabe and ZANU PF were coaxed into accepting ESAP, which had disastrous socio-economic outcomes. The outcomes increased the call for regime change, not only from the people of Matebeleland and Midlands (who suffered loss of lives and property during civil war) but also from the majority of people in Mashonaland, who found themselves unable to meet

the basic needs for human survival. Maphosa, Kujinga and Chingarange (2007:2), succinctly describe the effect of ESAP as;

Zimbabwe's economic problems have been largely attributed to the prescriptions of ESAP. The shrinking of the state in the provision of essential services, privatisation, withdrawal of subsides and the introduction of user fees in essential services such as health and education have resulted in a crumbling health, deteriorating education sectors the social side . . . unprecedented levels of poverty with 80% of Zimbabwe's population falling below the poverty datum line and inflation levels striking record levels . . .

The above scenario in the country encouraged the formation of political parties such as The Forum Party for Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Union of Democrats. ZANU-Ndonga and Zimbabwe Unity Movement, most of these parties where funded from outside the country. Of course, the primary goal of the political parties and their paymasters was to unseat President Mugabe and ZANU PF from power. The Western-crafted ESAP can thus be said to have prepared a fertile ground for regime change machinations to take root in the country as early as around the 1980s.

According to Raftopoulos (2006:29) in the early eighties most NGOs and civil society organisations were welfare-oriented and focussed on supplementing the state's social programmes and development activities. However, as the popularity of President Mugabe and ZANU PF waned out, they became actively involved in governance issues. When the government threatened western economic interests in the 1990s, Robert Mugabe's economic mismanagement and political misrule became more evident. This prompted the civil society groups in Zimbabwe and outside of the country to turn their attention to human rights, constitutional reform and other governance and democracy related issues. In service of parent donor countries in the West, civil society organisations began to point out weaknesses in Zimbabwe's system of governance (Maphosa, Kujinga and Mangarande, 2007).

Regime change agenda in Zimbabwe is also linked to neo-imperialist move to maintain economic leverage over President Mugabe's administration. For instance on the land question, the lapse of the ten year clause on land contained in the Lancaster House constitution was followed by a government declaration to embark on black empowerment. It can be argued that the call for regime change in Zimbabwe gained momentum when the West saw its interests threatened by such government pronouncements. The West hatched a scheme to detract Zimbabwe from the path of black empowerment so as to keep Zimbabwe depended on it for economic development. The facts

of the matter are that at the Lancaster House conference in 1979, Britain pledged to fund the land resettlement programme in Zimbabwe. But having spent 44 million pounds on land resettlement since independence, Britain cut off further support with 3 million pounds left unspent citing corruption as the major reason for taking that position (Meredith, 2002:126). The refusal by the British government to fund land reform later triggered violent white farm invasions by landless peasants who received tacit support from President Mugabe. Britain's response to Mugabe's government was hostile. It gave financial backing to the opposition MDC and other anti-Mugabe humanitarian and social groupings, whose purpose and intent was bent on removing the incumbent president and his political party from power.

According to Chigora and Guzura (2008:526) British hostility towards Mugabe's regime was based on Mugabe's decision to take white owned farms some of which belonged to the British landowners such as the Earl of Stair and Chippendale, the Director of Anglo-American Corporation, De Beers and the Bank of England. Britain, America and some countries in Africa such as Botswana also embarked on a campaign of tarnishing Mugabe's administration. They describe Mugabe's regime as dictatorial and ridden by human rights violations. Donors and the international community responded by cutting development aid to Mugabe's administration. Economic sanctions were also levelled on the administration as a way of expediting the regime change process in the country or else force Mugabe to accept the economic conditions of the West. One of the conditions was to force Mugabe to liberalise the Zimbabwe economy in line with the free market economy ideology.

The above scenario forced President Mugabe to take unpopular steps (in the eyes of whites) to address the land issue in the country. Actually, Mugabe found himself in a very difficult scenario after the bruising defeat by MDC at a referendum in 2000. His government had no funds with which to finance an orderly land reform; and yet the majority of the people in Zimbabwe were growing impatient about Mugabe's continued delay to give land to the people. If he had used force to stop the farm invasions, he would have lost the support of war veterans and this could have seen the war veterans working in cahoots with Mugabe' detractors. It was wise therefore for President Mugabe to concede to the demands of the war veterans and the land-hungry electorates by supporting the invasion of whites-owned farms.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2006) in Chigora and Guzura (2008), argues that the form which the regime change agenda assumed in Zimbabwe is a reflection of the risks involved in any African attempt to

defy the disciplining forces of globalisation and neo-liberalism. He argues that the Zimbabwean crisis was provoked by a nationalist attempt to resolve a delayed national question involving land restitution in a former settler colony. Neo-liberal anger from Northern industrialised nations took the form of support for the local civil society, non-governmental organisations and the MDC.

Apparently, Zimbabwe is economically attractive to the West because of its wealth, which comes from economic activities such as tourism, manufacturing, farming and mining amongst others. Zimbabwe is rich in mineral resources such as gold, iron, chrome and platinum. The country has been referred to by some as the Persian Gulf of strategic minerals. Multinational companies based in Britain and the United States such as De Beers and Anglo-American Corporation are in the forefront of the exploitation of Zimbabwe's mineral resources. Profits from doing business are repatriated to these countries. This is in line with Andre Gunder Frank's (1971) dependency theory which states that the capitalist system seeks to perpetuate economic dominance over the south. The quest for the removal of Mugabe was prompted by Zimbabwe's resolve to be economically and politically independent of the West.

Conclusion

The paper demonstrated that the origins of regime change in Zimbabwe are both internal and external to Mugabe's political administration. Western imperialist forces led by Britain and the United states together with local opposition political and civil organizations are the main drivers of the regime change agenda in the country. They blame President Mugabe for dictatorial rule and ruining a once vibrant economy. Furthermore, they accuse the regime of gross human rights violations, electoral violence and vote rigging as means to stay in power. The paper holds that the adoption of corporatism in the 1980s, payment of gratuities to war veterans and the fast track land reform programme are some of the key sources of the regime change agenda in the country. In addition to that, neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism are the major external origins of the regime change agenda.

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Researching Under Fire: Methodological, Ethical and Practical Challenges of Wartime Research

by

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Abstract

Conducting research in a war situation is a dangerous, but rewarding, undertaking. Wartime research is subject to considerable methodological limitations and is fraught with ethical dilemmas and practical challenges. These limitations and challenges necessitate the adaptation and modification of research methods and techniques. This paper discusses some of the necessary methodic adaptations that wartime researchers cannot avoid, and suggests ways of making up for these adaptations. It is as much concerned with the mechanics of wartime field research as with the underlying theoretical assumptions that inform different aspects of the research process.

Introduction

The study of the impact of war and violence on social science research is desperately underdeveloped. This paper is a modest attempt at addressing this academic deficiency, and it focuses in particular on the theoretical, practical, and ethical problems of wartime research. It asks: Is the scientific method possible in wartime research? Is objectivity feasible in studying people who have lived in an authoritarian culture, and through war? In a context in which an outsider is supposed to be a party/government official, or a rebel soldier, is it possible to adhere strictly to research ethics? The paper explores these questions through critical reflections on field work conducted by the author during Mozambique's civil war in 1992.

After nearly a decade and a half of fighting, in 1992 Mozambique's civil war intensified. This was because the belligerents were trying to gain more ground in the battlefield as a strategy to boost their bargaining power in the then on-going peace negotiations, which resulted in the Rome Cease-fire Agreement in October of the same year. The reality of the war influenced the research strategy, as it invariably does, and hence the findings of the research project. Based on a critical and qualitative social survey approach, the research's findings were published in a book, *The State, Violence and Development: the Political Economy of War in Mozambique (*Aldershot, Avebury,

1996), This article is a reflection on that wartime research process, and it attempts a methodological inventory for identifying and dealing with inevitable constraints and conflicts.

For a 'researcher under fire', often the military situation dictates possible research options of, for example, the selection of a research site, the time to visit it and who to interview. Even the choice of research methods is governed by the nature of the war and the objectives of the research At best, war renders certain tenets of the scientific method inapplicable, and at worst, unsafe. In order to avoid to avoid endangering himself or herself and informants, the researcher in a war situation may thus need to use unorthodox, and/or even unethical, research techniques to get the truth. Interestingly, war also exposes certain hidden or silent truths.

Why Research Under Fire?

There is "no legitimacy to war research conducted in peace time", assert Ellis and Barakat (1993). True, the study of past wars has yielded valuable insights into this perennial problem. Yet, in order to fully capture its dynamics and essence, war need to be studied while it lasts. Studying war *post facto*, that is after it has ended, has a number of limitations. These include, the perils of selective memory, the tendency to romanticize the past and to offer; heroic narratives as well as the danger of further traumatising informants

Selective memory means that informants only remember the extremes, of the bad and the good, or only things that they were or are passionate about. Different identities, ideologies and interests lead different informants to prioritize different issues in recalling their war time experiences. Quite often, and especially when confronted with present hardship, people tend to romanticize the past. With age and time, memory fades. All these lead to bias and distorted information.

Similarly, many find consolation in engaging in heroic narratives of their wartime involvement, often exaggerating their heroic acts or endurance; Such proclivities and tendencies are aptly captured in an African proverb:tales of hunting as told by the hunter always glorify the hunter. Finally, sometimes interviewing the traumatized war victims is akin to trampling upon their war memories – how justified are researchers in opening up old wounds? One such victim conceded that after being repeatedly asked to talk about his war experiences, he started having nightmares involving air raids in which bombs that had missed in the war got him in his sleep.

In a nutshell, studying war while it is 'hot' is revealing and enriching, while post-war research risks missing out on important aspects of the dynamics of war. After the guns have silenced, certain wartime behaviours and practices may disappear from the surface, and yet remain in people's subconsciousness, often influencing their actions and motives, even long after the war. Even more important, one major objective of wartime research should be to discover ways of ending war peacefully. The heuristic value of studying war while the guns are blazing, and not after they have stopped, that this implies need not be over-emphasized. Paradoxically, war made certain aspects of field research much easier, while others became more difficult, if not impossible. So, what is it that makes studying war during war unique, and/or enlightening?

War, Truth and Fear

The major impact of war on social research is that it compromises the truth. Macksey (1973; i) forcefully put it thus, "truth is the first casualty of war." He adds:

> The justification of war, for political or personal purposes, is frequently the justification of a lie, the purveying of distortions carried forward in the guise of historic fact. A victor's tale is unlikely to coincide with that of the defeated. The unravelling of the facts about war is a feat in itself (Macksey, 1973, i).

The truth in Mozambique's civil war was fiercely contested, with writers attacking or supporting one of the major protagonists in the conflict. Mostly partisan, the accounts either depicted the conflict solely as externally backed banditry (Hanlon, 1980 & 1991 and Nilson, 1980) among others, or as the inevitable outcome of Frelimo's misrule (Hoile, 1989 and Geffray, 1990). Similarly, the impact of the war was viewed only in terms of disaster and catastrophe. Such accounts of the war were theoretically inadequate, ideologically biased and misrepresented the truth. Wartime fieldwork, which involved objectively observing the war, its dynamics and consequences, became the only logical way to ascertain the 'truth' and transcend the limits of the dominant literature..

Contained in *The State, Violence and Development: The Political Economy of War* (1996), the research's key findings were threefold. First, the study found out that the causes and effects of the

war were far more complicated than the simplistic versions offered by partisan analyses that condemned or applauded either of the warring forces. Second, 'the grass roots war economy' was found to be central to the livelihood of many and, therefore provided a basis for post-war economic regeneration. The final proposition was that, although disastrous in many ways, the war also unleashed latent potentials in ways that were beneficial to society in the long-run: Indeed these latent are now manifest, and have become the basis for the further development of society.

In addition to ideologically motivated falsification of facts, the omnipresence of fear and deteriorating security presents innumerable problems for a student of war. Fear of death, reprisals, starvation, or uncertainty in general force many people to change their behaviours, practices and forms of expression accordingly. The pervasiveness of fear was summed up by an illiterate young mother, who refused to be interviewed thus:

> We are afraid. I will not say anything. Everything that happens here gets known within the neighbourhood very easily [implying that talking to us might get her into trouble]. This (the request to interview her) is frightening. In February a whole family was beaten by Matsanga (Renamo's local name) for talking to strangers. In Beira some people died of maize poisoning, and here others have died in similar circumstances. We are afraid to talk to strangers.

As this example shows, more time is needed than under peaceful circumstances to build a rapport with interviewees, before one can get cooperation and true answers. This kind of fear bears testimony to the real dangers and risks of wartime research and survival. That a significant proportion (35.0%) of the people said they did not know the cause of the war may be a reflection of the pervasiveness of fear among the population.

War leads to an increase in mistrust of strangers (including researchers) and an unwillingness to divulge any sensitive information to them. In a war situation, as Neuman (1994; 342) notes aptly:

> It is not always easy to build rapport. The social world is not all in harmony, with warm and friendly people. A setting may contain fear, tension, and conflict. Members may be unpleasant, untrustworthy, or untruthful; they may do things that disturb or disgust a researcher. An experienced researcher is prepared for a range of events and relationships.

Yet she may find that it is impossible to penetrate a setting or get really close to members. Settings were cooperation, sympathy, and collaboration are impossible require different techniques.

Clearly, studying war and violence certainly requires 'different techniques', for it entails encounters with human kind in its rawest form. Essentially it is an encounter with the Hobbesian man in a 'state of nature', where life is harsh, brutish and short. The wartime demolition of trust, established frames of reference, systems of thought and theory entail the simultaneous displacement and convolution of the research process. Separating fact from fiction required the application of the scientific method, which in this cases entailed objective and systematic observation of wartime behaviours, ideologies and survival strategies

Research Method and Field Techniques

Ghosh (1982; v) argues that "in order to acquire knowledge of social problems in a scientific manner, it is necessary to have some knowledge of research methods through which the scholar can see things in their proper perspective". In contrast, Neuman (1994; 336) notes, a field researcher "does not begin with a set of methods to apply or explicit hypothesis to test. Rather, she chooses techniques on the basis of their value for providing information".

The techniques applied in studying the social impact of the Mozambican civil war were dictated by the objectives of the research and the nature of the war itself. Multiple, but interrelated, the objectives of the research were understanding the social problems occasioned by the war, testing of an hypothesis on the war-society dialectic, and evaluation of the impact of war on society. A qualitative and critical social survey approach, combining various research techniques, was adopted, and adapted, as the most feasible research method.

Many philosophers and scholars have defined social survey in different ways (see Young.. and Ghosh 1982 among others). In a broad sense, critical social survey is a technique for investigating social problems by collecting data through interviews, questionnaire, library and, "provides the basis for theory construction, and [has] implications for social planning and reform. (Ghosh, 1982; 191). None of these research approaches would, singly, achieve the desired systematic interconnection of facts. Hence the resort to different research techniques in collecting data on

different aspects of the war society-interface. Observation and participant observation; structured and open ended interviews; life histories approach and statistical analysis of micro-economic activity were used to study different aspects of the war-society interface.

Selecting the Research Site

There are a number of important considerations that need to be taken into account in selecting the research site in war zone. These revolve around vital questions of communication and language, logistics, historical significance, and perhaps most important, the researcher and subjects' personal security. Manica Province was chosen as the research site for a number of interrelated personal and intellectual reasons. First, the author speaks some of the province's local dialects of Manyika, Tewe, Ndau and Barwe. Language is often a barrier to understanding for'the limits of our language are the limits of our world' (Wittgenstein,,,). Without an understanding of the language of the research subjects, one risks missing out on contextual meanings of cultural nuances, jokes or actions, even with the best interpreter.

Second, and from logistical and security considerations, Chimoio city seemed ideal. It is only about an hour's drive to the border with Zimbabwe, which meant the researcher could easily get basic essentials – food, toiletry and stationery – which scarce or unavailable in war-torn Mozambique; as a matter of fact, most of the manufactured goods traded in the province, came from Zimbabwe. The proximity of the Zimbabwe border made a quick escape possible in case of a deteriorating military situation. An added advantage was that the Beira corridor was then being guarded by the Zimbabwean army. Finally, historically and intellectually, Manica Province was interesting for two reasons. The Province had the longest war experience, as the war started there in 1977, and because of the relative safety of the corridor, relatively stable communities had emerged, whose study could provide useful insights on what the future held.

Entering the Field

Entering a field site in a war zone requires a flexible strategy or plan of action, negotiating access and relations with members, and deciding how much to disclose about the research to the field members or gate keepers (Ghosh, 1994;339). In a way the actual physical entry is more analogous to peeling the layers of an onion than opening a door, because at every level you have to re-

negotiate it. The first layer is the official level, that is, when the researcher has to secure a research permit. This can be quite tricky, and sometimes researchers end up taking the risky option of being thrown out for conducting research without a permit.

Normally, when dealing with government officials, a letter of introduction from your institution of affiliation can be helpful, and sometimes the reputation of the institution matters. However, when dealing with private individuals, more sensitivity and tactic are essential. For instance, illiterate peasants could easily be intimidated by the officious looking document, and hence refuse to cooperate, while on the other hand, the elite may be impressed; in both cases the opposite could happen depending on circumstances.

Thus, whether or not to produce such a document, as with many other aspects of field respect, depends on commonsense judgement and social skills. The same applies to gatekeeper approval before conducting interviews. For instance, being introduced by government officials to captured Renamo rebels inhibited the latter from cooperating and divulging much; most former rebels rehearsed the same story that they had been press-ganged into joining the rebels. One way of detecting lies like these is the use of a built-in crossing checking mechanisms, and asking more detailed questions.

After getting a research permit, the next step should be to recruit suitable research guide(s). The intellectual and military qualities of the guides should be taken into account. In particular, the research guide(s) should be charming, tactful and shrewd. These qualities – and more if possible – are essential because, a fieldworker and the research guide(s) have to deal with various types of persons and situations. One way of dealing with the problem is to have two or more research guides, whose qualities complement each other. In short, informed and vigilant research guides are vital. As co-producers of knowledge, albeit unequal ones, research guides need to have certain qualities.

Accommodation

Critical Participant Observation

Critical participant observation involves obtaining an understanding of members and moving beyond understanding to empathy (Neuman 1994) As Peberdy (1993; 48) observes, " as a general rule observation that involves a high degree of involvement tends to be especially useful when there are important differences between the views of outsiders and insiders, or when the phenomenon is hidden from public view…." Everything was critically was observed, ranging from how people live, behave, dress, eat, and the differences in their houses and cars. Churches, pubs and other popular places were visited. As part of participant observation, the researcher even taught English at a newly established college of International Languages in; the invasion of the country by donors from English speaking countries, meant that government and party officials who hitherto had spoken only Portuguese and their vernacular, had to learn English or be marginalized in the new dispensation.

All these engagements helped the researcher tease out what captivated and distressed people living through war, what their thoughts were on the war, economic crisis and social change. The perplexing diversity of views and perspectives proffered on these issues is inundating, and underscores the need for positively exploring difference and the joys of unity in diversity. Living with the war, widowed women, amputated ex-soldiers, orphans, barefoot traders and others, continued wioth their daily activities, knowing that, with the fall of darkness, Renamo soldiers would freely roam their homes and villages. Some, especially government and party officials, showed fear in their eyes, while others, the poor mass, revealed desperation. Ytt others still, like some of the youths, who could well have been Renamo soldiers on an espionage mission, showed indifference.

As the research progressed, such critical explorations and observations became even bolder, and the researcher\s relationship with the subject community, involved all the four roles distinguished by Junker (1960). At the beginning the researcher was more of a 'complete observer', moving to 'observer as participant', 'participant as observer, and to 'complete participant'. With time, the researcher even ventured into dangerous war zones, and it was indeed an eye opening experience on the direct effects of the war; destroyed schools, clinics, buildings rigged with bullet holes, and burnt out military equipment.

It was during this period of critical observation that the ground was cleared for the other techniques that were subsequently deployed. It was also during the same period that the redesigning of the

interview-schedule questionnaire took shape, with more questions being included and others being rephrased. In a nutshell, critical observation, in all its various forms provided a vital launching pad for the next stage of the research. More or less chronologically, the stages involved selection of sample, re-design of the interview schedule, statistical analysis of economic transactions, and recording of women's life histories, together constituting the research encounter being reflected upon.

Sampling

Even in peacetime social research, sampling is a very difficult, but necessary task. As Ghosh (1982; 202) notes, "the random sampling method is not very often possible". Paradoxically, the war itself made this task simple, as the target population was everywhere; The population constituted the universe from which the sample was derived from. It was an indefinite universe because the number of units kept on changing as new arrivals joined these communities on a daily basis.

For security reasons, it was not possible for the researcher to create a sampling frame, and then locate specific individuals in that frame for interviewing. It was also not advisable to identify specific individuals, except of course officials, for interviewing. Apart from jeopardizing the lives of both the interviewee and the researcher, making prior arrangements for interviews with people in the peri-urban slums was impossible because people were always on the move. The demands for survival had transformed the entire displaced peasant population into barefoot entrepreneurs or underpaid wage labour. Furthermore, since most people did not have telephones and the postal system did not work, it was not possible to make prior arrangements for an interview with people who lived in the peri-urban slums.

Inevitably, probability sampling, though desirable for its more powerful and reliable statistics, was therefore not possible. Consequently, non-probability sampling, in which samples are not based on probability theory, and hence more limited (Nueman 1994; 196) was adopted. This involved a geographical quota method based on the grid system, in which, a map of the Chimoio city and the peri-urban slums was drawn indicating all the *bairros* (suburbs). Specific sites were identified in each bairro where respondents were to be selected from.

In each bairro, at least three people were interviewed; in larger bairros, such as Bairo Cinco, about five or six people were interviewed. Geographical quota sampling, although an improvement on haphazard sampling, has its limitations. But for reasons mentioned earlier, it seemed the most feasible. The purpose of the research was to get a rough idea of people's opinions rather than a definitive 'truth'. In any case no one can ever accurately represent anyone. As Goodman (1981) aptly points out, since "representations are of something as something else", it is impossible to represent something as itself..

Not only was random sampling impossible, but in the literature there is no consensus as to which one is more important between the sample frame and the sample size. On the one hand, Nueman (1994; 197) argues that, "the sampling frame is crucial…. The size of a sample is less important than whether or not it accurately represents the population". On the other hand, for Ghosh (1982; 206-7) "the size of sample plays an important role in sampling". He argues that sample size depends on 'homogeneity or heterogeneity of the population of the universe; the number of classes of people involved; the law of inertia of large numbers, according to which "large aggregates are more stable than small"; the law of statistical regularity, which indicates that samples must be random and representative of the whole universe; the size of the questionnaire and the nature of the sampling. Ghosh (1982) adds that if the population of the universe is homogenous, a small size of sample may serve the purpose. But if the universe is heterogeneous, then the sample must be larger in size. Similarly, if the number of classes is large, the sample should also be large enough, and small-sized if small.

In Chimoio, the population was both homogenous and heterogeneous; the displacement and dispossession caused by the war had a leveling effect, while individual survival strategies and background had a differentiating effect. Consequently, the sample size was determined by a delicate balance of security/logistical and theoretical/epistemological considerations. It seemed about 100 people, in the event 102, was small enough a sample to avoid unnecessary expenditure and large enough to avoid a huge sample error.

 Pattern suggests that, '"an optimum sample in survey is one which fullfil the requirements of efficiency, representatives, reliability and flexibility."' (cited in Ghosh, 1982; 206). An effort was made, albeit unavoidably arbitrary, to uphold the principles of statistical regularity, by including population differences – age, sex, education, ethnicity, religion etc - in the sample. As already

noted, the war itself compensated for some of the deficiencies of the nonprobability sampling. For instance, the massive population dislocation and displacement, and the consequent emergence of peri-urban slums meant that, even with a small number of people, the sampling frame did accurately represent the target population; people whose lives had been affected by the war.

Conducting the Interviews

An interview is an art (Ghosh, 1982; 230), which requires the establishment of a rapport between the interviewer and interviewee as a *sine qua non* for a successful interview. The catch 22 is that building rapport takes time, yet spending too much time in some areas of the war zone was too risky. In fact, for security as well as practical reasons - there were no postal services nor telephones –interviews were conducted without prior arrangements, except for officials. It was too dangerous to let the interviewees know of the researcher's arrival in advance, as that could lead to ambush and capture by the rebels.

Rapport was thus rapidly build through perfecting persuasive skills - an art that develops through doing it - to convince people to cooperate and answer interview questions on the spot. Actually, as it turned out, these apparent disadvantages were not as problematic as they seemed; arriving without prior warning was often a blessing in disguise. For instance, it allowed observation of, and interaction with, the interviewees in their natural setting. Interviewees could be observed cooking, eating, washing up dishes, working, fighting or doing things they may have put aside had they had prior knowledge of the researcher's arrival.

The local culture also helped. Unlike in the West, especially in the UK where people are rather restrained in talking openly to strangers, in Chimoio people were more than eager to openly talk to, even assist, strangers. Similarly, unlike in the West where the entrenchment of formalism and technological advancement means that visitors are expected to inform their hosts of their intention to visit beforehand - by writing or telephoning - in Mozambique surprise visits are the norm rather than the exception. Such cultural practices greatly simplified the task of negotiating entry at each and every interview session. More important, it raises questions of the universalization of Western culture in the name of scientific research method, which in this case would have entailed practices that were not in tune with local ones.

In fact, and pleasantly surprising, some interviewees were very welcoming and prepared to say more than they had been asked. Such abundant hospitality was due to Christian influence, eagerness to express their anger (at least to an outsider), misperception of the exact identity of the researcher (some mistook the researcher for an international official, others as someone involved in opposition politics - something that was explicitly denied, without diluting their enthusiasm to talk openly). In short, the success of an interview depends to a great extent on successful communication between the interviewer and the interviewee, and this presupposes sensitivity and tact on the part of the researcher.

The Interview Schedule

The interview schedule was the most demanding, difficult and yet most revealing part of the field research process. Constituting the core of the research, it involved three basic steps; designing the instrument, identifying the interview sample, and conducting the interview. The interview schedule was both structured and open-ended and, had four sections; personal attributes; war experience; opinions on political/economic/social causes of the war; and questions/comments to the researcher, and 'thank you and good bye'.

The questionnaire was quite detailed, and it took two and half to three hours to administer. In the first section interviewees were asked about their age, education, employment, ethnicity, marital status and religion. The section on 'war experience' asked interviewees how the war had affected their lives, in particular whether or not they, or a relative, had been involved in or witnessed a battle. As their responses revealed, most people had been affected (affectados, as they were referred to in Portuguese), while many had been displaced and many others had died. The third section surveyed people's opinions on political, economic and social causes and consequences of the war.

Through the interview schedule it was possible to get insights on issues that are not open to observation, such as people's attitudes, feelings, opinions, reactions and historical facts/events. In addition, the direct exchange of information between the interviewer and interviewee was helpful in eliminating communication barriers, as well as in identifying emotional excesses and sentimental expressions. On the basis of this kind of psychological information, new questions were framed as part of cross-examination of the information offered verbally. In a nutshell, the interview schedule

affords the researcher the opportunity to act as a catalyst and more effectively control the situation, and hence results.

Although the interview schedule can reveal direct knowledge that may not be accessible through other research techniques, it also has a number of limitations. In fact, the very strength of the interview schedule method is also the basis of its weakness. To start with, there is always the perennial problem of subjectivity, both of the interviewer and interviewee. Emotions and sentiments are a double edged sword. On the one hand identifying them puts the researcher in a better perspective, but on the other, their expression may blur real issues. Here it has to be borne in mind that the pride and prejudice and selective memory of the interviewee are important variables, which the researcher has little control over.

Young (1949) suggests five ways of tackling the limitations of the interview method, which guided the research being reconsidered here. These are, ask consistent and relevant questions; standardize the ways of asking questions; employ non-directive techniques; standardize ways of recording data and; supplement interviews with projective techniques, in which the respondents are given an opportunity to express their attitudes and mind (Young, 1949). Asking respondents to ask questions and make comments threw into the limelight many ethical and epistemological issues (see below)..

'Statistical Footprints' and Statistical Analysis

Major economic developments leave 'statistical footprints', such as an increase or decrease in household disposable income. By carefully looking at these 'statistical footprints', one can construct a bigger picture of, for instance, the magnitude of economic activity in the whole economy During the interviews some people mentioned their incomes earned through informal/illegal activity, and how war had actually improved their situation indirectly. Accordingly, such statistical footprints were examined, household incomes disaggregated, barefoot entrepreneurs' margin of profit evaluated, and the contribution of the informal grassroots economic activity to the gross domestic product (GDP) was estimated.

Through such statistical analysis, it was discovered that the grassroots war economy, which emerged spontaneously in response to economic crisis, was the major source of livelihood sustenance for most of the displaced population. It was also clear that trends in the informal

exchange rate tended to reflect changes in the military situation, police border patrol intensity and the economic situation in Zimbabwe, and the world. The statistical footprints' suggested that the dichotomization of the 'formal' and 'informal' economies was misleading, as both actors and goods straddled the divide.

Life Histories

Life histories approaches became necessary in order to explore how some people had benefited from the war, while others lost. Because of time constraints, this purposive sampling aspect of the research was administered systematically only to women. From different women's life histories, it was evident that the war had catalysed the process of gender contestation, opening up new possibilities for the emancipation of women as well as sowing seeds of their further subjugation.

While some women acknowledged that their situation had improved during the course of the war, others complained that theirs had deteriorated seriously (for a detailed discussion, see Chingono, 1994). This is perhaps inevitable, given that women are a heterogeneous rather than homogenous social group. As the life histories amply demonstrated, although women have unique needs as women, they also have diverse and even conflicting interests. Age, class, education and religion, among others, often determine women's actions, choices, ethics and perceptions. The consequences of war for women were therefore ambiguous and contradictory.

Ethical Challenges: "Why are you doing it?"

Good research ethics demand that researchers treat the subjects with respect, honestly explain to them what the researcher is doing and avoid endangering their lives. Wilson (1992) suggested even "falling in love" and getting married, as he did, as a way of establishing mutual respect and good rapport. However, the reality of war means that some of the principles of ethical research should be bent. In order to get vital sensitive information, sometimes it was impossible not to lie.

For instance, when interviewing corrupt bureaucrats, or people involved in shady deals, it helped not to reveal the researcher's true identity. As a participant observer, it helped to pretend to want to participate in their deals, buy their illegal ware or even just showing naive curiosity and surprise. Similarly, when interviewing former rebel soldiers or soldiers in general, it sometimes helped to

appear to be just a curious foreigner; showing them official documents regarding the research and the researcher's identity frightened some of them as well as put the researcher's life at risk. The point is, the explanations we give about our research to the people we are studying, and to ourselves, "are important, perhaps central to research, yet are intensely problematic" (Walmsley, in Shakespeare et al, 1993; 37).

In a war situation, the question of whether or not to tell the truth cannot be decided a priori. Instead, it is a constantly negotiated ethical dilemma, and the appropriate choice depends on the specific demands of the situation. The first question that needs to be asked is, 'Is the information you want worthy the risk'? Often if you tell security sensitive informants the truth, they will not tell you the truth. In extreme cases, it is a matter of life and death, in which telling the truth may mean death to the researcher and/or to informants. In such cases, covert operations combined with built-in cross checking mechanism, become indispensable.

In line with the ethics and the principles of responsible research which dictate that the researcher also explain to the subjects, why s/he needs to understand and explain their perspectives, the last part of the interview schedule was a role reversal of some sorts. Respondents were given the opportunity to ask questions or make comments. The most asked questions were: Why are you doing the research? How will we benefit from the research? Can you please help us go to SA, USA and Zimbabwe.

Trying to answer these questions, brought to the fore dilemmas and discomforts which stem from the fact that this research had no obvious practical outcome. As with Walmsley (1993;45) :

> [I could not] convince myself that, once I have completed it, life will be better for those many people who have helped me on the way, that they will necessarily understand themselves better, or increase their income, or self esteem, or whatever. The benefits will not be concrete and tangible.

In fact, there is real danger that publication of these research findings may have compromised or made difficult the livelihoods of those who survived on informal and/or illegal economic activities – smugglers, pirates, illegal money dealers, corrupt bureaucrats.

In one way or another, and as the ethics of good research practice demand, the researcher had to answer the interviewees' questions. Starting with the last question, which was the easiest to answer, they were honestly told that they could not get direct help. However, advice was offered on the normal procedures of, and the difficulties involved in, getting passports and visas to go abroad. In response to the second question, the researcher answered, 'Not directly. But if I managed to get my research published, maybe it may cause some people to come your help'

Explaining 'Why are you doing the research' was more problematic. To start with, most of the participants were not familiar with, the term 'research', or its Portuguese translation *'pesquiza'* . It was simply an alien concept. Most peasants, barefoot entrepreneurs, soldiers and police had a very vague idea of what it was all about. Some Christians, having lived through much suffering and hope, saw the researcher as a messiah. For example, one elderly Christian man insisted that we eat the food he offered us thus: "If you do not eat, I would not have sinned [since he would have done his due]", adding that he had foreseen our coming in a dream.

To simplify matters, on occasion, the researcher had to settle for what they thought he was - a journalist. A journalist was close to their experience and the work that was being done. Posing as a journalist was quite handy, especially when taking photographs of dramatic events or important sites, when there was no enough time to explain who you are. Lofland and Lofland (1984) suggest that even when people know they are being studied they probably have only a tenuous idea about what the researcher is doing, and why. Even worse still, "you may never know how people explained you to themselves, yet that might be crucially important" (Walmlsey 1993).

How people explain the researcher to themselves, partly depends on who they are, and partly on the explanation by the researcher. Thus communication is vital. For instance, some of the elite, unlike most of the masses, not only knew about research, but some of them had undertaken some kind of research. This category included people like journalists from Radio Chimoio, secondary school teachers, some government and party officials and foreign donor agency personnel. But, unfortunately, understanding 'what it was all about' could also work against the researcher in many ways.

First, there were those powerful stakeholders, who knowing the importance of research, not only wanted the author to write only about their version of history, about their personal autobiographies

and highlighting their heroic encounters. Second, there were those who, also aware of the importance of research, felt that local history should be written by locals. Finally, balancing relations with members of the ruling party Frelimo, and of the rebel movement Renamo, was hard enough. Whether personal ego trips, nationalist patriotic zeal, or political commitment, the point is, the attitudes and actions of the political overzealous hampered the work of the researcher in many unpredictable ways.

Another related problem was the fact that certain people, by the very nature of their activities, preferred to co-operate with the researcher just as a friend, a customer or a client, than as a researcher. In fact, there were a number of occasions when people, and based on a misperception of the researcher's true identity, voluntarily divulged vital information, only to regret it when they discovered that their new 'found friend' was a researcher and writer.. It is precisely in such situations, when a researcher is forced to adopt unorthodox research techniques, that questions of ethics come to the foreground.

Indeed, as Douglas (1976: 14-16) argues, "'the techniques of field research share much in common with those of other types of investigative inquiry such as investigative journalism and detective work'" (Neuman, 1994; 336). At one level, it is another variation of the perennial end/means dilemma. Do ends, getting reliable information, matter more than means, how you get it? Is it vice versa? Or are they equally important? There seems to be no hard and fast rules concerning this, each unique war situation presenting different sets of priorities and elements of its solution.

The key is to balance sensitivity and security. Both are important in any field research, and are indispensable in wartime research. As military situations develop and change rapidly in war, it may be necessary to modify or even abandon certain goals and methods. For instance, and navoidably, some visits to remote districts of Manica Province had to be cancelled as the military situation deteriorated. In a nutshell, and in order to survive and collect reliable information, a fieldworker in a war situation simultaneously needs the qualities of a diplomat, covert agent, journalist, politician, soldier, and humanist philosopher.

Explaining and getting explanations are equally problematic, and yet they are at the core of an empowering and emancipatory social research. Persuasive social skills, charm, an ability to read situations and act accordingly are all necessary if a researcher is to get explanations, cooperation

and reliable data; yet there is no magical way of doing this. Dean and Whyte (1978) correctly argue that "asking whether the informant is telling the truth is irrelevant. What is important is understanding why they present themselves as they do". Is it not quite hard for them to understand the researcher who comes in purporting to be: "A disinterested observer? A friend or ally? A seeker of knowledge?" (Walmsley 1993; 42).

In a war situation, the question of whether or not to tell the truth cannot be decided *a priori*. Instead, it is a constantly negotiated ethical dilemma, and the appropriate choice depends on the specific demands of the situation. The first question that needs to be asked is, 'Is the information you want worthy the risk'? Often if you tell security sensitive informants the truth, they will not tell you the truth. In extreme cases, it is a matter of life and death, in which telling the truth may mean death to the researcher and/or to informants. In such cases, covert operations combined with built-in cross checking mechanism, become indispensable.

Is the Scientific Method Possible in Wartime Research?

The greatest faith of Enlightenment thinkers was that the methods used in natural sciences could be appropriately employed in the study of human societies. At the origins of this belief was the discovery of the basic laws of nature by Newton. The principle of scientific rationalism was then adopted by what are now called the social sciences. These acquired the status of sciences by virtue of the alleged objectivity of value-freedom commanded by scientific rationality.

Although Weber had expressed his doubts on the value-freedom of the sociologist early in this century, it was only in the last few decades that the possibility of objectivity and criteria of rationality have seriously been questioned. Indeed, as Phillips, (1992; 37) notes

Many of the contemporary theoretical and philosophical disputes about the nature of the social sciences become explicable if … we look at ourselves as living in an age when the naturalistic ideal has migrated from the physical and biological sciences into the social sciences, where it is not receiving a uniformly warm reception.

There are indeed numerous sceptics who posit that, "the fact that social scientists think they are doing social science, clearly is not sufficient proof that the enterprise is not chimerical" (Phillips,

1992; xi). According to the philosopher of science Phillips (1992; xi), the philosopher Louch, has written that "'my main intent has been to show that the idea of a science of man or society is untenable'". The point is, that science is not truth, but rather, a systematic approximation to 'truth', for truth itself is always relative.

The latest discoveries in quantum physics, completely demolish the myth of scientific absolutism; reality does not exist until it is observed, and the process of observing affects the observed (Gribbin, 1994). The point is, even the staunchest of empiricists cannot dispense with a normative model of man or society. As Hollis (1977;3) notes, " every social theory needs a metaphysics… in which a model of man and method of science complement each other".

Perhaps an even more challenging question is whether or not the scientific method, a central feature of supposed Western rationality, is the most effective method of studying non-western societies. The imposition of western analytical categories brings to the fore the vexed questions of representation and their connection to the power/knowledge nexus. The influence of Western intellectual thought in developing countries is multifaceted and ranges from blunt marginalization or denial of local civilization to more subtle forms of transfer of values and ideas in benign as well as malignant forms. The uncritical celebration of western science at the expense of non-western beliefs systems is a typical example.

Robin Horton, in a paper entitled, "African Traditional Thought and Wesetern Science", shows that both systems of thought are primarily theoretical attempts to explain the world (cited in Peberdy, 1993; 49). This casts doubt '"on most of the well-worn dichotomies used to conceptualise the differences …intellectual versus emotional; rational versus mystical….; empirical versus non-empirical; abstract versus concrete; analytical versus non-analytical"' (Peberdy, 1993; 49). Representations that rely on Eurocentric models of human nature, not only make ethnography meaningless, but also vitiate local explanations and representations of human nature. As Hobart (1984) suggests, social scientists should consider indigenous ideas, rather than postulate Western rationality as universal, in their research accounts.

The 'naturalistic ideal' means that wartime research should be based on the scientific method of objective and systematic observation and measurement, which offers clear, robust and comprehensive explanations. However, the multitude of unpredictable forces and events, have

fundamental implications for the scientific method. For example, probability random sampling (which is considered the most scientific) is usually impractical in a war situation.

First, in a war the population is always on the move, either becoming refugees in neighbouring countries or internally displaced persons. Thus reliable population records, which are essential for probability sampling, may be non-existent. Second, for fear for their lives, few would be prepared to cooperate in some of the procedures required in probability sampling. Third, probability sampling may require that the researcher visit the research site more than once, which is dangerous move; as a general rule, dangerous war zones should be visited only once and follow-up trips avoided to avoid ambushes and capture, .

Another problem is that when people perceive themselves as victims, they tend to exaggerate their plight as a calculated move to gain empathy and help from outsiders. On the other hand, and for similar reasons, others may be prepared to divulge sensitive information to strangers.

So how do you compensate for these war induced research deficiencies? All is not lost. With careful planning and forethought, some of these problems can be overcome. If enough attention is paid to the theoretical, methodological, ethical and practical challenges of wartime research, the whole undertaking can be great adventure which yields great data and generates critical knowledge.

Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

From the foregoing, four things are paramount in methodological and theoretical planning of wartime research. First, war time research must be theoretically informed. This is important because, if events or developments on the ground change – and in war they often do so rapidly – the theory will remain intact, and can still be deployed elsewhere. The research can be continued in a safer zone using the same theoretical tools and instruments. Within certain limits, it should be possible to theorize and generalize from the experience of safer war zones.

Second, and related, the research design should be very valid and reliable. While this is true of all social science research, it is of utmost importance and indispensable in wartime research. Because of rapid changes in a war situation, a valid and reliable research design can easily be replicated in another safer area and still generate valid results. In considering issues of validity, reliability and

representative sampling, it is helpful to take on board post modernist insights on problems of representation. According to post modernist perspectives, no-one can represent another. Indeed, representation is seen as a form of violence that denies the other, the represented, their true identity. From this standpoint, whether in peace or war, a truly representative sample is impossible: interview those who are accessible and available and admit honestly that the findings represent only the views of those interviewed.

Third, it is helpful to take account of the principle of parsimony. The principle of parsimony was developed by William of Occam, a minimalist monk, who lived in the medieval era, and who is considered one of the key figures in the development of modern social science (Burnham, Peter, *et al*). He built the principle on Aristotle's notion that entities must not be multiplied beyond what is necessary. A wartime researcher must try to build elegant models that minimize the number of explanatory variables used; often too many variables lead to confusion and not clarity. As Burnham rightly puts it, "the simplest theory that fit the fact of the problem is the one that should be selected...Shave off unnecessary concepts or variables'.

Finally, in order to minimise deliberate falsehoods, the researcher needs to develop a built-in cross-examining technique to expose the contradictions and lies. One way of doing this is rephrasing the same question in a different context, and asking as many people as possible.

War and Social Science Research

Interestingly, war has also led to a remarkable increase in research on the country; the stories and pictures of war torn nation beamed to western audiences through the electronic media and newspapers attracted droves of young western researchers to the country. In other words, the war put the country on the international map and attracted intellectual attention.

In Mozambique the war period witnessed a significant increase in war-related social research productivity by both locals and foreigners. Then, euphamistically dubbed a 'virgin territory' among certain research circles, Mozambique provided many researchers with different opportunities of establishing useful contacts, carving up a niche, learning research skills by doing it, or by simply being tourists in a 'revolutionary crisis'. The war-related topics covered ranged from 'survival strategies' (Lundin, IB, 1986, Nunes, J, 1992) 'dealing with the emergency' (Safeworld, 1984,

United Nations Research Institute for Social Development), 'refugees and displaced people (Wilson, KB, 1992)', 'food aid', 'women', 'traditional authorities', 'religion', 'debt and costs of the war' to 'the peace process', 'demobilization' and 'post-war reconstruction'. For a summary of intellectual production of the period, see Wilson's *State of the Art Review* (1992).

Clearly, war put the country on the world spotlight, and researchers flocked to the country. Conferences, symposiums and workshops, with the varied, but interrelated objectives of ending the war, achieving social justice and post war reconstruction were organized inside outside Mozambique. However, much of NGO and government research, and precisely because it was geared towards 'crisis management', was rather more haphazard than scientific, making claims to capacity building dubious.

But the question is, is it ethical to worry about method and technique, while people are dying? In any case, how do you measure increase in knowledge?

Summary

To recapitulate, the research project being reflected upon was a qualitative social and historical survey of people's beliefs and practices during the war period. In undertaking this qualitative research the aim was to penetrate the subject community's world, to understand people's perceptions of their world, the war, its causes and effects, and to explain these perceptions. Of necessity, this involved taking a step into the subject community's world, living amongst them, learning their culture, the rhythms and patterns of their daily lives. And on the basis of their reaction and feedback, adapt and adjust expectations and explanations, strategy and tactic. This involves a gradual process in which non sensitive issues are observed and questioned first, and later only after some tension has been cleared can the big issues addressed.

The major unique features about wartime research are fear, uncertainty and rapid change in military situations. These mean that the researcher of war should be prepared for nasty encounters, nerve-racking experiences and to accept new 'cults of violence and counter-violence' as the norm in the field. The key is a preparedness to take calculated risks and balancing practical considerations and epistemological demands. Imagination, innovation, sensitivity strategic vision, and not panicking or despairing when things go awfully wrong, as they often do, are indispensable. The rules of the

game, if there are any, can only be learnt in the field by playing the game; watch and see what the locals do.

Conclusion

The pervasiveness of violence and warfare in Africa in particular, and the world in general, doubtlessly make wartime research is essential. Yet warfare affects social research in general, and field research in particular in many ways. This paper has attempted to identify some of the main practical, theoretical and ethical problems that a wartime field researcher may encounter Drawing attention to what is unique about wartime research, and building on personal wartime research experience, the discussion suggested ways of surviving, thriving and gathering reliable data in a war situation, without endangering the subjects and the researcher. While there certainly is no absolute truth, the researcher in war ought to be absolute and rigorous in her/his search for truth.

The relationship between war and social research is rather complicated, and cannot be ascertained *a priori*. It is only by field research, that the exact nature of the effects of war on society can be ascertained. Intuitively, one would imagine that war undermines social science research as resources are diverted to the war effort. On the contrary, as in the US and the UK during the Second World War, war-related natural and social research expands considerably, as donors poured in money to fund such research. Indeed, the war period witnessed a voluminous increase in publications on Mozambique, and an increase in knowledge about the country and its people.

Studying war while the guns are still blazing is a risky undertaking. A wartime researcher may need to acquaint him/herself with survival tactics and strategies for avoiding the dangers and pitfalls inherent in such research. Although danger is always lurking, it is a worthwhile risk. The logic and rational of the research methods to be deployed, as well as their achievements, would be dictated by the exigencies of the war itself. Approaches, forms of interactions, the questions to ask and how to ask them may need to be changed to suit different situations. In others words, the research method develops as the research progress, with new encounters leading to refinements of strategy.

In conclusion, although war imposes considerable constrains on the applicability of the scientific method in the field, it is nonetheless possible to conduct an objective research, and to approximate 'truth 'in social representation. With flexibility, innovation and resilience on the part of the researcher, it is possible. It is a delusion to uncritically entertain the notion that a pure/absolute scientific method or model of society is possible, but not appreciating the value of the scientific method, is selling the discipline of social science short.

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Culture, Gender and Patrarchy: The Tripartite Alliance of Power and its Impact on the Legal Provisions and Rights of Black Women in Zimbabwe.

By

Efiritha Chauraya

Abstract

This paper is a desk review, exploring the confluence of culture, gender and patriarchy and analyzing the impact of this connection on the legal provisions and rights of black women in Zimbabwe. Using a qualitative gender analysis of provisions of legal acts and empirical evidence from some high court judgments made, the paper brings out how the legal provisions mirror the dominant patriarchal culture in which they are brewed and applied and the resultant effect this has on the rights of women in Zimbabwe. The conclusion made is that gender, culture and patriarchy are not discrete entities but are very closely related, interwoven, coexisting, overlapping and influencing each other in ways that make the Zimbabwe legal provisions, openly or subtly, support patriarchy. Since patriarchy is based on the principle of sex discrimination, the legal provisions themselves are also discriminatory, thereby violating the rights of women. Patriarchy has installed a traditional hierarchy that is resistant to change and in this hierarchy women occupy the lower ranks where they are actively restrained, subordinated and abused by the Zimbabwean laws. Cultural beliefs are the overriding factor in determining whether the laws are implemented and how the laws are interpreted. Primary eradication of the patriarchal culture is advanced as the solution to women enjoyment of their rights because enacting national laws is meaningless if the attitudes of the communities are contrary to the laws.

INTRODUCTION

This article is divided into 6 sections. After this introduction which brings out the objective of the article, section two thrives to show that women's rights are indeed human rights while section three shows the linkage between culture, gender and patriarchy. Section four argues for the legal provisions as cultural rights or human wrongs. Section five proposes the way forward, ushering possible measures that the writer hopes will assist in removing barriers to the women's enjoyment of their rights and the final section is the conclusion. This paper was inspired and conceived in the context of an unprecedented lack of respect for the black women's rights in Zimbabwe, herein only called the women. This is in spite of the many pieces of legislations meant to protect them.

It is not a matter of debate that women in Zimbabwe constitute the majority in the population and that the majority of these are black. Nor can it be doubted that these women play a pivotal role in the human and social development of the Zimbabwe society. However, these two perceptions are seldom linked. This paper argues that what hinders these women is the restrictive and discriminatory social environment in which they live. According to the Zimbabwe Human Development Report (2000) even the laws that seek to non- discriminate these women often fail to achieve the intended results. This report found that these women continue to be discriminated against and have their rights violated even in the face of the very laws that have been crafted to protect them. This alone formed the motivation of this paper. The two key questions to be answered are: Why do these women continue to have their rights violated and why do the laws meant to effect change fail to achieve the intended results? The argument of this paper is that male/female power relations in Zimbabwe are inextricably intermixed with culture, gender and patriarchy and this connection is not only violating the woman's rights but has gone further to normalize it as part and parcel of life in Zimbabwe. The legal provisions are crafted, interpreted and applied in the normalized context of this antagonizing connection. This paper strives to advance this argument and out rightly maintain that the issue of these legal provisions and the rights of women can only be understood against the background of these women's social status in Zimbabwe- a direct dictate of culture, gender and patriarchy.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

A human right is something which a human being, male or female has a moral or legal entitlement (Wringe, 1981). Human rights are not bought, borrowed or earned. Neither are they awarded or granted by authority but by virtue of being born a human being not a plant or any other animal, any human person is entitled to enjoy them. They are inherent from the dignity of the human person and cannot be taken away or withdrawn. This is as provided for in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) whose article 1 categorically states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights (Patel and Waters 1994, p.124). If article 1 of the UDHR so explicitly states, then why an issue over women's rights in Zimbabwe? The issue is clear. Despite this article 1 of the UDHR to which Zimbabwe is signatory without reservations, women in Zimbabwe are, in most cases not viewed by society and by some pieces of legislation as full human beings. This is so in spite of the country ratifying the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1991, a declaration that reiterates the fact that elimination of discrimination on basis of gender is an important aim of human rights. Zimbabwe is also a signatory to the Vienna Declaration of 1993 which reiterates the fact that a violation of women's rights is a violation of human rights. To make the adoption of these conventions significant and meaningful, the Zimbabwe Government translated them into domestic laws and even amended its own constitution in 1996 to include non discrimination on grounds of gender. However, in spite of all these endeavors, the UN Zimbabwe Human Development Report cited above finds women discriminated against and the laws that seek to effect gender equality often failing to achieve the intended results. This paper finds the answer in the tripartite power alliance of gender, culture and patriarchy – the invisible knife that assassinates the rights of these women in Zimbabwe.

MAKING CONNECTIONS: CULTURE, GENDER AND PATRIARCHY

The focus of this article as already said, is to show how the combined power of culture, gender and patriarchy discriminates against women and how this violates the rights of these women even in the face of the laws that are meant to protect them. It is, therefore, necessary to have this paper's shared understanding of these terms.

Culture is a design for living, a shared understanding that people use to coordinate their activities (Odetiola, Oloruntimehin and Awenda, 1983). It is a way of life of people, - a common possession

of a body of people who share the same traditions. No one is born with a culture but everyone is born into a certain culture. A newly born is useless to all cultural intents, purposes and behaviors. But through the process of socialization, the newly born is acculturated and learns, intentionally and/or unintentionally, to be a member of his or her society.

Any culture has its own characteristic norms (guidelines which define acceptable and appropriate behaviors) and values (beliefs on what is good and desirable) that it upholds (Giddens, 1997). Through these cultural norms and values, gendered perceptions about the 'real men and real women' in a particular culture are brewed, maintained and perpetuated. This brings the paper to the concept of gender.

As said from the above definitions, gender does not occur in a vacuum but is rooted in a people's culture. In simple terms, gender is the cultural meaning given to one's sexual identity (Henslin, 2005). No one is born with gender. Gender starts the moment one's sexual identity is known because that is when cultural meanings about the individual begin to be constructed and from that moment onwards, men and women are treated unequally on the basis of the fact of their sex. Attitudes and expectations for boys and girls become different on both minor and major things. This ideology of gender determines what is expected of, allowed of, and valued in men and women and also the way responsibilities, resources and rights are granted (IWRAW Asia Pacific, 2001). The crucial point made here is that, it is people and social forces that shape and create gender and all gender perceptions bear the imprint of their social contexts and themselves reinforce that social context. There is therefore, a direct correlation between gender and culture. Gender is no longer a consequence of culture, rather a necessary precondition. The gendered structures become entrenched in the culture in such a way that they appear consensual and non-negotiable. Yet they are only based on the inequality of power. Sadly to note though, is that this inequality in power makes women participate in their own subordination (Henslin, 2005). This points to the power of the ideology of sex difference- the ideology of patriarchy.

Literally translated, patriarchy means 'rule by the father' and as an ideology, patriarchy is deeply entrenched in this belief (Oxfam GB, 1994). It is a social system that propagates male superiority, power and supremacy over women as God given. Though not all men oppress and exploit all women, it is true that there is a general oppression of women by men and this is precisely the defining point of patriarchy (Schaefer, 2006). Likewise, in this study, women's subjugation by men

is not about individual women but about how society is organized in ways that result in women's lives being restricted specifically because they are women. As a system and practice, patriarchy oppresses, exploits and subordinates women because its principles, regulations and structures are based on male supremacy. It insists on unequal hierarchical power relations between men and women, with the superior men on top and the inferior women below and this is ingrained in the people's culture through socialization and influences men's and women's social behavior, actions and attitudes.

Zimbabwe is to a patriarchal society whose cultural gender systems reinforce and entrench patriarchal relations between its men and women. In Zimbabwe, patriarchy uses state apparatus such as the mass media and education and even outside the state social institutions like the church as its ideological apparatus. Because of this, leadership roles, control of valuable resources and their benefits, as well as decision making is culturally considered a male domain. This is a feature of both the private and public spheres. This patriarchal culture maintains a distinct social stratification with men on the top stratum even on minor things like the sitting arrangement. Men, culturally, sit on stools while their women sit on mats. This portrays a pseudo highness to men and with it authority and power. By merely watching the installation of a chief, one observes that even the symbols of power are not items women use e.g. knobkerrie, spear, axe, e.t.c.

The connection is now clear, and its sum total is male power. By virtue of being born male in the Zimbabwean culture one is born with power and by virtue of being born female, a poverty of power dominates women's lives and permeates virtually all aspects of their existence. When the women internalize their own subordinate status, they view themselves of lesser value and when this happens, even their sense of their own rights is diminished. The three: culture, gender and patriarchy reinforce each and the connection acts as a conservative force, justifying and legitimizing the subjugation, exploitation and oppression of women.

ZIMBABWE GENDER RELATED LEGAL PROVISIONS: CULTURAL RIGHTS OR HUMAN WRONGS?

Zimbabwe gained its independence in 1980, at a time when issues of women's rights and their greater recognition were firmly entrenched in the global agenda. Just the year before, in 1979, the UN General Assembly had adopted the Convention on the Elimination of all forms Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), a watershed in the issues of the rights of women. Due to this global

fever and the fact that women had participated in the liberation struggle, it is not surprising that the early years of Zimbabwe's independence were characterized by moves to achieve legal equality for males and females. Zimbabwe started to engender its domestic laws to suit its new agenda. It is not possible herein to enlist all the gender related laws passed by the Zimbabwe Government. This article is only going to briefly outline a few that are felt necessary to highlight the violation of women's rights. Some of these pieces of legislation openly allow women discrimination yet others discriminate subtly, purporting to grant equality to males and females. The following Zimbabwe laws will be discussed:

The Zimbabwe Constitution

This is the highest law of the land. Even though the constitution was amended to include non discrimination on grounds of gender in its section 23(1) and (2); its sections 23(3) (a), (b) & (f) still permit discrimination against women under the guise of customary provisions. It is not an issue of debate that Zimbabwean customary practices are patriarchal and patriarchy itself, based on the principle of sex discrimination is a violation of the equality principle of the UDHR (Musasa Project, 2003). The argument of this paper is that, how can a national constitution run away from patriarchy when the environment in which it is brewed and its architects are patriarchal? At the same time how can the provisions of such a constitution be expected to respect the equality principle of human rights. By sanctioning and allowing customary law in areas of adoption, marriage, divorce, burial and devolution of property e.t.c, (areas well known to discriminate against women) the constitution automatically compromises women's rights (Mazambani, 2006).

 Communal lands act

 The provisions of this piece of legislation openly violate the rights of women. According to this act, communal land should be distributed in accordance with the customs and practices of the area. Zimbabwean customary practices, as shown immediately above under the discussion on the constitution are patriarchal, that is why they place heavy emphasis on the land rights being enjoyed by the head of the family, who in the cultural context is invariably always male. No question about it, women's land rights are therefore not sufficiently protected (ibid). This denial of women land tenure rights coincides with the gender demographics in the country - more women live in rural areas. This, inarguably, is the reason why the Zimbabwe Land Reform Act of 2000 allowed women to be allocated only at least 20% of all land under resettlement. Yet the national population statistics stand at 52% females and 48% males (Government of Zimbabwe, 2004). Is giving the majority

about only a quarter of what is taken up by the minority, not a direct slum in the face? Where is the equity principle? Does it not entail that enjoyment of resources and their benefits be shared commensurately with the national population distribution? These may be the facts but in patriarchy there is little awareness of the importance of fairness. The important thing is not the majority in population but the majority in decision making -hence the land rights are male cultural rights. Such legal provisions continue to deny women of their land rights in the name of customs and traditions. But again how can this not be? Is it not only common sense that the spirit of a law should run congruent to the attitudes of the environment in which it is brewed and is serving if it is to be tolerated by its people. But the existence of an abuse in a cultural tradition does not make that abuse desirable. This article agrees with Meena (1992)'s opinion that respect of culture should not be used to deny women their basic human rights. Yet it should be remembered that though such feelings and the provisions of the UDHR are pervaded by an aspiration of fairness, in patriarchy there is little awareness of the importance of fairness. The point being argued here is that there can never be fairness in laws that are brewed in a patriarchal culture by architects whose core values are also patriarchal.

Companies act

According to section 173 (1)(b), of the Zimbabwe Companies Act, a woman married in community of property can only be Company Director "if her husband gives his written consent and that consent is lodged with the Registrar of Companies" (Mazambani, 2006 p.5). Conversely, a husband does not need the wife's consent in the same matter. Like with the case of the previous laws, this is directly culturally driven - the man is the head of the family and it is quite normal from customs and practices of Zimbabwean life. Yet it has negative gender implications in that it concentrates decision making power in a single individual, by virtue of his being male. The assumption is that his decisions benefit the whole family but Molokomme (1997)'s research studies in South Africa and others elsewhere, show that such allocations of power on the basis of a social norm contradict the reality of women's lives. It should be born in mind that, this has far reaching consequences for the rights of the wife. Where is the equality in the dignity of the human person? Does it not fundamentally entail a life with self esteem as a human being?

Guardianship of Minors Act

 According to this act, the father is the natural guardian of children born in wedlock, and in Zimbabwean terms, it covers all children born under the three marriage acts of the country (Musasa

Project, 2004). This may sound absurd for always often, when people are taking marriage vows the presiding priests, pastors and reverends say 'and the two are now one'- but here, in reality, it can be seen that there is inequality in the oneness. Naturally, it takes mother and father to produce a child, but patriarchy makes the effect of the 'other' to be totally submerged by the 'one' (Singh, 1997). In patriarchy marriage is not a partnership of equals. This is why there cannot even be joint guardianship for the children. The argument again is cultural- the father is the head of the family after whose name the children will take their surnames whether or not he exists in their lives. Such legal provisions are an infringement on women's rights and participation in family life.

Legal Age of Majority Act (LAMA)

This act confers majority status for black women and men upon age 18 years. Prior to this, the women in Zimbabwe were minors from womb to tomb as they could not get married unless with the consent of a male guardian, could not open a bank account, could not own property in own names and could not take anyone to court (Musasa Project, 2004). By the stroke of the pen, the black women, for the first time, were given majority status. But in a culture that has always held women as inferior to men the impact of this legislation on men and women is different. The equal status is only in theory. This is why besides this act having been passed in 1982, in the case history of Vareta v Vareta (1992)(2)ZLR(1)H, the son even though younger than the daughter was appointed heir to the late father's estate and the presiding judge said this aspect was not affected by LAMA (Feltoe and Rowland, 1999). This is also why in case of Marisa v Marisa 1992(1) ZLR167(S), a surviving widow was made only to administer the estate of her late husband on behalf of the deceased's children, and not to be heir to the late husband's estate (ibid). In the same vain was the case of Magaya v Magaya 1999(1) ZLR100(S), where an older female child in a polygamous union had wanted to inherit ahead of the younger brother from the junior wife, lost the case to the brother. The Zimbabwe Supreme court ruled unanimously that only men can inherit under customary law (UNICEF, 2004). The judge presiding over the case held that " The claimant is a lady and therefore cannot be appointed heir to her father's estate when there is a man" (Mazambani 2006, p.8). In the cultural sense, widows and girls are passer-bys, so allowing them to inherit removes riches from the clan-line. The thinking is that they will eventually get married, so allowing them to inherit is only enriching the new acquisition. Why water another man's garden? But who said all women want to marry or stay in marriage? This is just a diplomatic way of sidelining women. LAMA is one of the most celebrated pieces of legislation that was enacted to benefit women, but as can be seen from these cases, the decisions in these cases reversed the implications of LAMA. Such rulings reduce

women once again to legal minors. Its enactment built hope but its application demoralizes the hope. LAMA, is thus, practically, an overwhelming disregard of rights of women to inherit property in the case of death of own husband, parent or from divorce. Research has already shown that not all male inheritors will use the resources for family benefit (Molokomme, 1997). Far from its celebrated goal of being a gender-equalizer, LAMA, in actual fact, contributes to the preservation of the patriarchal social order. Once, when the judge presiding over such inheritance cases made the surviving widows win her property rights, this is what happened:

> Cecilia Gunda, Zimbabwe, a 57-year-old widow, died on 30 December 2005 after being stabbed by her stepson at the home she had shared with her husband. Her murder followed a High Court judgment making her the rightful heir to the matrimonial home. Her stepson was arrested and remanded in prison, but was recently released on bail, pending trial (Izumi, 2007 p.15).

Thus, where a woman gets what's rightfully hers, it angers the relatives and she may end up losing what is most precious and important, i.e. her right to life. Yet article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UNHR) of 1948 states that: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment…". (UNHR 1948). This is surely more than torture and goes beyond cruelty to the highest form of inhuman treatment.

Deeds Registries Act

Through this act, black women in Zimbabwe can now register immovable property in their names. This applies to rural and urban commercial land where title deeds are obtainable (Mazambani, 2006). At face value, women and men are granted same rights as regards registration of immovable property but a gender scrutiny of the law shows that women are discriminated against. More often than not, because of the patriarchal nature of the Zimbabwean society, immovable property (especially where the piece of item is only one) like houses in urban areas, plots and farms, are almost invariably registered in the name of the father, a situation compounded by the fact that all the marriage types in Zimbabwe are out of community of property. Women can only own such properties when out of marriage or when the pieces of property are more than one and the law demands that no one person can have more than one. Kaori Izumi working on property grabbing in Africa, found out that women enjoying independent property rights are often viewed not only by men but by the whole society as a threat to social stability (Musasa Project, 2004). All the same, in Zimbabwe more women than men are in unpaid work, or less paying work, so a law giving the two sexes same property rights actually maintains the inequality between the sexes. It should be noted

here that in a society that has a strong and rigid inequality like Zimbabwe, legal reform cannot succeed to produce equality between people of different social powers (Assie- Lumumba, 2000).

Marriage Act Chapter 5:11

This is a monogamous marriage which males can undertake at the age of at least 18years and females at the age of at least 16 years. The question is: why are the ages different? A gender scrutiny finds that girls are made more vulnerable to early marriages than boys. And when they enter marriage this young, studies by Musasa Project, a local Non Governmental Organisation in Zimbabwe which works to reduce violence against women   found that the more they are prone to abuse(Musasa Project, 2004).

Customary Marriages Act Chapter 5.07

This is a potentially polygamous marriage and according to customs only the man can have more than one wife and not vice versa. The gender impact of this is that, only the husband can sue for adultery but the wife cannot since the husband is entitled to have more than one wife. By this doing husband and wife do not enjoy equal privileges. Somehow this marriage type is still very predominant, especially in Zimbabwe rural areas where most women live. Customary law on its own part has no specific rules to guide relations in the family, but at least has a mechanism of 'elders' help the parties in case of need. This 'elders' help are embedded traditions and beliefs that are perceived by elders (and indeed the community) as either biologically or divinely ordained. These traditions and beliefs, as said earlier on, are known to discriminate against women.

The cited cases, especially the court rulings, provide a vivid and engaging portrait of gender discrimination and infringement on Zimbabwe women's rights. The list of such gender discriminatory laws in Zimbabwe is by no means endless. What is crucial to note here is that the Zimbabwe State's seemingly undermining patriarchal structures through changes in the law, is a failing venture because the women continue to be discriminated against even by the very laws crafted to protect them. In reality it is the ideology of patriarchy that is fostered and legislated by the state. This defeats the purported enhancement of the status of women in Zimbabwe and the much publicised increase in enjoyment of women's rights.

WAY FORWARD

As can be seen from the above argument, the notion of equal rights is not fully recognized within

the provisions of the Zimbabwe domestic laws. The application of the pieces of legislation makes gender discrimination starkly visible and institutionalized. This is not to undermine the efforts made, but only an attempt to show that a pervasive patriarchal culture erodes women's fundamental rights to equality with men. This, as the cited cases have shown, happens even in the face of the very laws meant to uphold the equality principle. How can this be prevented?

In order to prevent the continued violations of women's rights, there is need to examine and understand why in the first place these violations continue to happen. The reason for the continued violations has been shown to lie wholly in the interplay of culture, gender and patriarchy at individual, relationship and community level. This being the case then, to prevent entails doing away with this interplay that lends legitimacy to violations of women's right.

Legal reform is one such a way, but this paper stands to argue that it is only a secondary measure which can only be fruitful in a supportive environment. On its own it can not sufficiently guarantee women's rights, in fact, as shown, it may work to reproduce the inequality between men and women. The cited High Court and Supreme Court cases are empirical evidence. This is because laws do not operate in a vacuum. Legal provisions cannot be cut off from the social forces they apply to and serve. As has been shown, the violated rights are many (like the right to life, personal and mental integrity, right not to be subjected to torture, cruelty or inhuman treatment, right to equal protection before the law and from deprivation of property, right to equality within the family), but their denial has the same source despite their being played out in different arenas. The same source of denial is the tripartite alliance of power emanating from the confluence of culture, gender and patriarchy.

These three in Zimbabwe, are sites of women discrimination and interact and influence each other to keep women subjugated to men. Even the enacted laws maintain this inequality openly or subtly regardless of the fact that some women are actually involved in the making of the laws. This is why the provisions of the Zimbabwe gender-related laws are at best gender neutral as in the case of the Deeds Registries Act (i.e. assume that provisions will affect men and women the same so treats them the same) or at worst gender discriminatory as in the case of the Guardianship of Minors Act (i.e. make a distinction against women that results in women being treated unfairly and unjustly because of the perceptions of the law makers on women as a sex group). Gender neutrality does not allow for sensitivity to disadvantages that may not permit women to benefit from equal treatment as

shown from the argument on the Deeds Registries Act.

The starting point in the intervention process, therefore, is to work to change the environment in which the laws are brewed and operate. This means changing the social norms and behaviors that create male supremacy and women subordination. Such a societal shift is critical if the passed laws are to guarantee and maintain human right principles and be accepted by the society. This should be or should have been the Zimbabwean Government's starting point. Working on educational reform in Africa, Assie-Lumumba found that if this is not done, legal reform will only be "part of symbolic gestures designed to indicate governmental… awareness of problems and sympathetic intentions rather than serious efforts to achieve social change" (Assie-Lumumba, 2000, p.93). Mehta and Gopalakrishnan working on cases of gender violence in South Asia also found that while reforms in law can make changes, "deeply entrenched attitudes can be changed only by people"(Mehta and Gopalakrishnan, 2007, p.44).

While it is understood and agreed that change in societal attitudes is difficult to achieve, all the same way a change in attitude towards women, by men and women themselves, through gender equality awareness and educational campaigns, can happen and there is definitely need for this to happen in Zimbabwe. Discrimination against women in Zimbabwe is not just a current issue, but rather has deep seated traditional roots in the patriarchal culture, and in many instances, the discrimination is considered socially acceptable even by women themselves. This culture is the invisible legislation of the country. This attitude has to be confronted headlong. After that is done, eventually then, Zimbabwean people may begin to develop alternatives that are more equal, respectful and mindful of individual dignity. While the target of these campaigns is to change individual's thinking, this cannot be sustained without a supportive social environment- it shall not be dealt with just individuals but with their friends, families, the media, the school, the church, the opinion leaders and the government (Michau, 2007). The writer is fully aware of the efforts made by some non governmental organisations, and notwithstanding their work, this article feels that the problem of gender discrimination calls for more concerted actions by the state in form of gender equality awareness campaigns in Zimbabwean communities. It is only such actions that go to the heart of what it takes to ensure non discrimination and creation of gender equality. Human beings are born with the potential to change within and to bring change to others.

While everyone cannot be reached or convinced, the target is achievable even with just enough

people from all walks of life. After this primary and broader struggle for equality, then other secondary and tertiary measures such as legal reform can then be instituted.

The law can only succeed in promoting women's rights when there is congruency between it and the environment in which it operates. This paper therefore, openly, disagrees with the Southern Africa Research Development Committee which says that "Legal reform is the first step towards dismantling a social structure that systemically discriminates against women" (SARDC, 2005).

It is again irresistible not to concur with the opinions and recommendations by Amy Tsanga and her research team when they were looking at children and women's rights in Zimbabwe in 2004 (Tsanga, Nkiwane, Khan and Nyanungo, 2004). This article totally agrees with the views of their research that there should be a multi pronged attack to the issue of interventions within the field of the rights of women. This article would like to go further to rank the levels of interventions necessary for behavioral change that are contained in the recommendations offered by this team in the following manner: Level one- Community level (i.e. gender awareness campaigns for the consumers of the laws). level two: Structural level (i.e. changing procedures, training professional and establishing clear reporting procedures) and level three- changing or enacting laws. This study is proposing this ranking order because a change in the law can only be fruitful in removing inequality if there is a matching spirit in the society. This paper maintains that the first and foremost step should be to unpack the structural basis of gender inequality that is created by patriarchy in Zimbabwe society. Legal reform as has been shown, as an initial stand-alone strategy, cannot dismantle culturally entrenched patriarchy.

Culture, though often represented as a static ideology that cannot be changed, is in fact dynamic. The same Zimbabwean culture which is perpetuating patriarchy can at the same time be changed to offer important opportunities for gender equality change. After these intensified gender- equality- awareness- to-action programmes this article proposes an amendment to the Zimbabwean Constitution's (section 23) so that discrimination on customary grounds is out-lawed. This should be done before going on to level two because customs and culture are very much alive in the current constitution which allows customary law to override most legislation. The final step would then be to amend or even create new laws in harmony with the amended constitution.

CONCLUSION

The paper has tried to highlight why women in Zimbabwe continue to have their rights violated, openly or subtly, even in the face of the laws meant to save them. This has been shown to be the resultant effect of the patriarchal environment in which the laws are brewed and applied. Laws mirror their society if they are to be accepted. Since, the Zimbabwean society is patriarchal, its laws, too, are patriarchal –hence their violating women's rights is unavoidable, regardless of the various legal initiatives enacted to improve the women's lot. To prevent legal violations of women's rights, this paper calls, first and foremost, for a through and pervasive transformation of society to rid the society of patriarchal beliefs and behaviors.

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